High School Women's News Page

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Unwed Arab Mothers Victims of "Honor Killings"

By Jennifer Church
San Diego High School

A few Jews, Christians, and Arabs are working quietly together, at risk to their own lives, to save young Arab women who would otherwise be murdered by their families because they got pregnant out of wedlock.

These murders are known as "honor killings," and are widely accepted on the tradition-bound West Bank of the Jordan River and in some small villages in Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The small group helping the mostly teenage girls, is financed by a Swiss human rights organization in Israel They smuggle the girls out of the West Bank area by a secret route and into another country.

The women can then choose to either have their babies or get abortions. Most get abortions, but even this is risky. They must make up elaborate cover stories to tell their relatives, since it is uncommon for unchaperoned Moslem females to travel abroad alone. Most girls don't return for fear of their lives.

A prominent Jewish doctor who is active in the underground group estimates there is up to one killing per week on the West Bank alone. The exact number of killings is unknown, since most are made to look like accidents. Readily available pesticides are often used to poison the girls. The families explain to police that the girl committed suicide to save her family's honor.

The doctor described other cases he is aware of:

— A 17-year-old pregnant girl was brought to a hospital with burns over her entire body. Her family said a kerosene heater tipped over accidentally.

— A father in Hebron, south of Jerusalem, reported that his daughter killed herself by jumping into a well. An autopsy showed she was poisoned.

— An Arab girl who had an abortion died mysteriously after being visited in the hospital by her mother.

— A man walked into a police station with his sister's head in a plastic bag. He was arrested and tried, but released a year later.

The strict Muslim code of honor came under criticism last year after the television airing of the film "Death of a Princess." The film is about a Saudi princess who took a commoner as a lover and was subsequently executed along with him by her family. Although some Western countries were shocked by the film, the Middle East wasn't surprised. Honor killings have been going on for a long time.

"Even when the woman is the victim of rape, the family considers itself dishonored," said the Israeli doctor. "A girl of 17 was raped by

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TV Programs Portray Teens Unrealistically

By Debbie Hardin
Kearny High School

Several psychologists have proclaimed television a mirror to society. Other specialists insist that television programs of today are worthless advertisements for sex and violence. Given these opinions, one wonders what category programs featuring teenagers would fall into.

Although much of television is supposedly aimed at the younger generation, there are only three prime time shows revolving around contemporary teenagers: "Breaking Away," "Eight is Enough," "The White Shadow," and three popular shows based on teenagers of a past era: "Little House On The Prairie," "Happy Days," "The Waltons."

"Eight is Enough" definitely jams "enough" hysteria into one episode to last the average person for life. This program tends to plunge its characters into a ridiculously large number of controversies. It is inconceivable that so much could happen so quickly to one family. However, because of the diversity of characters, the show is able to explore many topics. Episodes have focused on issues ranging from teenage pregnancy to teenage alcoholism.

"Breaking Away" seems to be the favorite show among many students. It is a comedy/drama about high school buddies drifting in and out of trouble in a small town. The mixture of personalities, plus the fact that not all of the characters are stereotypically gorgeous, is attracting the attention of critics. But despite the

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Drug Abuse By Women Increasing

By Debbie Hardin
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Recently, in a period of only three months (July-September 1980), 1,275 people ended up in emergency rooms in San Diego for drug-related crises. The number one cause was the abuse of alcohol, usually in combination with sedatives. Second on the list of drug-culprits was Valium, followed in descending order of frequency by PCP, aspirin, and heroin/morphine. Forty-seven of these cases resulted in death.

As staggering as these figures are, they represent only the tip of the iceberg. For example, while there are no reliable statistics on cocaine, Kathy Willmore of Pathways roughly estimates that the use of this drug is up 100%. Generally, for every reported drug abuse case there are five that go unreported. Willmore states: "You know people are using illegal drugs, but you don't know how many."

Legal drug abuse is also on the increase. Three out of four patient visits result in prescriptions. According to Theodora Wilner from Options, women make up 60% of a doctor's patients. Twice as many prescriptions are given to women for the same symptoms as their male counterparts. (Three-fourths of these prescriptions are for mood-altering drugs.) A possible reason for this was offered by Wilner: "Women use the system more, so they are more likely to be exploited."

There are no statistics available on the actual breakdown of male vs. female illegal drug abusers. While marijuana and cocaine are usually thought to be used by an equal number of men and women, heroin and LSD are often thought to be predominant male drugs. (Some studies say that almost ⅔ more men than women use these drugs.) But according to recent surveys, women abusers are on the increase.

Reasons for turning to drugs range from the desire for a quick escape to social pressure from friends.

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San Diego Program Aids Teenage Mothers

By Cookie Lemke
San Diego High School

One of the biggest problems a teenage mother faces is not being able to finish high school and get a diploma. Even if she does have the opportunity to complete her education, it is almost impossible for her to have her child taken care of for little or no charge.

Ten years ago, Mrs. Olee Huntsman of San Diego High School recognized this problem and started a training program that allowed young mothers to go to school and have their children taken care of for free.

This semester there are approximately 50 students, including one father, enrolled in SPID (School-Age Parenting and Infant Development), a program devoted to the teenage mothers in the San Diego City School District who are going to school full time while still caring for their young children.

SPID is a new program in the school district as a whole that allows students who are parents to continue their education, receive professional help with their infants, and acquire some skills in parenting.

At San Diego High School there are 15 young women enrolled in SPID, two of whom are pregnant. Statistics given on these young

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