

TOWARDS COLLABORATION BETWEEN PUBLIC WELFARE AGENCIES AND MASS ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA TO BRING ABOUT A TURNING POINT STAGE IN THE LIVES OF BATTERED WOMEN

DESPRE COLABORAREA DINTRE INSTITUȚIILE PUBLICE ȘI MASS MEDIA ÎN VEDEREA STABILIRII UNUI PUNCT DE COTITURĂ ÎN VIEȚILE FEMEILOR ABUZATE

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the promoting and impeding factors that advance the turning point in the lives of battered women. The subject is important because of the contribution of the turning point stage to the ability of women to leave the violent relationship and the way in which the public welfare agencies become involved in order to help the victim to advance towards the turning point. The article also reviews the influence of the entertainment media in shaping the positions of the public regarding marital violence, the presentation of battered women in the media, and the connection between their media presentation and their advancement towards the turning point in reality.

The research is based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, and focuses on content analysis. The qualitative content analysis included 40 journal articles, 1 documentary film and one drama series, the personal interviews included 8 social workers and 6 journalists, and the focus group included 8 battered women. The findings indicate an awareness of battered women in the various media, and of a gap between the perception of social workers and the journalists regarding the role of the media in raising social problems.

The article calls for cooperation between the media and the professionals in order to construct

messages of empowerment that will enable women to advance towards the turning point in their lives.

Key words: Battered women; turning point; mass media; public welfare policy; public welfare agencies

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, much has been discussed and researched on the importance of using mass media to disseminate social messages and to form social opinion towards building a public agenda. These academic discussions and research projects have been analyzed primarily from the Marxist and Functionalist schools of thought.

The phenomenon of violence against women began to emerge as an issue beyond the confines of the private sector as a result of the Feminist movement of the 60s. Mass media played a significant role in turning the phenomenon from a private into a public and social problem. Most research dealing with presenting violence against women in mass media has focused on the forming of public opinion on the issue and on measuring the contribution of media in raising the issue of violence against women from a level of a private issue to a public concern.

This research examines the link between the portrayal of battered women through mass media and the self image of those women themselves. Previous studies have discovered that the most significant factor in triggering a battered woman to the turning point of taking action against the violence is a change in her self image. The research analyzes the link between the portrayal of battered women in Israel's mass media and the resulting self image of battered women. It discovers differences between battered women's self image and their portrayal in mass media, and explores the consequences and effects on their self image due to these differences. The objective of this research is to form a profile of a battered woman in the mass media with which other battered women can identify, in order to bring them closer to the turning point. In this article, academic tools are being used to analyze the link between the mass media portrayal of battered women, their self image, and the therapeutic intervention of professionals working in public welfare agencies.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Intimate partner violence

Women battered by their partners are a well-known phenomenon in history that had been given social legitimacy, but it is only from since the 1970s, as a result of the activity of women organizations and against the back of human rights movements, that it began to be treated as a

social problem. This activity raised the awareness of violence and ended the conspiracy of silence around it, and it also led to changes in the norms and legislation in sphere of violence in the family (Loue 2001; Dobash & Dobash 1979; Joseph 1997; Roy 1999). Married couple violence was defined in the past like all acts intended to harm the other, to hurt, to abuse, or to murder (Hoff 1990; Straus & Gelles 1990). Today, this violence is usually treated not only from its physical aspect, but at additional levels such as sexual, psychological and economic violence (Carlyle, Slater & Chakroff 2008). In spite of the agreement that exists among researchers that this is a phenomenon that transcends race, ethnic affiliation, sexual orientation, physical abilities, and demographic characteristics (Mahony, Williams & West 2001; Walker 1994), there is no agreement in the research literature regarding the scope of the phenomenon, especially because of the fact that it is impossible to locate those who do not report violence or who turn to informal or private frameworks of assistance (Straus & Gelles 1990).

