

## Domestic Violence: Deadly Rage

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### Introduction

During the summer of 2000 several horrific murders and attempted murders shocked Canadians. On June 13, Harjaap Bolla was ambushed, stabbed, and set on fire by her ex-fiancé, who then killed himself. One week later, Gillian Hadley was shot and killed in her home by her estranged husband Ralph, who was under a court order to stay away from her because of earlier abuse charges. On June 27, Zahra Zeinali was shot in the face by her ex-husband, who then committed suicide. Ms. Zeinali survived. The month of horror culminated on July 6, when the six bodies of the Luft family were discovered in their home in Kitchener, Ontario. Bohumila Luft and her four children had been stabbed and shot to death by her husband William, who also killed himself. The public reaction of horror and intense media coverage led many to question how the social and legal systems could have suddenly failed so many women.

Experts on domestic violence, however, know that these were only the most recent and grim manifestations of a problem that has long plagued society in general Canadian society included and at every social and economic level. Shortly after the Luft killings, Statistics Canada published its most recent survey on domestic violence and announced that in the period from 1994 to 1999, 1.2 million Canadians were victims of spousal violence. Both men (549 000) and women (690 000) reported abuse, but women suffered far more severe forms of physical violence: chokings, beatings, sexual assaults, and threats with weapons. In 53 per cent of attacks women said that they feared for their lives. However, recent StatsCan figures also indicate that there has been a 36 per cent drop in the number of women killed by their male partners.

Domestic violence is considered one of the most frightening forms of violence because virtually anyone can become a victim. It happens in all socio-economic groups, and has been reported by people in all occupations and with every level of education. It can occur at any age, although younger women are especially at risk. It occurs among all nationalities, ethnic groups, and religions. Much of it is invisible hidden within the family and never reported to outsiders, especially to the police.

Coping with domestic violence places a heavy burden on our social services. Police forces spend approximately one-third of their time responding to domestic calls. Special courts have been created to deal solely with family violence charges, which clogged the regular court system and were rarely approached in a consistent manner. Over 400 shelters for abused women have opened across Canada; with government funding cuts in the area of social services over the last decade, many have been and continue to be underfunded, over capacity, and forced to turn women and children away.

Children who live in homes where there is domestic violence are themselves often physically or sexually abused. Those who witness abuse show an increase in psychological problems. Children who are raised in violent homes often accept violence as a normal part of life, or become violent themselves.

There is no easy solution to the kind of domestic violence that occurred in the summer of 2000. Women's groups especially have called attention to the growing evidence that a "law and order" approach is not enough to keep women safe. Shelters and victim education have a

major role to play. The socialization of our children what we teach boys and girls are appropriate attitudes and behaviours for their gender also needs examination. The first step in preventing domestic violence, however, is creating a general awareness and understanding of the extent of the problem and the varieties of abuse that harm many individuals and can also potentially lead to murder.

**Note to teachers:** *This News in Review story should be approached with great care. Teachers are advised to carefully "pre-teach" this issue and to be especially sensitive to children in their classes who may have experienced violence in the home.*

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### Mindful and Sensitive Dialogue

#### Carefully Opening Doors

For many people, violence in a family situation is shocking and hard to imagine. For some it is all too familiar and something to be hidden, known only to the members of the families in which it occurs. As a society, however, it is important for us to deal with this subject as best we can. Before watching this News in Review report, discuss the following:

1. Why might individuals or society in general want to hide this kind of behaviour or not want to deal with it openly?
2. How might it help begin to solve the problem if we acknowledge its existence and talk about it?
3. What might some of the difficulties be in talking about abuse and violence that happens in the home? In your opinion, what is the best way of talking about it?
4. Why is it very important to approach a subject like this with care, compassion, and sensitivity? How can we do this?

#### Factual Viewing

While viewing this News in Review report, take notes in order to answer the following questions.

