

Compared with the writings of Diana Russell, Andrea Dworkin, and the work of Ottawa-based Linda MacLeod, for example, this book conveys little of the experiential world of women who are abused. They are reduced to subjects acted upon. What is crucially missing from this volume is the voice of real women, even in quotations and parenthetical information. Fire is missing, and outrage.

This is truly a topic for which anger, indignation, and outrage are appropriate. The authors' "abuse typology" presents a short but staggering list of offences and victims. The writers argue forcefully that "a research agenda that limits its focus to physical assaults in the marital home offers an inadequate understanding of the pain and suffering women endure in Western countries such as Canada, Britain and the U.S."

DeKeseredy and Hinch point out the weaknesses of discussions of woman abuse which ignore a sociological interpretation, such as those which place the perpetrator in the category of psychopathology, or those which do so with reference to the victim. These tend to be explanations which are based in biology or psychology and which look to individual problems or inherent biological tendencies, e.g., female dependence, male aggression and territoriality.

A panoply of jargon permeates this book. The authors state that woman abuse "is a specific result of capitalist economic conditions interacting with patriarchal social relations." That would seem to beg the question of woman abuse in preindustrial societies, but the authors do not even countenance debate. They like categories, and they divide feminist sociologists into "left idealists" and "left realists," the latter so named because they believe that positive change can be introduced before the advent of a socialist feminist utopia.

Short-term solutions are problematic because they legitimate the state which daily upholds patriarchal domination. They note that "[s]hort-term initiatives are repudiated by left idealists because they believe that social and criminal justice reforms...do not eliminate the inequalities of capitalism and patriarchy which are major sources of female victimization."

In rejecting gender neutral definitions of violence, the study points out that men seriously hurt women vastly more than

women hurt men. Quantitative self-reporting surveys like the Conflict Tactics Scale Survey (CTS) do not usually record psychological abuse and the abuse of economic control, two of the most detrimental and destructive forms of male social control. Most important of all, the CTS ignores sexual violence. The authors cogently describe the liabilities of such research tools.

The most interesting aspect of the book was the few pages devoted to the ideology of familial patriarchy, in which traditional husbands who value wifely obedience and economic dependency are shown to be statistically more likely to be perpetrators of male violence. Battering is clearly supported by the ideology of the nuclear family with its diseased concept of the exalted economic role and decision-making capacity of the husband.

One glaring weakness of this study is the absence of a discussion of the sexual abuse of power relationships, including sexual abuse by therapists, teachers and religious counsellors. In addition, the section on sexual harassment contributes very little to advance the topic. The chapter on corporate violence and workplace abuses promises more than it delivers and is disappointingly cursory.

In settling for a "middle range" of proposed policy solutions, the authors evade hard questions about how Canadian society can be transformed into a realm of equality for women. One would have to agree with Andrea Dworkin that polite and timid solutions have had predictably empty results.

DATING VIOLENCE: Young Women in Danger

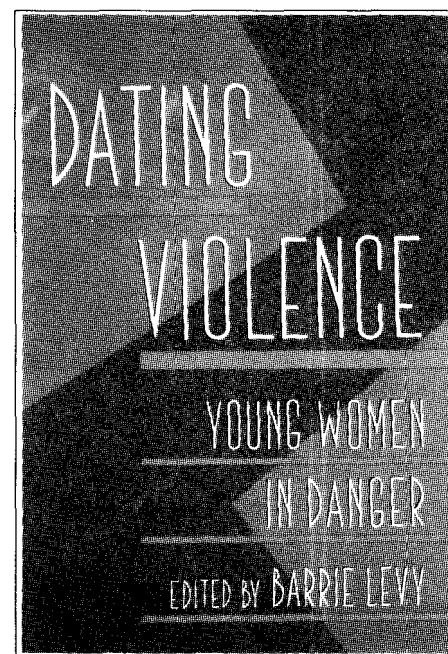
Barrie Levy, ed. Seattle: The Seal Press, 1991.

By Sue Carter

Having established that the personal is political, we can now engage in a giant sidestep to the personal as necessary. In *Dating Violence: Young Women in Danger*, editor Barrie Levy devotes the first quarter of her book to intimate testimonies written by adolescent victims of dating violence (including one contribution by a mother whose daughter was stabbed to death by an over-zealous ex-boyfriend.

Levy immediately scores points for involving the experts — and for ascribing to the notion of writer's authority: the female survivors speak their proper truths, write their own stories. Dating violence needs to be explained in human terms; the personal-anecdotal orients the reader and is a necessary precursor to the empirical number-crunching of incredibly high incidence rates. That approximately one-third of young women are being beaten up physically, emotionally and sexually by their boyfriends has yet to be grounded in general consciousness. Levy's choice of structure is a serious attempt at enlightenment: the testimonies provide readers with real insight into the dynamics of dating violence.

Following the personal (but always in case reference) is a selection of essays contextualizing dating violence. Judith MacFarlane writes of the exacerbated incidence of battering of pregnant unmarried women. Foci for other essays in this section include young black women (as doubly discriminated against in power structures) and incarcerated teens (whose past sexual abuse histories shed light on their present jailed state). Only one essay in the collection is devoted entirely to date rape, and while this section is worthwhile, its minimalization in the broader scheme of dating violence counterbalances the tendency of many women's programs to over-emphasize acquaintance rape and underplay or ignore other forms of dating violence. The extreme nature and the humiliating effects of this violence are somehow still acceptable or excusable to many



young people; Levy herself examines the unique aspects of adolescent dating, some of which partially explain this reticence to adopt the issue. Dee Graham and Edna Rawlings' piece, "Bonding with Abusive Dating Partners: Dynamics of Stockholm Syndrome," parallels the relationships between hostages and their captors, and women and their violent boyfriends, and offers a most interesting perspective on bidirectional bonding and denial of abuse.

