

# BATTERED WOMEN



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stein • Minority Leader • New York State Senate



## DOCUMENTATION OF SERVICE GROUPS

### RESPONSE TO THE NEED FOR AID

The steps we took to conduct the survey which forms the substance of this report are outlined in the Introduction. This section, the county profiles, covers, county by county, the response we received from our initial inquiry to the county commissioners, from the agencies within each county that were suggested to us either by the commissioners or by other groups known to us within each county, and from the questionnaires sent to hospitals and health-related facilities suggested to us by the Department of Hospitals. We have used this information in preparing a profile of service groups within each county to the needs of battered women.

The profiles give in some detail the information that was gathered in response to our questionnaires, copies of which may be seen in the Appendix. Comments from police departments have been included in the county profiles in those cases where the comments seemed to us to give information or to provide insight into the attitude of law enforcement personnel towards battered women. The response to the request for statistical information which we addressed to police departments by means of our questionnaire will be found in Chapter VI, "Police Response". A summary and charting of the information gathered from social service and other groups within each county will be found in Chapter V.

Demographic information on each county was obtained from the summary of Title XX services prepared for each county and from the U.S. Bureau of Census statistical reports.

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ACQUISITIONS

## ALBANY COUNTY

Albany County consists of a large rural and suburban population, and the City of Albany.

It has a population of 290,000, of which approximately 40% live in the City of Albany. Of the total population, 24.5%, including 37,271 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. The population is 94% white. There are 60,258 husband/wife families out of a total of 94,004 households. (1980 projected population: 295,356)

In 1976, 8% of the population was unemployed. The median income for a family of 4 was \$15,169.00. According to the 1970 Census, 5.8% of the families in Albany County had incomes below the poverty level.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In answer to our letter requesting the names of those agencies in Albany County that aid battered women, John Fahey, the Commissioner of Social Services, forwarded the name of one group providing comprehensive assistance, Aid to Battered Women, Inc. They, in turn, gave us the names of 2 other agencies which might be of assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all 3, with 2 answering: Aid to Battered Women, Inc., and the Salvation Army.

As they were recently organized, Aid to Battered Women had statistics available for a 3-month period only. During that time, 12 cases came to their attention, all through a hotline which they have established. Six were from Albany County, and the rest were from neighboring counties. The group provides referrals, advocacy services, and crisis intervention services.

The Salvation Army had 50 battered women come to their attention within the past year. They provide emergency shelter, usually just overnight, counseling and referrals, although they do not have a specific program for battered women.

Of the 62 battered women seen by the 2 agencies, 27 sought counseling, 34 shelter, 28 legal services, and several others hospitals, legal, and other services.

There were 59 women between the ages of 20 and 40, 36 were married, and 58 had children, with 2 others pregnant at the time of battering. All but 3 of the children were under the age of 12.

Only 4 women were employed. All of the women who came to the Salvation Army were at the public assistance level.

Referrals to lawyers were made for 45 women, and 13 were referred to public social service agencies.

#### Hospitals

Of the 8 questionnaires mailed by the Department of Hospitals, 5 were sent to hospitals and 3 to health-related facilities. We received 2 returns, both from hospitals. St. Peter's Hospital examined records for January, February, March, and April of 1977 and reported a total of 25 alleged and suspected cases seen in that time period. Of these, 13 were Emergency Room cases, 6 came directly to the Social Services Department, 2 to the Clinic, and 3 to the Alcoholic Unit. No vital statistics were available on the patients. This hospital refers all such alleged cases to the Social Services Department, and maintains records on cases but has never established specifically a reporting system.

The Albany County Medical Center told us that "battered" is not employed as a diagnostic term under which data is collected, though judging by the number of trauma cases they are certain that battered women do report to their Emergency Room. However, "lacking statistical data and reporting mechanism, no objective measurement of incidence is possible."

Comments from Police

"The New York State Police do not compile such statistics and in order to obtain the information you desire a long, tedious, and costly search would have to be made. Even if such a search were made, from reviewing your form it is obvious that our records would not satisfy your request." -- New York State Police, State Campus, Albany.

"We do not keep any records of this category of incident, nor do we have officers especially trained or assigned to this type of case." -- Albany Police Department.

"All are arraigned in Police Court and disposed of as a criminal matter and some are withdrawn, dismissed, or transferred to Family Court." -- City of Cohoes Police Department.

"We utilize the Community Services Unit (CSU), a group of clergymen from all faiths, on a voluntary basis to interview and counsel families." -- Town of Colonie Police Department.

Two other police departments reporting noted that cases are treated according to the type of crime committed against the woman.

### Family Court

In the first 4 months of 1977, a total of 183 petitions were filed in Albany County Family Court, with the wife as petitioner in 170 cases. In 52 of those, the wife charged assault, while in 111 others, threat or harrassment was charged.

Using these figures to project a total for 1977, one could expect that 510 petitions will be filed by wives against their husbands. Furthermore, since less than 60% of the battered women reported by the agencies were married, these statistics cannot show the extent of the problem.

## ALLEGANY COUNTY

Allegany County is located in the "Southern Tier" area of western New York. The population, which totals 46,458, is concentrated in small villages and hamlets; there are no large cities.

Of the total population, 23%, including 5,430 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. There are 9,485 husband/wife families out of a total of 13,437 households. The population is 95% white. (1980 projected population: 54,480)

At the time the Title XX county profile for 1976 was assembled, the unemployment rate in Allegany County was approximately 11%. The average family income was \$9,728.00, with 2,182 families, or 20.6%, having a total income less than \$5,000.00.

### Incidence of Battered Women

Allegany County offers no aid to the battered woman beyond the usual routine of family court. R.F. Shear, the County Commissioner, stated that no statistics were kept on the problem, and referred us to the Sheriff's Office as the only possible source of information. Therefore, no social service questionnaires were sent in Allegany County.

### Hospitals

Both questionnaires mailed, one to Cuba Memorial Hospital and one to Andover Medical Center, were returned. Cuba Memorial reported that they occasionally see women whom they suspect are battered, but that the history given by the patient is "falling", "running into an object", or a similar story. They cite fear of



retaliation as a prime factor in this type of occurrence. The Andover Medical Center reported seeing a few battered women in the past year, but has no established system for recording such cases.

#### Police Comments

"Most cases of battered women are settled out of court by the parties involved and the officers." -- Wellsville Police Department.

#### Family Court

Family court figures for January through April 1977 indicate a total of 29 petitions, of which 26 were filed by women against their husbands. In 9 cases, the charge was assault, while threat or harassment was the charge in 14 others.

Based on these figures, one can project a total of 78 wives filing petitions against their husbands in family court during 1977. It is therefore obvious that a problem of some proportion exists which is going unanswered by the Allegany County Department of Social Services.

## BROOME COUNTY

Broome County is located in upper New York State's "Southern Tier" and is a predominantly rural region, of which the City of Binghamton is the economic, industrial, and cultural center.

It has a total population of 221,815, of which 98.6% are white. Adults between the ages of 20 and 40, including 28,162 women, account for 24.35% of the population. There are 48,843 husband/wife families out of a total of 69,458 households.

According to the 1970 Census, the median income of families residing in Broome County was \$10,338.00, with 15.4% earning below \$5,000.00 annually. In January 1976 the unemployment rate was 7.5%

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter, the Director of Social Services of Broome County, Adelina Sassani, stated that while battered women come into the office for assistance, statistics are not kept on the number. However, she did give us the names of four organizations which might have information on battered women, which included one women's group, 2 private social service agencies, and a local mental health clinic. Questionnaires were sent to all 4, with only the women's center responding. They, in turn, gave us the name of a couple privately providing emergency shelter for battered women, who were able to complete our questionnaire partially.

The Women's Center reported 15 cases of battered women who came to their attention with no outreach and virtually no publicity on the problem. Ten sought shelter, counseling and/or social ser-

vices. Twelve were between the ages of 20 and 40, 10 were married, and 12 had children.

Most were at the public assistance or low income level and had no financial resources of their own.

The Center provides advocacy, support, and limited counseling to battered women. Referrals were made to both public and private social service agencies, although Jean Lindholm of the Center commented that they usually don't work.

The couple who provide shelter for battered women asked to have their name and address kept confidential. They reported having sheltered seven women in a 4-month period. All were married and had children. At the present time, there is no paid staff, and the money used to run the shelter is from their personal resources. They are planning to expand and hope to receive some financial support as they receive many more requests for aid than they can handle.

The YWCA in Binghamton was also contacted. They are able to provide emergency shelter but only on a short-term basis and not for women with more than one child or an older male child.

#### Hospitals

Out of the 10 questionnaires mailed, 4 to hospitals and 6 to health-related facilities, 3 were returned. None of the organizations responding reported encountering battered women, or having a system for recording such cases, and were therefore unable to contribute to our knowledge of the situation in Broome County.

### Police Comments

According to the questionnaire received from the Binghamton Police Department, "Officers receive 'crisis intervention training' at Recruit School and in-service training."

This would certainly seem to be a step in the right direction, yet Jean Lindholm of the Women's Center in Binghamton had several adverse comments on the behavior of local police when on family crisis calls:

"You cannot believe the horror stories on lack of police enforcement of orders (of protection). Few of the excuses police give are quite true. For instance, we usually hear that 'the woman won't sign the complaint against the man'. One woman we know would have signed anything -- her teeth were out, her foot was broken, her phone ripped out and her child abducted by her ex-husband -- and the police came and refused to do anything."

Obviously, there is still a gap between the present behavior of police in crisis intervention and the ideal.

### Family Court

In reviewing family court statistics for the first 4 months of the year, we found a total of 151 petitions filed, of which 148 listed the wife as petitioner. In 91 of those petitions, a charge of assault was filed, while threat or harassment was charged in 55 other cases.

Projecting a yearly total for 1977 from these figures, we can expect to see a total of 444 wives filing petitions against their husbands in Broome County, in spite of a system which discourages

many women from using the courts.

Clearly, there is a need for supportive services from public social service agencies which is not being met. Battered women are entitled to more aid than an Order of Protection, which to both police and husbands may be merely a piece of paper.

## CATTARAUGUS COUNTY

Cattaraugus County is located in western New York State, bordered on the south by the State of Pennsylvania.

In 1970 it had a total population of 81,666, which was projected to reach 88,970 by 1980. The population is 96% white. Of the total figure, 22.53%, including 9,446 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. Of 24,878 households in Cattaraugus County, 17,185 were husband/wife families.

According to the 1970 Census, the median family income was \$8,506.00, 20.4% of all families had incomes below \$5,000.00, and in November 1976 10.6% of the population was unemployed.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In reply to our letter to the commissioner, Patricia McGrath, who is the Acting Director of Social Services, submitted a list of 8 agencies in Cattaraugus County which might offer aid to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all of the agencies listed, other than police and family court. Two answers were received.

Only one agency, the Cattaraugus County Guidance Clinic, had seen battered women within the last year. Although statistics were not available, they conservatively estimated the total number of battered women at 30. Most of the women were referrals from other agencies, while several had heard of the services offered by word of mouth.

Most of the women were married and had children. No statistics were available on their ages.

Because of the nature of the agency, most of the battered

women seen were already on the welfare rolls, and therefore had few or no resources of their own.

### Hospitals

We mailed 6 questionnaires to this county, 4 to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities. Our 2 responses were from hospitals. Tri-County Memorial Hospital in Gowanda reported, "This hospital does not keep statistics on suspected 'battered women' who come for treatment nor do we have an organized out-patient department in which coding of conditions requiring treatment is gathered. Therefore, we are unable to supply the information requested. We are aware of suspected, sometimes confirmed, cases of 'battered' women seeking treatment." Salamanca Hospital District Authority reports occassionally seeing Emergency Room cases of battered women and several suspected cases, but: "We haven't kept special reports on this,...perhaps we should. (We) will start keeping track of such cases."

### Family Court

According to the Cattaraugus County Guidance Clinic, most of the battered women they encounter would not file charges because of the effect the publicity would have on their families.

Family court statistics for January through April of this year seem to support this theory. Of the total of 19 petitions filed, only 13 were wives filing against their husbands, and in only 3 cases was assault charged.

A projection from these figures indicates that total petitions filed in 1977 would be 57.

## CAYUGA COUNTY

Cayuga County is located in upper New York State, bounded on the north by Lake Ontario.

The total population in 1970 was 77,998, with little or no growth projected for 1980. Of the total population, 23%, including 8,623 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The population was 97.5% white. Of a total of 22,987 households, 16,000 were husband/wife families.

According to the 1970 Census, the median family income in Cayuga County was \$9,311.00 with 17.7% of all families having incomes below \$5,000.00. Unemployment was 10.5% in August 1975.

### Incidence of Battered Women

The response to our letter came from a Cayuga County case-worker, who, after calling to clarify the definition of "battered", wrote that because battering is not a legally defined problem and has no reporting procedure, it might be difficult for agencies to provide statistical information. He did, however, include a list of four agencies other than the police which might provide assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all 4, with 3 agencies responding: one public social service agency, one private social service agency, and one legal aid group.

A total of 34 cases were recorded, with the majority falling in the 20 to 40 age group. All of the women were married and had children. Only 20% were employed, but most had some financial resources available to them. Some sought counseling, others shelter or social services, or legal aid. None of the agencies is equipped



to provide shelter for battered women. Dorothy Abrams of the Cayuga County Action Program saw "emergency shelter and full legal services as the priority items in Cayuga County." Furthermore, she suspected that there were many cases of battered women which did not come to the attention of her agency, as the local Bar Association restricts them from dealing with separation, divorce, and custody cases.

#### Hospitals

We received one questionnaire out of 3 mailed (2 to hospitals, one to a health-related facility). The reporting hospital, Auburn Memorial, Auburn, N.Y., said that they do see battered women but have no available statistics to enable them to answer our questions.

#### Police Comments

"Most of these cases are turned over to the Sheriff's Department or State Police. Some are handled without any charges being pressed because of knowing the people." -- Weedsport Village Clerk.

"Cases are referred to the agency and/or court that handles cases of this nature." -- Auburn Police Department.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics reveal very few women filing petitions against their husbands. In the first 4 months of this year, from a total of 24 petitions filed, 20 were wives charging their husbands, and 6 of those were assault charges. Threat was charged in 13 cases.

We can project, then, that, in 1977, 72 petitions will be filed.

On the basis of this information, it might seem logical to conclude that the problem of battered women is not great in Cayuga County. However, P.A. Kelly of the Cayuga Counseling Service commented:

"Our contacts with the women who live in the small rural towns reveal them to feel that the police, district attorney, probation and family courts offer them no alternative except to endure physical attacks...Courts appear to be unwilling to protect these women when they seek help."

If this is true, it is entirely possible that the number of women filing petitions in family court in Cayuga County is only a small part of the total number of battered women there.

## CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

Chautauqua County is located in the southwestern corner of Upstate New York. The 1970 total population was 147,305, with little change projected by 1980. The county is 98.6% white, with 22.42%, including 17,488 women, being between the ages of 20 and 40. Of a total of 47,685 households in Chautauqua County, 33,232 are composed of husband/wife families.

The median family income in 1970 was \$8,838.00, with 19.8% of all families having incomes of less than \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment was 7.9%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter, the Director of Social Services of Chautauqua County forwarded a list of 19 agencies which might be of assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all of the agencies, with 8 responding: 5 private social service agencies, 2 hospital social service agencies, and one women's group.

A total of 95 cases was reported, with all of the agencies encountering battered women within the last year. The women came primarily through referral (18), word of mouth (43), or from within the group (12). Of the women on whom statistics were available, 31 sought legal aid and advice, 45 sought counseling, 17 shelter, and 15 social services.

Again, where statistics were available, 77% of the women were between the ages of 20 and 40, 80% were married and all of the women had children.

The women came from both lower and middle income families. Approximately 20% had some type of employment outside the home.

None of the agencies listed shelter as a service provided for battered women, although there is an obvious need for it. The Women's Resource Center and Rape Crisis Clinic of Jamestown is interested in organizing a pilot project to provide emergency shelter for battered women and rape and assault victims. At the present time, however, the only funding they receive is for two part-time CETA positions. Otherwise, their entire staff is composed of volunteers. It is the only group in Chautauqua County organized specifically to work for women.

#### Hospitals

From a mailing of 6 questionnaires (4 to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities), we received two responses, both hospitals. Jamestown General gave us a negative response to Question #1, and therefore did not complete the questionnaire. Westfield Hospital reported seeing 2 battered women in the last year, but does not have a system for reporting cases if the woman does not specify that she was assaulted. They reported that "both women beaten by husbands showed much hesitation in pursuing legal action against husbands."

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of this year indicate a total of 54 petitions filed by wives against their husbands. In 26 petitions, the charge was assault, with threat or harrassment the charge in 14 others.

Using these figures to project a total for 1977, we can expect 162 cases in which wives will file petitions against their husbands. Whether or not these statistics reflect an accurate picture of the number of battered women, it is obvious that the needs of battered women in Chautauqua County will not be sufficiently met until emergency shelter is available.

## CHEMUNG COUNTY

Chemung County is located in the "Southern Tier" area of New York State. It has a total population of 101,537, with the great majority residing within or near the City of Elmira, and a projected 1980 population total of 97,911.

Of the total population, 23.31%, including 12,295 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40, and the population is 96.5% white. There are 21,773 husband/wife families in Chemung County, of a total of 31,230 households.

Currently (August 1977) unemployment is 9.9%. In 1970 the median family income was \$9,376.00, and 18.1% of all families had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually.

### Incidence of Battered Women

According to Raymond Fortier, Commissioner of Social Services of Chemung County, there are 3 agencies other than the Department of Probation which would have some concern with the problem of battered women, although no one agency deals specifically with the problem.

Questionnaires were sent to all 3 agencies, with only one responding: the Chemung County Neighborhood Legal Services.

This group had come in contact with approximately 50 battered women within the past year, all of whom had been referred by other agencies or had heard of the service through word of mouth. Because of the nature of the agency, all of these women came for legal services, so the demand for shelter or other services could not be determined.

No information was available on the ages of the women, their marital status, or whether or not they had children.

All of the women were from households with incomes below the federal poverty level, and most had no financial resources available to them.

The Neighborhood Legal Services also stated that, to the best of their knowledge, no center or group exists in Chemung County which offers aid to battered women.

#### Hospitals

Both questionnaires were completed and returned. The Chemung County Health Department reported that since they don't provide a service to deal with this problem, they see only one or 2 cases annually, which are then referred to other agencies for follow-up. St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira reported that they keep no specific statistics regarding battered women and could not undertake the exhaustive investigation of records that would be necessary to give a reliable response to our questionnaire. However, recollections of various "responsible people" from the departments involved is that "cases of this type in any one year are minimal."

#### Police Comments

"Generally persons arrested under conditions of [beating a spouse] are arraigned in Police Court and after three days referred to family Court for further action." -- Elmira Heights Police Department.

### Family Court

Family court statistics for January through April of 1977 reveal a total of 28 petitions filed by wives against their husbands. Assault was the charge in 6 cases, while threat or harassment was charged in the other 22. While we can, based on these figures, project that 84 petitions will be filed by wives in 1977, until more information is available from service agencies and hospitals, it is impossible to judge the extent of the problem in Chemung County.



## CHENANGO COUNTY

Chenango County is located in the South Central region of New York State, between the Cities of Utica and Binghamton, with the major population centers located in the Chenango River Valley. Although 83% of the rural population is considered non-farm, 81% of the people in the county live in rural areas.

The total population in 1970 was 46,368, projected to increase to 48,663 in 1980, and was over 99% white. Of the total, 22.3%, including 5,362 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. There are 10,192 husband/wife families out of a total of 13,839 households.

The median family income in 1970 for Chenango County was \$8,983.00, with 19% of all families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. The unemployment rate in August 1977 was 7.1%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our inquiry regarding services for battered women, Mrs. Ruth Bordwell, Supervisor of Family Services, listed 4 agencies which might be of assistance.

Questionnaires were sent to all but the Department of Probation, and answers were received from 2 agencies: the County Mental Health Clinic and the Department of Social Services. A total of 72 cases were reported.

Most of the cases came from the Mental Health Clinic, whose staff reported that the beatings were revealed by the women during the course of their therapy. All of the women were in the 20 to 45 age range and were from Chenango County. Other statistics were not available.

The Clinic did feel that the problem of battered women had not yet been addressed in Chenango County. There is no legal advice available to these women. The staff at the Clinic also believed that the police were not supportive enough and were reluctant to become involved in what they considered a family dispute.

As for the women seen by the Department of Social Services, all came to the office on their own. They were all under the age of 40, and had children. All of the women but one were married. The clients of the Department of Social Services were at the public assistance level and had no financial resources of their own.

#### Hospitals

Three questionnaires were mailed in this county -- one to a hospital and two to health-related facilities. There was no response.

#### Police Comments

"About 25% of these cases are repeat complaints and after about the third assault, usually the woman will follow through with some type of court action which may or may not resolve the problem."  
-- Chenango County Sheriff, Norwich, New York.

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of the year reveal only 12 petitions filed by wives against their husbands. Assault was charged in 10 cases, with threat or harassment the

the charge in the two remaining cases.

Using these figures, one could project a total of 36 petitions filed by wives against their husbands over a twelve-month period. Judging from the information given by the two social service agencies, one would have expected a greater number of petitions to be filed, but without further information, we cannot guess at the reason.

## CLINTON COUNTY

Clinton County is located in the northeast corner of New York State, bounded on the north by the Canadian province of Quebec and on the east by Lake Champlain. While three-fifths of the Clinton County population is considered rural, only one-tenth of that number reside on farms.