1. In the individual cases described in the video, what indications had there been beforehand that one of the partners in the relationships was potentially in extreme danger?
2. What steps were being taken by the criminal justice system to prevent injury to and abuse of the victim in each of these relationships?
3. What were some of the most important recommendations made by the jury in the Arlene May inquest?
4. Why does Justice Leslie Baldwin feel a summit meeting on domestic violence is necessary, and what groups should be included in this summit?
5. Does there seem to be a trend developing in the way we, as a society, respond to the issue of domestic violence? Explain your point of view.
6. What do some of the most recent statistics indicate about trends in the type and amount of domestic violence taking place in Canadian society?

#### Lessons and Predictions

Based on your viewing of the video and your reading of the Introduction on the previous page, discuss the following:

1. How well are we able to predict the likelihood of domestic violence in relationships?
2. How well does our legal system including the coroner's inquest deal with domestic violence? What should the role of the police and the courts be in addressing the problem?
3. Other than the law, what institutions and agencies are working against domestic violence? What methods and approaches do they use? How do their methods complement those of the justice system?
4. What steps might we as individuals take to discourage and prevent domestic violence?

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### A Statistical Snapshot

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics collects data made up of police-reported crime statistics, using an annual survey in which 179 police agencies in six provinces participate. These data are combined with the results of a variety of surveys conducted by Statistics Canada. The result is an annual publication called Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile. The information provided here is from the 1999 report. It should be noted that many incidents of family violence are not reported to the police.

As you read this information, think about the wide-ranging impact of domestic violence throughout society.

### Family Violence

In 1997, 17 per cent of all victims of violent offences were victims of spousal violence. A large majority of spousal violence victims were women: of the 22 254 reported victims, 19 575 were women and 2679 were men.

Common assault (defined as not using a weapon or causing serious physical injury) was the most common charge, in 75 per cent of all cases. More serious assaults resulted in charges in 14 per cent of reported incidents; criminal harassment (stalking) accounted for another seven per cent; other violent offences, including homicide, made up the remainder.

Age was a significant factor in the number of incidents of reported spousal violence. Of the victims identified, 22 per cent of females and 12 per cent of males were under 25 years of age; 39 per cent of females and 38 per cent of males were 25 to 34; 28 per cent of females and 33 per cent of males were 35 to 44; and 11 per cent of females and 17 per cent of males were over 45. It is also true that the number of overall incidents decreases as the population ages.

Of all police-reported spousal violent offences, 77 per cent involved the use of either a weapon or physical force. Physical force caused injury to 69 per cent of female victims and 48 per cent of male victims. Weapons were used against five per cent of female victims, and 17 per cent of male victims.

Women account for 88 per cent of all spousal violence injuries. Of the 19 575 reported offences against female victims, 26 per cent suffered no injuries, 70 per cent suffered minor injuries, and four per cent suffered major injuries or death. Twenty-eight per cent of the 2557 male victims suffered no injuries, 66 per cent suffered minor injuries, and six per cent suffered major injuries or death.

Residential dwellings are the location of 89 per cent of spousal violence offences.

### First Review and Discussion

1. Who are the most likely victims of spousal violence?
2. What age group is most at risk?
3. What form is spousal violence likely to take? Is it the same for men and women?
4. When physical force is used, which spouse is likely to suffer the higher percentage of injuries? Is this different if weapons are used? What might account for the difference?
5. Suggest the implications of the answers to the above questions.

### Family Homicide

From 1978 to 1997, there were 12 871 homicide victims in Canada. Family members were responsible for 31 per cent of these homicides, and acquaintances for another 39 per cent.

Of these homicides, a family member killed 50 per cent of female victims, but just 20 per cent

of males were killed by a member of their family.

Husbands murdered 67 per cent of the female victims of family homicide; 26 per cent of male victims of family homicide were murdered by wives.

From 1978 to 1997, 1485 women and 442 men were killed by their spouse.

The rate of spousal violence has been declining in Canada. In 1978, 14 wives per one million couples were killed. By 1997, the ratio had dropped to nine wives per one million couples. The 1978 rate for husbands was five per one million couples; in 1997 this had declined to two per one million couples.

Age of the spouse is a factor in domestic violence. The rate for young wives (aged 15 to 24) is 29 per one million couples; for young husbands it is 13 per one million couples. This rate declines to 12 per million couples for wives and four per million couples for men in the next two age groups (25 to 34 and 35 to 44).