The turning point in the lives of battered women

The life cycle of battered women is described in the research literature as having three stages: The women remain within the sphere of marital violence; there is a process of change and a turning point; the battered women leave the sphere of marital violence.

The reasons why battered women remain in the marital sphere is described in research conducted since the 1970s. This research literature tends to divide the reasons into three categories. The first category is that the marital sphere provides the normal needs of a woman, such as love, commitment, and the care of children (Strube & Barbour 1983; Turner & Shapiro 1986) or that it provides her pathological needs such as masochism and neutralization of guilt feelings (Shainess 1979). The second category is remaining in the sphere of marital violence as a psychological or socio-economic trap (Okun 1986; Herbert, Silver & Ellard 1991). The third category is that this is a rational choice for practical considerations of cost-benefit (Pfouts 1978; Schechter 1982). At this stage, the battered women remain in the marital sphere because they are experienced in coping with their situation in various ways, to deny the violence or to come to terms with it (Gordon 1996; Star 1980; Johnson & Ferraro 1984; Peled, Eisikovitz, Enosh & Winstok 2000) up until the turning point.

The term turning point, encompasses (a) the culmination of an inner process by which a battered woman switches from living with violence to a rejection of violence and an unwillingness to continue to live with it; (b) the woman's public acknowledgment of the violence and her open search for ways to curb it, and (c) the woman's confrontation of her partner about her unwillingness to tolerate the violence and her involvement with formal organizations specializing in domestic

abuse (Eisikovitz, Buchbinder & Mor 1998).

Contrary to the assumption that the turning point results from an extremely violent event that upset the balance of the created pattern of violence (Hamilton & Coates 1993; Edleson 1999), the argument has been put forward that the internal changes that a woman experiences when trying to escape from the circle of violence are those that bring her closer to the turning point (Turner & Shapiro 1986; Kirkwood 1993; Eizikovitz, Buchbinder & Mor 1998). One of the significant changes at this stage is the change in self-image. Self-image is defined as the sense of control over life and of power. As a result of the experience of violence, the self-image of a woman is damaged (Janoff-Bluman & Frieze 1983), while the turning point is described as the ability to reconnect to the sense of inner power in spite of weaknesses and to forgo feelings of guilt and fear (Eizikovitz, Buchbinder & Mor 1998).

Since this stage is accompanied by many dilemmas and internal conflicts such as loyalty to the family as contrasted with the realization of her needs, and active desertion instead of remaining (Eisikovitz & Buchbinder 2000), the turning point is the stage at which the woman can choose between desertion, an attempt to change the existing marital system, or to remain in it without protest. The woman takes into account cost-benefit considerations in her decision whether to remain or leave the marital system (Peled, Eisikovitz, Enosh & Winstok 2000), and these considerations have to accompany the treatment intended to strengthen the woman, to reconnect her with her powers and self-esteem with assistance in estimating her situation (Burstow 1992). Since the turning point is in most cases associated with an external event over which the professional worker has no control, the treatment and the assistance will not produce an immediate change, but only in bringing the woman closer to her limit of endurance. This will be done by increasing the woman's readiness and ripeness for change. When an additional event occurs, the woman will give this event the significance that will lead her to the turning point and eventually to the negation of a continued life with violence (Eizikovitz, Buchbinder & Mor 1998).

The power of the media to influence public opinion and its positions has been of central interest for journalists during the 1980s (Kulman & Akamatsu 2006). One of the main methods for changing perceptions, positions and tendencies of target audiences was by means of the entertainment media (films, drama series, advertisements, etc.) This enabled the exposure of the public to stories about life through which people learnt about various matters concerning the world at large. Entertainment media became one of the most effective tools in transmitting social messages that would not otherwise have obtained public interest (Signorielli 1990). It has become the most popular genre, with daily exposure to millions of people, and is therefore an educational tool to create positive social change which news reports have failed to accomplish (Wallach 1993).