The population in 1970 was 72,900, projected to increase to 92,643 in 1980, and was 3.3% black. Of the total, 29.19%, including 9,730 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. There are 13,992 husband/wife families in the county, out of a total of 19,168 households.

The median family income in Clinton County in 1970 was \$8,258.00, and 21.6% of the families had incomes below \$5,000.00. In January 1976 unemployment was 13.8%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter, Marion Ratliff of the Clinton County Department of Social Services listed 4 agencies other than the Department of Probation which might offer assistance to battered women.

Questionnaires were sent to all 4, with only one agency responding: the Women's Resources Center in Plattsburgh.

At the present time, they are only in the organizational stage and, therefore, were unable to complete our questionnaire. They do expect the problem of the battered woman to be one of their priorities once they begin to function.

### Hospitals

In Clinton County, 3 questionnaires were mailed -- 2 to hospitals and one to a health-related facility. There were 2 responses: Champlain Valley General Physicians Hospital and General Hospital of Saranac Lake.

Champlain Valley General Physicians Hospital reported seeing 18 cases in the last year, and, though they do not have an established policy or mechanism for reporting such cases, they were able to tell us that all were Emergency Room cases, the majority being 31 to 40 years old, and that 14 of the women were married, the other 4 being unmarried.

General Hospital of Saranac Lake reported seeing 14 cases in the last year, all coming to the Emergency Room and 3 being admitted to the hospital. The majority (9) were medicaid patients. Twelve of the cases involved women under 21, but were not considered cases of child abuse by the hospital. They state that cases involving "battered women" are entered in the Emergency Room register but are not reported as are cases involving children.

### Family Court

Family court statistics reveal a total of 22 petitions filed by wives against their husbands during the first 4 months of this year. Assault was charged in only 2 cases, with threat or harassment charged in 19 cases.

Using these figures to project a yearly total for 1977, one would expect to find 66 petitions filed by wives, 6 of which would list assault as the charge.

These figures are obviously not an accurate portrayal of the problem of wife-beating in Clinton County, when one hospital alone, Champlain Valley General, reported having 14 women beaten so badly by their husbands that they needed Emergency Room care. Without more information, it is impossible to know the true extent of the problem, but it is clear that either women in Clinton County do not have faith in the Family Court system or they are being discouraged from using it properly.

## COLUMBIA COUNTY

Columbia County is located in the northeast portion of the Mid-Hudson area of New York State. It is bordered on the east by the State of Massachusetts. Essentially a rural county, it has only one city (Hudson) within its boundaries.

The 1970 population was 51,519, which was expected to increase by almost 20% by 1980. Whites account for 96.2% of the population, and 21.85% of the people, including 5,862 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. There are 11,645 husband/wife families in Columbia County, out of a total of 16,292 households.

The median income for families in Columbia County in 1970 was \$8,746.00; 20.7% of all families had incomes below \$5,000.00. In 1975 9.1% of the population was unemployed.

### Incidence of Battered Women

Mrs. Florence Westover, the Supervisor of Children's Services of Columbia County, responded to our letter by stating that, although there were no agencies at the present time to deal with the problem of battered women, there were two agencies who were considering the provision of such services. Questionnaires were sent to both, but only, one, the YWCA of Hudson, responded.

The YWCA reported 3 battered women who had come to their attention within the last year. Two of them sought shelter, the third legal advice. No other statistics in reference to the women were available. The YWCA did point out that they did not seek out battered women, and the figures were, therefore lower than

the need.

One cannot assume from the lack of data that battered women are not a problem in Columbia County. According to the Title XX county profile, there are very few service agencies for county residents to turn to for help. Furthermore, there is no public transportation in the county, other than a mini-bus system within the City of Hudson, which would impede the ability of those in need to obtain help.

Mrs. Westover of the Department of Social Services believes there is a definite need for some sort of hostel or home for battered women and their children in Columbia County. She also commented that, "This agency and the Family Court are often at a loss to provide suitable services for such family crisis situations."

#### Hospitals

We sent one questionnaire to a hospital and four to health-related facilities in this county. There was no response.

#### Police Comments

We received two comments indicating the manner of handling cases:

"In Family Affairs, arrests are made only to protect an individual or to control a situation." -- Hudson Valley Police Department.

"We try to handle them ourselves. If the party is hurt bad, then we let the courts take care of it." -- Stuyvesant Police Department.



### Family Court

In the first four months of 1977, a total of 34 petitions were filed in or transferred to Family Court, 27 of which were filed by wives against their husbands. Assault was charged in 5 cases, while threat or harassment was the charge in the remaining cases.

One can project a total of 81 petitions filed by wives against their husbands during 1977.

Until further information is available from other sources we cannot know if these figures are an accurate portrayal of the situation in Columbia County.

## CORTLAND COUNTY

Cortland County is located in Central New York State. The total 1970 population was 45,894, of which approximately 48% live in rural areas, and was 99.5% white. An increase to 48,475 was projected for 1980.

There are 9,510 husband/wife families in the county, out of a total of 13,773 households. Of the total population, 26.6%, including 6,466 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40.

The median family income in Cortland County in 1970 was \$9,142.00, with 17.3% of all families residing there having incomes under \$5,000.00 a year, and 8.5% incomes below the poverty level. In August 1975 unemployment was 9.5%. Also, 46.59% of the males and 41.59% of the females over the age of 25 have not graduated from high school.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our inquiry regarding battered women, Christina Hay, the Director of Services of Cortland's Department of Social Services, informed us that no services were available specifically for battered women within the county. She did mention a newly organized church residence which was available to all people needing living quarters, but no other information about the shelter was included.

However, we did receive correspondence from Ms. Joan Willmer, of Cortland, who is part of a group studying the problems of rape and domestic violence to ascertain how best

to cope with them in their community. She cited more than a dozen cases of abused women which had come to her attention in the course of conversation when the subject was mentioned. She had also heard tales of the indifference of police and the courts who were involved in the cases.

Ms. Willmer and her group believe that some sort of shelter and support system for women in need in Cortland County is necessary and plan to take some substantive action in that direction shortly.

#### Hospitals

We sent one questionnaire to a hospital and two to health-related facilities. The Cortland County Health Department reported that they see battered women "occassionally." Their counselors reported that "...[recently] a number of women began meeting around the concerns of domestic violence, rape, and displaced homemakers. As we became more visible more women revealed to us that they had been subjected to wife beating. We are about to do a community program..."

Cortland Memorial Hospital was able to give us specific information on battered women who had been admitted to the hospital. They saw five such cases in the last year, all coded on charts to indicate a type of assault. There is no information on emergency room cases not admitted or on suspected cases.

#### Police Comments

"As a policeman for a number of years I have investigated cases

regarding the term battered female, and also have made arrests of spouses and boyfriends only to have the female appear in Court the next day and drop all charges." -- Cortland Police Department.

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of this year reveal a total of 14 petitions filed in or referred to Family Court, of which 11 were filed by wives against their husbands. In two cases, the wife charged assault. In the remaining nine cases, threat or harassment was the charge.

Using these figures, we can project a total of 33 petitions filed by wives during 1977, six of which will charge assault.

## DELAWARE COUNTY

Delaware County is located in the Southeastern region of New York State, bordered by the State of Pennsylvania on the southwest. It is basically a rural farming and vacation area with no large cities within its boundaries.

The total 1970 population was 44,718, and was projected to reach 50,343 by 1980. It was 99% white. Of the total, 21.52%, including 4,832 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Husband/wife families accounted for 10,033 of the 13,910 households in Delaware County.

The median family income reported in the 1970 Census for Delaware County was \$8,494.00, with 22.5% of all families having incomes below \$5,000.00, and 47.2% of employed persons 16 years and older working in low status occupations. In 1975 the unemployment rate was 8.9%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

No response was received in answer to our first letter or to a telephone call to the Delaware County Department of Social Services. A second letter was sent, including a questionnaire.

The Department completed the questionnaire, reporting a total of 17 battered women who came to their attention within the last year. All were seeking counseling and social services, with several also interested in getting legal advice and medical services.

Fourteen women were between the ages of 20 and 40. All

of the women were married and had children, 90% of whom were 12 years old or younger. All were at the public assistance level; only one was employed.

The Department commented that many of these women express a desire to leave their husbands, but the few who do leave generally return home.

### Hospitals

Out of a total of 7 questionnaires mailed (6 to hospitals and 1 to a health-related facility), we received three replies.

The Social Services Department of The Hospital in Sidney, New York, reported seeing two cases in the past year. Both women were admitted to the hospital and were offered continuing counseling and helped with arrangements for public assistance. In both cases the husband had been drinking excessively and had a history of abusive attacks on the woman. Read Memorial in Hanock, New York, saw three cases in the past year, all admitted to the hospital. Neither hospital has an established policy or mechanism for reporting such cases, though they were able to report 3 and one cases respectively.

Planned Parenthood of Delaware and Otsego Counties saw 10 to 12 battered women in the last year, with half a dozen more suspected. Since they have no established policy for reporting such cases, they are not able to give figures regarding ages, income, etc.

### Police Comments

"With E.R.A. this will be an icnreasing event." -- Delaware County Sheriff, Delhi, New York.

"I regret that we cannot be of much assistance to you in this matter, as the New York State Police statistical reporting form does not provide a specific data 'breakdown' in the areas of your interest." -- New York State Police, Troop "C", Sidney, New York.

### Family Court

In the first four months of 1977, 21 petitions were filed by women against their husbands. In only 5 cases was assault charged with threat or harassment the charge in the remaining cases. Total petitions filed for January through April 1977 was 22.

From this we can project that 63 women will file charges against their own husbands in Delaware County in 1977. However, because of the paucity of information from service agencies, it is impossible to ascertain whether these family court figures present an accurate portrayal of the situation in Delaware County.

## DUTCHESS COUNTY

Dutchess County is located in southeastern New York State, halfway between Albany and the City of New York. In 1970, it had a population of 22,295, which was 93% white, and was projected to reach a population of 266,019 by 1980. One out of every 3 county residents lives in Poughkeepsie.

Of the total population, 27.36%, including 30,159 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. Husband/wife families account for 45,432 of the 62,495 households in Dutchess County.

The median family income in 1970 was \$11,662.00, with 11.2% of those families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. The unemployment rate in August 1977 was 5.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

After no response to our letter was received within the required time period, a telephone call was placed to Commissioner William Eagen, Jr., of the Dutchess County Department of Social Services. He explained that the letter had been passed around the department, but there was no response from the staff regarding the information requested. "Guess it isn't a problem around here," was his comment.

### Hospitals

We mailed 4 questionnaires to hospitals and 4 to health-related facilities. All 4 hospitals responded, as did Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene.



The Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene saw 1 alleged case and 1 suspected case in the past year. The alleged case was counseled at the clinic, and involved an alcoholic husband. Their reporting system is that "such information is documented in client records at the time of intake and at weekly counseling sessions."

All 4 hospitals responding reported that they do not have an established policy for recording the incidence of battered women. Two (Vassar Brothers Hospital and Highland Hospital) were unable to give any information as their records do not include the type of information requested.

St. Francis in Poughkeepsie sees 2 or 3 battered women a month, plus another 2 or 3 suspected cases. They all come in through the Emergency Room and are referred to Social Services, though "how many partake of the services is unknown to us because patients usually want to wait. Most of the 'battered women' seen in the Emergency Room are too 'emotionally hurt' at the time to accept any type of advice or help...Most are battered by their husbands and are afraid to do anything about it."

Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck, New York, reported seeing only one case in the last year and has at this time no mechanism for tabulating all cases of battered women, though they would add another category to their reporting system if required.

#### Police Comments

"I would like to have a trained personnel in my department."

-- Fishkill Police Department.

### Family Court

Family court statistics for January through April 1977 reveal a total of 157 petitions filed, 156 of them filed by wives against their husbands. Surprisingly enough, only one woman charged her husband with assault, with the rest charging threat or harassment.

Projecting a yearly total from these figures, we would find 468 petitions filed by wives, with only 3 charging their husbands with assault. Yet one hospital alone, St. Francis in Poughkeepsie, encounters at least that many women each month who are so badly beaten that they require Emergency Room service.

Certainly, one would expect these women, when filing charges, to charge their husbands with assault, not threat or harassment. Either battered women are totally discouraged from using the courts or are steered by officials involved into filing less serious charges.

It is obvious, then, that these family court statistics do not reflect the reality of the situation in Dutchess County. However, even with this cautionary note, 156 petitions within 4 months should be an indication to the commissioner that a problem does exist.

## ERIE COUNTY

Erie County is located in western New York State, on the banks of Lake Erie. It is the most heavily populated county outside the New York City area, with a total population of 1.1 million people, of whom over 90% are white. The population is projected to increase by more than 30,000 by 1980. It has 3 major cities, the largest of which is Buffalo, and 40 towns and villages.

Of the total population, 24%, including 140,663 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Husband/wife families account for 235,597 of the 346,374 households in Erie County.

According to the 1970 Census, 14.6% of all Erie County families had a total income of less than \$5,000.00. The median income for families was \$10,482.00. In 1975, unemployment was 11.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to the letter sent to the County Department of Social Services, the Deputy Commissioner, William Magner, forwarded a list of 59 major social service agencies, both public and private, which he felt might come in contact with battered women. He stated that Erie County did not keep separate statistics on battered women and that social workers had found clients to be very reluctant to admit to this problem.

A total of 27 questionnaires were sent to agencies in the county. Fourteen groups responded: one women's group, 1 hospital social service agency, one public social service agency, and 10 private social service agencies. Eleven of the fourteen had

contact with battered women within the past year. A total of 798 cases were recorded.

Where statistics were available, it was found that 250 of the women were seeking counseling and 262 shelter. (This does not include women from the N.O.W. Task Force on Battered Women, which did not keep statistics on this information). Over two-thirds of the women fell in the 20 to 40 age group. Approximately 70% were married, and 62% had children.

The women came from families of all income levels; however, most were not employed outside the home and had little or no financial resources of their own.

Of the responding agencies, only 3 had any facilities at the present time for shelter.

The YWCA residence in Buffalo has rooms available, but only those able to pay their own way or those who qualify for welfare assistance can be offered shelter. Any others have to be turned away or referred elsewhere. Until funds become available for aid to battered women, they will be unable to expand their services.

Compass House is a refuge for teenagers only, so the aid it can give in this situation is extremely limited.

The other agency which provides emergency shelter for battered women is the Salvation Army. It is the only refuge for women and children in Buffalo, where they can come any time of the day or night to seek refuge. At the present time, they can provide shelter within their facility for 6 or 7 women at a time, but are planning a somewhat larger shelter for the future. However, no

one is ever turned away; if the shelter is full, the Salvation Army will house them elsewhere. They have sheltered 145 women within the past year, but according to Margaret Gordon, the Director of Social Services, "There is definitely a need for more shelter."

Jean Hutchinson of Planned Parenthood of Buffalo agreed, stating, "Buffalo offers minimal help to battered women...The primary need seems to be a good shelter system for battered women."

#### N.O.W. Task Force On Battered Women Hotline

Over 400 cases of battering were reported by the N.O.W. Task Force on Battered Women in Buffalo which operates a hotline. The women who called were seeking counseling, shelter, legal help, and/or social services. They were from all parts of Erie County and fell in the 20 to 40 age group. At least 85% had children.

At the present time, their aid is strictly informational and all their staff members are volunteers, but they are also endeavoring to obtain funding for a shelter for battered women. Paula Battaglia, the Task Force coordinator, stated that, "To our knowledge, no other area outside of New York City (in New York State) is doing anything to aid the battered woman."

#### Hospitals

Out of 34 questionnaires mailed -- 18 to hospitals, 16 to health-related facilities -- we received 19 responses.

Eight hospitals responded, as follows:

Our Lady of Victory, Lackawanna: "It is difficult to find any specific numbers as to the incidence of battered women, since we do not keep any statistics. Therefore, any numbers given would

only be from personal memory or a guess."

Edward J. Meyer Memorial, Buffalo: "This hospital does not have an established policy or method for recording the incidence of 'battered' women. Therefore, it is impossible for us to retrieve statistical information referable to your particular study."

Buffalo General: "We will be setting up a meeting to plan and establish a mechanism for recording statistics."

St. Francis Hospital, Buffalo: They returned the questionnaire with a negative response to Question #1, and gave no other information.

Bry-Lin Hospital, Buffalo: "The...questions would not be applicable to our facility. We are primarily a private psychiatric hospital with an additional alcoholism treatment unit."

Deaconess Hospital, Buffalo: "In attempting to determine answers to these questions, we realized that we did not have a specific written policy on how to handle these types of cases. Thank you for raising this issue -- we shall proceed to develop a specific policy on handling battered women who come to our hospital for care."

Sisters of Charity, Buffalo: They reported seeing approximately 30 battered women in their Emergency Room in the past year, though the information given was "estimated figures only, as (they) do not maintain statistics relative to this problem."

Lafayette General, Buffalo: They saw 15 cases last year, with another 10 suspected. All cases came through the Emergency Room, and data regarding age, income, etc., was provided, though the hospital does not have a specific policy or mechanism regarding

reporting of such cases.

Erie Medical Center of Buffalo: They saw 15 alleged cases and 25 suspected in the past year. All were requesting abortions; the complaint of being battered "came up usually as part of the motivation for terminating the pregnancy." Our other responses were from the Erie County Department of Health. In addition to the head office, which responded negatively to Questions #1 and #8, we heard from the following centers: Lackawanna, Outer East Side Nursing, West Buffalo, Depew, Kensington, Tonawanda, Hamburg, Ellicott, and East Aurora. These centers reported seeing a combined total of 17 cases in the past year, and about 20 suspected cases. Most were discovered by public health nurses on home visits and included cases of men, usually elderly or infirm, mistreated by women. Comments are that the battered women seemed to have low self-esteem, and would accept the beatings rather than lose the relationship. There was denial of the beatings and many excuses given for injury prior to finally admitting the truth. Fear of reprisal was a factor in this pattern.

#### Police Comments

"It is the policy of the Town of Hamburg Police Department to handle family-related assaults as any other assault is handled... In minor cases of family disputes that involve any injury such as harassment and the situation is not critical the victim is to contact family court directly." -- Town of Hamburg Police Department.

Most of the police departments responding to our questionnaire were unable to give figures because they do not keep such statistics.

### Family Court

In reviewing court statistics for Erie County for the first 4 months of 1977, it was found that a total of 352 petitions were filed in or referred to family court. Of these petitions, 236 were filed by wives, with 74 charging assault, and 117 charges of threat or harassment.

Using these figures, it is possible to project a total of 708 petitions filed by wives in family court during 1977. If one takes into account the number of women who are not married and, therefore, would not have been included in these family court statistics and those cases which do not reach family court, the ranks of battered women in Erie County swell enormously. It is obvious that there is a great need for services and shelter specifically for these women.



## ESSEX COUNTY

Essex County, the second largest county in area in New York State, is located in the northeast corner of the state. Since nearly two-thirds of the land is within the Adirondack Park, the major source of employment is the tourist industry, with the result that unemployment rates rise dramatically during the off-season.

The total population in 1970 was 34,631, with no large growth projected for 1980. Of a total of 10,660 households, there were 7,389 husband/wife families. From the total population, 21.31%, including 3,827 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Only 4% of the population is non-white.

The median family income in 1970 was \$8,145.00, and 22.8% of all county families have incomes below \$5,000.00. Unemployment, usually higher during winter months, averaged about 15% in 1975.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter, the Director of Social Services of Essex County, Cora Trumbull, submitted the names of 2 agencies offering assistance to battered women and commented that, to date, a battered woman does not meet the criteria for adult protective services.

Questionnaires were sent to both agencies with only one answering, the Essex County Mental Health Services. The agency reported a total of 35 cases within the past year -- 23 who came through referral and 12 who heard of the services through word of mouth. All came for counseling and were given help within the center.

Twenty of the women were under the age of 40. Twenty-eight were married and 32 had children, 70% of whom were 12 years old or younger. Eight were from families of middle income; the rest were below poverty level or on welfare. Only 9 were employed.

#### Hospitals

We contacted 4 hospitals and 1 health-related facility in Essex County. Our only response was from Keene Valley Hospital in Keene Valley, which reported that they occasionally do see battered women, but have no record of any such cases in the past year. This hospital is presently updating its policies and procedures regarding battered persons.

#### Family Court

A total of 16 petitions were filed in or referred to family court during the first four months of 1977. All were filed by wives against their husbands, with 5 charging assault and 10 threat or harassment.

From this, we can project that 48 wives will file petitions against their husbands in Essex County Family Court in 1977.

## FRANKLIN COUNTY

Franklin County lies between the northern foothills of the Adirondack Mountains and the St. Lawrence River valley. In 1970 the total population was 43,900, with little growth projected for 1980. Only 21.09% of the population, including 4,666 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Husband/wife families accounted for 8,527 of the 12,907 households in Franklin County. The population is 96% white.

There is very little industry in the area, and much of the employment to be found is seasonal. Hence, as of February 1976, the unemployment rate was the highest in the state. According to the 1970 Census, the median family income was \$7,870.00, and 26.6% of the families in Franklin County had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter regarding battered women, the Franklin County Director of Social Services submitted the names of 4 agencies which would provide assistance. Questionnaires were sent to all of the agencies, excluding the Department of Probation. No answers were received.

### Hospitals

Out of 3 questionnaires sent in this county, we received 2 responses. The Alice Hyde Hospital Association in Malone reported seeing 3 battered women in the past year, all Emergency Room cases and none being admitted to the hospital. Planned Parenthood

of Northern New York in Malone reported 2 cases and an additional 3 suspected cases. Neither facility has an established policy or mechanism for recording the incidence of such cases.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for the first 4 months of 1977 reveal a total of 34 petitions filed by wives against their husbands, out of 41 petitions filed. Of these, 12 wives charged their husbands with assault.