Firearms are used in 37 per cent of all cases of spousal violence. Husbands used firearms in 40 per cent of incidents, knives in 25 per cent, and beating or strangling in 31 per cent. Wives used firearms in 25 per cent of incidents, knives or similar weapons in 60 per cent, and beating or strangling in 10 per cent.

Previous domestic violence is reported as a factor in 56 per cent of all spousal homicide cases.

#### Second Review and Discussion

1. Who are the likeliest victims of spousal homicide?
2. What age group is most at risk?
3. Compare the data from the sections on family violence and family homicide. What similarities and differences can you see between the victimizers and the victims in these two sections?

#### Follow-up Discussion

Why is it important for government and non-governmental agencies to research and maintain data on domestic violence? Why is it important for the general public to be aware of these statistics?

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### The Nature of the Problem

As you read the following information, consider why it is important to recognize levels and types of domestic violence.

Domestic violence involving homicide engenders a great deal of media coverage and consequently public awareness. Sadly, however, such violence is rarely an isolated event; there is usually a lengthy history of warning signs. It is almost always preceded by an escalating pattern of abuse that is based in an attempt by one partner to assert power and control over the other. What looks like ardent love may just be the beginning sign of a real problem: the partner is jealous and possessive, tries to isolate his or her mate from family and friends, and constantly accuses and interrogates the spouse.

This behaviour often escalates to verbal and emotional abuse, which can include ridicule, insult, humiliation and threats. By this stage, abusers are keeping their victims in what has been called a "psychological prison." Often the abusive partner will behave violently in the other person's presence, and may cause damage to objects or harm pets.

Emotional abuse is also always part of physical abuse, which includes pushing and slapping, often escalating to punching, choking and attacks with a weapon. It often includes sexual abuse, which is forcing an unwanted sexual act on another person.

Jean-Guy Tremblay is an example of the kind of abuser who demonstrates this progression. By June 2000, during a hearing in which it was to be determined if he was to be formally designated a dangerous offender, it was revealed that Tremblay had been convicted 14 times for violence against a total of six women. At the hearing, an additional six women who had never pressed charges appeared as witnesses. The same story was repeatedly told. Tremblay would move in with a woman and begin controlling her life. He would isolate her from her friends, then forbid her use of birth control. Physical abuse would rapidly escalate from pushing and slapping to choking and, in one case, dragging a woman down a flight of stairs.

### Risk Factors

Lethal violence, however, does remain the most frightening aspect of the problem of spousal abuse, and identifying the signs that indicate its likelihood is not easy. A study is in progress at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing that is attempting to pinpoint the real risk factors. Below is a preliminary list of such factors. Suggest the importance of each factor individually as well as its importance in the continuum of such violent behaviour.

1. A history of violence by the man in the relationship (This is the most significant indicator.)
2. The past stalking of a woman by her male partner (even when the partners are living together)
3. An increase in either the frequency or severity of physical abuse
4. Attempts by the man to choke or force the woman to have sex
5. Drug or alcohol abuse by the man
6. Verbal threats to kill
7. A woman's own belief that her partner is capable of killing her

### **Follow-up Discussion**

Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell, who is leading the group of researchers putting together the list, has one final caution: "No matter what the research says, what I say to a woman is, 'If he does something that is terribly frightening, be scared! If it makes the hair stand up on the back of your neck, be scared!'" In your opinion, what role should fear play in dealing with the problem of domestic violence?

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### The Legal Response

In an attempt to deal with domestic violence and to prevent the kind of tragedies that occurred in the summer of 2000, governments across Canada have striven to pass effective legislation and to develop new responses to what is now seen as a major social problem. Here are some of the more recent developments. As you examine these legislative changes, consider how changes in the law may or may not help solve the problem. Also think about what would need to happen in order for the legislation to be effective.

#### Mandatory Charges

In many jurisdictions, police are now required to lay charges against abusers in cases where there is physical evidence of abuse. This policy has been developed in response to a number of past cases where the victims refused to lay charges against their abuser. Critics argue that this policy discourages victims from calling police because the victims now have no control over the consequences. It has also led to more countercharges being filed by the original accused, alleging that he or she is actually the victim in the incident.