Thus, the educational-entertainment media has been defined as process that contains educational programs and entertainment messages with the aim of raising the level of personal awareness on a subject and to create a pro-active approach towards it so as to change undesirable behavior associated with it (Singhal & Rogers 1999).

The method used by the media for behavior change is described in the research literature by three models taken from the behavioral sciences (Hornik 1991):

- a. Social expectations: The behavior of a person is influenced by social expectations, and therefore he will decide to act for the sake of a social problem according to the accepted perceptions and norms in society.
- b. Change in behavior through a change in belief: Individual behavior is influenced by belief in the danger, outcome and cost of the initiative to act for the sake of a social problem.
- c. The building of trust through models of imitation: Despite the fact that people are aware of the seriousness of social problems, they are afraid that they are unable to act for their sake and need a model of imitation in order to be motivated.

In the 1970s, some groups in Hollywood called the “Hollywood Lobby” formed active ties with Hollywood producers and directors to cooperate in raising social subjects on the public agenda through the entertainment media. This cooperation created documentaries that presented social themes that had dramatic aspects (Montgomery 1989). The subject of health was the first one to be dealt with by the educational entertainment media during the 1980s. The model for transmission of messages included three levels:

- a. Figures for imitation – a wide range of desirable behavior relevant to health issues was presented.
- b. Specific perspectives regarding health and sickness – the audience was supposed to be convinced to adopt these approaches.
- c. Advertisements – strong messages about health appliances and a health way of life, to complement the influence already applied through news reports and entertainment.

This model was comprehensive and successful, and constituted the basis for media usage in connection with other social problems (Nariman 1993).

The influence of exposure to media programs – personal involvement in media programs

The degree of exposure to subjects and programs through the media, the ways in which they are perceived and analyzed, are liable to lead the viewer who is directly affected by the programs, to a behavioral, emotional or cognitive turning point. Exposure to media programs is influenced by sociological, economic and psychological factors, and selective exposure depends on those

conditions particularly relevant to each person (Sears & Freedman 1965). From this one may understand that human positions and values will influence their perceptions and their comprehension of social occurrences in general, including media programs. Moreover, people are liable to grasp messages transmitted by those media programs when it depends on the degree of their personal involvement in the subject (Vidmar & Rokeach 1974).

Personal involvement in media programs have two meanings, according to Rubin & Perse (1987):

- a. Importance of the subject – people have a higher motivation in paying attention to the media programs that are of greater importance to them.
- b. Personal experience – involvement is a situation in which people have direct personal experience of subjects and messages to which they are exposed by the media. When people have personal experience of a subject, they will be more attentive to the media message and will react to it at an emotional, cognitive and behavioral level.

Involvement in a message is based not only on the program itself but to a great extent also on the level of identification with the personality that transmits the message. A para-social system of relationships is created between the transmitter of the message and individuals in the audience. These relationships are defined as a semi-friendship between the individual in the audience and the personality (Sood & Rogers 2000), and are the product of television viewing which is perceived as mediating between the audience and the socialization process. According to Hoffner (1996) the viewer shares his positions, perceptions, and experiences with the media personality, and even develops an emotional bond with it. The para-social system of relationships has five dimensions that allow the individual to be involved, to open up to the personality, and to absorb the messages and the information that it transmits to him:

- a. Emotional interaction (a feeling of close familiarity with the personality).
- b. Cognitive interaction (perception of the media programs as realistic and comparison with his own positions).
- c. Behavioral interaction (the extent to which the individual converses with the personality and/or with friends about the messages transmitted by the personality).
- d. Related involvement (the degree to which the individual links the message with his personal experience).
- e. Critical involvement (the degree in which the individual is involved in constructing the message and raising proposals and changes in its construction).