Projected totals for 1977 are therefore that 102 wives will file petitions against their husbands in 1977. Considering the size of Franklin County, it is obvious that proportionately more battered women are using the court system than in most counties of New York.

## FULTON COUNTY

Fulton County is located in the lower Adirondack area, along the Mohawk Valley in eastern New York State. In 1970, 43% of the population resided in rural areas, but only 11% of the rural population lived on farms. There has been a steady increase in the process of suburbanization, with population declining in the Cities of Gloversville and Johnstown and increasing in surrounding towns.

The total population in 1970 was 52,637, of which less than 1% was non-white, and was projected to increase to 45,828 by 1980. There were 11,915 husband/wife families in the county, out of a total of 17,618 households. Of the total population, 21.12%, including 5,755 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40.

The median family income in Fulton County was \$8,653.00 in 1970, and 19% of the families residing there had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In 1975 unemployment averaged 11.5%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our inquiry regarding aid to battered women, we received a letter from Mrs. Margaret Teetz, Senior Caseworker for the Department of Social Services of Fulton County. While Fulton County has no specific agencies for dealing with this problem, 4 agencies were mentioned, other than the Department of Probation, which could give aid to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all 4, with replies received from 3: one public service and 2 private social service agencies. Two of the 3 reported battered women who came to them for aid, for a total of 56 cases.

Fifty of the cases were reported by the Department of Social

Services. The women who came sought counseling, shelter, legal and/or social services. To the extent of our knowledge, no shelter is available in Fulton County.

Over 90% of all the women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 85% were married and had children. All of the women who came to the Department of Social Services were below poverty level; the other women had incomes over \$5,000.00.

#### Hospitals

We sent 2 questionnaires to hospitals and one to a health-related facility in this county. Our single response was from Fulton County Nursing Service in Johnstown, which reported seeing 2 cases in the past year, and one suspected case. Though they have no specific mechanism for reporting such cases, the service was able to tell us approximate age, income level, and marital status of both women.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for January through April of 1977 reveal a total of 39 petitions filed. Thirty-one were filed by wives against their husbands with the following breakdown: 12 assault charges, 6 threat or harassment, 13 other.

Using these statistics, we can project a total of 93 petitions filed by wives during 1977, including 36 charging assault.

## GENESEE COUNTY

Genesee County is located in western New York State, bounded on the east by Monroe County and on the west by Erie County.

The 1970 population was 58,722, and was 97% white, with no large growth projected by 1980. Husband/wife families accounted for 13,040 of the county's 17,589 households. Of the total population, 23.42%, including 7,092 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40.

The median family income for 1970 was \$10,005.00, with 14.1% having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In 1975 unemployment averaged 12%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter requesting the names of those agencies aiding battered women, the Office of the Commissioner of Social Services of Genesee County reported that only the Department of Social Services itself would offer aid to battered women. A questionnaire was sent, but no answer was received.

### Hospitals

We contacted two hospitals and one health-related facility and received a response from Genesee Memorial Hospital in Batavia. They reported seeing about 12 battered women in the past year, with an unknown number of suspected cases. They asked that we note all figures given are approximate since the actual number of such cases cannot be known because "many times the patient will not admit how she was acutally injured...As a matter of interest, for those patients who are admitted, we find no specific code in our

diagnosis book for 'battered woman syndrome' as we do have the 'battered child syndrome'. We do not code Emergency Room patients and that is why we could never actually count any specific condition."

#### Police Comments

"I am returning your form as the information you requested is not readily available. The New York State Police do not compile statistics and in order to obtain the information you desire a long, tedious and costly search would have to be made. Even if such a search were made, from reviewing your form it is obvious that our records would not satisfy your request." -- New York State Police, Batavia, New York.

#### Family Court

Forty-two petitions were filed in family court in Genesee County during the first 4 months of 1977. Of these, 33 were filed by wives, 11 of whom charged their husbands with assault.

Projecting from this for 1977 as a whole, we can expect to see 126 wives file charges against their husbands in Genesee County.



## GREENE COUNTY

Greene County is a rural county located in the Catskill Mountains. Approximately 80% of the county land is classified as woodlands. The total population in 1970 was 23,136, projected to increase by one-third by 1980, and was 97% white.

Of a total of 10,750 households in the county, 7,634 were husband/wife families. Adults aged 20 to 40 accounted for 21.44% of the population, with women being 3,700 of this group.

The 1970 median income for families in Greene County was \$8,552.00, and 23% had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment was 7.2%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter requesting the names of agencies assisting battered women, Elizabeth Schoomaker of the Department of Social Services submitted a list of 5 agencies in addition to the Department of Probation. Questionnaires were sent to all 5 agencies, with 3 responding: the local N.O.W. chapter, the Equal Justice Society, and the Greene County Mental Health Center.

The N.O.W. president was unable to supply us with exact statistics, but said they had helped 40 to 50 battered spouses, including some men on a temporary basis. They will house battered women among their members if necessary, help them find jobs, and get necessary social services.

The other two agencies reported a total of 176 cases which had come to their attention within the last year. Rosemary Byron, (Equal Justice Society), had at least 125 cases within her legal practice, of which 50% sought shelter, 20% social services and

100% legal services. Of the 51 women from the mental health center, 50 sought counseling, 20 social services, 5 legal services, and 1 shelter.

Of the total of 176 women, 115 were between the ages of 20 and 40, 160 were married, and 150 had children.

Income levels ranged from welfare to wealthy. Over half of the women were employed.

As a result of being battered, 132 left home permanently. Seventy-four women were referred to public social service agencies and 25 to lawyers.

#### Hospitals

In Greene County, we sent one questionnaire to a hospital and one to a health-related facility. We received no replies.

#### Police Comments

"If the woman is willing to press charges, we are more than willing to oblige. More often than not the woman refuses." -- Athens Police Department.

"Reports of battered women...are handled the same as any disorderly conduct, harassment, or assault." -- Hunter Police Department.

#### Family Court

A total of 25 petitions were filed in Greene County Family Court during the first 4 months of 1977. Of these, 20 were filed by wives against their husbands. In 6 petitions, the charge was assault, while in 10 others, threat or harassment was charged.

Using these figures, we can project an annual total of 60 petitions filed by wives in 1977. With 176 cases of battered women documented by only 2 agencies, it is obvious that many more cases of battering occur than ever reach the family court system.

## HAMILTON COUNTY

Hamilton County is located in northeastern New York State. Centers of population are widely spaced and thinly populated, the largest being Indian Lake with a population of 1,290. In addition, the lack of public transportation makes it extremely difficult to provide adequate social services throughout the county. Due to the abundance of seasonal work, unemployment remains low during the summer months, but approaches 20% in the winter.

The total population in 1970 was only 4,714, projected to increase to 5,836 by 1980. Only 19.39% of the total, including 478 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 99% of the population is white. Of a total of 1,627 households in Hamilton County, 1,126 are husband/wife families.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter requesting the names of agencies assisting battered women, the Commissioner of Social Services, David Curry, listed four agencies which might be of help in Hamilton County. Since all 4 were police or family court, the service agency questionnaire was not sent to any of them.

### Hospitals

While we sent no questionnaires directly to this county, we received one completed by the Hamilton County Public Health Nursing Service in Wells, New York. We believe this questionnaire was forwarded from a service in a neighboring county. (Wells is located close to the border of Hamilton and Warren Counties, and

not far from Saratoga and Fulton Counties.) The Service reported seeing one case over the past year, a case in which the husband was jailed overnight, and the couple planned to go to family court.

#### Family Court

Because of the size and distribution of the population in Hamilton County, it is not surprising to find few documented cases of battering. Only 2 petitions were recorded during the first 4 months of 1977, both filed by wives against their husbands, one charging assault and the other threat or harassment.

Projecting from this figure, we would expect only 6 wives to file petitions in 1977.

## HERKIMER COUNTY

Herkimer County is located in the Upper Mohawk Valley region of eastern New York State. It is a rural area, with almost 60% of the land classified as forest, 17% as active agriculture and 11% as brushland.

The total population in 1970 was 67,633, with virtually no growth expected by 1980. It was 99.98% white. Of the total, 21.67%, including 7,520 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Of a total of 21,406 households in Herkimer County, 14,975 were husband/wife families.

The median income for a family in 1970 was \$9,460.00, with 16.5% of all families having incomes below \$5,000.00. In August 1977 unemployment was 7.7%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter regarding battered women in Herkimer County, the Director of Social Services, Marion Damulis listed only 2 agencies which would provide aid to battered women: the Department of Social Services and family court. A questionnaire was sent to the Department of Social Services.

The Herkimer County Department of Social Services said that battered women rarely come to their attention and that none had been seen within the past year. According to Mrs. Damulis, "There are isolated instances of husbands beating wives, etc., but rarely do these women seek help."

### Hospitals

We sent three questionnaires to hospitals and two to health-

related facilities. The 3 hospitals responded.

Herkimer Memorial Hospital in Herkimer responded by letter, saying in part: "It is extremely difficult to determine whether any women in the category you describe were treated by this hospital. However, our patients who appear to have been physically abused or mistreated would have been reported to the local authorities."

Little Falls Hospital in Little Falls reported seeing 10 such cases in the Emergency Room in the past year, 4 of whom were admitted to the hospital. They noted that "most incidence of battered women appear during a holiday time like New Year's Eve."

Mohawk Valley General Hospital saw 2 battered women in the past year, both of whom required admission to the hospital. Their method of recording incidence of battered women is "simply nurses' notes".

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for the first four months of 1977 reveal a total of 51 petitions filed in or referred to family court. Forty-three were filed by wives against their husbands, and 12 of those petitions charged assault.

Projecting a 1-year total from these figures, we can expect 129 petitions to be filed by wives against their husbands in 1977. These cases can certainly not be considered "isolated instances". There is obviously a need for cooperation between the Department of Social Services and the family court to provide back-up services for these women.

## JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County is located in northern New York State, bordered on the west and north by Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. The major portion of the Thousand Islands is located in Jefferson County. Approximately 37% of the land is considered agricultural, 26% woodlands, and 11% water.

The county population in 1970 was 88,508 and projected to grow to 95,706 by 1980. Of the 27,435 households in Jefferson County, 18,817 were husband/wife families. Of the population total, 21.76% including 9,922 women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 99% of the population is white.

A consistently high unemployment rate indicates that Jefferson County is an economically depressed area. According to the 1970 Census, the median family income was \$8,696.00, with 20.6% having incomes below \$5,000.00.

### Incidence of Battered Women

Responding to our letter requesting information on services for battered women in Jefferson County, Commissioner S. Jean Wagoner listed 5 agencies, in addition to family court and probation, which offer counseling to battered women. She also noted that a committee had been formed by 2 social service workers to investigate the problem of battered women, with the ultimate goal of establishing a "safety" house for these women to live in until their problems are settled.

Questionnaires were sent to the 5 agencies mentioned. Answers were received from 4, although only one agency completed the questionnaire.

The Community Mental Health Center of Watertown was unable to



complete the questionnaire because they did not keep specific statistics on this problem. However, the administrator of the clinic, Sr. Margaret Mary Riordan, stated that they do serve battered women on a fairly frequent basis with individual, family, and/or group counseling. The Social Service Department of the House of the Good Samaritan Hospital also reported having seen battered women within the last year, and estimated the number at three a month.

The Family Counseling Service of Jefferson County reported having seen seven abused spouses in the last year, all of whom came through various referrals. Reba Haimowitz, the Executive Director, is also one of the organizers of the battered women's committee mentioned by the commissioner. She hopes to have a group for battered women established within the next few months.

The Jefferson County Department of Social Services was the only agency able to complete the questionnaire. They reported four cases within the last year, all of whom came in on their own initiative. All four were between the ages of 20 and 40 and had children. Three women were married. The women had incomes at the public assistance level and only one was employed. The Department of Social Services noted that their agency does not service these women except to refer them to Probation intake for family court and give supportive help to follow the procedure through family court.

#### Hospitals

From a mailing of 6 questionnaires, 4 to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities, we received 4 responses.

The North County Children's Clinic, Watertown, reported seeing 4 battered women in the past year, and suspect at least 10 more. Thier reporting system is as follows: "If someone

comes to our office who has been beaten, or if one of the interviewers suspects this to be one of the problems, the cases are documented (without names) so that some statistics may be presented to a local committee concerned with the problems of the battered spouse."

Carthage Area Hospital, Carthage, had 14 cases in the past year, all coming in through the emergency room. They reported an additional 2 suspected cases. Though they lack a recording mechanism for such cases, they were able to provide some information regarding marital status, ages and income level of the 14 women they saw.

Jefferson County Public Health Nursing Service did not complete the questionnaire, stating that it was not applicable to their type of service and that, as a rule, they do not encounter battered spouses. If such a situation should be found, they would contact "other agencies" in the county.

Planned Parenthood of Northern New York, Jefferson County Branch, responded by letter as follows: "[We have] no history of having seen a 'battered patient.' If a patient came to us and she was a minor, it would be reported according to New York State regulations. If the patient were an adult, the situation would be handled on an individual basis."

#### Family Court

All of the 45 petitions filed in Jefferson County Family Court during the first four months of 1977 were filed by wives. Of these 45 women, 12 filed assault charges, 25 threat or harrassmen

charges and the remaining 8 filed miscellaneous charges against their husbands.

A total of 135 petitions filed by wives can be projected for 1977.

## LEWIS COUNTY

Lewis County is located on the western side of the Adirondack Mountains in northern New York State. The county is predominantly rural, except for Lowville, the county seat and major population center; 65% of the land is classified as woodland, with another 18% considered active agricultural. Nearly 85% of the population is considered rural, with almost one quarter of the rural population residing on farms.

The 1970 county population was 23,644 with no large growth projected by 1980. Of a total of 6,635 households, 4,817 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 21.09%, including 2,547 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Less than 0.2% of the population was non-white.

The median family income in Lewis County in 1970 was \$8,053.00, with 22.8% of the families having incomes below \$5,000.00. In August 1977 unemployment was 8.2%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

No response was received to our initial inquiry regarding battered women. After a follow-up telephone call, a letter was received from Mrs. Virginia Sunderhaft, Director of Social Services, stating that any cases of this nature in Lewis County would be referred to family court or to the Sheriff's Department, and that no information was available as to the number of referrals made by the agency. Therefore, apparently no social services exist for battered women in Lewis County.

### Hospitals

We contacted one hospital and one health-related facility in Lewis County, and received a reply from the hospital. Lewis County General Hospital, in Lowville, reported seeing 4 or 5 battered women a year, all Emergency Room cases. Ranging in age from 18 to 48, about half were married and about half were medicaid. The hospital commented: "As this problem seems to be on the increase, it should be more widely recognized and records kept to determine more exactly the magnitude of the problem."

### Family Court

Only 4 petitions were filed in or referred to family court in Lewis County during the first 4 months of 1977. Three were filed by wives and all contained charges of threat or harassment.

Projections for 1977 are therefore that only 12 petitions will be filed in 1977.

## LIVINGSTON COUNTY

Livingston County is primarily a rural county lying south of Rochester, but within its radius of influence. The number and percentage of people living in urban areas of Livingston County has increased over the years while the percentage of those classified as rural has decreased, so that by 1970, one-third of the residents were classified as urban. In addition, the rural non-farm segment is steadily increasing while the rural farm population is declining.

The total population in 1970 was 54,000, projected to increase by 10% by 1980. Of the total of 15,088 households, 11,142 are husband/wife families. Of the population, 26.66%, including 7,545 women, are between the ages of 20 and 40. Only 2.4% of the population is non-white.

In 1970, the median family income was \$10,520.00, with 13.8% of Lewis County families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In December 1975 unemployment was 8.4%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter regarding agencies which offer assistance to battered women, Ms. Mary Lee Goodrich, of the Livingston County Social Service Department, listed 3 agencies other than police which might offer some types of help. Questionnaires were sent to all 3, with 2 responding: a crisis center and a council on alcoholism.

The 2 agencies reported a total of 26 cases within the last year. In 15 of the cases, which were reported by the alcoholism

center, the problem was reported by the abuser. In the rest of the cases, the women came through referrals, hotline or word of mouth. Most of the women sought counseling, although several others sought a variety of services including shelter and legal and social services. Ages were available for only 2 of the women from the crisis center (21 to 30 range). The majority of the women from the alcoholism group were somewhat older than we have found to be the norm, with 40 as the median age. Of the total number of battered women, 25 were married and at least 20 had children.

Although the crisis center did not have information on the women's financial situation, the alcoholism center was able to tell us that the average family income level of the women they saw was between \$6,000.00 and \$10,000.00 and that one-half were employed.

Between the 2 agencies, there were 5 referrals to lawyers and 4 to public social service agencies.

The crisis center did express their belief "that the problem is much more widespread, but women are not seeking assistance due to hesitancy of police to interfere in family matters and difficulty in following through on a family complaint."

#### Hospitals

We sent one questionnaire to a hospital and one to a health-related facility. No replies were received.

#### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, 12 of the 17 petitions filed in family court were filed by wives against their husbands. Four petitions contained charges of assault; the remaining 10, threat or harassment.

From this, we can project that 42 wives will file charges against their husbands in 1977.

## MADISON COUNTY

Madison County is located in central New York State. Its northern section is located midway between 2 large urban areas, the City of Syracuse on its west and the City of Utica on the east. At the present time, the rural population is still larger than the urban population, but the majority are rural non-farm dwellers.

The total 1970 population was 62,864, projected to reach nearly 69,000 by 1980. Of the total, 24.39%, including 7,399 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Of a total of 17,741 households, 13,097 were husband/wife families. The population is 99.1% white.

According to the 1970 Census, the median family income was \$9,639.00, with 16.7% having incomes below \$5,000.00. Average unemployment in 1975 was 11.4%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter, Mrs. Amy E. Malloy, Supervisor of Adult & Family Services, listed 3 agencies in Madison County which would offer assistance to battered women, including the Department of Probation. Questionnaires were sent to the 2 social service agencies, the Madison County Department of Social Services and the Salvation Army, which, we were told, will provide shelter; however, neither agency returned a completed questionnaire.

### Hospitals

A total of 4 questionnaires were sent, 2 to hospitals, and 2 to health-related facilities. No replies were received.



### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, 32 petitions were filed in or referred to family court. Twenty-five of these petitions were filed by wives, 10 of whom charged their husbands with assault.

From these figures, we can project that 75 wives will file charges against their husbands in Madison County in 1977.

## MONROE COUNTY

Monroe County is located in northwestern New York State, on the shores of Lake Ontario. Its largest city is Rochester.

The 1970 population was 911,917, with no large growth expected by 1980. There were 220,554 households in Monroe County, of which 154,071 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 25.56% including 98,395 women were between the ages of 20 and 40. The population is 89.33% white.

The 1976 estimate of the median family income in Monroe County was \$15,211 which is slightly higher than that for New York State as a whole, and 8.36% of the families have incomes below \$5,000.00. Monroe County has consistently had one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state; in 1975 it was 6.8%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter requesting the names of those agencies dealing with battered women in Monroe County, John C. Farie, the Deputy Director of Social Services, forwarded a list of 9 agencies which might come in contact with battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all 9 agencies. Four answers were received.

Three of the agencies responding had encountered battered women within the past year. One group, the Coalition for the Battered Woman, in Rochester, has not yet begun providing services, although, on the average, 3 or 4 women per month have been seeking them out, having heard of them by word of mouth or through the media. The group intends to establish a crisis center which will be combined with a shelter.

At the time this report was written, they were involved in a survey with which the police and Family Court were cooperating to collect statistics on battered women in Monroe County.

The other two agencies responding reported a total of 35 cases of battered women. 25 were from the Genesee Mental Health Clinic which offers a group for battered women, meeting weekly. Their figures included only those battered women seen from January to mid-April of this year. They noted that "the numbers of such cases increase as our awareness and sensitivity to the problem increases."

Of the 16 women from both agencies on which statistics were available, 15 sought counseling, six, legal services and one, shelter. Fifteen were under the age of 40. 13 were married, and two more had common-law husbands. All had children. 5 of the 16 women were employed.

All of the women were given help within the center or group. In addition there were 3 referrals to hospitals, 3 to private doctors, 3 to lawyers and 3 to public social service agencies.

#### Hospitals

We sent questionnaires to 8 hospitals and 10 health-related facilities, and received a total of 5 responses.

St. Mary's Hospital, Rochester, did not complete the questionnaire, commenting, "We have not separated such statistics as we have, e.g., with battered children."

The Genesee Hospital, Rochester, also did not complete the questionnaire. They commented in part, "Outside of reports to the local department, if so desired by the patient, which is infrequent, we do not maintain statistical records in either our Medical Records Department or the Emergency Department of problems of abuse."

Rochester Rehabilitation Center reported seeing 4 battered women in the past year, and one suspected case. All 4 women were Medicaid, two of them married and 2 not. This facility has no established recording mechanism.

The Hearing and Speech Center of Rochester saw one battered woman, who had been admitted to a hospital. They said, "Parents bring their children to our agency for service. Ordinarily a mother would not discuss the matter of her abuse with us."

Monroe County Health Department reported that, though exact figures are not available, 10 to 15 women were seen in the last year who admitted their husbands had beaten them. Suspected cases cannot be determined. They commented, "Public Health Nurses have encountered many family units where wives or women in the house are beaten -- when the man is angry or under the influence of alcohol, etc. Usually they complain about this or just accept the situation because they need support for children. Frequently they accept beating as a part of life. In a few instances, particularly if children are threatened, the woman will issue a warrant for arrest or take some legal action. The latter action is difficult for the woman -- legal process is too slow."

