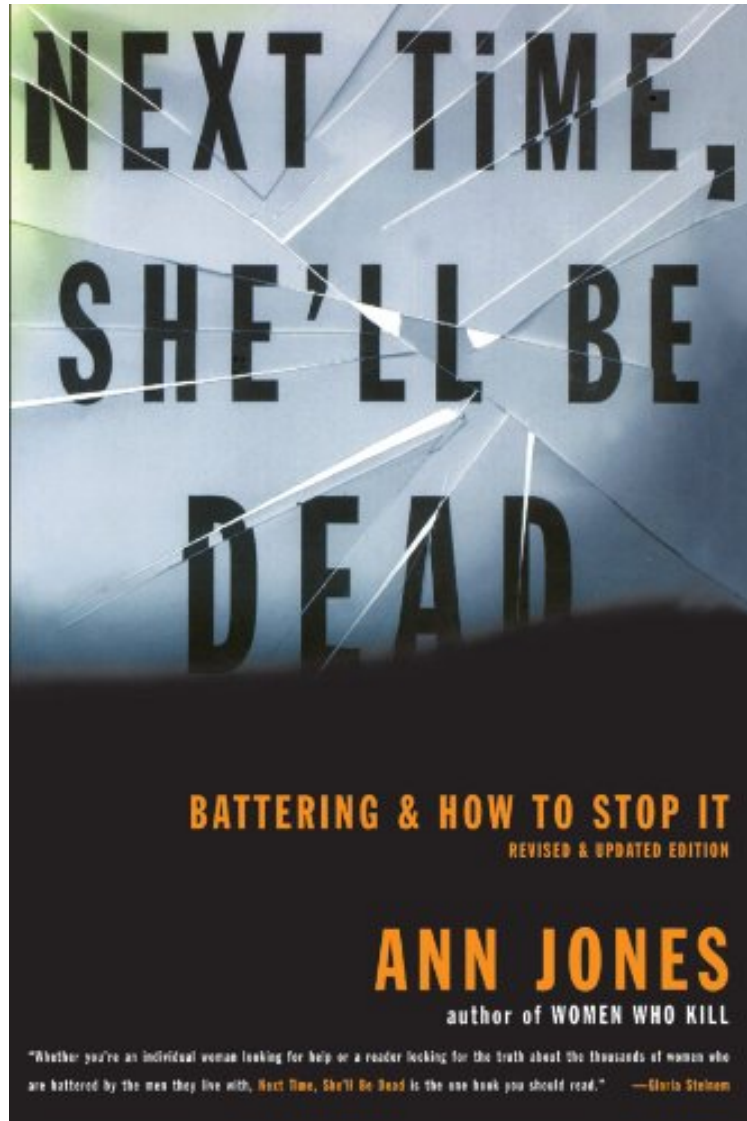


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Next Time, She'll Be Dead: Battering and How to Stop It

Ann Jones

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Ann Jones : Next Time, She'll Be Dead: Battering and How to Stop It before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Next Time, She'll Be Dead: Battering and How to Stop It:

8 of 19 people found the following review helpful. powerful and important, but simplistic and one-sided By Brian Estlin First, let me say that this book does something very important: it tells the stories of a great many women who were victims of horrible violence and whose repeated attempts to get help from the police and courts were met with

ignorance, denial, and even derision. Many of these women died because police, judges, and juries "blamed the victim." Jones is passionate about exposing the institutionalized sexism that destroys women's lives, and she does a good job. However, this book is written from a perspective which I cannot agree with -- a black and white worldview in which violence is the exclusive domain of men and patriarchy is the sole cause of domestic violence. I believe that patriarchy is still strong, and does much to contribute to the problem of battering. However, if we stop here (as Jones does) we fail to explain why only a minority of men are violent. Psychological explanations are necessary in order to account for the difference between violent and non-violent men, and Jones ignores or in some cases even derides psychology, sticking to socio-political explanations. "Blaming the victim" is a real problem, and Jones has plenty of real-life examples where the victim was blamed and lost her life because of it. However, the idea of "blaming the victim" can turn into a blunt weapon in the wrong hands, used to suppress alternative ideas the way McCarthyism suppressed dissent by calling people communists. Jones, unfortunately, does just this. For example, she makes the very good point that many people ask "why didn't she leave" even if the victim did, in fact, leave (or try to). However, many women stay with their abusers for months or years. And, according to Jones, if you ask why they stay, you are "blaming the victim". In perhaps the most misguided example of this tendency, Jones refers to the literature on co-dependency as "victim-blaming at its most pernicious." It's ironic that one reviewer attacked *Codependent No More* for (supposedly) encouraging people to leave their spouses, whereas Jones seems to think that the book encourages battered women to stay and get beaten some more. In fact the idea of co-dependency encourages people to grow into self-responsibility, which might involve staying or leaving depending on circumstances. But to Jones, the very idea of self-responsibility, applied to a battered woman, is tantamount to "blaming the victim". Jones has a point. There are plenty of examples in her book of women who did everything they could to take responsibility, leave, get help, only to be turned away by police and eventually murdered by their husband or boyfriend. However, Jones throws the baby out with the bathwater, concluding that because some men will go to any lengths to possess and control a woman, the idea of co-dependency is just another excuse to blame women for their own problems. Finally, Jones insists on casting the problem as one of "male violence", reinforcing the oppositional gender split in this culture which I believe contributes to the very patriarchy which Jones purports to critique. Jones says that "the assailant in almost all heterosexual and homosexual violence is a man". However, some studies (which Jones doesn't mention) suggest that domestic violence is more common among lesbians than heterosexuals or gay men. If Jones believes these studies are inaccurate, she should critique them, not ignore them. Ultimately, Jones does a great job of presenting the patriarchal aspect of domestic violence. The problem is that she not only stops there, but unjustly condemns other important perspectives on this grave social issue.