Presentation of battered women in the media

The presentation of battered women in the entertainment media can be encountered in various forms of communication such as women magazines, films, plays, or drama series. The narrative of battered women is often presented within a framework of empowerment, close relationship or the performance of social justice (Berns 2004). Research in the field of news reports and entertainment refer to the innovative reviews of violence towards women as being in most cases intended to serve the economic needs of the press and not just to advance the subject – a social problem that needs treatment and solution. For example, a personal case of violence towards women will be brought in conjunction with a court case being conducted around the incident in order to increase newspaper sales. Yet parallel with such reports on violence towards women, feminist movements did not always have the necessary power or resources to appear in the media and transmit their messages in the right way regarding the need to find a solution to this social problem (Stone 1993). However, from an analysis of the content of such reported events and of films and programs dealing with the subject of violence towards women in the United States from the 1970s until the 1990s, it was found that the media actually succeeded in raising doubts with regard to the central national values of American society. An example of this is the review of the O.J. Simpson and Nicole Brown Simpson case. On this personal case of violence towards a woman and her murder, the media managed to raise doubts regarding other central values in American society such as the relations between blacks and whites (Kozol 1995).

During the 1970s and 1980s, the economic and political crisis in the United States caused the media to focus on social matters as well, such as violence towards children. This subject led into the subject of violence towards women. Thanks to the feminist movements and the establishment of shelters for battered women during the 1970s, the media began to take greater interest in the subject of violence in the family (Pleck 1987).

In spite of the distinction between entertainment media and news media, both of them still rely on the personal, realistic and melodramatic story, especially when it concerns violence towards women (Rapping 1997), therefore a film dealing with the subject may sometimes cause a strong reaction and be raised to the public agenda. An example of this is the Hollywood film “The Burning Bed”: a real life case of Francine Hughes, who in 1977 after years of abuse set fire to her husband in his sleep. This sensational event led to a flood of reports on cases of violence towards women, interviews with feminist groups and treatment of the subject through TV police series and soap operas. But it was this film in particular, based on a true story, that succeeded in creating a much wider public outcry, even more than the story itself did in 1977, and won a higher audience rating than any broadcast had ever done before (Kozol 1995).

Also the film, “To Sleep with the Enemy”, that Kozol (1995) had analyzed, describes the central figure of Laura who has managed to escape from her abusive husband, Martin, by her own efforts without help from family, community or formal organizations. Even when she manages to escape from him by swimming away, she does not turn to the police, a shelter for battered women, or any other source of help. She finally succeeds, also by her own efforts and in self-defence, to kill her husband who has pursued her. Ironically, the media expect a woman to cope with the problem of violence towards her by her own efforts and does not take into consideration such variables as economic situation, social structures, power balance in society, and family dynamics. In addition, the media describes formal organizations as ineffective, even though in reality it has been proved that through professional help a turning point occurs in the woman and results in a change in her behavior (Scott 1991). Thus, when the media regularly ignores the ability of a battered woman to find assistance in formal organizations at the turning point in her life, it actually creates a barrier between the private world of the battered woman and the raising of the problem as a public issue and its treatment through public organizations (Alcoff & Gray 1993).

On the other hand, in the film “The Color Purple”, according to Kozol (1995), the media chose to treat this issue from other aspects. Celie, the battered black woman, succeeds in coping with violence towards her by the power of the female community and personal empowerment. Unlike earlier films, she is not alone, and even presents her rehabilitation after her release from the circle of violence. One of the criticisms against films presenting the problem of violence towards women is that the woman is presented as a victim, as a helpless mother, or as someone who is responsible for the violence towards her. In this way, the media strengthens the image of the battered woman as an object, removes the narrative from the context and isolates it from its connections with social forces. In this way, the media perpetuates its existing ideas regarding battered women instead of casting doubt on them (Roiphe 1993; Sommers-Hoff 1994).