#### Police Comments

Joseph D. Picciotti, Jr., Chief of Police in Fairport sent us a copy of a letter he had sent to the Coalition for Battered Women in Rochester at an earlier date. In the letter he had cited the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 and noted that several

articles of legislation restrict free flow of information from Police Agencies to outside groups other than those authorized to have access to confidential police files. He would allow a representative of the organization to work with his clerk in an effort to obtain information requested, but only within the framework of guidelines which protect the individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. He continued, "...I cannot help but admonish you for making your program a selective one and charge you with the formidable task of making your program available to all family members in need of help. ... Do not make your program just one more based upon specific qualifications, race, color, creed, or as in your program, sex; make it one based upon the human quality."

The Ogden Police Department, Spencerport, New York, said, "Also two reports on file where husbands were assaulted by wives."

Two other departments told us that their record system does not include such records as we requested. Also one department told us that they do not have sufficient manpower to search their records but that our staff would be welcome to do so.

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of this year reveal a total of 162 petitions filed in Monroe County; 137 petitions were filed by wives with the following breakdown: 99 - assault charges, 32 - threat or harassment, 6 - other charges.

Using these figures, a total of 411 petitions filed by wives can be projected for this year; 297 of those petitions will contain charges of assault.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County is located in the center of eastern New York, near Schenectady and Albany counties.

The total 1970 population was 55,883 with no large growth expected by 1980. The population is primarily second generation European, with a current influx of Hispanic groups into the City of Amsterdam. In 1970 it was 99.5% white. Of a total of 18,812 households, 12,680 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 20.44%, including 5,922 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40.

According to the 1970 Census, approximately 25% of the employed residents commuted to work outside the county; the median family income was \$9,006.00 and 19.1% had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In December 1975 unemployment was at 11%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter to the Montgomery County Social Services, a list of 4 agencies, other than hospital and family court, which offer assistance to battered women, was forwarded. Questionnaires were sent to all 4, with only one responding, the Department of Social Services. Rosemary Lasher, Staff Development Coordinator, stated that the Department does not keep track of the number of battered women who come to their attention and therefore could not complete the questionnaire. She did tell us, however, that in those cases they do see, the battering is not an isolated problem. The women are brought to their attention through referrals, or come in on their own seeking counseling, legal direction, and social services.

### Hospitals

Our mailing consisted of 2 questionnaires sent to hospitals, both of which responded.

St. Mary's Hospital, Amsterdam, reported seeing 6 battered women in the past year, all of whom came in to the Emergency Room. Ranging in age from under 21 to 50, the women were all above medicaid level income, and 4 of them were married. The hospital commented: "The Emergency Room staff have suspected women to be 'battered' but most are hesitant to reveal the nature of their injury and either are too embarrassed or else it is a common occurrence."

Amsterdam Memorial Hospital, Amsterdam, saw 2 battered women in the past year, both hospital admissions referred to Social Services from acute care. They commented, "We do not necessarily have statistics on this type of patient. In many cases, the cause of injuries is suspected but when confronted the women will deny it."

### Police Comments

"All deputies have training that is mandated in reference to assault and family occurrence." When an arrest is made, the person is charged under penal law and then the case is transferred to family court. -- Fonda, New York, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office.

### Family Court

Twenty-three wives filed petitions in the total of 27 filed during the first 4 months of 1977. Of those, 4 charged assault, and 19 threat or harassment.

We can project a total of 69 wives charging their husbands in family court in 1977.

St. Mary's Hospital, Amsterdam, reported seeing six battered women in the past year, all of whom came in to the emergency room. Ranging in age from under 21 to 50, the women were all above Medicaid level income, and 4 of them were married. The hospital commented: "The Emergency Room staff have suspected women to be 'battered' but most are hesitant to reveal the nature of their injury and either are too embarrassed or else it is a common occurrence."

Amsterdam Memorial Hospital, Amsterdam, saw two battered women in the past year, both hospital admissions referred to Social Services from acute care. They commented, "We do not necessarily have statistics on this type of patient. In many cases, the cause of injuries is suspected but when confronted the women will deny it."

#### Police Comments

"All deputies have training that is mandated in reference to assault and family occurrence." When an arrest is made, the person is charged under penal law and then the case is transferred to Family Court. -- Fonda, New York, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office.

#### Family Court

Twenty-three wives filed petitions in Family Court, charging their husbands with assault (4) and threat or harassment (19) during the first four months of 1977.

Since the total for the first four months of 1977 was 23 petitions filed by wives, we can project that 69 wives will file charges against their husbands in 1977.



## NASSAU COUNTY

Nassau County is located on the western end of Long Island, immediately adjacent to New York City. The 1970 county population was 1,428,838 and is expected to stabilize at that level. Of the total, 21.66%, including 167,455 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Of a total of 401,056 households, there were 323,538 husband/wife families. The county population is 94.8% white.

Considered an affluent suburban area, Nassau County has one of the highest median income levels in the nation - \$15,169.00 for a family of four in 1975. Only 6.92% of the families in Nassau County had incomes below \$5,000.00 in the last census. In August 1977 unemployment was 6.7%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

Our letter to the Commissioner of the Nassau County Department of Social Services was forwarded to Dorcas Carlos, Director of Public Information, who informed us that to the Department's understanding, "there are no organizations based in Nassau County geared to deal with this specific problem." Instead, she noted, all inquiries related to the problem of battered women are referred to Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC) in New York City. (That organization is included in the New York City profile.)

Through other sources of information, it was learned that at least 2 organizations do exist in Nassau County for the purpose of giving aid to battered women: The N.O.W. Task Force on Household Violence/Battered Women and the Coalition for Abused Women of the Nassau County Medical Center.

At the time of our correspondence, the Coalition for Battered Women had only been in existence for 6 months. The 2 agencies

reported a total of 47 cases: 20 came through hotlines, 22 through referrals and 5 through word of mouth. Most sought counseling and legal services, with shelter the next priority. The NOW Task Force did not have information on the vital statistics or financial background of the women, but the Coalition reported all but one of the women they saw were between the ages of 20 and 40, all were married and only one was childless. They estimated that all of the women came from families with income levels below \$20,000 and 1/3 were employed.

The NOW task Force provides information and referral as well as consciousness raising sessions for battered women and is presently seeking funding to provide further aid. The Coalition for Battered Women, formed by several interested agencies and organizations, is also not funded at the present time, but they hope to write a grant for a battered women's shelter. At the present time, they provide counseling information and referral.

Ms. Sherry Radowitz, Chairperson of the NOW Task Force, is also Associate Director of the Action Council of Central Nassau, a local community action group. Last year, she sent out a questionnaire about battered women to many organizations and agencies in Nassau County. As a result, she stated, "Almost every one that answered saw approximately 2 or 3 battered women a month, and most agencies feel helpless, finding themselves unable to provide the kind of comprehensive service a battered woman may need." She told us that the Social Service Department was aware of the problem of battered women and was unable to explain why they were not mentioned to us by Ms. Carlos.

## Hospitals

Out of 28 questionnaires sent, 17 to hospitals and 11 to health-related facilities, we received 10 responses, 8 from hospitals and 2 from health-related facilities.

The Nassau County Department of Health, Mineola, replied that they never see battered women nor do they have suspected cases. The Home Care Nursing Service of the same Department returned the questionnaire without filling it out, commenting, "The Nassau County Health Department does not keep statistics on battered women."

Two hospitals were unable to complete the questionnaire. They commented as follows:

Hempstead General: "...both our Emergency Room and Social Services personnel...reported no statistics are kept on 'battered' women. Such cases are usually treated with regard to the specific injury reported by the woman as they appear at our emergency ares...the record is concerned with the diagnosis."

Nassau County Medical Center: "...our hospital does not presently keep any statistics or run special programs for battered women."

The other six hospitals had some records available and responded as follows:

St. Francis, Roslyn, saw 4 battered women in the past year, all coming in to the Emergency Room. All were married and in the 31 - 40 age range. Their recording method is that, if the patient admits to being battered a notation is made in the patient's record and the Emergency Room Supervisor is notified through the

daily report sheet.

Long Island Jewish - Hillside Medical Center, New Hyde Park, saw 16 cases in the last year, and 4 suspected cases. Fourteen came into the Emergency Room and 2 to Social Services. The majority were non-medicaid and in the 22 - 40 age range. Their method of recording the incidence of battered women is through chart recording.

Manhasset Medical Center Hospital, Manhasset, saw 2 battered women in the past year. Both came in to the Emergency Room. Both were married and were not medicaid. They were referred to legal services and private lawyers.

Franklin General, Valley Stream, reported only 1 case in the past year, a hospital admission referred to the Social Services Department. The hospital commented: "Since formal statistics have not been kept prior to this time, the Social Services Department reply is based on memory recall. Both departments will set up a system of recording such incidence in the future."

Nassau Hospital, Mineola, recalled 2 cases and 2 suspected cases. The former were hospital admissions seen by Social Services and referred to legal services (1) and Suffolk Victims Information Service (1). They have at present no established policy for recording such cases.

South Nassau Communities Hospital, Oceanside, reported both from their Emergency Room and their Mental Health Clinic. The Mental Health Clinic saw 13 battered women in ages from under 21 to 60. Though they do not have a recording policy, they were able to give accurate statistics regarding ages, income level, and referral. They said, "We need a facility in Nassau County to protect families in crisis through threats of physical abuse."

The Emergency Room saw 50+ cases, but had no statistics available to answer our other questions. They told us, "Police are notified only if patient has to be admitted or in life-threatening situation."

Police Department

"If the victim signs a complaint, then we arrest them on the appropriate charge. Otherwise, we refer them to Family Court."

-- Mineola Police Department.

Officer Monty Gerbush, Planning Unit, Nassau County Police Department, responded as follows:

"The data you requested concerning 'battered women' is... not readily available. ...

"Currently, an officer, upon completion of a 911 radio assignment, phones in the disposition of the call to his precinct station house. The disposition is recorded in the precinct blotter, which is a chronological record of all precinct business.

"This method of recording dispositions and the fact that the classification of assignments does not allow for specific identification of 'battered women' calls, makes gathering such data almost an impossibility. We can always refer to the blotter to locate a disposition to a particular assignment. If we are conducting a follow-up investigation or seeking the information for another purpose it is available. However, the gathering of this information manually would prove to be a massive undertaking. There is a possibility that in the future we will utilize a computer aided dispatch system that will be capable of capturing the type

of data you are requesting.

"Another possible source of this information will be the data tabulated as a result of a referral-needs assessment grant this department is proposing in conjunction with Nassau County Medical Center. This grant will address many crisis situations of which 'battered women' will be one. If our grant application is successful, we will be able to better identify to what extent various crisis intervention problems exist within our County. It is most likely that 'battered women' will be one of the categories identified in our evaluation.

"In response to Question #6, regarding specifically trained police personnel to handle battered women complaints, our Sex Crime Unit is available to assist field personnel whenever appropriate. Additionally, our Training Bureau is involved in a Department-wide crisis intervention training program which is giving responding officers skills that enable them to better handle assignments that involve problems of a personal nature, such as 'battered women.'"

#### Family Court

In the first 4 months of 1977, 695 petitions were filed in Nassau County Family Court, 449 of them by wives against their husbands. Of these, 372 charged assault, while 26 others charged threat or harassment.

From these figures, we can project a total of 1,347 women filing charges against their husbands during this calendar year, and 1,116 women alone to file assault charges.

It is obvious that some publicly-funded aid for battered

women in Nassau County is necessary and surprising that the Department of Social Services is so ill-informed on the few services which are available. With 1,116 cases of assault in Family Court in one year, a shelter for these women to escape to would not be out of order.

## NEW YORK CITY

The 5 counties, or boroughs, of New York City are grouped together to form the New York City Social Services District. The counties are New York (Manhattan), Bronx, Kings (Brooklyn), Queens, and Staten Island. Together, they form one large metropolitan area. The population is almost entirely urban, though the outermost edges of Queens and Brooklyn could be called suburban. Staten Island is basically suburban throughout, though there remain a few rural areas. The population, as identified in the review of services available under Title XX, published by New York State, is 58.6% white, exclusive of Hispanics who account for 16.1%, and 25.3% are considered to be non-white.

The population includes a great many immigrants, representing almost every ethnic group in the world. In 1970, U.S. Census surveys reported a total New York City population of 7,895,563 with an anticipated decline of about 500,00 (falling to 7,362,189) by 1980. In 1970, 27.5% were between 20 and 40 years old, and females aged 20 to 40 made up 14.6% of the total population. There were 2,836,872 households in New York City, and of these 2,043,762 were husband/wife families.

New York State figures based on the 1970 Census indicate that in 1975 21.2% of all families in New York City had less than \$6,000.00 in income. In May 1977 unemployment was at 9% overall.

### Incidence of Battered Women

Our list of agencies and groups in the New York City area which might give aid to battered women was already extensive and



we therefore did not require a list from New York City's Department of Social Services. However, we did send a questionnaire to the Commissioner, J. Henry Smith, and received a reply from the Human Resources Administration (HRA) of the City of New York, of which Mr. Smith is the Administrator/Commissioner. HRA estimated that the Emergency Assistance Unit sees about 8 cases a month, the majority of whom are referred to Income Maintenance Centers after being given a night's housing. Most are brought in by the police, and are in need of shelter, food money, and carfare to Income Maintenance Centers. Ms. Candice Butcher, Family and Adult Services, wrote an accompanying letter which is quoted from in the following paragraphs.

"I am not able to supply you with any other figures on battered women handled by the Human Resources Administration because at the present we have no specific programs to deal with this population, and historically we have never recognized them as a discrete group with special needs, so that we have never collected segregated statistics on battered women serviced by our various programs. This is not to say that battered women do not receive assistance from agency programs, but rather that they do so on an individual case-by-case basis, and in such a way have gone through the system without being specially recognized. I am quite confident that we do, in fact, assist such cases at our Income Maintenance Centers and at the Centers operated by the Office of Case Intake and Management.

"For your information, although it will not be of use to you in terms of your current study, we should be able to furnish you

with statistics on battered women serviced at a future date. HRA is in the process of developing both a pilot shelter program (in conjunction with Abused Women's Aid in Crisis and Henry Street Settlement Houses) and a city-wide income maintenance/housing program, to be administered by our Protective Services for Adults unit. The pilot shelter will be located at a facility of Henry Street and will have 18 apartment units available. Social Services will be provided by Henry Street staff, and AWAIC will provide initial intake and follow-up services. The city-wide program will provide emergency housing in hotel settings, and cases serviced by this program will be 'case-managed' by Adult Protective staff. The city-wide program will be open-ended in terms of the number of women with children, with the caveat that those women receiving emergency assistance who are found ineligible for continuing public assistance, because of financial resources, be required to assume responsibility for paying for their accrued shelter costs when their financial resources become accessible. We plan to open the shelter in 1 - 2 months, and hope to start the city-wide program in July."

#### Summary of Questionnaires

Within the 5 counties of New York City, we mailed 190 questionnaires, 42 of which were returned to us. We heard from 2 public social service agencies and 17 private ones, 5 legal groups, and 12 women's groups. Six questionnaires were returned by the post office. Therefore, we have reports from 36 groups or agencies.

Six centers which offer psychological consultation -- The Psychiatric Clinic and Counseling Center of Institutes of Religion

and Health, National Institute for the Psychotherapies, Inc., Theodor Reik Consultation Center, Psychological Consultation Center of Teachers' College, Columbia University, N.Y. Counseling and Guidance Service, and Gestalt Center for Psychotherapy and Training -- reported that the nature of their work is such that they do not encounter battered women. The Postgraduate Center for Psychotherapy, although not returning a questionnaire, indicated by telephone that their therapists saw a significant number of battered women who probably did not request treatment specifically for this problem. No statistics were kept or were readily available. Permission from the "Board" would have been necessary for their release, and no further feedback occurred.

The Women's Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union will be issuing a report on battered women soon, but reported that they do not deal with battered women on anything but a theoretical basis. HealthRight, a women's health education and consumer advocacy organization, though planning to publish an article on violence against women, does not get calls from women who have been battered and could give us no information. Legal Referral Service, a public service to help laymen get legal assistance, said, "This organization has no program in any way directly concerned with battered women. We refer people with legal problems to lawyers. Undoubtedly cases in family law contain this element. However, we do not collect data of this kind."

Brooklyn Legal Services, Corporation B, a New York not-for-profit corporation established in 1968 for the purpose of providing

free legal services to the poor, is an example of a federally funded service (through Community Action for Legal Services) whose matrimonial unit has been in the forefront of identifying and providing legal services (mostly divorces) to battered women. Its lawyer/director Marjorie Fields has in addition been the prime developer and advocate of battered women legislation in Pennsylvania and New York State. The matrimonial unit is presently conducting extensive research on the problem of wife beating during pregnancy among middle and upper income as well as lower income homes. This agency has also participated with the Center for Constitutional Rights in the Bruno vs. Codd lawsuit against the New York City Family Court and Police Department.

Lutheran Community Services, located in Brooklyn, had no information to give, and the Salvation Army, Greater New York Division, said, "We do not have a program for battered wives. On occasion such a situation may have come to our attention, but we do not separate out such requests statistically." (In other areas of the state, we discovered that the Salvation Army is one of the few organizations that offers shelter and emergency assistance to battered women.)

We received a positive response from the majority of the groups we contacted, that is, from about 70% of our returns. An evaluation of their response must take into account the fact that statistics are usually incomplete and many times altogether lacking. We do know that there were more than 3,000 cases noted in our returns. One private social service agency, Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC), reported that they receive over 1,500 hotline calls a

year from battered women who learned of their service through referral, word of mouth or through the media. They said, "The most urgent need at present is for the establishment of shelters, throughout the city and state, which will provide a safe haven for women and their children when it is imperative that they leave home for the sake of their safety."

The Henry Street Settlement in New York City also reported a large number of women seeking shelter. Fifty women came to them in the past year and were all referred to the Urban Family Center, where the Henry Street Settlement provides temporary emergency housing for welfare families.

New York Women Against Rape, while unable to give figures, said they very often receive calls from battered women on their hotline and that all the women wanted shelter, with counseling and legal help being required by most of the women as well.

The Center for Elimination of Violence in the Family saw at least 200 battered women in the last year. While they were unable to give figures, they told us that most of the women wanted shelter, with counseling and legal help second most frequently requested as types of aid.

We also heard from Talbot Perkins Children's Services, primarily a foster care and adoption agency, who reported seeing 43 battered women in the last year; from Women's Self-Help Clinic of the College of Staten Island-St. George; CAUSE, a group giving information and access assistance to persons living in the Chelsea area; from the Drug Abuse Rehabilitation Services's Lower Eastside Service Center, who commented: "The problem of battered women is enormous among

drug abusers..."; from the Community Council of Greater New York, with the comment "...resources for help for battered women are extremely limited..."; Crime Victim Hotline, a project aiding persons going through Brooklyn Criminal Court; Women's Action Alliance, a clearinghouse for information and referrals; Women's Counseling Project at Columbia University; Family Service Association of America; Home Advisory and Service Council; MFY Legal Services; Westside Medical and Pediatric Group, located in Manhattan; The Legal Aid Society; Park Slope Safe Homes Project, located in Brooklyn; and All the Queens Women.

An example of a local network of battered women is the Coalition for Battered Women convened by the American Friends Service Committee to coordinate activities regarding battered women and to act in an advocacy role.

In evaluating our returns, we found that the majority of the women who came to the various groups and agencies came through hotline calls or by referral. As is indicated by the comments quoted from some of the groups, the greatest number asked for shelter, counseling, and legal advice. Social services were also often requested, but few women who came to the groups and agencies we heard from were seeking medical aid. It was most common for help to be given within the center or agency, though many persons were referred to lawyers or to public social service agencies. The type of aid most usually offered was information, referrals, and counseling within the center or agency. Though shelter is one of the most frequently requested types of aid, there are not many places that are able to offer it.

Of the more than 3,000 battered women who sought help in New York City in the past year, the great majority were between the ages of 20 and 40. Only a few were younger or older than this age group. More than 80% were married and most had children. Their children were almost always under 12, with the majority being under 6. Very few of the women were employed and most lacked any financial resources of their own. Usually, the women did not leave home, and more than half of those who did leave returned.

We have, therefore, a general idea of the number and the circumstances of women who are battered in New York City, but statistics are usually not kept by those groups and agencies who aid women in crisis. We cannot present anything more definite than a composite estimate drawn from the estimates of those who reported to us.

### Hospitals

From a total of 187 questionnaires mailed, 117 to hospitals and 70 to health-related facilities, we received 57 responses. The report we received, divided by counties, is as follows:

#### Bronx

Out of 6 hospitals reporting, only 1 was able to give a few figures. The others said: "We do not keep statistics..." (Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center); "We have not had any case of a battered adult." (Montefiore/Morrisania Comprehensive Health Care Center): "We do have many women coming to our Emergency Room who would be classified as 'battered' women, but maintain no





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**1 OF 2**

statistics." (Union Hospital of the Bronx); "...we are unable to report any cases of battered women having been treated at this hospital." (St. Barnabas Hospital).

Four health-related facilities responded, as follows: "At this moment we are unable to provide such statistics." (Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center); "...we do not keep such statistics on file..." (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Health Center). New York City Department of Health, Morrisania Health District, reported about 75 at a rough estimate discovered through home visits. Morrisania Neighborhood Family Care Center estimated seeing 10 battered women in the last year, with a recording mechanism being developed.