#### Restraining Orders

One problem with restraining orders has been that police often have difficulty identifying abusers who are under a judicial order requiring them to avoid their partner or ex-partner. British Columbia now keeps a computerized registry of restraining orders that police may consult at all hours.

#### Risk Assessments

In some jurisdictions, risk assessments to determine the likelihood of future violence by an abuser are automatic when police are called in. Risk assessments can also be used by police to make recommendations to victims of methods to ensure their future safety. Several victims rights groups have recommended that risk assessments be mandatory before any bail hearing and that judges be instructed to consider them in their discussions. Critics worry that such a procedure infringes on the rights of the accused under our legal system.

#### Electronic Monitoring

Electronic bracelets have been used in some jurisdictions to monitor the location of convicted criminals released into the community on probation. Some groups have recommended that these be used with known abusers under restraining orders.

#### Signalling Devices for Victims

In some parts of Canada, emergency cellular phones programmed to 911 are being given to women especially at risk of violence from their partners. The program has had some success in the U.S., and a campaign has been launched by the U.S. Wireless Foundation and the National Coalition Against Violence to collect one million phones for this purpose. In Calgary, wrist bands with panic buttons have been issued to women at high risk.

#### Family Violence Courts

To encourage consistency in dealing with domestic violence, some cities and provinces have created special family violence courts to deal only with abuse cases. Winnipeg created the first in 1990 and Ontario followed with two new courts in 1997, and is expanding its system. They have similar objectives: early intervention in domestic violence situations, increased

victim support and protection, more effective investigation and prosecution, and accountability for abusers. A joint pilot project involving local, provincial, and federal governments in Calgary has created a special court with immediate access to the police, probation, and all parts of the treatment system all the resources required to get help for victims, their families, and the offenders.

#### Federal Gun Registry

Because firearms are often the weapons of choice in domestic violence incidents where weapons are used, the Firearms Act contains a special regulation. Anyone who applies for a license and who has a spouse, or who had one within the previous two years, is required to name that partner. Officials or police will contact that person. If the partner objects to or expresses concern over the issuing of a license, an investigation will be launched to determine the validity of the concern.

#### New Identities Program

The RCMP is planning to expand its Witness Protection Program to include battered spouses who are in extreme danger from abusive partners. The program will set them up with new names and Social Insurance Numbers, relocate them to new communities, and even cosmetically alter their faces. The cost will be about \$100 000 per person. This must be seen as a solution of last resort, even a re-victimization. Women who enter the program are required to sever all connections with family and friends and create totally new lives.

#### **Follow-up Discussion**

1. Advocates of the rights of the accused argue that the law in cases of domestic violence is weighted so heavily against the accused that it is difficult to present a proper defence. Victims' rights advocates, on the other hand, argue that the law must go further in protecting victims of domestic violence. Using the examples in this section and the information gathered during your viewing of the video, discuss the relative merits of the two arguments.

2. The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project has developed a highly respected risk assessment questionnaire. It is available at [www.duluth-model.org/23questions.htm](http://www.duluth-model.org/23questions.htm). Download the questionnaire. Then, using the Johns Hopkins preliminary list of risk factors in the Levels of Violence section of the guide, identify the questions that would signal real danger for the victim in an abusive situation. Discuss how the courts and the police might make use of the information gained from this risk assessment.

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### Shelters

For women who are victims of domestic violence, completely separating themselves and their children from their abuser is often the only effective solution. In Canada, family violence shelters have proven to be one of the most important solutions in breaking the cycle of violence.

The 1997-1998 Transition Home Survey conducted by Statistics Canada identified 470 shelters for abused women across Canada as of April 20, 1998, housing 6100 women and children. Seventy-seven per cent of women in shelters were there to escape abuse, and most abused women were fleeing a partner or ex-partner. According to the Violence Against Women Survey, 63 per cent of abused women who have stayed in a shelter have, at some point in their relationship, been severely enough injured to require medical attention.