The connection between presentation of battered women in the entertainment media and professional public organizations offering services for prevention and treatment of marital violence

According to Klein, Campbell, Soler & Ghes (1997), caregivers and professionals in the field of violence towards women would be interested in mass educational programs that call upon the public to condemn violence towards women, to take personal responsibility to stop it, and to help battered women to obtain the appropriate assistance. Since the 1970s, the media has taken care to present the problem regularly as a “private” problem, stressing the personal ability of the woman to cope with it instead of moving from these private cases to the general situation and to raise the issue of violence towards women as a social problem that demands to be dealt with (Rapping 1987). Mos

of the studies in this field were conducted in the 1990s.

From an analysis of 1156 cuttings from the Canadian press on the subject of violence towards women in 1988, it was found that only 156 (10%) raised the problem of violence towards women as a social problem. These extracts discussed the ways to help the battered woman, to prevent violence towards women, and social education on the subject of violence towards women. At the same time, in most of the news reports on violence towards women, including those that referred only to an individual case, one can find opinions and references to the feminist movement and the intention to raise the phenomenon of violence towards women as a social problem (Stone 1993). This fact indicates that newspaper editors began to regard not only the personal story, but also the feminist viewpoint as newsworthy information for publication in the newspaper.

The feminist movement managed to bring about changes in the attitude of society towards the problem of violence towards women. Shelters were set up for battered women, programs and centers were opened for the prevention of violence, and on the legislative level – violence towards women was considered a crime. Just as the subject was raised to the public agenda, so did the press begin to treat the subject of violence as a social problem. The media took upon itself the responsibility to teach about violence in the family, described stories about violence, and presented statistics on the subject (Ghez 2001). An example of this is the “Hollywood Lobby”. This cooperation created documentary films that presented social subjects that had dramatic aspects. It began with the field of health promotion but later treated other social subjects, including marital violence (Montgomery 1989). Another example of cooperation between caregiving agencies and the media occurred in California during the 1990s, where a foundation for the prevention of family violence was established and set out on a wide-ranging advertisement campaign to prevent violence. This advertisement campaign consisted of two stages:

- a. The use of advertisements that called upon people to act in preventing violence towards women. A "Toll-Free Number" and an explanatory kit were distributed to the public to show how to help battered women. It was found that this advertisement was reliable, successful in changing attitudes and effective.
- b. A message was transmitted by means of TV social dramas in which social messages were embedded, and the figures were models for imitation (Martin, Zia & Soler 1998).

According to Ghez (2001) the work on developing messages was a cooperative one between caregiving professionals and the media. It was found that the campaign led to four significant changes:

- People remembered the message and supported it.
- There was a marked increase in reports on violence towards women.

- Violence towards women was perceived as an important subject to be dealt with.
- People believed that men who beat others should be sentenced to imprisonment.

Relying on the success of the educational-entertainment media in the health sphere, they also wanted to make use of the media for the sphere of violence against women, with a stress on the following parameters:

- a. Examination and understanding of the factors that would lead the target audience to motivation (development of messages that would motivate the target audience to act for the sake of preventing violence against women).
- b. Examination of the barriers to involvement facing the target audience (development of messages including specific information about the safe and effective ways to offer assistance).
- c. Examination of the psychological and emotional needs of the target audience (development of messages that will encourage aggressive men to take responsibility for their actions, since this is a need that was identified among the target audience).
- d. Examination of cultural sensitivity (development of emotional and cultural messages that identify the threshold of tolerance towards violence among various communities. Education through figures for imitation that will help to develop the perceptions of the various communities towards the subject and the methods to obtain a solution).

According to Ghez (2001), these parameters conform to the model of Hornik (1991):

- Social expectations: These are an expression of the fact that violence in the family continues because clear social norms have not been consolidated to eliminate the problem.
- Behavioral change through change in beliefs: This is an expression of the fact that the individual has to cope with questions regarding his beliefs about violence in the family (does he understand the seriousness of the problem? Does he have any reason to take action about it?).
- Building up trust through presentation of tools for change: This is expressed by constructing the message in the media so as to strengthen the belief of the individual in his power to create change.