#### Kings

The following health-related facilities reported no contact with battered women: Fort Greene District Health Center, South Brooklyn Health Center, Bushwick District Health Center, Kings County Highway Center, Bedford District Health Center, and Mid-Brooklyn Health Association. Bushwick-Williamsburg District said they always question if they suspect such a case and encountered 2 -- 1 with jaws wired and 1 with stitches around her eye. Of the 11 hospitals responding, 8 encountered battered women and 3 said they do not. Though some of the hospitals responding positively were able to give figures, none had a recording system and one stated, "As advised by the Emergency Room Nursing Staff, women present a medical history to the examining physician that they were mugged or fell."

New York

The Roosevelt Hospital was able to give quite a bit of information, though they qualified it by telling us that that all figures given were approximate and not completely accurate. Ms. Etta Sherman, Associate Director of the Social Service Department, told us, "My entire staff of social workers reviewed their caseloads for well over a year. We do not have an established policy or mechanism for recording the incidence of battered women. The social workers themselves have case records on a number of situations. The emergency room usually alerts us to these situations. It should be noted that in many situations the women do not initially define the problem as one of being battered. It comes out in the course of interviewing." They estimated having seen about 23 in the emergency room and 38 in Social Services. About two-thirds were married and approximately the same number were medicaid recipients. Thirty of the women were between 22 and 30 years old, and 20 of them were 31 to 40. "Social Service was involved in one way or another with at least 48 situations. About 20 required treatment in the emergency room; about 9 were admitted to the hospital.... At least 20 women were referred for legal services, a few directly to the police, a few to court, a few for ongoing counseling." In addition, they reported 37 suspected cases of battering. Ms. Sherman stated: "The social work staff recommends legislative action that would enable women to feel more comfortable in stating what the problem actually is. There is also a strong recommendation for more protective shelters where women and children could be cared for and helped via counseling. Many of the social workers

recommend intervention along the lines of 'women's consciousness-raising groups'. Many of the women interviewed returned to the situation from which they initially fled. Many do not pursue ongoing counseling. Frequently 'the battered syndrome' is part of a major problem - alcoholism."

Questionnaires were returned by 10 other hospitals. Eight of them reported that they do not keep statistics, or that they do not encounter battered women. One hospital had records of some cases, and told us that in two instances the women had become paraplegic as a result of beatings. St. Vincent's Hospital was not able to give figures at the time they returned the questionnaires, but they reported that they were beginning a 4-week study to determine the number of battered women seen in their hospital and to gather significant data.

#### Queens

Seven hospitals responded, 2 saying they have not encountered battered women. Five said they do encounter battered women and were able to give some figures, though none of them had a recording system established for instances of battering of adults. One health-related facility, Rockaway Health Center, reported having seen 7 battered women in the past year and suspected another 7 such cases.

#### Richmond

One hospital responded by saying that they recall 3 suspected cases, but have no established recording policy. Richmond District Health Service said, "We offer services for specific entities,

i.e., venereal disease, tuberculosis, child health. We would therefore not come in contact with the 'battered wife' except indirectly."

In mid-summer, 1977, the Mayor's Task Force on Rape, in cooperation with the Health and Hospitals Corporation and the Human Resources Administration, announced the establishment of four Federally financed Borough Crisis Centers located in Harlem, Lincoln, Queens, and Kings County Hospitals. The program, financed with \$307,217.00 in Comprehensive Employment Training Act funds from the Department of Labor, planned to offer the victims of rape, wife beating, and child abuse on-site crisis intervention counseling and legal and shelter referrals.

Although there has been some serious concern about staffing procedures, particularly in regard to hiring, training, and the lack of involvement and consultation with hospital staff and feminist groups, there is common recognition that crisis centers at points where victims are seen immediately (like hospitals) are of utmost importance to the delivery of services to battered women.

#### Police Comments

The following comments both came to us from police departments in Queens County:

"Most of assaults on women were due to excessive drinking by either husband or boyfriend."

"The... 'battered' or alleged 'battered' were cases involving divorce proceedings where no signs of assault were evident but female complaintant wanted a police report on record for upcoming

divorce proceedings." -- Lake Success Police Department.

Family Court

In the 5 boroughs of New York City, there were a total of 3,114 petitions filed in, referred or transferred to, Family Court during the first 4 months of 1977. Of these, 2,227 were filed by wives, of whom 1,519 charged assault, 558 charged threat or harassment, and the remainder, miscellaneous charges.

We can then project a total of 6,681 petitions being filed by wives in Family Court during 1977. From that number, 4,557 will file charges of assault against their husbands and 1,674 others will charge threat or harassment.

## NIAGARA COUNTY

Niagara County is located in the northwest corner of New York State, bounded on the north by Lake Ontario and on the west by the Niagara River. It is generally considered to be part of the metropolitan Buffalo/Erie County area. The 1970 total population was 235,720 with little growth projected to occur by 1980. Of the total population 23.25%, including 28,650 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. There were a total of 71,881 households in Niagara County, of which 52,230 were husband/wife families. The population was 95% white.

The median income for families in 1970 was \$10,203.00, with 13.5% of all families have annual incomes below \$5,000.00. In 1975 unemployment averaged 13.3%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter to the commissioner, we received a reply from Carl Bongiovanni of the Niagara Department of Social Services. He stated that while there was no specific listing of agencies dealing with battered women, he was enclosing a listing of community resources in the area. Questionnaires were sent to 32 agencies with 11 answering, 7 of whom had come in contact with battered women. Of these 7 agencies, only 4 were able to provide us with any statistics. The other 3 agencies were aware of the problem and had seen battered women in their work, but did not keep specific records on it. Husnara Sundram, Director of Niagara Community Action Alcoholism Program, stated, "I am afraid so far there has been no special reason to keep statistics on battered women. I know we see a lot of them...Usually the woman does not want to complain because her assailant is left free and she fears

an even worse fate. I would like to see a home or shelter for such women where they are free from threats of assault..."

The 4 agencies which could supply statistics reported a total of 26 cases. Most came to the agencies through referral or were already within the group for other reasons. The greatest number sought counseling, with shelter second.

Nineteen women were between the ages of 21 and 40. Twenty-three were married and at least 21 had children. The women came from families with incomes ranging from low to upper middle. At least 10 women were employed.

A minimum of 19 women returned home. Only one of the agencies, Community Missions, Inc., provides emergency shelter for battered women. The others primarily provide counseling, rap sessions, and/or referrals.

#### Hospitals

Nine questionnaires were sent to Niagara County, 6 of them to hospitals and 3 to health-related facilities. Only one was returned.

Inter-Community Hospital, Newfane, replied that they saw 3 or 4 suspected cases in the Emergency Room this past year. All the women were married. None were admitted to the hospital. Indeed, the Department records have no indication of any such cases being admitted in 1976.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for the first 4 months of 1977 reveal a total of 58 petitions filed, 51 by wives against their husbands. Nineteen charged assault, and the remaining number threat or harassment. We can therefore project that 153 wives will file charges against their husbands in 1977.



## ONEIDA COUNTY

Oneida County is located in the Mohawk Valley area of Central New York State. According to the 1970 census, the total population was 273,037, with a slight decline projected for 1980. Of the 1970 total, 23.74%, including 32,705 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Husband/wife families accounted for 56,580 of the 82,080 households in Oneida County. The population was 97% white.

The median income for families in Oneida County in 1970 was \$9,810.00, with 15% having incomes below \$5,000.00. In December 1975 unemployment was 11.3%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter regarding aid to battered women in Oneida County, we received a reply from Sally Moore of the Department of Social Services Information Center, stating:

"There are no agencies in Oneida County which are listed as offering assistance to battered women. Oneida County Department of Social Services does, however, offer protective services for adults under Title XX of the Federal Social Security Act."

A questionnaire was sent to the Department of Social Services, but no reply was received.

### Hospitals

Out of the 14 questionnaires sent, 6 to hospitals and 8 to health-related facilities, we received 4 replies.

The Oneida County Department of Health replied by letter, as follows: "We have no such statistics in our office nor are any kept to my knowledge in Oneida County. I believe it would be

a good thing to maintain such information..."

St. Luke's - Memorial Hospital Center, Utica, returned the questionnaire indicating that they do not have records of battered women coming to them, as did Rome Hospital and Murphy Memorial Hospital, Rome, New York.

Planned Parenthood Association of Mohawk Valley commented: "We have not documented [suspected cases of battered women] in such a way that we could easily compile statistics that would meet your need. Your letter has effected a change in our viewpoint, however. We will in the future be more alert to such cases and attempt to record data..."

#### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, 69 petitions were filed in family court, 55 of them by women charging their husbands. Of those, 13 charged assault, while 41 others charged threat or harassment.

Using these figures, we can project a total of 165 wives filing charges against their husbands, with 39 of them charging assault.

It is surprising in a county of this size to find no sensitivity to or awareness of the problem by the Department of Social Services or local hospitals, yet the problem certainly does exist.

## ONONDAGA COUNTY

Onondaga County is located in central New York State, bounded by Oswego County on the north, Madison County on the east, Cortland County on the south and Cayuga County on the west. It had a total population in 1970 of 472,835, which is expected to increase to 500,728 by 1980. Approximately 18% of the population of Onondaga County resides in rural areas. The largest population center is the City of Syracuse. In 1970, 5.7% of the county population was classified as non-white.

From the total population, 25.74%, including 63,294 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. There were 145,322 households in the county of which 98,674 were husband/wife families.

In 1970, the median family income for Onondaga County was \$10,836.00, with 15.8% having incomes below \$5,000.00. In 1975 unemployment was at 8.1%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

A letter was received from John Lascarid, Onondaga County Social Services Commissioner, in reply to our request for a list of those agencies offering assistance to battered women. He stated that there were no services to deal with this problem specifically, but that there were a number of directions the problem could take depending on the frequency and mental and/or individual histories.

He also remarked that "the delivery of service depends upon the motivation of the recipient(s) to receive and utilize the services available. If the criminal justice system is invoked

and involved, probation may be a service in itself or a source of referral to a more appropriate service. The court may provide protection to the injured party. Any service rendered is more easily rendered and more effective if both parties participate."

A list of six agencies which might provide service or appropriate referrals for battered women was included. Questionnaires were sent to all, with only one response which came from the Rape Crisis Center of Syracuse. They reported a total of 7 cases of battered women who came to their attention, 3 via hotline and 3 by referral. Three women sought counseling and 3 shelter. Two also sought legal services. Information on ages, children, and family financial condition was unavailable. Five of the women were married.

Patricia Fletcher of the Rape Crisis Center commented: "At the present time, in our county, there does not exist a comprehensive service to deal with the problem of the battered woman. Adequate facilities for shelter for the woman and any children she may have is also non-existent. Many groups are doing bits and pieces to assist her, but adequate resources are not available. A comprehensive service is needed, with personnel specially trained to meet the physical financial and emotional needs of the battered woman."

The Rape Crisis Center can provide a 24-hour hotline, counseling, and referrals for the battered woman.

#### Hospitals

We sent 5 questionnaires to hospitals and 3 to health-related facilities. No replies were received.

### Police Comments

"Each officer receives training in police academy for such cases." -- Village of Fayetteville Police Department.

"Members of the Police Department are assigned to In-Service Training on handling domestic problems relative to assault, harassment, etc." -- Department of Public Safety, Clay, New York.

### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, 262 petitions were filed, with 221 wives charging their husbands with family offenses. In 140 cases, assault was the charge, while threat or harassment was charged in 65 others.

From these figures, we can project a total of 663 family court cases in which wives will file charges against their husbands, and 420 cases where the charge filed will be assault for 1977.

These figures are not surprising for a county of this size; what is surprising is the lack of comprehensive and responsible services for the women involved.

## ONTARIO COUNTY

Ontario County is located in mdiwestern New York State. The 1970 population was 79,000, projected to increase to 91,000 by 1980, thereby diminishing the rural characteristics of the county, especially in those areas closest to Monroe County (Rochester). Of a total of 23,748 households, 17,187 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 24.19%, including 9,794 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Approximately 98% of the population was white.

The median income for families in 1970 was \$10,511.00, with 14.5% having an income below \$5,000.00. In August 1977 the unemployment rate was 8.1%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

When no response was received to our inquiry regarding battered women in Ontario County, a telephone call was placed to the office of the County Social Services Commissioner, who was able to give us the names of three agencies which might offer assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all three, with only one agency responding.

The Center estimated having seen 12 women who were battered in the past year. Most came through referrals, with several others coming in for help on their own. All were seeking, and did receive, counseling.

All of the women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Most were married and had children.

The women were generally from families in the low to lower middle income range. Very few were employed, and most had no

independent resources.

Dr. Mariner of the Mental Health Center commented that beyond the usual range of social and law enforcement agencies, there were no agencies organized specifically for the purpose of aiding battered women. The doctors at the center strongly support the idea of shelters for battered women.

#### Hospitals

From a total of 5 requests for information, 3 to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities, we received 2 responses.

Planned Parenthood of Ontario County, Geneva, New York, saw 10 cases in the past year, 3 under 21 and the rest between 22 and 30. Seven were married and half the women were medicaid patients. The counsellor commented: "I always ask when I have a suspicion, so I think the number I have stated is pretty accurate."

Geneva General Hospital, Geneva, saw 5 cases over the last year, all coming in to the emergency room, and suspected one other. Four were married and 3 were medicaid patients. This hospital has no established policy for recording incidence of battered women.

#### Police Comments

The Police Department in Canandaigua, New York, responded as follows:

"Our records indicate approximately twenty calls per month under the category--'Family Trouble,' as well as numerous calls falling under the various categories you indicate in Question 4.

"Approximately 90% of these calls (complaints) are taken care

of by referrals to other agencies (i.e. family court, Social Services, etc.) or by direct police action (other than arrest) -- therefore, since there is no 'explanatory' report filled out in the majority of these cases, we have no way of knowing which complaints deal with 'battered women' unless an arrest is made or a General Report made out..."

#### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, 40 petitions were filed in family court, 28 of them by wives. In 22 cases, the charge against the husband was assault. Threat or harassment was charged in the remaining cases.

We can project that 84 petitions will be filed by wives against their husbands during 1977.



## ORANGE COUNTY

Orange County is located in southern New York State, bordered by the Hudson River to the east and the State of New Jersey to the south.

The 1970 total population was 221,657 and projected to reach 275,000 by 1980. Of the total, 25.19%, including 28,059 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. There was a total of 65,607 households in Orange County, of which 46,984 were husband/wife families. The population was 94% white.

The median income for families in 1970 was \$10,130.00, and 15.9% had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. Unemployment is quite high, particularly among minority groups, which make up 6.9% of the Orange County population.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter requesting the names of those agencies offering assistance to battered women, Commissioner Henry Parry of the Orange County Department of Social Services called to inform us that he knew of no such services in his county.

Through another source, however, we learned the name of a counseling service which comes into contact with battered women: Outreach, in Port Jervis. A questionnaire was sent, and the agency responded, reporting a total of 37 battered women whom they had seen within the last year. The majority of cases of battering were revealed only incidentally during the course of counseling. Although exact figures were unavailable, the women sought a variety of services, including shelter, counseling, legal, and social services.

Twenty-eight women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Thirty were married and thirty-two had children.

Most of the clients served by Outreach are low income. None of the women were employed or had any financial resources of their own. Only one woman left home and did not return.

Twenty referrals were made to public social service agencies and 10 to lawyers.

Sylvia Pruzan, who runs Outreach, stated that she is still seeking funding for the service.

She also commented that there is a Community Emergency Shelter in Middletown, with three rooms available. However, they must be shared and are only for short-term shelter. "It is not a program that can provide all the variety of needs for battered women and their children." A copy of our questionnaire was to be given to the shelter by Ms. Pruzan, but no answer was received.

#### Hospitals

Eight hospitals and 2 health-related facilities were contacted. There were 3 returns, reporting as follows:

Orange County Department of Health responded negatively to question 1, and therefore did not fill out the rest of the questionnaire.

St. Francis Hospital of Port Jervis indicated that they do not encounter battered women, then commented, "However, since there is an increased amount of information in the news media and as a result of this request for information, we intend to give closer scrutiny to the possibilities of such cases. We have alerted

our Social Services Director and our Emergency Department."

Arden Hill Hospital, Goshen, replied by letter, saying in part, "Effective April 1, 1977, service is available to our emergency room patients (see the attached memo). Record-keeping will automatically be an adjunct to this service, as all cases will be reported to us, even if the woman declines any counsel." The memo referred to contains an excellent policy statement and broad procedural outline. It is as follows:

POLICY:

Supportive Services are to be made available to women patients who come to the emergency room for treatment due to physical abuse caused by their male partners. Our hospital would be remiss if we did not acknowledge our awareness and the meaning that the 'battered woman' has to her whole family unit, specifically the implications that it has for the emotional and physical health of the parties' children.

PROCEDURE:

The Emergency Room nurse or the Emergency Room doctor shall make known to the battered woman that there is a hospital staff person available to whom she might talk out her experience and feelings, to ease her psychic pain; that if she expresses interest in this counseling service, that the Medical Social Worker shall be called for such an interview.

This form of crisis intervention or supportive service can be described as follows - non-judgemental listening, and a communicating to the woman that there are services in the community to which she can reach out for counseling, to gain self-awareness

regarding how and why she is in this kind of relationship, and counsel to sort out her feelings about where she wants to go with her relationship with the abusing partner.

Implicit in the process is assessment regarding to what extent the unit's children may be adversely affected, and a request for Preventative Child Welfare services will be made where indicated, if there is consent from the woman.

A directory of confirmed resources for referral purposes is available.

The Medical Social Worker is to be notified even if it is not a time when this employee is normally available."

#### Police Comments

"The Family Court is a hold over from a time when men were the masters of their homes. Since equality is the presently held ideal all offenses between family members should be handled by the Criminal Courts." -- Blooming Grove Police Department.

"Subjects all arrested on harassment charges, arraigned and released on own recognizance pending Family Court action." -- Town of Deerpark Police Department, Huguenot, New York.

"Nearly all our 'battered women' are the result of family arguments where the husband beats the wife. The wife signs a complaint and the husband is arrested and brought into Middletown City Court. The judge normally transfers the case to Family Court." -- Middletown Police Department.

The police Department in the Town of Wallkill, Middletown,

New York, said that "cases of this type are turned over to the State Police." Pending the arrival of State Police, Wallkill Police will respond to calls.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for the first 4 months of 1977 show a total of 138 petitions filed, 110 by wives against their husbands. In 41 cases, ~~the~~ charge was assault, with threat or harassment charged in the remaining 69 cases.

Based on these figures, we can project 330 wives filing charges against their husbands in Orange County Family Court in 1977. A figure of this size, which we can safely assume is only the "tip of the iceberg", points to a need to which the Department of Social Services must address itself.

## ORLEANS COUNTY

Orleans County is located in northwestern New York State on the shores of Lake Ontario. The population in 1970 was 37,305, projected to climb to 40,277 by 1980. Of those over 25 years of age, 31.4% have only an eighth grade education or less. There are no large cities within Orleans County, so 45% of its population commutes to work outside its borders.

Of the total population, 23.4%, including 4,442 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The population is 95% white. Husband/wife families accounted for 8,125 of the 11,320 households in the county.

In 1970 the median family income was \$10,119.00, with 15.2% of those families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. According to the Title XX profile, the average unemployment rate for those in the 25 - 65 age group was 14%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to the letter which was sent to the county Department of Social Services, the Director of Social Services, Helen Brinsmail, and the coordinator of the Information and Referral Service, Pat Hills, forwarded a list of those agencies which they believed might come in contact with or give aid to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to ten of the agencies on the list and seven responded: two public social service agencies, four private social service agencies, and one legal aid group.

Since none of these agencies was organized to deal with this problem, it was surprising that all of them had come in contact

with battered women within the last year. A total of 85 cases of battered women were reported, of whom 66 were married. Almost all of the women were referred by other agencies or heard of the service through word of mouth.

According to the agencies, the greatest number of the women were seeking counseling (32) and/or legal advice (44), with several seeking shelter facilities which are unavailable in Orleans County.

The women came from all over the county. Where figures were available, it was found that the vast majority (92%) were under the age of 40, and over 80% of all the women had children, most under the age of 12. All income levels were represented, although most women were at the lower end of the income scale, with little or no financial resources of their own. This, however, is not surprising, given the economic conditions of the county.

#### Hospitals

In Orleans County, we sent 4 questionnaires, 2 to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities. We received one reply, from Medina Memorial Hospital, Medina, telling us that they do not encounter battered women, and have no recording mechanism established.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics reveal a total of 17 petitions filed in the first 4 months of 1977, 12 of them by wives. Only 7 women charged their husbands with assault, the other 5 charging threat or harassment.

Using these figures, we can project a total of 36 petitions being filed in family court during 1977, of which 21 will contain charges of assault.

## OSWEGO COUNTY

Oswego County is located in the central area of New York State, bounded on the north by Lake Ontario. The county has changed from being a self-sufficient agricultural area to an area dependent upon industry.

The 1970 total population was 100,897, which is projected to reach 117,101 by 1980. There were 29,179 households in Oswego County, of which 21,080 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 24.69%, including 12,897 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 99% of the population is white.

According to 1970 figures, 27.9% of the employed persons in Oswego County work outside the county. The average income for families was \$9,254.00, and 18.19% had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In 1975 the unemployment rate was 14.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our inquiry regarding aid to battered women in Oswego County, we received a letter from Commissioner Rupert J. Collins, Department of Social Services, listing 2 agencies other than police which offer some type of assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to both.

The 2 agencies, the Women's Crisis Center of Oswego and the Farnham Youth Development Center, responded, reporting a total of 13 cases which had come to their attention in the last year, all through hotlines which the agencies run. Three sought shelter as well as counseling, with the rest seeking counseling and legal advice.