The third section of the book looks at intervention techniques and the barriers to existing support services faced by many "young women in danger." A focused look at Asian-Pacific victims of abuse highlights some of the specific repercussions many young women face by disclosing abusive intimate relationships. Similar double binds faced by young women who suffer abuse at the hands of their lesbian partners are discussed by Levy and Kerry Lobel, who remind us first that services for battered lesbians are extremely limited, and second that to find support the young women must expose their lesbian identity. Essays on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and "flooding" as therapeutic intervention pale in comparison to the more interesting nature of the problems they seek to treat, but are nonetheless (or all the more) necessary to the discussion.

Education and prevention become increasingly pertinent as the enormity of the dating violence problem surfaces. The context of the six program profiles Levy offers is undeniably American; this does not, however, detract from the overall applicability of the book north of the 49th. The shortness of the educational resource list underlines the serious need for greater initiatives in dating violence prevention. The complete bibliography on dating violence will be a goddess-send to those working in this field.

Dating Violence: Young Women in Danger offers a thorough, varied, and personal-political orientation to dating violence. The book moves logically and thoroughly from orientation to contextualization, to instruction and to example. Levy goes beyond consciousness-raising and calls for action, providing concrete models and proving the urgent need for active prevention and intervention strategies. As a resource to the initiated service worker, and as an introduction to the uninitiated, Levy's collection is an extremely valuable tool.

NO MORE SECRETS

Nina Weinstein. Seattle, Washington:
The Seal Press, 1990.

By Rachel Brandeis

I think that novels like this one are very important for teenagers (I am sixteen) today to read. *No More Secrets* shows how sexual abuse can affect the rest of a woman's life, but as well, it explains that it is possible to face up to things, deal with them, and heal from them.

Amanda Baker's mother refused to believe that her daughter had been raped when she was eight years old. Amanda's father Maury had been out of town on business when it all happened. Amanda was in bed trying to get to sleep when a man came into her room and said, "Your mother knows I'm here, she said it's o.k."

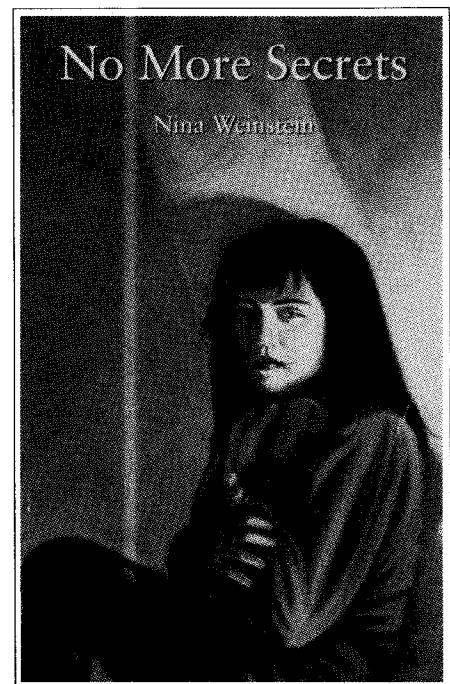
Amanda was confused. She wondered why her mother let this strange man into her room. But the fact that her mom said it was o.k. for the man to do what he did bothered her the most.

After the man had left, Amanda told her mother that he had hurt her. The following day they went to the hospital, where a nurse told her, "A big girl like you should've known better, Amanda. You really should have." The doctor found traces of blood. Amanda admitted that the strange man had touched her uncomfortably, but she would never let anyone know that she had been raped.

At the age of thirteen Amanda and her family moved to a town in southern California called Iverlawn. There they were "as poor as church mice." Amanda started high school and became very best friends with a girl named Steffie. But still Amanda kept her secret to herself.

At the age of sixteen Amanda became very sick. She would wake up during the night with diarrhoea and would vomit during the day at school. Also, for three months she stopped having her period. Amanda was hospitalized for a few days while doctors conducted all kinds of tests. Nobody every really figured out what was wrong with her, but Amanda's illness forced her mother to confront what had happened eight years ago.

Amanda started going to a therapist. She learned how to deal with what happened and how to begin the process of healing herself. She could now accept that



she had been raped, but she was still puzzled about the man who came into her room that night while her mother was home. Amanda was dying to know who he was, but every time she tried to talk to her mother, she just told Amanda to forget about it, and never bring it up again.

Finally Amanda's mother agreed to tell her everything. With all her questions answered, she can move on with her life.

The characters were very well drawn. Amanda appears to be a very lonely girl, although on the inside she is really quite strong. I felt like I knew her personally, and could relate to her problems.

The novelist describes her settings so clearly that I can easily imagine a scene and know something important about the characters in it: "...my mom and dad were at the kitchen table, which was covered with dirty dishes from this morning. There was an old Philco refrigerator that hummed every once in a while in the far corner of the room, and a stove that had brown stains all over the burners right next to it. The walls were Pepto Bismol pink. We'd lived in the house three years, and as far as I knew, no one had ever painted."

Nina Weinstein made me enjoy reading about a very tough subject. The topics of sexual abuse and rape usually make me uncomfortable, but since this book was so well written I now feel comfortable reading and talking about these things. I would recommend this novel to any teenager or young adult who enjoys a good story and who may also want to feel more comfortable in dealing with these subjects.