The media model that describes the influence of the educational-entertainment media on improving the status of women in this connection was developed by Brown & Cody (1991) and includes three parameters:

- a. Awareness of pro-social behavior: This refers to the motivation of the individual to process the message transmitted to him and to understand it.

- b. Dependence on television: This refers to the degree in which the individual is exposed to television – the greater the dependence on television the more is the readiness to accept changes in beliefs and behavior.
- c. Involvement: This refers to the previous approaches that the individual brings with him into the media situation, to the emotional, cognitive and behavioral participation during exposure to the media and the para-social relations with the personalities that transmit the message.

These three parameters lead to changes in the beliefs of a woman regarding those programs and messages that were transmitted through the media.

Hypothesis:

1. Media framing and construction of social problems by means of the turning point of battered women in mass media:
 - a. A phenomenon of violence against women is presented by the media as a social problem.
 - b. Most of the reasons why battered women reach the turning point as presented in the mass media is because of an extreme violence committed against them.
 - c. Most of the results of reaching the turning point, as presented in the mass media, is murder of the victim or the violent partner.
 - d. The media does not consider whether the women who have reached the turning point are satisfied with its results.
 - e. In the narrative of battered women as presented in the media, those who left their violent partners will describe the moment of reaching the turning point as their initiative, while those who decided to stay will describe this moment as a compulsion.
2. Involvement of battered women with messages conveyed by the media:
 - a. Identification with a figure of a battered woman as presented in the mass media is positively connected with the experience that the battered women experienced in reality with regard to the turning point.
 - b. The involvement and acceptance of these messages is positively connected to the experience that the battered women experienced in reality regarding the turning point.
3. Involvement of public welfare agencies and centers of prevention and treatment of violence against women with messages conveyed by the media:
 - a. Professional consultants see the mass media as an educational medium for battered women while the media considers itself as an educational medium for all the citizens and as a means of agenda-setting.

METHOD

The methodology was based on qualitative factors and was focused on content analysis and interviews. Profile articles of battered women were counted as follows: all the articles in which the outcome was murder of the battered woman and their country of origin; compared with the number of battered women actually murdered between the years 1992-1999, and their country of origin. (Data of battered women who were murdered by their partners is available from police and women organizations only from 1992. This data was originally based solely on news reports).

The following newspapers were used: "Yediot Aharonot" (a daily popular journal), "Haaretz" (a daily journal) and "LaIsha" (a women's magazine). From these sources, all the profile articles on battered women were taken from 1991 - 1999. Also, from the electronic media, the documentary "Forever Beaten" (from the documentary weekly television program "Uvda" with Ilana Dayan, Channel 2) was used, as well as the drama series "Tironut" Channel 2 (which describes how a battered woman and her family copes until her son decides to murder his violent father).

These articles and programs presented stories of battered women, and includes their situation both prior to and after the turning point.

After receiving the results of the content analysis, eight professionals in the fields of social work, family counseling, etc. were interviewed, as well as six journalists who have covered subject. These interviews contributed to a more comprehensive understanding on the subject from the widest possible range of sources, built a basis for a more accurate profile of the battered woman in mass media, and led to a more profound understanding of the collaboration between the public agencies and the media in striving to help battered women.

FINDINGS

The personal story of a battered woman in the mass media helps in raising public awareness of the problem and actively portrays the issue as a social and public problem and responsibility. During the turning point stage the battered woman is portrayed as the initiator in taking action against the violent partner, as well as having a network of social and family support. Separation or divorce from the perpetrator are the solutions recommended by the media. Identification with the narrative of a battered woman as seen in the media, is positively related to the personal experience of a battered woman in reality; but it is also related to the measure of realism of the character and to the measure of reliability and credibility of the message conveyed by the media. In order to enable battered women to accept the message, to become more involved with the narrative and to give them the means to act, one should present other alternatives to resolve the problem of violence, to

convey a reliable message and to present practical information.