Most women who come to shelters take a long time to get there. According to Diane Reynolds, the Nursing Co-ordinator at Chantel's Place in Toronto, "On the average, a woman is assaulted 33 times before she actually leaves a relationship." Ruth Mann, a professor of criminology at the University of Windsor, says that the "intense and complex emotional attachment" of the victim to her abuser makes separation very difficult. Shelters, however, offer an escape without the need to report the abuser to the police (75 per cent of women who suffer emotional or physical abuse and enter shelter do not contact the police). The importance of shelters in helping women break the cycle of abuse is even more obvious when one realizes that women are most at risk when they leave a relationship, especially during the period immediately after they leave.

While all shelters have as their main purpose helping women and children escape the abuse taking place in their own homes, they also offer a number of other services to both residents and non-residents. Yellow Brick House in Aurora, Ontario, is one shelter that offers crisis counselling and a children's program to residents, as well as a weekly support group, court support, housing searches, and a follow-up program to ensure success in independent living. It maintains a separate counselling and legal support service for non-residents. Led by Suzie McGee, its Public Education Co-ordinator, it provides workshops for high school and elementary students focusing on the prevention of domestic and dating violence. Yellow Brick House also maintains a second-stage apartment building to give former residents the opportunity to fully adjust to independent living. This adjustment, says McGee, can be extremely difficult because many abuse victims have few or no friends to whom they can turn for support. Many have been forced by their abusive partners to give up their friends.

Women who arrive at Yellow Brick House as victims of domestic violence are first made to feel comfortable and supported, and encouraged to tell their stories. Staff members are careful to be non-judgmental, and to offer counselling only when the woman is ready and requests it. If and when counselling is requested, staff help women set realistic goals in the areas of housing, work, finances, and custody. Because Yellow Brick House works closely with other agencies, once goals are set the client can be directed to sources of assistance such as Legal Aid, Manpower, and the Children's Aid Society.

The Iris Kirby House in St. John's, Newfoundland, is a shelter that provides similar support for its residents (in 1999, 170 women and 136 children stayed at Iris Kirby, some of them returning for a second or third time). A stay at the shelter gives women an opportunity to

reflect on their problems and to plan for the future. Equally important is their ability to share their experiences with others and learn that they are not alone.

Many shelters across Canada are often filled to capacity or beyond, and regularly have to turn away women and their families. Despite this, they have been subject to cutbacks in government social services funding and rely heavily on community fundraising to meet their funding requirements. Some have had to cut back on the variety of services offered.

### **Discussion and Community Research**

1. Having read the above information regarding shelters and the legal response to domestic violence, discuss the contributions such shelters make to addressing the problem. How can the legal system and shelters best work together? Should government funding give priority to one over the other? What contributions can both systems make to the prevention of domestic violence?
2. What services exist in your community for victims of spousal abuse and/or other domestic violence? One of the first places you could look for this information is in "Emergency Telephone Numbers" in your telephone book.
3. Invite a member of a community organization that supports victims of domestic violence to come and speak to your class.

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### Dating Violence

Often when we hear about news events, we don't always realize how close to home they can get. As many teachers will tell you, abusive behaviour between males and females is often in evidence in our schools. With our culture's emphasis on dating rituals, the pressures to date and to be popular can be very strong. There are many issues in the dating game, however, that need to be looked at: dating violence is unfortunately one of them. Dating violence is the use of either physical force or verbal abuse to obtain and maintain control of a partner in a casual or serious dating relationship.

#### The Facts

Dating violence is a significant problem for teenagers. A variety of studies have shown the following:

Female or male teenagers can be both victims and abusers, and there are mutually violent relationships.

Males initiate abuse in relationships approximately 70 per cent of the time.

Twenty-eight per cent of high school and college students in one U.S. survey said violence had been part of a dating relationship. One third of teen dating relationships are violent.

A study of grade eight and nine students (male and female) in the U.S. indicated that 25 per cent suffered non-sexual dating violence and eight per cent were victims of sexual dating violence.

Once violence occurs, it will almost certainly happen again.

Most violence occurs during a steady dating relationship.