Vital statistics were available for only 3 women, all of whom



were between 20 and 40 and were married. Two had children. Only one of the 3 was employed, the other 2 having no financial resources of their own.

The Women's Center and the Farnham Crisis Center provided referrals to public social service agencies (3) and lawyers(10). Both centers offer counseling and hotlines. The Farnham Crisis Center also can provide emergency sleeping quarters.

#### Hospitals

Two questionnaires were sent to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities. We received one reply, from Oswego Hospital, Oswego. They reported seeing 3 battered women in the past year, all of whom came in to the Emergency Room. They were all married, all medicaid patients, and one was admitted to the hospital. All 3 were referred to Legal Services. The hospital reported that they have no established policy for recording such cases.

#### Police Comments

"Due to our method of filing complaints, the above information had to be taken from our arrest records. Therefore, the above figures reflect only those cases in which an arrest was made."

-- Sheriff, Oswego, New York.

#### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, 28 petitions were filed, 19 of them by wives against their husbands. Seven petitions contained charges of assault, with 11 others charging threat or harassment.

We can project from this that in 1977 57 wives will file charges against their husbands in Oswego County.

## OTSEGO COUNTY

Otsego County is located in the eastern half of New York State, in the foothills of the Catskills. It is composed of 24 rural townships, 10 incorporated villages and one city.

The total 1970 population was 56,181, with no large growth expected by 1980. There were a total of 16,785 households, of which 11,640 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 24.81%, including 7,458 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 99% of the population is white.

The 1975 estimated median income was \$11,832.00, and according to present eligibility standards, 38.6% of the population are financially eligible for services from the Department of Social Services. Because of the area's reliance on summer tourism, unemployment is high in the winter months. In August 1977 it was only 7.8%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our inquiry regarding aid to battered women in Otsego County, we received a list of 5 agencies that might be of assistance from Commissioner Alton Shillieto of the Department of Social Services.

Questionnaires were sent to all 5 with only 1 responding: the Department of Social Services. They reported an estimated total of 30 cases within the last year. Almost all of the women sought counseling and social services; 50% sought shelter (which the Department does not provide) and 10% sought legal Services.

All of the women were under the age of 40; 95% of them were married, and had children.

The income levels of the women's families ranged from low to moderate. Only 10% were employed, and 95% had no financial resources of their own.

All of the women were given some help within the agency. In addition, 15% were referred to lawyers, 10% to private social service agencies, and 5% to hospitals.

#### Hospitals

Four questionnaires were sent, two to hospitals and two to health-related facilities. Both hospitals responded.

Aurelia Osborn Fox Memorial Hospital, Oneonta, replied by letter, saying, "...the incidence at Fox Memorial Hospital is so infrequent that data cannot be furnished at this time."

The Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital replied as follows:

"Unfortunately, we are unable to provide you with the information you wish on your questionnaire. We do not keep data on battered women as diagnostic category. ..Though it is possible that these patients get diagnosed within other categories, we have no data to support even that assumption....

"While I do not doubt that this phenomenon occurs in this area, may I suggest that among our predominantly rural (and small town) population, there may be greater reluctance than in urban societies for women to seek medical help following an assault.

"Unless we should get some sense of an increase in this..., we probably would not develop a screening process and a diagnostic label for this problem. All patients who exhibit any kind of unusual stress and anxiety regarding an injury, would get

referred to psychiatry and/or social work..."

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of 1977 reveal a total of 6 petitions filed, all by wives against their husbands. Only one women charged her husband with assault.

From these statistics, we can project a total of 18 petitions filed by wives in 1977, of which only three will contain charges of assault. Based on the information received from only one agency, we find this figure surprisingly low.

#### Police Comments

"In almost all cases the woman drops charges. Also, the courts are far too easy on offenders." -- Unadilla Police Department.

"...records are not specifically kept concerning this type of complaints..." -- Oneonta Police Department.

## PUTNAM COUNTY

Putnam County is located in southern New York State, bounded on the east by Connecticut, on the west by the Hudson River, on the north by Dutchess County, and on the south by Westchester. The majority of Putnam County's population, approximately 63%, commute to points outside the county to work.

The 1970 total population was 56,696, with a 40% increase expected by 1980. Of a total of 15,995 households, 12,962 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 25.76%, including 7,699 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 99% of the residents are white.

The median income for families in 1970 was \$11,996.00, with 11.3% having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 the unemployment rate was 7%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, the Office of the Social Services Commissioner notified us of two individuals living in Putnam County who, they believed, would be able to give us information. We contacted both women, who are active in feminist groups in Putnam County. One of them, Jody Israel, edits a paper called the Feminist Bulletin, but had no information regarding battered women other than an article her paper had published. The other woman, who is active in the Putnam N.O.W., had no information herself, but referred us to the N.O.W. Task Force on Wife Abuse in Southern Westchester (which is included in our Westchester County profile).

We therefore have no direct information from Putnam County.

#### Hospitals

We contacted 2 hospitals in this county and one of them responded. Putnam Community Hospital in Carmel reported that they do encounter battered women but have no recording mechanism for such cases and do not have statistics available.

#### Family Court

A total of 37 petitions were filed in or referred to family court in the first 4 months of 1977. Thirty-three petitions were filed by wives, 19 of whom charged their husbands with assault, the other 14 charging threat or harassment.

Based on this, we can expect that 111 wives will file charges against their husbands in 1977.

## RENSSELAER COUNTY

Rensselaer County is located in eastern New York State, bounded on the east by the States of Vermont and Massachusetts. Because it is primarily a rural county with few industries located within its boundaries, a large percentage of the labor force works outside the county. Most of the people of Rensselaer County live along the Hudson River in or near the Cities of Troy or Rensselaer.

The 1970 population was 152,510, projected to increase to 159,950 by 1980. Of a total of 47,322 households, 31,638 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 24.16%, including 18,617 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The population is 97.2% white.

The median family income in 1970 was \$10,087.00, with 14.6% having incomes below \$5,000.00. In April 1976 the unemployment rate was 8.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our correspondence regarding aid to battered women, we received a letter from Mrs. Judith B. Marks, Staff Development Assistant of the Department of Social Services, listing 7 agencies other than hospitals which would offer assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all 7, with 6 responding.

Only one agency did not come in contact with battered women, but 3 of the 5 who did see battered women did not have any statistics on the problem.

One of these agencies, the Department of Social Services, said that most of the battered women were previously known to the department and that caseworkers had been working with them in relation to other problems within the family structure. "Most

of those [battered women] are in need of medical attention. Thus, medical bills are sent to this department for payment. If the diagnosis indicates abuse, the case is sent to a social service team for counseling."

Another agency which encountered battered women but was unable to supply any statistics was the Unity House Street Ministry in Troy. Virtually all of the women they saw were from lower income families and had children. They stated that "although [we are] lacking statistical information, it is believed that wife abuse is a pressing problem in our community. This belief is predicated in the incidence of self-reported abuse from the one mother's group with which the agency is involved and from numerous women coming to this agency seeking shelter... There seems to be a widespread ignorance concerning the need for services to women, as well as a reluctance to become involved, as wife abuse is not yet considered a problem in its own right, but rather as resulting from idiosyncratic domestic relations."

The two agencies which did have statistics on the problem, the Family and Children's Service and the Alcoholism Center of Rensselaer County, both of Troy, reported a total of 66 cases. Forty-six were referred (including 5 from the Probation Department) and 20 came on their own initiative for assistance. Nine sought legal services, 57 counseling, and 20 medical services.

Fifty-seven women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Forty-six were married, and 56 had children.

All but 5 women had family incomes under \$10,000.00. Seventeen



women were employed.

Twenty-five referrals were made by the agencies to hospitals, 5 to lawyers and 3 to public social service agencies.

#### Hospitals

A total of 9 questionnaires were sent, 3 to hospitals and 6 to health-related facilities. We heard from one in each category. The Samaritan Hospital, Troy, reported that they do not keep statistics on the incidence of battered women requesting service. The Rensselaer County Department of Health, on the other hand, did have information available, though they stated that they do not have an established policy or mechanism for recording incidence of battered women. They reported seeing 6 such cases in the past year and 24 suspected cases, all of whom came to Social Services. The 6 women ranged in age from 22 to 50 and were evenly divided as to married and unmarried. Five were medicaid patients.

#### Family Court

A total of 92 petitions were filed in Family Court during the first four months of 1977. Seventy-seven were filed by wives, of whom 64 charged their husbands with assault, 10 with threat or harassment and 3 with other charges.

Using these statistics to project a total for 1977, we can expect 231 petitions to be filed by wives in Rensselaer County, of whom 192 will charge their husbands with assault.

Police Comments

"Battered men, women and children are a symptom of disintegrating family structure. These statistics show a distorted view. While most of the time the male may be arrested, he is not necessarily the sole aggressor in a given situation." -- East Greenbush Police Department.

"If it is a husband and wife it is a Family Offense and sent to Family Court after a 72-hour waiting period, because most of the time the woman withdraws the complaint before 72 hours." -- Hoosick Falls Police Department.

"Most of the cases of adult battered women are a result of husband and wife arguments. [14 out of 32] refused to press charges, although warrants were advised by the officer at the scene." -- Troy Police Department.

## ROCKLAND COUNTY

Rockland County is located in southern New York State, bordered by New Jersey on the south and the Hudson River on the east. It is primarily a residential or "bedroom" community for neighboring New York City, although several large industries are located there. The population of Rockland County in 1970 was 229,903, and was projected to reach 279,223 by 1980. Approximately 92% of the population is white. Of the total 25.93%, including 32,160 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. There were 60,359 households in Rockland County, 47,732 of them being husband/wife families.

According to the 1970 Census, the median family income was \$13,753.00, with approximately 8.4% of the families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment was at 6.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, Ruth Northrup, Supervisor of Family Services of the Rockland Department of Social Services, forwarded a list of agencies which would provide assistance: she noted that only one of these agencies, the Volunteer Counseling Service in New City, provided services specifically oriented to the needs of battered women.

Thirteen questionnaires were mailed to the agencies listed by Ms. Northrup. Six responses were received.

Two agencies, the Nyack Consultation Center and the Salvation Army, did not come in contact with battered women, although the latter did mention having had contact about "harassment".

The Rockland County Guidance Center was also unable to supply us with statistics, although they did note that several battered women had come to their attention in the last year. They sought a variety of services -- counseling, shelter, legal and social

services. The women were between the ages of 20 and 40 and came from low income families.

The other agencies responding were the Volunteer Counseling Service, Catholic Charities of Nanuet, and the Rockland County Department of Social Services. The three agencies reported seeing a total of 102 battered women among them.

The twenty women reported by the Volunteer Counseling Service only included those seen by a special committee on battered women. Many more were seen by other counselors doing marriage counseling or working with adolescents, when battering came up incidentally to other problems. As the original purpose of the service was to provide counseling for persons involved in Family Court actions, all of the women came through probation and referral. The women ranged in age from 18 to 56, most were married and many had children. The family income levels ranged from welfare to professional. Referrals were made to lawyers and public social service agencies.

Of the remaining 82 cases, 79 came from the Department of Social Services. They were already on public assistance when the battering came to the attention of their caseworkers. They received counseling and social services from the Department.

Of the three battered women seen by the Catholic Charities, two came through referral and one on her own initiative. One woman sought shelter, (which the agency does not provide), two legal and social services, one hospital and medical services, and all three counseling.

Of the 82 women seen by the two agencies, 61 were between the ages of 20 and 40, and 52 were married. The Department of Social Services did not include statistics on children, but the Catholic

Charities reported that all three of the women they saw had children.

As previously stated, the women seen by the Department of Social Services were at the public assistance level. Those seen by the Catholic Charities had incomes ranging from \$8-15,000.

### Hospitals

Out of 5 questionnaires sent to hospitals and 3 to health-related facilities, 3 questionnaires were returned.

Nyack Hospital in Nyack reported incidence of battered women to be very rare and recalled only 1 in the past year. She came in to the Emergency Room. They were not able to supply any other information and commented that unless notified in advance of what information would be needed they would not be able to institute a survey.

Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern recalled two cases of battering in the past year, one battered woman and one battered man. They were unable to supply any other information and commented, "We do not presently keep statistics on reported or suspected cases of battery except those involving child abuse."

Summit Park Hospital in Pomona replied that they are a chronic disease - rehabilitation hospital and, lacking an emergency room, do not treat battered individuals.

### Police Comments

The following comment, received from Haverstraw Police Department, is typical of those made by officers in Rockland County responding to our questionnaire:

"The present system of reporting does not include a section

for this type of crime. Due to this fact, it is almost impossible to report on the incidence of such crimes within our jurisdiction. We do know, however, that there are many incidents during a reporting year. It would be helpful if this were a reportable offense listed on the monthly reports..."

#### Family Court

In the first four months of 1977, 94 petitions were filed in Rockland County Family Court. Sixty-eight were filed by wives, of whom 44 charged their husbands with assault.

Projecting a 12-month total from these figures, we can expect 204 women to file charges against their husbands in Family Court in 1977, and 132 to charge their husbands with assault.

## SAINT LAWRENCE COUNTY

St. Lawrence County is a predominantly rural area, located in northern New York State. The greatest concentration of population can be found within the St. Lawrence River Valley, with settlement becoming quite sparse in the Adirondack Mountain area. Isolation, due to climatic conditions, sparse distribution of population over a large geographic area, and lack of availability of public transportation within the county is an important factor in the difficulty of delivery of social services.

Although it is the largest county in the state, the 1970 total population was only 11,991, with an increase of 10% expected by 1980. Of a total of 30,354 households in 1970, 21,705 were husband/wife families. There were 23.68%, including 13,163 women, between the ages of 20 and 40, and 99.4% of the population was white.

The 1970 median family income was \$8,667.00, with 20.3% of the families in St. Lawrence County having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. A combination of high seasonal unemployment, a sharp decline in the number of farms within the county, and the recession have resulted in a low per capita income. In 1975 unemployment averaged 14.4%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for the names of those agencies offering assistance to battered women, Commissioner Donald Kitchin informed us that there are no definite organizations other than police, family court and the Department of Social Services who would be involved in providing services to these women. If necessary, the Department of Social Services can arrange for the

women to be placed in Adult Homes or receive housing through the Salvation Army or Catholic Charities.

The Commissioner also mentioned in his letter that some women in the county planned to organize a group in the near future to help battered women.

A questionnaire was sent to the St. Lawrence County Department of Social Services for further information, but no answer was received.

#### Hospitals

Out of a total of 9 questionnaires mailed -- 6 to hospitals, and 3 to health-related facilities -- we received one reply. Massena Memorial Hospital in Massena reported that they do encounter cases of battered women but that at the present time they have no way to keep the statistics we requested. Consequently, they were unable to complete the questionnaire.

#### Police Comments

"...we do not keep records in this regard. It would be impossible to retrieve the data from our files. The only exception might possibly be in cases where arrests are made and even then the job would be a monumental one." -- Village of Massena Police Department.

#### Family Court

Of 34 petitions filed in or referred to family court during the first 4 months of 1977, 27 were filed by wives. Thirteen wives charged their husbands with assault, 13 with threat or harassment, and 1 with another charge.

We can project that in 1977 102 wives will file charges against their husbands.



## SARATOGA COUNTY

Saratoga County is located in eastern New York, near the Albany area. The northern half of the county is predominantly rural, with the northwest corner located within the Adirondack Forest Preserve. The southern part of the county is more heavily populated, with a large percentage of employed residents commuting to work outside the county.

In 1970 total population was 121,764, and was expected to increase to over 168,000 by 1980. Of a total of 35,686 households, 27,024 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 25.79% including 16,607 women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 98% of the people in Saratoga County are white.

The 1970 median income for families in Saratoga County was \$10,500.00, and 13.5% had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment was at 7.3% countywide.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter regarding aid to battered women, an answer was received from a caseworker in the Department of Social Services. He stated that the agency was not aware of any organization, other than the various county agencies such as public assistance and family court which would specifically offer aid to battered women. A questionnaire was sent to the case supervisor of the public assistance service of the Department of Social Services, but no answer was received.

### Hospitals

We contacted 3 hospitals and 2 health-related facilities.

Our one reply was from Planned Parenthood of Warren, Washington, and Saratoga Counties. They commented, "We know of incidences through clinic interviews but have no retrieval system for numbers, referrals, etc."

#### Family Court

Sixty-three petitions were filed in Saratoga County Family Court during the first 4 months of 1977. Forty-five were filed by wives against their husbands, with 13 filing charges of assault.

This gives a project figures of 129 petitions filed by wives for 1977.

## SCHENECTADY COUNTY

Schenectady County is located in central-eastern New York State. It has an area of only 207.5 sq. miles, and half of the population lives within the City of Schenectady. The 1970 population was 160,979, with a slight decrease projected for 1980, and was 97.4% white. Of a total of 53,472 households, there were 36,915 husband/wife families. Of the total population, 23.22%, including 19,334 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The median family income in 1970 was \$10,702.00, with 12.9% of families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In July 1975 the unemployment rate was 8.1%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our inquiry regarding services for battered women in Schenectady County, we received a letter from Olive McGauley of the Department of Social Services. She noted a meeting convened by the Critical Issues Committee of the Human Services Planning Council to discuss the problem of battered women and domestic violence. She listed six agencies other than police and family court which were represented. Questionnaires were sent to all six as well as to the chairperson of the committee and to three other agencies listed by a responding agency.

A total of five questionnaires were returned: one public social service agency, three private social service agencies, and one women's group.

Only one group, Planned Parenthood of Schenectady, was unable to complete the questionnaire due to a lack of statistics. They stated that battered women do come to their office, but for other reasons. "However, if it should come to the attention of a staff member, they would try to find a referral which could help...if she

woman."

The other four agencies which responded reported a total of 87 cases of battered women within the last year. Almost all of the women heard of the services available through referrals or word of mouth. 43 women sought legal services, 29 shelter, 22 counseling and 45 social services.

Where statistics were available, 75% of the women seen were between the ages of 20 and 40, 72 of the 87 women were married, and 58 had children.

Two of the agencies responding did not have information on family income. The other two reported their clients were low or low middle income. Only 9 women had any financial resources of their own.

Two of the responding agencies can provide shelter for battered women, the YWCA and the Humane Society. The Humane Society did comment, however, that "we get no payment for battered women and their children. We can take more of them - but would need some payment for their stay - so - we hope for legislation permitting public agencies (Department of Social Services) to pay a per diem rate in these emergencies."

The YWCA stated that they have dozens of emergency referrals each year. "We house and assist women and their children on a temporary basis in any crisis - although family violence is a major reason." The YWCA also provides counseling for battered women.

Among the four answering agencies, there were 54 referrals to lawyers and family court and 48 to public social service agencies.

### Hospitals

We sent 5 questionnaires to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities. We received 2 replies: St. Claire's Hospital, Schenectady, responded by letter, saying in part: "We cannot complete the questionnaire...because of the difficulty of securing this information. As you probably know, many women will not admit, for whatever reason, to being assaulted by a member of the same household, or even an unrelated member..."

Carver Comprehensive Community Health Center, Schenectady, replied that they do not encounter battered women.

### Family Court

Of the 57 petitions filed in or referred to family court during the first four months of 1977, 45 were filed by wives against their husbands. Of these petitions, 80%, or 36, contained charges of assault, with the remaining petitions charging threat or harassment.

We can from these figures project that 171 wives will file charges against their husbands in 1977 in Schenectady County.

## SCHOHARIE COUNTY

Schoharie County is located in central-eastern New York State, west of Albany County. There are no cities within the county, which is geographically subdivided into 16 townships. The population is small, sparsely scattered and rural oriented. The 1970 Census indicated a total of 27,750 people living in Schoharie County and projected a growth of approximately 50% by 1980.

Of a total of 7,268 households in Schoharie County in 1970, 5,337 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 21.66% including 2,740 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The residents are 99.3% white.

The median family income in 1970 was \$8,278.00, with 25.2% of all families residing in Schoharie County having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In 1977 unemployment was at 11.8%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter to the Schoharie County Department of Social Services, the Director of Social Services, Dianne Hendrickson, sent us the names of two public social service agencies, other than family court, which would offer some assistance to battered women. Ms. Hendrickson stated, "There are no private voluntary agencies in this county with programs of this type, as far as we know."

Questionnaires were sent to both agencies, the Department of Social Services and the County Mental Health Clinic. A response was received from the Department of Social Services only.

The Department had seen 3 battered women within the last year.

All were walk-ins and sought counseling, and legal and social services. According to the Department, only one woman wanted shelter. All 3 women were married and had children and two were between the ages of 20 and 40.

Family income level was unknown, although the Department was aware that none of the three women were employed or had any financial resources of their own.

All three women stayed with their husbands and did not leave home at any time, although the Department did refer them to family court.

#### Hospitals

Two questionnaires were mailed in this county, one to a hospital and one to a health-related facility. The Community Hospital of Schoharie County in Cobleskill, replied by letter, as follows: "We do not index visits to our Emergency Room and have no procedure to retrieve this information. There have been no hospital admissions with final diagnosis in this category."

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for the first 4 months of 1977 reveal a total of 17 petitions filed in Schoharie County. Ten were filed by wives, of whom three charged their husbands with assault, and seven with threat or harassment.

This indicates that in 1977 as a whole 30 wives will file charges against their husbands in this county.

## SCHUYLER COUNTY

Schuyler County is located in south central New York State. In 1970, 72.6% of the county population was classified as rural non-farm, while 10.7% was considered rural farm. There are no cities in Schuyler County and only 12 townships and villages. The 1970 Census indicated a total population of 16,737 with an increase of 1,500 expected by 1980. Less than 1% of the population is non-white. Of a total of 5,073 households in 1970, there were 3,734 husband/wife families. Of the total population, 22.67%, including 1,924 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40.

