

Richardson wanted to play Little League Baseball. The coach said sure - just cut your hair, dress like a boy and we'll call you Bob.

Dot discovered softball instead. The year was 1972, the same year Title IX passed, and an athletic revolution began.

Source: South China Morning Post, 7 August 1996

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## GANG RAPE AS PUNISHMENT

Gang rape is common practice—it is used to punish girls who have more than one boyfriend. Gang rape might even be used as “a punishment” if a girl tells her boyfriend he has passed a sexually transmitted disease (STD) on to her.

This startling information emerged from one of the workshops held with young women in Mpumalanga last year to develop the Women's Health Project workshop manual on sexually transmitted diseases.

The issue of gang rape came up during role plays in a workshop. In the workshop a “girlfriend” had to tell her “boyfriend” that she had an STD. This is followed by a role play in which the “boyfriend” discussed this information with his “friend.” In this role play the “boyfriend” said: “I was so annoyed by this girl who said that it was me who made her ill. When I realised that I also have the disease, I decided to arrange a group of boys to come and rape her.”

In the discussion after the role play we asked the young women whether gang rape was a reality in their community. They said gang rape happens in their community; it is a common practice especially as a punishment for a girl who has

more than one boyfriend. Then young men meet and arrange that a group of men should rape such a girl.

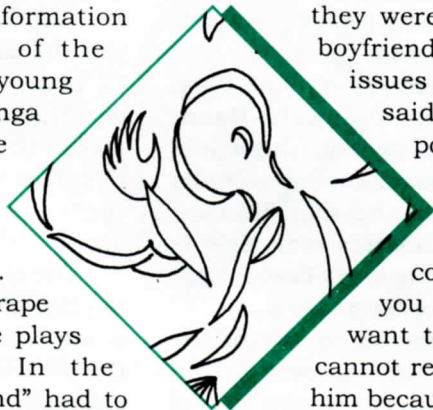
The young women described gang rape as a method that is used to punish women “who do not behave well.” They said girls “behave well” out of fear that they may be gang raped and even felt it was good that “misbehaving women get punished because it is wrong for them to make the boyfriends fools.” Young women who sympathised with girls subjected to gang rape were in the minority and they also voiced their condemnation of such girls' behaviour.

While the young women said they were not scared of their boyfriends and could discuss issues with them, they also said they were not in a position to suggest the use of condoms to them. They told us: “Even if you have the condom there is nothing you can do if he does not want to use them and you cannot refuse to have sex with him because he is going to beat you up”.

The young women didn't question the inequalities in relationships. They saw men as leaders who should always also be initiators.

The above issues have come up in STD and other Women's Health Project workshops. As a result of this, WHP feels that there is a need for educational materials that will address violence, health and sexuality issues.

Source: Women's Health News, May 1996, No. 18



## APPROACHING MID-LIFE? READ ON

Women who reach natural menopause menstruate between 400-500 times during their lives.

Smoking can bring on an early menopause.

Japanese women have a very low rate of menopausal complaints. It is suggested that this may be due to their higher consumption of *tofu* (soya bean curd).

Mangoes are an anti-depressant.

Banana and lettuce calm your nerves.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) helps improve memory and may reduce the risk of Alzheimer's Disease

Men also experience midlife changes when the testosterone levels in their bodies decline.

Some researchers believe that testosterone treatment may prove equally effective for male patients as oestrogen is to females.

Source: NEWomen NEWSletter Winter 1996

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## MURDER PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON PROSTITUTION

SOUTH AFRICA—The prostitute's corpse was found buried upside down in bushes near Milnerton in November 1995, her legs and buttocks protruding above the ground. The post mortem revealed she had probably been buried alive.

In January 1996, another body was found near Durbanville, and police announced a serial killer was on the loose in Cape Town. He had murdered at least nine prostitutes, strangling them with their clothes, and torturing three of them before they were killed.