Women suffer more physical injuries than men; women usually employ violence only for defensive purposes.

Most teenage dating violence is reported only to peers, and 25 per cent is never reported to anyone.

Dating violence leads to spousal violence.

Programs designed to prevent dating violence for young people can work if all teenagers, including those most at risk, are involved.

Many women's shelters now have education and outreach programs for young people. Suzie McGee, Public Education Co-ordinator for the Yellow Brick House, one such shelter, believes that education to prevent dating violence should begin by grade nine, when students are beginning high school. Her program helps male and female students recognize the signs of abuse, and encourages them to make choices that will change the nature of their relationships.

#### What is Emotional Abuse?

Yellow Brick House provides students with a manual titled Dating Relationships. In it, the authors point out that emotional abuse is often the hardest form of abuse to identify, but also the most traumatizing. Victims often must first identify the feelings they are experiencing in a relationship in order to know they are being abused. Warning signs include feelings of intimidation, hopelessness, guilt, frustration, helplessness, and being trapped or always in the wrong.

The manual also lists many behaviours by a partner that might promote these feelings, including the list below. What do all of these have in common? How is each an attempt by one

partner to control the other?

Controlling your life, how you think and behave  
Criticizing, always finding fault  
Intimidating  
Blaming you or other people for all shortcomings  
Extreme jealousy  
Possessiveness  
Criticizing important people in your life  
Attempting to put you down, to make you feel badly  
Blackmailing or humiliating you

#### What Is Verbal Abuse?

Verbal abuse includes name-calling, threatening and belittling. If one partner calls the other demeaning names, or says things to make him or her uncomfortable, that partner is being verbally abusive. Name calling and put-downs chip away at a person's self-esteem and make the victim feel inadequate and inferior to the abuser. This is another way in which the abuser can control the victim.

#### What Is Sexual Abuse?

Sexual abuse in a dating relationship is not limited to date rape. It includes being pressured into any form of sexual activity in which the victim does not wish to participate. The pressure used need not be physical, and can include blackmail, threatening to leave a partner, or accusations of being unloving or frigid.

#### What Is Physical Abuse?

Physical abuse in a dating relationship follows a pattern similar to that of domestic violence. Emotional abuse is the beginning of a control cycle that often leads to physical abuse. It most often begins with pushing and slapping, and moves on to more serious assaults.

#### How and Why Should Changes Occur?

Gaining control of their own lives is critical to the abused partners in violent dating relationships. Continuing in the role of victim only validates the power of the abuser. Each partner in a relationship must have the right to set clear limits as to what behaviour is or is not acceptable. If necessary, partners should make clear and enforce the consequence for unacceptable behaviour, that is, the termination of the relationship.

#### **Follow-up Activities**

The Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh ([www.trfn.clpgh.org/womenscenter/datingviolence.htm](http://www.trfn.clpgh.org/womenscenter/datingviolence.htm)) provides an excellent source of information on dating violence. In small groups (each group will select one activity) use the information provided at this Web site and in this section of the guide to complete the following activities:

1. Prepare a list of danger signals for both abusers and victims in a potentially violent dating relationship.
2. Read the section "Tina's Story" on the Web site and analyze it to identify the examples of dating violence in her relationship with Darryl.
3. Brainstorm how friends can best assist someone who is a victim in an abusive dating relationship, and prepare a guide for your class.
4. Create a brief safety plan for partners who are involved in an abusive relationship they are unwilling to leave.
5. Once you have finished, choose a spokesperson from your group who will then present your findings to the entire class.

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## Comprehensive News in Review Study Modules

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Using both the print and non-print material from various issues of News in Review, teachers and students can create comprehensive, thematic modules that are excellent for research purposes, independent assignments, and small group study. We recommend the stories indicated below for the universal issues they represent and for the archival and historic material they contain.

"TV Violence: Who Gets Hurt?" May 1993  
"Violence Against Women," September 1993  
"Violence in Schools: Zero Tolerance?" April 1994  
"Gun Control: A Law To Stop the Killing," April 1995  
"Children in Trouble: Guns in Schools," September 1999  
"News Cameras and Privacy: In Your Face?" September 2000

## Other Related Videos Available from CBC Learning

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Does Your Resource Collection Include These CBC Videos?