The median family income in 1970 was \$8,394.00, with 18.9% having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 the unemployment rate was 8.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

A letter was received from Acting Commissioner Katheryn R. Doolittle in response to our inquiry regarding aid to battered women in Schuyler County. The Commissioner listed two public social service agencies in addition to police and probation departments which might be of service.

Questionnaires were sent to both agencies (the Department of Social Services and the Mental Health Department). Only the Department of Social Services answered. They reported that five battered women had come to their attention within the last year.

All of the women sought counseling and 4 sought legal aid. In addition, one woman needed medical assistance and another social services.

All were between the ages of 20 and 30. Three were married, the other two living with men. All of the women had children.



The family income ranged between \$8,000.00 and \$12,000.00. Two of the women were employed.

The five women were referred to the Probation Department for further counseling and possible family court action. In all but one case, court action was initiated and then rescinded, and the couples were reunited.

Acting Commissioner Doolittle stated: "There have been very few cases (of battered women) in Schuyler County over the years. This is not to say, it does not occur -- only that, usually through fear, the incidents are never reported."

#### Hospitals

Only one questionnaire was mailed to this county, to a hospital. It was returned by the Chairman of the Schuyler County Legislature, who said, "As far as our Home Health Agency can determine, we had no such cases for 1976."

#### Police Comments

"The...figures are mere guesses...We do not keep any statistics in this matter and they are all categorized under assault, menacing, reckless endangerment, or family offense." -- Schuyler County Sheriff, Watkins Glen.

#### Family Court

Family court statistics for the first 4 months of 1977 reveal that of the 11 petitions filed 10 were filed by wives against their husbands. Six women charged their husbands with assault, while the other four charged threat or harassment.

We can from this project that 30 wives will file charges against their husbands in Schuyler County in 1977.

## SENECA COUNTY

Seneca County is located in midwestern New York State, In 1970, it had a total population of 35,083, which was not projected to greatly increase by 1980.

Husband/wife families accounted for 7,207 of the 9,853 households in 1970. Of the total population, 22.95%, including 4,000 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 98% of the population is white.

The median family income was \$9,606.00, and 16.1% of the families residing in the county had incomes below \$5,000.00. In 1975 unemployment was at 6.3% overall.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, we received a letter from Cecelia M. Smith, Supervisor of Services, of the Seneca County Department of Social Services. She listed five agencies, other than Probation and Police Departments, that would work with battered women.

All five agencies were sent questionnaires, but only three responded.

The Seneca County Department of Social Services stated that, although battered women were seen by the agency, they were unable to supply us with any further information because no statistics are kept on battered women. However, Ms. Smith did remark, "As the direct result of your survey, a request was passed to all units within our Department to begin keeping such information as you've requested."

The Seneca County Mental Helath Clinic was also unable to supply statistics on battered women, but did say that many cases had come to their attention within the last year. For the most part, the women sought counseling, although the clinic did make referrals to lawyers, clergy, family court police, and social service agencies.

Most of the women were married and almost all had children. The women came from families of low and middle income.

The Family Counseling Service of Seneca County also saw battered women, but most often in the context of other presenting problems. They reported a total of 8 battered women, 7 of whom came through referrals. All had come for counseling.

Seven were between the ages of 20 and 40. Only 4 of the women were married. The income levels of the families were unknown.

#### Hospitals

A total of 3 questionnaires were sent, 2 to hospitals, and 1 to a health-related facility. We received no replies.

#### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, a total of 20 petitions were filed in or referred to family court in Seneca County. Seventeen were filed by wives, of whom 5 charged their husbands with assault, 10 threat or harassment, and 2 with other charges.

## STEUBEN COUNTY

Steuben County is located in the southern tier of New York State. The total population in 1970 was 99,546, of which 25,000 are considered economically disadvantaged by the County Department of Social Services. The population is primarily white American, with only 872 black people in the county. Of a total of 30,751 households, in 1970 21,687 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 22.6%, including 11,727 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The median family income in 1970 was \$9,082.00, with 18.5% having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment was at 7.8%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

A letter was received from Marilouise Heath, Services Supervisor of the Steuben Department of Social Services, in response to our request for information on services for battered women. She listed seven agencies in addition to the probation department and family court which would be willing to assist battered women. She also remarked that no agency in Steuben County can provide emergency housing other than the Welfare Department, and that it was considered to be a real need. At the present time, the Tri-County Action Council in Corning is preparing a proposal to submit to the Federal Government for a residence of this type.

Questionnaires were sent to the seven agencies listed. Five responses were received. Only one agency was unable to supply statistics: the Steuben County Department of Social Services. Mrs. Heath stated that, although statistics are not kept on battered women, "The caseworkers in Adult and Family Services in our department concurred that we have many women who would fall under the category of 'battered'...There are eleven caseworkers

in our unit and all were sure that they had encountered at least 25 women during the last year." All of the women sought counseling and social services.

The other four agencies reported a total of 28 battered women (and one battered male) who had come to their attention within the last year. Twenty-five came through referrals, the other three came on their own initiative.

Nineteen women sought counseling, 4 shelter, 8 legal services, 6 hospital services, and 2 social services.

Fourteen women were between the ages of 20 and 40. Twenty-one were married and twenty-four had children. Seven of the children were of pre-school age.

Family income level, when known, ranged from welfare to \$20,000.00 a year. Seventeen women were employed.

Seven women were referred to hospitals, 4 to lawyers, 7 to public social service agencies, and 4 to private social service agencies. In addition, 5 women were referred to the Probation Department for Orders of Protection.

Robert Hovey of the Family Service Society noted that the problem of battered women is a serious one. He remarked, "Local police will/cannot intervene in family disputes. Women don't have much power."

The Steuben County Alcohol Abuse Program reported that, due to the time limitation, they were unable to gather statistics from their counselor in Hornell, but believed that she had seen 4 - 6 battered women in the past year, in addition to those

already reported.

### Hospitals

From a total of 5 mailed -- 4 to hospitals and 1 to a health-related facility -- we had 2 responses.

The Steuben County Public Health Nursing Service did not complete the questionnaire and commented, "...we do not have occasion to see the type of patients described in your letter as would a hospital or private physicians."

Ira Davenport Memorial Hospital, Bath, recalled seeing 3 battered women in the past year, all coming to the Emergency Room. They commented, "These patients are referred to Social Services. Rape Cases are covered by a separate policy and are police reported. We report cases of battered patients if the person wishes to file a legal complaint which few of them do....We don't keep separate files in the Emergency Department."

### Police Comments

"...[just] as many men are battered if not more. It would be interesting to compare." -- Bath Police Department.

"...each man [in our department] has been well-versed in what to do in this type of situation..." -- Village of Canisteo Police Department.

"Any police officer ought to be able to handle a case involving family trouble...We handle same with due care." -- Woodhull Village Police Department.

"Our agency...monitors the entire county, and are often called to 'referee' a family situation. If the woman does not want an arrest

made, we refer them to Family Court, and in the majority of cases, do not keep a written record of these cases. Therefore, the figures provided are, at best, an approximation.

"We also receive a great many calls from women whose ex-husbands return to the home and abuse them there, or in a public place. While you have not included these in your request, we do have a number of these cases...."

#### Family Court

Of the 58 petitions which were filed in or referred to Family Court in the first four months of this year, 39 were filed by wives. Twenty women charged their husbands with assault, while 19 others charged threat or harassment.

From these figures we can project a total of 117 petitions filed by wives during 1977, of which 60 will contain charges of assault.

## SUFFOLK COUNTY

Suffolk County is located on Long Island, east of Nassau County. Suffolk can be divided into three areas, according to level of development. Western Suffolk, the area nearest New York City, has largely developed suburban areas whose growth has already peaked, while Central Suffolk is in the midst of rapid growth and development. Eastern Suffolk is still predominantly rural in nature, showing little permanent population increase.

The total population in 1970 was 1,127,030 and is projected to reach 1,371,471 by 1980. Of 294,487 households in Suffolk County, 240,446 were husband/wife families. Of the total county population, 25.75%, including 153,472 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Over 94% of the population in 1970 was white.

According to 1974 figures, the median income of families in Suffolk County was \$12,084.00, while the average income was \$13,314.00. Of all families, 4.8% had incomes below the poverty level. In 1975 unemployment was at 8.4%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, the Assistant Social Services Commissioner of Suffolk County, Mary Gordon, forwarded a list of those agencies which she felt might be of some assistance. She noted that two of the organizations, the Victims Information Bureau and the Long Island Women's Coalition, were in the process of opening shelters for women in Suffolk.

As to financial assistance available, Ms. Gordon stated:



"...a battered woman would be accepted for assistance at our agency despite the fact that her husband was technically supporting, if she had an Order of Protection or other documentation of her situation. Beyond this, emergency financial aid is available from community organizations such as Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army."

Questionnaires were sent to 27 agencies and organizations, including women's groups, in Suffolk County. Five agencies responded.

All of the agencies reported having seen battered women within the past year.

The Women's Center of Oakdale reported seeing approximately five battered women per month. Most came to their attention through a hotline. The women sought both legal services and counseling, and generally were married, with children. Family income ranged from \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 annually. Evaluation, group therapy, and legal advice were given at the center and referrals were made to the Victims Information Bureau in Hauppauge.

Two social services agencies, the Alternatives Counseling Center and the Family Service League, reported a total of 40 cases of battered women within the last year. Thirty-six of the women sought counseling, and 11 legal services. Thirty-two were between the ages of 20 and 40. All of the women were married, and 38 had children. The women were from families of all income levels, and 18 were employed. Fifteen referrals were made to lawyers and five were made to public social service agencies.

Jesse Nemtzwow of the Family Service League stated:

"In the main, the women are financially dependent on their husbands, have dependent children, and took abuse from their husbands because they felt they had no other choice except to leave and go on welfare...Attitudes of police regarding family violence need to be changed since it is felt by members of our staff that the 'scope of battering is greater than [is] ever reported.' Women fear reporting and also have no place to go. Need for immediate and short-term shelters as residences is great as is the [need] to secure immediate financial aid for victims of abuse and [their] children."

The Long Island Women's Coalition, one of the agencies seeking to open a shelter, reported having six or seven battered women come to their attention each week. Almost all of the women came through a N.O.W. hotline, with the rest hearing of the Coalition by word of mouth. All of the women wanted counseling and approximately half needed legal advice. In addition, Linda Lane, the Director of the Coalition, stated that all of the women sought shelter and some were desperate about it.

Information on the women's ages was unavailable, but it was known that those who came were married and almost all had children. Family income ranged from blue collar to professional levels, although few of the women were employed.

The Coalition offers counseling, help with food, legal aid and advice. In addition, they refer all of the women to the Victims Information Bureau for further help. They hope to have funding for a shelter shortly, which they would like to make as

non-institutional as possible. At the present time, their entire staff is composed of volunteers, some of whom were battered women themselves.

The Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk (VIBS) is the prime referral for victims of rape, sexual assault, battered spouses, and persons involved in domestic disputes. The bureau consists of a 24-hour hotline staffed with mobile outreach counselors and a walk-in center located in Hauppauge. It is a non-profit agency, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, supplying 24-hour crisis intervention, mediation, short-term counseling, and referral.

The VIBS had 4,600 hotline calls in the last year, of which 95% were from battered women: 400 of the women who became part of the VIBS caseload, that is, the women who became counseling cases, were battered women.

The average age of the women was 35 and approximately 98% were married. The vast majority had children, most of whom were pre-teen; 75% came from families with incomes below \$5,000.00, and only 10% of the women were employed.

More than half of the women contacting the VIBS sought counseling, while 15% also wanted legal advice and social services. James Walsh, the Executive Director of VIBS, noted that the majority of the women who came for help want to stay in the marriage, but want the violence to stop.

In reference to the outcome of the counseling, Mr. Walsh stated: "The majority [of battered women seen] never leave home. However, with our assistance, the battering stops. In every case with both husband and wife in counseling, violence stopped in

three weeks." The VIBS believes that theirs is a unique treatment model. Although the marriage may continue to be bad, the husband and wife can then work out their problems without violence.

No mention was made in the questionnaire of establishing a shelter.

### Hospitals

We sent a total of 27 questionnaires, 13 to hospitals and 14 to health-related facilities. Our 9 returns reported as follows:

Hoch Psychiatric Center, West Brentwood: "After checking out the records of Hoch and Northeast Nassau Psychiatric Centers, we

were unable to find any cases of 'battered women'."

Planned Parenthood of Northern Suffolk, Huntington,

PPNS: First noting that they do not encounter battered women, they then commented: "If we get a call or visit from a battered woman, we can refer her to Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk."

The John T. Mather Memorial Hospital, Port Jefferson: They saw 8 battered women in the past year, all coming to the Emergency Room and all referred to the Social Services Department. None were medicaid. The majority were aged 31 to 40 and 6 of them were married. Their recording mechanism, as outlined by the Supervisor of Social Services, is to keep records on all patients seen, coded by a colored marker and to keep a list "as seen". They advise the women of legal rights, including how to avoid being charged with abandonment, provide immediate psychological counseling, and urge that the patient let them contact VIBS for continuous counseling and legal help. The Supervisor commented: "The low number of women seen indicates the embarrassment victims feel. The problem is far more prevalent than statistics show...Having

been in this situation personally as well as professionally, I can attest to the need for crisis centers, counseling services, emergency housing and hotlines to deal with this problem. Violence becomes a learned attitude, whether in child or wife abuse and is destructive to everyone involved."

St. John's Smithtown Hospital, Smithtown, reported 13 battered women (figure approximate) in the last year and an additional 13 suspected cases. All were seen in the Emergency Room and were referred either to the Social Services Department (9 to 5) or to N.O.W. (after 5 p.m.).

Smithtown General Hospital, Smithtown: "Our Emergency Department records are filed alphabetically by patient's name. Therefore, it is difficult to adequately fill out the attached questionnaire. Enclosed is an approximation of the amount of patients seen and referral bureaus to which they were sent." They reported approximately 20, all Emergency Room cases and all referred to VIBS.

Syosset Hospital, Syosset, saw 3 battered women, all under 21 and 2 unmarried, in the past year. All came to the Emergency Room. They commented: "If patient states that she was assaulted by spouse or boyfriend, it is documented as 'pt. states'. We do not document suspicions...I think each hospital should have the same policy for 'battered women' as for child abuse. If suspicious cases can be reported, more patients will receive the proper treatment and the proper follow-up..."

Lakeside Hospital, Copiague: This hospital maintains a 24-hour hotline for victims of sexual assault and family violence. They saw 7 battered women in the last year, all in the Emergency Room,

and another 7 suspected. Statistics were based on 1976 Emergency Room cases.

Good Samaritan Hospital, West Islip: "I regret to inform you that neither the Emergency Department, the Medical Records Department, nor the Social Services Department keeps or has kept such records."

Eastern Long Island Hospital, Greenport: "...our Medical Records Department has checked their files and finds no such cases to report."

#### Police Comments

"Complaintant would be taken to Suffolk Police Department for interview by trained female police officer at her request."

-- Village of Head of the Harbor Police Department, St. James, New York.

"About 90% of our 'battered women' are not touched physically...

Also...our referrals to Family Court go to an intake section where counseling and social services try to handle the problem before resorting to the courts." -- Amityville Police Department. The County of Suffolk Police Department reported that they do not have information in an available form.

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of 1977 reveal a total of 620 petitions filed, transferred, or referred to Family Court. 559 petitions were filed by wives, of whom 259 charged assault and 296 charged threat or harassment.

Using these statistics, we can project a total of 1,677 petitions filed by wives in 1977; 877 women can be expected to file charges of assault against their husbands. Clearly, a shelter should be a priority in Suffolk County.

## SULLIVAN COUNTY

Sullivan County is located in the Catskill Mountains of southern New York State. It is bordered on the east by the Delaware River, which separates the county from the State of Pennsylvania.

The total population in 1970 was 52,580 and projected to increase to 67,928 by 1980. Over half of the population lives in the towns of Liberty, Thompson, and Fallsburg.

Of a total of 15,865 households in Sullivan County in 1970, 11,500 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 22.88%, including 5,793 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40, and 93% of the county population is white.

According to the 1970 Census, the median income for families was \$8,893.00; 21.6% of all families had incomes below \$5,000.00. In 1977 unemployment stood at 10.5%, a rather high figure for that year.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on services for battered women, Commissioner Robert Travis forwarded a listing of social service agencies and resources in Sullivan County and noted those agencies that might be of some assistance.

Nine questionnaires were sent, and 7 responses received. Three agencies stated that they did not encounter battered women in their work. A fourth agency was unable to complete the questionnaire because no records were kept on battered women. Joan Schmukler of the Mid-Hudson Valley Legal Services Project, stated: "Our main involvement with such cases is when they come to our office to obtain a divorce on grounds of cruelty. As far as I know, there is really no group within the county that offers

aid to battered women, other than a referral to Family Court."

The three agencies which were able to supply statistics reported a total of 83 cases in the last year.

Twelve women came to their attention through hotlines, 20 through referrals and 7 were already receiving help for other problems. Another 38 women had heard of the agencies through word of mouth.

68 women sought counseling, 24 sought shelter, 24 sought legal services, and 11 hospital services.

Seventy of the 83 battered women seen by these agencies were between the ages of 20 and 40. Sixty-one were married and 56 had children. Twenty-two of the children involved were below the age of 5.

The income levels of the women's families ranged from welfare to \$15,000.00 annually. Thirty-seven women were employed, but 32 had no financial resources of their own.

All but 26 women were given some help by the responding agency. In addition, 10 women were referred to hospitals, 26 to lawyers, 25 to public social service agencies, 2 to private social service agencies, and 7 to Family Court or Police.

Services offered by the responding agencies basically consisted of counseling, crisis intervention, information, and referrals. None of the agencies provided shelter for battered women.

#### Hospitals

From a mailing to 5 hospitals and 2 health-related facilities, we heard from 2 hospitals. Community General Hospital of Sullivan



County said, "[We are] sorry to inform you that we do not keep statistics on 'battered women'. Therefore, we cannot help you at this time."

Hamilton Avenue Hospital, Monticello, commented: "Please be advised that I have no way of compiling the information that you requested since no statistics are kept here on how injuries are sustained."

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of 1977 reveal a total of 39 petitions filed in or referred to Family Court. Twenty-nine were filed by wives, of whom 16 charged their husbands with assault.

From the above figures we can project that in 1977 a total of 117 wives will file petitions against their husbands in Sullivan County.

## TIOGA COUNTY

Tioga County is located on the southern border of New York State, midway between the eastern and western boundaries of the state. It is described in the 1976-77 Tital XX Plan Book as having a "predominantly small town, rural population."

The total population in 1970 was 46,513. Of that figure, 25.46%, which included 6,163 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Of 13,375 households in Tioga County, there were 10,223 husband/wife families. Over 99% of the population is white.

The median income for families in Tioga County in 1970 was \$10,226.00, and 16.2% of the families had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In February 1976 unemployment stood at 9.2%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, Commissioner Allan Eisenberg of the Tioga County Department of Social Services returned our letter with the names of two agencies listed on the bottom: the Probation Department and the County Court House. Since the statistics from these two groups are those included in the Family Court Section, no social service questionnaires were mailed in Tioga County.

### Hospitals

We mailed 3 questionnaires -- one to a hospital and two to health-related facilities. We received two responses.

Tioga County Public Health Nursing Service, Oswego, saw 1 battered woman in the past year, married, medicaid, aged between 21 and 30. The woman was referred to legal services, but did not keep her appointment. One additional case was suspected.

Tioga Opportunities Program, Oswego, saw approximately 5 cases, but commented, "We have no way of obtaining an accurate figure... The cases that do come to our attention have not been serious enough to require medical care or hospitalization. It has been mainly bruises. The patient is counseled and in some cases referred. A large part of the problem is trying to bring the individual to the point of realizing they don't have to put up with abuse. Many of them live with it and expect nothing else. It's a very serious problem and definitely needs to be looked into in depth."

#### Family Court

A total of 28 petitions were filed in or referred to family court in the first 4 months of 1977. Twenty-four were filed by wives, of whom half charged their husbands with assault.

We can project a total of 72 women filing petitions against their husbands in 1977, of whom 36 will charge their husbands with assault. These figures indicate a need for some backup services from the Department of Social Services.

## TOMPKINS COUNTY

Tompkins County is located in the Finger Lakes District of Central New York State. Ithaca is the only city in the county, which is otherwise composed of nine townships and five villages. Of the total population, 58.5% live in rural areas, but only 3.2% are farmers. The 1970 county population was 77,064, which includes over 18,000 students at Ithaca College and Cornell University. More than 35% of the population, including 12,281 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Of 22,614 households in Tompkins County, 14,912 were husband/wife families. The people in the county are 96% white. (1980 population projection: 85,883)

Median family income in 1970 was \$10,247.00, which was \$626.00 higher than the national average, and 15% of the families had incomes below \$5,000.00. In 1975, 46.2% of the employed population of Tompkins County was involved in professional or managerial level work. In 1975 unemployment was 6.5%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

Responding to our request for information on aid to battered women in Tompkins County, Commissioner Robert Wagner of the Department of Social Services, listed one agency, the Suicide Prevention and Crisis Service, which he described as the coordinating agency for Tompkins County.

A questionnaire was sent to the agency as well as to five women's groups in the area. Only the Suicide Prevention Center responded.

The Center reported receiving approximately ten calls per month from battered women. Although statistics were unavailable,

the Service reported that the women sought counseling, shelter, legal and social services, and financial and emotional support.

