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### *Women Battering as Marital Act: The Construction of a Violent Marriage.* Margaret Hyden.

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Margaret Hyden, *Women Battering as Marital Act: The Construction of a Violent Marriage*. New York: Sandinavian University Press, 1994. \$35 hardcover. (Distributed in the United States by Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016).

This study of the experiences of the victims of family violence in Sweden makes disturbing reading but, at the same time, offers powerful insights into the way women are subjected to abuse and of the way they deal with its consequences. Hyden worked for some time as a social worker in a clinic in Stockholm where she developed the technique of recording the experiences of her clients in narrative form. Using this technique, and linking effectively it to symbolic interactionism to enhance its interpretive power, she has produced a remarkable collection of real life accounts which show how ordinary people suffer the emotional and physical pain of abusive relationships.

The study analyzed 141 cases in which interviews were conducted not only with the women victims, but with the male perpetrators of violence and often with children as well. A smaller group was selected for in-depth analysis. In addition to providing a fascinating narrative account of the experiences of her subjects, Hyden uses her material in theoretical significant ways to test and reformulate several critical propositions in feminist theory relating to the issue of family violence. Her book makes an important contribution and should be widely consulted.

Juanita Ramos (Ed.), *Companeras: Latina Lesbians*, New York: Routledge, 1994. \$45 hardcover, \$14.95 papercover.

This extraordinary book is an anthology of essays, narrative accounts, short stories, oral histories, poems and academic writing on the experiences, views and feelings of forty seven Latina lesbians. While it may appear to deal with an esoteric subject of limited relevance to readers interested in mainstream issues of gender and sexuality, it will enchant anyone working the field. It confirms Routledge's growing reputation as a adventurous publisher of serious books which do not qualify for course adoption. While the book has no unifying theoretical perspective, its literary style which reports subjective experiences and