Life With Billy  
Life After Billy  
I Will Not Fall  
Out of Control  
The Kids They Took Away  
Liar, Liar  
This Secret Shame

## Domestic Violence: Deadly Rage

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### Contents

### Introduction

### Mindful and Sensitive Dialogue

### A Statistical Snapshot

### The Nature of the Problem

### The Legal Response

### Shelters

### Dating Violence

### Getting and Giving Help

### Discussion, Research and Essay Questions

### NiR Home

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### Getting and Giving Help

Abuse victims and their friends need to know how and from whom to obtain help. If you or your friends feel that you are in immediate physical danger, the best action is usually to dial 911, or the police emergency number in your area. On the first page of most telephone books you will find a list of emergency numbers for assault victims, sexual assault victims, and emergency community services information. In smaller communities the telephone numbers for women's shelters are also often listed on this page. In larger communities, the victim support lines will provide information on local shelters.

#### Safety Plans

Victims of violence should develop a safety plan, especially if they choose to continue in an abusive relationship. At the very least, they should do the following:

1. Learn to recognize warnings of potential violence in their own situation, and determine what steps they might take to defuse a potential explosion.
2. Determine a safe place to go to when their partner is abusive.
3. Know whom they can contact in an emergency: friends, family, or other adults.
4. Develop a code word to use with friends when they feel they are in danger.

#### Friends

Because friends are far more likely to know about abusive relationships than are family members or other adults, they have an extremely important role to play in helping young victims. The Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh and the Yellow Brick House suggest the following actions:

1. Believe the victims and promise to support them.
2. Recognize the behaviours used by an abuser to control a relationship.
3. Ask victims about the relationship.
4. Maintain open and respectful communication (don't be judgmental).
5. Help the victims make safety plans.
6. Help victims talk to adults. Use school and community resources such as counsellors, nurses, parents.
7. Call your local domestic violence agency and ask for their help.

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1. The first step in dealing with violent relationships is understanding their characteristics. The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project has developed a graphic model, which uses wheels to compare and contrast the dynamics of a controlling relationship (violent) with one based on equality (nonviolent). Each wheel has eight spokes, and each spoke in the Power and Control Wheel has its opposite in the Equality Wheel (for example, "Using Coercion and Threats" is opposed to "Negotiation and Fairness"). Copies of the wheels may be downloaded from [www.duluth-model.org/daippce.htm](http://www.duluth-model.org/daippce.htm)

The class will be divided into eight groups. Each group will work with the information provided by one matching set of spokes from the two wheels to prepare and present a brief dramatic demonstration of the behaviour described as typical of the opposing types of relationships. Discuss how likely family and friends would be to recognize that abuse was taking place.

2. Professor Sally Goldfarb at Rutgers University has written: "We are in a culture that in many ways celebrates male dominance and female submission, and that is in some ways the definition of an erotic heterosexual relationship." Discuss the validity of this statement.

3. One problem in dealing with dating violence is the reluctance of young people to confide in adults. What might be done to improve this type of communication? In whom, other than peers, might young people be most prepared to confide?

4. The "battered wife defence" has been established in case law and successfully used in several trials where wives were charged with spousal murder. Research this defence and write a report showing when and how it is likely to be used.

5. Domestic violence is an international issue. In some countries Pakistan is one such example hundreds of women are burned to death yearly by their husbands and in-laws; often these are "honour" killings, the result sometimes of a husband finding his wife talking to another man. Research and prepare a report on the extent of the problem of honour crimes.

6. In the September 23, 2000, issue of Saturday Night magazine Alex Roslin, writes, "When an abused woman calls the police, says one former chief, there is a two-in-five chance a batterer [a police officer responding to the call] will show up at the door." Locate and read the article "Black & Blue" in this Canadian magazine, and prepare a report on the problem of abusers on North American police forces.

7. In your opinion how do the following relate to the issue of domestic violence: fear, power, self-confidence, shame, gender?

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