70% of the women were married, and most had children. Family income level ranged from \$3,000.00 to \$10,000.00 annually, and few of the women were employed.

The Service has a 24-hour telephone service which provides counseling, information and referral, and emergency back-up teams. In addition, they keep a list of emergency homes for battered women. They have organized a Task on the Battered Woman which includes people from a wide range of community agencies and interests.

Ms. Nina K. Miller, the Director of the Service, noted that most of the women return home because choices are very limited, but the Service hoped to have alternatives available shortly.

"We are working to develop a number of private homes which will function as emergency shelter for 3 nights, a list of trained counselor/advocates who will help the woman mobilize resources she may need in the community, assist her in getting an Order of Protection, etc. We are also involving a group of professional mental health workers to explore the most effective forms of counseling services for the battered woman and/or her spouse. Finally, we are trying to develop appropriate public education materials."

Because the Task Force is just beginning its work, the above figures are based only on calls that reached them as a suicide prevention program.

### Hospitals

According to our records only 1 questionnaire was mailed to Tompkins County, to a hospital. However, we received two responses, from Tompkins County Hospital, Ithaca, and from Planned Parenthood of Tompkins County, Ithaca. The explanation for this is that a questionnaire was passed to Planned Parenthood by another agency.

Tompkins County Hospital reported seeing 2 battered women in the past year, both coming to the Emergency Room and then admitted to the hospital. An additional 2 were suspected, who spoke to Social Services counselors about beatings but denied it to physicians. Cases are reported through a monthly statistical report. They commented: "There may be more women who are seen in Emergency Rooms or admitted that are never referred to Social Workers. Additionally, we have seen 1 battered husband last year."

Planned Parenthood of Tompkins County reported that they do not encounter battered women.

### Family Court

Twenty-one of the 23 petitions filed in Family Court during the first four months of 1977 were filed by wives. Four women charged their husbands with assault, the rest charging threat or harassment.

Based on the above figures, we can project that in 1977 a total of 69 wives will file charges against their husbands in family court in Tompkins County.

## ULSTER COUNTY

Ulster County is located in the southeastern portion of New York State, between the metropolitan areas of Albany and New York City. It has only one city, Kingston, in which 18.1% of the county's population reside. The total population in 1970 was 141,241, projected to increase to 173,200 by 1980, and was 96% white. More than 25% of the population, including 18,245 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. There was a total of 42,533 households, of which 30,656 were husband/wife families.

According to the Title XX county profile, there was a large growth in the age category 20 to 24 between 1970 and 1975. This growth trend is projected to continue in 1980 and it will account for the highest increase in any agency category in 1980. Surveys of agency workers describe a client population in this age group with similar characteristics of personal and/or family dysfunctioning.

Since the greatest incidence of battered women occurs in the 20 to 40 age group, one would expect to see an increasing number of battered women in Ulster County at this time.

The median income for families in 1970 was \$9,813.00, with 18.1% having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment stood at 7.7%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In answer to our letter regarding battered women in Ulster County, the county Department of Social Services forwarded a list of 15 agencies (other than police family court, and hospitals) which offer some assistance to battered women. Questionnaires were sent to all the agencies. Six responded: 2 public and 2 private social service agencies, and 2 women's groups.

Four of the six were able to supply statistics on battered women and reported a total of 148 cases. Most came to their attention through referrals from other agencies. Eighty-seven sought counseling, 60 sought shelter, 85 legal services, and 103 social services.

All of the women were residents of Ulster County: 123, or 84%, were under the age of 40; 112, or 77%, were married; 136, or 92%, had children. The women came from families of all income levels, but most had incomes of \$10,000.00 a year or less. The majority were not employed and had no financial resources of their own. Six of the women were students at SUNY in New Paltz. In fact, Sue Gambill of the Women's Crisis Center at New Paltz said: "...on our campus, this is one of the major problems facing women. Our problem is how to get them to reach out for help."

The only shelter, present or planned, for battered women known to us in Ulster County is the Women's Country House in Bearsville. They are only in the organizing stage, so were unable to supply us with statistics. However, they did say that at least three calls a week were received from battered women since they started working. At the time of our correspondence, they were still investigating sources of funding.

At the present time, a variety of services are offered to battered women in Ulster County by the agencies responding, including counseling, referrals, emergency financial aid, and educational outreach.

Twenty-six women were referred to lawyers, 6 to public social service agencies, and 40 to private social service agencies. In



addition, the Department of Social Services refers almost every battered woman to Family Court.

### Hospitals

From 5 questionnaires sent, 3 to hospitals and 2 to health-related facilities, we received 3 responses.

The Kingston Hospital, Kingston, reported that while they have no established recording mechanism at present, hopefully, "we have been spurred into setting up such a policy!" They commented "... have reviewed all records of females discharged from our hospital in 1976 whose final diagnosis may have fallen into this category and was able to definitely isolate only one. Since we are already tardy in returning your questionnaire, we have not studied our Emergency Room daily logs which would be our only other source of such information."

Benedictine Hospital, Kingston: "I'm sorry but we have no way of breaking out battered women. The diagnosis would come under different categories at the present time. We have no way of knowing without going through individual records which would take quite some time...."

Ulster County Community Mental Health Services Drug Abuse Program reported seeing 5 battered women in the past year, all methadone patients. "All were seen by their drug abuse counselor and appropriate referrals made, i.e. D.S.S., X-rays, physician, psychiatrist....All battered persons are referred to Kingston Hospital Emergency Room."

### Police Comments

"Some of the cases show no disposition because the victims refused to press charges or just wanted the incident blotted with no action taken by the Police." -- Town of Marlborough Police Department, Milton, New York.

### Family Court

During the first four months of 1977, a total of 78 petitions were filed in or referred to Family Court. Fifty-eight were filed by wives, of whom 12 charged their husbands with assault, and 44 with threat or harassment.

Using these figures, we can project a total of 174 petitions filed by women against their husbands, with 36 charging assault during 1977.

## WARREN COUNTY

Warren County is located in eastern New York State, almost entirely within the Adirondack State Park. It is a principal center of the Adirondack summer vacation industry, particularly along the shores of Lake George.

The population in 1970 was 49,402, and was projected to reach 55,184 by 1970. Over one-third of the population resides in the City of Glen Falls, whose industries also attract workers from more rural parts of the state.

Of a total of 15,394 households in Warren County, 10,584 were husband/wife families. More than 22% of the population, including 5,875 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Approximately 98% of the residents are white.

The median income for families in 1970 was \$8,770.00 and 20.4% had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In 1977 unemployment was 14.1%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

No response was received to our original letter to Commissioner Menaldino requesting information on aid to battered women in Warren County. After a follow-up telephone call was placed, a duplicate letter and a questionnaire were mailed to the Commissioner.

Because of his late response we were unable to send questionnaires to two agencies which the Commissioner believed would offer aid to battered women. However, the Department of Social Services itself informed us that two or three battered women had come to their attention within the last year, seeking counseling and social services. Other information was unavailable regarding the women.

Commissioner Menaldino commented, "As an agency, we have had very little experience with this category."

#### Hospitals

Two questionnaires were sent, one to a hospital and one to a health-related facility. A reply was received from Planned Parenthood of Warren, Washington, and Saratoga Counties, but it has been recorded under Saratoga County. Therefore, we have no replies to record for Warren County.

#### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of 1977 reveal a total of 29 petitions filed in or referred to Family Court, of which 21 were filed by wives. Seven women charged their husbands with assault, while ten charged threat or harassment.

From the above figures, we can project that in 1977 a total of 63 wives will file charges against their husbands in Warren County.

## WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County is located in eastern New York State. It is bounded on the west by Warren County and Lake George, and on the east by the State of Vermont. Within this county lies some of the richest farm land within the state, as well as much of the most unproductive, as the flat, rich land of the Hudson Valley gives way to the mountainous regions of the Adirondack Park.

The total population in 1970 was 52,725, which is projected to increase by approximately 10% by 1980. There were 15,314 households, of which 10,938 were husband/wife families. Of the total population, 23.10%, including 5,922 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40.

The median family income for Washington County in 1970 was \$8,668.00, with 20.4% of those families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment stood at 6.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter regarding aid to battered women in Washington County, Ms. Anita Sarchioto, the Title XX Coordinator, noted that private or public agencies which serve battered women are relatively non-existent. The County Department of Social Services does, however, provide investigation, counseling and arrangements for other resources when they are available, as well as make referrals to the Community Mental Health Center and to the individuals' ministers for counseling.

Questionnaires were sent to both the Department of Social Services and the Community Mental Health Center. Only the Department

of Social Services responded, reporting that nine to twelve battered women had come to their attention within the past year. Ms. Sarchioto commented, "The women came to our attention during our investigations into family problems referred to us, not as a primary referral of the battered woman."

All of the women were between the ages of 30 and 40 and had children. None of the women were employed or had any financial resources of their own as they were all at or below public assistance level.

In addition to the counseling given by the Department of Social Services to all of the women, six referrals were made to lawyers and three to the Department of Probation.

#### Hospitals

We contacted 2 hospitals and 2 health-related facilities in Washington County. A reply was received from Planned Parenthood of Warren, Washington, and Saratoga Counties, but it has been recorded under Saratoga County. Therefore, we have no replies to record for Washington County.

#### Family Court

During the first 4 months of 1977, a total of 25 petitions were filed in or referred to family court. Seventeen women filed charges against their husbands, with 5 of those charging assault, and 11 threat or harassment.

We can project from this that in 1977 as a whole a total of 41 wives will file charges against their husbands.

## WAYNE COUNTY

Wayne County is located in upstate New York, bordered on the north by Lake Ontario. Until recent years, it was primarily an agricultural area, but, with the expansion of the Rochester metropolitan area, it has increasingly become a bedroom community for Monroe County municipalities. By 1970, 41.7% of its residents worked outside Wayne County. In addition, it has the largest migrant farm worker population of any county in the state.

There are no cities in Wayne County, but there are ten villages and fifteen towns. The total county population in 1970 was 79,404. The non-white population was 3%; 25% of the people (which includes 10,196 women) were between the ages of 20 and 40. There were 17,367 families headed by a husband and wife, out of a total of 23,553 households.

The median family income in 1970 was \$10,508.00; 16.2% of the families in Wayne County had incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In August 1977 unemployment stood at 9.6%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our letter requesting the names of agencies which offered assistance to battered women, the director of social services of Wayne County, Ms. Katherine Quealy, listed two: the Legal Aid Society and the Wayne County Department of Social Services. Questionnaires were sent to both, with only the Department of Social Services replying.

In addition, a questionnaire was mailed to the Wayne County N.O.W., who also responded.

The two organizations reported a total of 150 cases of

battered women. Eighty of the 100 women seen by the Department of Social Service came on their own, with no referrals.

128, or 85%, of the women were between the ages of 20 and 40. 135, or 90%, were married, and 142, or 98%, had no children.

The family incomes of all the women were below \$10,000.00, and many were public assistance recipients. Two-thirds had no financial resources of their own; only 42 were employed.

Most of the women sought social services and legal aid, with several seeking counseling and shelter. E.L. Indick of the Wayne County N.O.W. commented, "Many people would have used above services if they were available to them... We do need a place and financial support to help these women."

#### Hospitals

We contacted 2 hospitals and 1 health-related facility in Wayne County, and received 2 replies. Wayne County Public Health Service, Lyons, informed us that they saw 7 battered women in the last year, ranging in age from under 21 to 40. Six were married and 5 were medicaid patients. This agency reported that they have no established policy for recording such cases.

#### Family Court

Sixteen of the 18 petitions filed in or referred to Family Court during the first four months of 1977 were filed by wives. Eight women charged their husbands with assault, while seven others charged threat or harassment.

From these statistics, we can project a total of 48 women filing charges against their husbands in Family Court in 1977,



and 24 charging their husbands with assault.

Considering that 150 cases of battered women were reported by the Department of Social Services and N.O.W., it is clear that many more cases of battering occur than are ever revealed by the Family Court statistics.

## WESTCHESTER COUNTY

Westchester County is located in southern New York, bounded by the Hudson River on the west, New York City on the south, and Connecticut and the Long Island Sound on the east. The southern area of the county is more urbanized than the north and has attracted an increasing minority population. In recent years, both whites and non-whites have moved from New York City to Westchester in order to improve their housing situation and gain the advantages of a more suburban life.

The population in 1970 was 894,407 and is expected to level off at the present level, with no increase projected through 1985. 201,464 of the 282,629 households in Westchester County were husband/wife families. 23.97% of the population, including 115,925 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. 88.3% of the total population was white.

According to the 1970 census, the median family income in Westchester County was \$13,784.00, comparing favorably to the statewide median of \$10,617.00, with 9.5% of all families having incomes below \$5,000.00. In August 1977 unemployment was 7.1%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, the Westchester County Commissioner of Social Services, Charles Bates, forwarded a list of those agencies which he believed were most active in providing assistance to battered women. Fifteen questionnaires were sent to agencies and organizations in Westchester County, including women's groups. Ten responses were received.

Of the ten agencies responding, 5 were unable to supply us with any statistics. Two of those agencies did not offer any services to battered women, although one of them had recently done a study on battered wives for the County Board of Legislators. Linda Salamon of the County Executive's Office reported:

"The incidence of wife abuse appears to have increased substantially within the last decade. Unfortunately, timely and accurate statistics on this problem are not readily available. Therefore, along with the need to establish comprehensive programs for battered spouses, there also appears to be a need to research the problem professionally to accurately assess its dimensions and to better understand the impact of such variables as income, education, age, alcoholism, child abuse, ethnic influences, etc."

Of the remaining agencies unable to provide statistics, the Westchester Civil Liberties Union reported rarely coming in contact with battered women; the Central Westchester N.O.W. was just beginning work in the area and had no statistics; and the Mental Health Association of Westchester reported seeing battered women, but not keeping statistics on the problem. However, they did inform us that they have requested funds from Title VI to establish an Abused Spouse-Battered Woman Help Project.

Four of the 5 agencies which were able to complete the questionnaire to some extent reported a total of 92 cases of battered women. Approximately half of the women heard of the agency through word of mouth, 7 through a hotline and the rest were referrals. Although statistics were not available from all four agencies, the greatest needs of the women seemed to be shelter,

counseling, and legal advice. Where statistics were available, all of the women were between the ages of 20 and 50 and married, and 87.5% had children. The family incomes ranged from public assistance to \$50,000.00 annually and higher. Few of the women were employed and over 90% had no financial resources of their own.

One of the organizations, The Yonkers Women's Task Force, is starting a coalition with other groups, such as the YWCA, to work on the problem of battered women and would like to provide substantive aid for these women. Eleanor Castro, of the Task Force, stated: "Changing the laws seems to be a priority, but there is also a great need for a shelter and a hotline."

The other response from Westchester County came from Zelle Andrews of the N.O.W.-New York State in White Plains. She reported getting 3 or 4 calls a week from battered women. The women came from the local N.O.W. hotline, referrals, word of mouth or from within discussion groups conducted by N.O.W. Counseling, shelter, legal advice, social services, and medical aid were among the services sought.

Ms. Andrews estimated that 90% of the women were married and some had children who were also being abused. As to the women's backgrounds, she noted:

"Battered women come from every location, race, class of people. We get as many calls from Scarsdale as we do from Mt. Vernon. They are the wives of doctors, lawyers, judges, professors, policemen, day laborers, [the] unemployed -- you name it."

At the present time, N.O.W. can offer legal advice, moral

support, and referrals for battered women, but, as Ms. Andrews noted, "this is really a bandaid over a gaping wound... The needs are great and feminist resources cannot answer them all... It is a ghastly social problem of horrendous proportions. Please help us."

### Hospitals

A large number of questionnaires were mailed to this county; 20 to hospitals and 19 to health-related facilities, totaling 39. We received 7 responses, reporting as follows:

Donald R. Reed Speech Center, Inc., in Phelps Memorial Hospital, North Tarrytown: "At the ...Center we have few occasions to learn of the incidence of battered women and none...for the last three months. I can imagine that, in the course of counseling with a parent during speech therapy, a mother would tell me of being assaulted by another member of the household. In such a case, I would refer her to what I felt would be an appropriate agency for help."

Psychiatric Service Center, White Plains: "We have no useable information at this facility."

Burke Rehabilitation Center, White Plains: "Does not apply. Burke Rehabilitation Center is a psychiatric rehabilitation center."  
Yonkers Professional Hospital, Yonkers, reported seeing 3 battered women in the past year, all in the Emergency Room. They were all between 21 and 30, and were medicaid patients.

St. Agnes Hospital, White Plains: "It is difficult to give exact information without reviewing every Emergency Room chart for the entire year. There are no statistics being kept at the present

time. Information in this report was gathered from discussions with Emergency Room staff... The growing awareness of the 'battered woman' suggests to me that we should include this category in future statistical reports." They reported seeing 12 to 15 cases in the past year, all coming to the Emergency Room. The women were 21 to 50 years old, and approximately half were married. Phelps Memorial Hospital, North Tarrytown, saw approximately 8 battered women in the past year, all coming to the Emergency Room. In addition, there were 2 suspected cases. One woman was admitted to the hospital. This hospital has no established mechanism for recording such cases, but were still able to tell us that six of the women were married and that the age range was 21 to 40.

Lake Short Hospital, Irving, reported seeing 10 to 15 cases in the past year. All came to the Emergency Room. Two thirds were married and approximately half were medicaid patients. Most were in the 31 to 40 age range. "Many came in claiming they fell down stairs, only upon closer questioning you find they are battered."

#### Police Comments

"Overall findings are as happened in the one case we had in 1976: Victim and Complainant later withdrew the charge." -- Pelham Manor Police Department.

"One woman was beaten 4 times but she refused to press charges. Most women refuse to press charges." -- Bedford Town Police Department, Bedford Hills, New York.

One department said that if the victim is actually assaulted, then the incident is recorded as such. Otherwise, it is recorded as a family offense and the victim is advised to go to Family Court.

Three departments said that records are kept only according to the type of charge that is made. Therefore, it is not possible to tell how many cases recorded under each charge were battered women without an exhaustive and expensive search being made.

Two departments reported that their officers are trained to deal with crisis intervention.

#### Family Court

During the first four months of 1977, 581 petitions were filed in family court, 428 of them by wives charging their husbands. In 262 cases the charge was assault, and in 166 threat or harassment.

From these figures, we can project a total of 1,284 petitions filed by wives in Westchester County during 1977, of which 786 will be filed by wives charging assault.

If these statistics are any indication of the problem, there is, most definitely, a need for emergency shelter and further back-up services for battered women.

## WYOMING COUNTY

Wyoming County is located in western New York State, east of Erie County. In 1970, there were 37,688 people living in the county, which continues to have a larger rural than urban population. An 11% increase in population is projected for 1980.

Of a total of 10,610 households in Wyoming County in 1970, 7,851 were husband/wife families. More than 25% of the total population, including 4,106 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. The population was almost 97% white.

The 1970 census showed the median income for families in Wyoming County to be \$9,526.00, while the mean income was \$10,299.00; 15.8% of all families reported an income of less than \$5,000.00. In 1975 unemployment was 10.7%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, the Staff Development Coordinator of the Wyoming County Department of Social Services, Robert O. Holley, Jr., forwarded a listing of agencies, both public and private, which would offer assistance to battered women.

Questionnaires were sent to 11 agencies, but only 1 responded, the Warsaw Counseling Group. The Group, which is in its first year of operation, had seen only two battered women.

Both women sought counseling and had come to the agency through referrals. They were married, had children and came from families with incomes between \$7,000.00 and \$10,000.00. Both women were given help within the center, but one referral was made to a lawyer and a second to a public social service agency.



### Hospitals

One questionnaire was mailed, to a hospital. We received no response.

### Family Court

Family Court statistics for the first four months of 1977 reveal a total of 18 petitions filed in or referred to Family Court, of which 16 were filed by wives. Twelve women charged their husbands with assault, while three others charged threat or harassment.

For 1977, we can therefore predict a total of 48 petitions filed by wives against their husbands in Wyoming County Family Court.

## YATES COUNTY

Yates County is located in the Finger Lakes region of mid-western New York. It is a small county, with a total population in 1970 of 19,831, projected to increase by 2,000 by 1980. Yates is one of the 12 most rural counties in the state, with only 26% of its population residing in the one census-defined urban area, the Village of Penn Yan.

Of 6,052 households in Yates County, 4,362 were husband/wife families. More than 21% of the population, including 2,435 women, were between the ages of 20 and 40. Approximately 98% of the people of Yates County are white.

The median family income for Yates County in 1970 was \$9,068.00, 17.3% of the families having incomes below \$5,000.00 annually. In September 1975 unemployment was 7.8%.

### Incidence of Battered Women

In response to our request for information on aid to battered women, Commissioner William Falvey of the Department of Social Services forwarded a list of those agencies which he believed would be involved in this matter. The only social service or community organization listed was the Department of Social Services, to which a questionnaire was sent. No response was received.

### Hospitals

One questionnaire was mailed, to a hospital. Our reply was filled out by the Yates County Home Health Agency, Penn Yan, who reported that they do not encounter battered women and commented, "As a home health agency we rarely have this kind of problem referred to us..."

### Police Comments

"...statistics are those that were arrested on information signed by wife. Unable to give...cases that are handled informally by the deputies at the scene of complaint. In most cases, wife will not file charges." -- Yates County Sheriff, Penn Yan.

### Family Court

In the first four months of 1977, only 7 petitions were filed in or referred to Family Court. Four petitions were filed by wives against their husbands, but only one woman charged her husband with assault. The other three petitions filed by wives contained charges of threat or harassment.

We can project that a total of 12 petitions will be filed by wives in family court for the year 1977.



**END**