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BOOK NOTES

Dee L. Graham with Edna I. Rawlings and Roberta K. Rigsby, *Loving to Survive: Sexual Terror and Women's Lives*. New York: New York University Press, 1994. \$24.95 hardcover.

Why is it that women who are regularly subjected to physical and emotional abuse, continue to endure abuse and even to love their abuser. In this interesting book, the author's claim that a phenomenon known as 'Stockholm syndrome' provides useful insights into this issue.

The term 'Stockholm syndrome' was coined in 1973 after two bank robbers held two men and a woman hostage for a period of five days in a large Stockholm bank after an attempted robbery was foiled. Although the robbers threatened the lives of the hostages, the hostages identified with their captors and developed an emotional bond with them to the extent that they viewed the police as the enemy, and their captors as their friends. This feeling persisted long after the hostages had been rescued. Mental health professionals have discovered a similar dynamic at work in many other hostage taking situations. In addition, Stockholm syndrome characterizes many other abusive situations particularly, spousal abuse.

Stockholm syndrome occurs when victims bond with their abusers. While the reasons for this bonding are not entirely clear, the author's note that bonding occurs because victims see no way of escape and behave submissively in an attempt to further their sense of security. This, they point out, is exactly what happens in abusive family relationships.

The question which the authors do not, however, adequately address, is why some victims of both hostage taking situations and spousal abuse, do in fact resist their captors and seek to escape. While the authors insist that Stockholm syndrome is a normal response of normal people, deviations from the norm require more discussion. Also, problematic is the author's attempt to employ Stockholm syndrome as a generalized explanatory basis for all gender relationships in society. Femininity, they claim, is an expression of women's subjugation. Femininity is an attempt to please men which has its roots in Stockholm's

syndrome. Femininity, women's psychology and gender relationships in general are essentially survival strategies in a captive situation marked by male terror. While this is an interesting thesis, it will be contested not only by men but by many women and many feminist as well. Nevertheless, this well written book should stimulate widespread debate.

Ronald J. Angel and Jacqueline L. Angel, *Painful Inheritance: Health and the New Generation of Fatherless Families*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994 \$52.00 hardcover, \$19.95 papercover.

It is widely believed that children who grow up in single parent families are seriously disadvantaged. Many believe that these children lack the emotional support they need and that they will grow up with many psychological deficits. Children of single parents are also thought to perform poorly in school, and it generally accepted that many of them will subsequently engage in deviant behaviors including crime, drug abuse and teen pregnancy.

This book explores another aspect of the debate — the health situation of children in single mother families. The authors, who are sociologists at the University of Texas at Austin, have undertaken a detailed analysis of the data. They show that children of single parent families do in fact have greater health problems than children in two-parent families. They note also that these children have inadequate access to modern health care services. However, they demonstrate that the concentration of health care problems among children of single parent families is closely associated with poverty, particularly among African-American and Hispanic fatherless families. Their study reveals that single parenthood of itself has few negative consequences for health status. Adults and children in single families with adequate incomes are as healthy as those in other family configurations.

As the authors note, poverty and racial disadvantage are major causative factors of low health status. The problem is exacerbated by poor services for these families. The authors reveal that health care services for single families are hopelessly