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Want mine? By RyanAnn Jones did a pretty good job but sometimes I felt she made me, as a man, feel guilty and responsible for every incident that occurred. Not every man is the same Ms. Jones!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. 94 edition review By Colleen Julie I read the older 1994 edition of this book, and apparently it was updated in 2000 to include newer laws and statistics for the time period this book covered, I found it very well written and referenced. It definitely made me angry at how society, the press and the legal system have failed battered women miserably. Quite simply condensed - this book tells us that men often eventually kill the women they batter, because they have gotten away with abusing them over and over again. Concrete and workable solutions are offered to this problem in the end of the book. This book (or ones like it) should be required reading for those who are in the media, law enforcement, hospitals, and other venues that interact with abused women. I do know that hospitals now must ask ALL patients if they feel safe at home, and are much more responsive to signs of abuse than they used to be. One can only hope that other signs of progress are in the newer edition and that if updated again today, the picture wouldn't be quite as dismal as it was in the early 90's.

This revised and updated edition of "the most critically acclaimed book" (Publishers Weekly) on domestic violence includes new information on the effect of the 1994 Violence Against Women Act, examines resources on the Internet, and details what you can do to help stop battering.

From Publishers Weekly Significant and depressing, this study by the author of *Women Who Kill* brings home as few others have the number of women who are battered and the virtually insuperable obstacles they face trying to combat abuse. We learn that more than a million American women are battered each year, most by husbands or boyfriends, who are also likely to hit children in the home as well. The police, according to Jones, are unsympathetic to battered women, whom they regard as partly, if not entirely, responsible for the attacks they suffer. In the most shocking sections of the book, Jones asserts that there is an entrenched misogyny in the legal system; she cites the sentence of a man who shot his wife in the head (where the bullet is still lodged) to three months while, later, she was sentenced to life because, after being threatened repeatedly, she hired a man to kill her husband. As Jones so succinctly puts it, "battered women are battered once again by the law." She devotes a chapter to suggested remedies. First serial to *Mirabella* and *Glamour*. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* An impassioned, informed, and immensely readable critique of domestic violence and society's dangerously ineffectual response by the author of *Women Who Kill*. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Kirkus SA* study so painful in its

case histories and reported numbers of women abused by men that most readers will flinch as they absorb it; by the author of *Women Who Kill* (1980). But that is Jones's purpose: to rouse men and women-- especially legislators, judges, police, and social workers who fail to protect women--to awareness. Among the numbers: from 1967 to 1973, 17,500 women and children were killed in the US by ``battering men," slightly less than half the number of men killed in Vietnam during the same period. Two decades later, police receive reports of more than 21,000 ``domestic assaults" (including rape and murder) every week. Women's legal struggle to secure a life free of violence dates back to English common law and to 19th-century American statutes that permitted husbands to ``chastise" their wives without danger of prosecution. Although subsequent laws protect women and children against abuse, the right of a man to control ``his" woman lurks in the public consciousness--leading to cops reluctant to interfere in ``domestic disputes"; judges wary of imprisoning men convicted of wife-beating; and a general tendency to blame the victim--even when, Jones says, she's made every effort to escape her oppressor. The author cites instances of women assaulted and killed while living under so-called orders of protection, and of women attacked where they should be safest: in the courthouse (lawyers and judges number among the victims). What can be done? Jones suggests changing the focus of inquiry from the women who are battered to the men who attack, and questioning the ``hydraulic" theory of human behavior-- that violence wells up in men and must be released. She offers guidelines for change--including the passage of the ERA- -that would affect how we view women both as societal members and as human beings. A powerful, frightening report that drives home the fact that doing violence to another is tolerated in this society--especially if the victim is a female sex partner. -- Copyright 1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.