All the journalists interviewed for this research regard their reports of personal stories of battered women as a social service and responsibility to the public. The LaIsha journalists take an extra step in also directing their articles to the battered women themselves, and through these articles transmitting a direct message of empowering their self image.

The professionals who were interviewed for this research consider the mass media as a source that presents the battered woman only as a personal tragedy and who should be regarded as a helpless victim, stereotyping her character and status, and focusing only on the different types of violence used against her.

Contrary to that, all the journalists who were interviewed see their work as a contributing to society and strive to create an impact on public opinion by raising the personal narrative of battered women. Journalists from "LaIsha" convey direct messages to battered women in order to empower them while the other journals describe the battered woman as a weak victim who is usually murdered at the end.

DISCUSSION

Following the findings, the research suggests that the portrayal and narrative of the battered woman in mass media should be more in line with that of "LaIsha". This research also suggests developing the narrative along the lines of three models: development of the turning point stage in the lives of battered women (Eisikovitz, Buchbinder & Mor 1998); the influence of the media on changes in benefits (Cody & Brown 1991); and alternative models in behavioral change (Hornik 1991).

Mass media should transmit more messages of empowerment, increase self esteem, on one hand, while continuing to maintain public awareness and conscience. Articles should not focus on the detailed descriptions of method and types of violence against women and not highlight the victimization of the battered woman, because these descriptions have a negative effect; It desensitizes the reader, suppresses the battered woman, and encourages violent men to continue their behavior and may even increase their aggression.

The findings of this research confirm the importance of cooperation between the two disciplines of professional social work and the media. This cooperation may assist in bringing more women to their turning point to actively seek solutions to the violence perpetrated against them. It is hoped that this research will open new directions in research, both practical and theoretical, in the fields of communication, public policy and social work, in order to advance solutions for social issues. It is also recommended to conduct large-scale quantitative research among professional

consultants and journalists in order to develop a collaborative model. Moreover, it will be interesting to study more about the women who have not yet reached the turning point stage in order to discover who would be suitable from their point of view to help them reach the turning point stage.

Limitations

- a. The research was checked against a small number of communication programs, but it should be noted that these were all the programs that were published during the period of this research (at least those in connection with the drama series and reports in the newspapers that were selected). This in itself switches on a red light, especially in view of the enormous quantity of news reports on the subject during that period.
- b. Only a few of those under examination were interviewed, but I tried to select the sample in relation to the quantity of communication programs on this subject, however few these were.
- c. Only one researcher analyzed the results of this research, and therefore subjective tendencies can be found that could not be prevented.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research has reviewed the factors that promote and impede battered women from reaching the turning point in their advancement towards freedom from the circle of violence and the creation of a positive change in their lives. The contribution of public organizations dealing with prevention of violence and taking care of these women is not in doubt. The research examined the presentation of battered women in the media and the power and influence of mass media in promoting the treatment of marital violence the public policy level on one hand, and of bringing battered women closer to their turning point on the other. This research proposes an alternative to way in which social problems are presented in the media. It was found that the aim of the media was to place the problem on the public agenda, to create public response and thus to assist battered women. If this is the case, then it is suggested that these aims be introduced into another conceptual framework in which the battered woman would be presented in a different manner, and thus also to contribute to battered women trying to change their lives, and doing so without harming the aims of the media mentioned above.

Towards cooperation between the media and public agencies dealing with prevention of marital violence.

This research may serve as an opening for cooperation between professional workers from

the public service agencies and the media in constructing the material programs and examining a sample of this in their presence before releasing it for publication. Interviews with professionals workers reveal a tone of criticism towards the media in its attitude towards this social problem. I believe that this can serve as a basis for rapprochement between the two professions at the practical level, and thus moderate the criticism and replace it with an atmosphere of study and mutual productivity that will eventually benefit the battered women themselves, as by doing so, society in general. This research can also constitute a basis for examining other social problems and for examining the link between their presentation by the media and by those suffering from social problems in real life.

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