



JUSTICE IN ACTION

VOLUME III, NO. 3

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FROM OUR TEAM

Dear Reader,

As we have our eyes on women's history this month, it is fitting that we should reflect on the history of our movement against intimate partner violence, which plays a key role in the greater story of women's liberation in the US. This fight that began as the Battered Women's Movement has evolved in name and scope, yet the heart of the mission remains the same. ["The Battered Women's Movement began as an intersection between the women's liberation movement and the courageous actions of individual survivors and their allies who dared to break the silence and speak out about their horrific experiences at the hands of male partners."](#) We feel privileged to carry the baton of the brave women who have gone before us in our fight to see an end to the violence against women and all intimate partners. This month, we want to give a glimpse at some important moments in this ongoing story, highlight one of our staff members who has been on the frontlines of this work, and hear from another of our incredible survivor clients who inspires us all to keep writing this story of liberation until the ending is freedom for all.

Happy Reading,
The MBP Team

TIMELINE OF THE BATTERED WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

- 1966: Beating, as cruel and inhumane treatment, becomes grounds for divorce in New York, but the plaintiff must establish that a "sufficient" number of beatings have taken place.
- 1967: The state of Maine opens one of the first shelters in the United States.
- Late 1960's & Early 1970's: The women's liberation movement sets the stage for the battered women's movement. The emerging movement details the conditions of daily life that allow women to call themselves battered. Women's hotlines and crisis centers provide a context for battered women to speak out and seek help.
- 1972: In June, the first emergency rape crisis line opens in Washington, D.C.
- 1975: Most U.S. states allow wives to bring criminal action against a husband who inflicts injury upon her.
- 1976: The first Legal Center for Battered Women in the U.S. is funded by a grant from the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago.
- 1977: New York State funding was provided for shelters and victims of domestic violence. A law was passed allowing married victims of domestic violence to file criminal charges against a spouse.
- 1981: The first annual Domestic Violence Awareness Week is celebrated.

TIMELINE OF THE BATTERED WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

- 1983: Over 700 shelters are in operation nationwide serving 91,000 women and 131,000 children per year.
- 1984: *People v. Liberta*: New York's highest court made marital rape a crime, striking down the "marital rape exemption" on the grounds that it denied equal protection of the laws to married women.
- 1994: The federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) created the first legislation acknowledging domestic violence and sexual assault as crimes and provided federal resources to encourage coordinated community responses to domestic violence.
- 2005: VAWA was reauthorized.
- Efforts in the last 2 decades have been more focused on intersectional issues and the impact of violence on women experiencing multiple oppressions. This includes but is not limited to women of color, indigenous, poor or immigrant women, the LGBTQIA+ community, those with disabilities or addiction, as well as other disenfranchised women.

Meet Our Staff

AN INTERVIEW WITH CASSIE DROCHELMAN



How long have you been involved with The Mary Byron Project? Almost 6 years

How did you get involved with MBP? In early 2016, I moved back home to Louisville and was looking to continue working in the domestic violence field. I feel so grateful to have learned about the Mary Byron Project and that they happened to be looking for a new team member.

What inspired your passion with the cause of ending intimate partner violence? I started volunteering for a local domestic violence and sexual assault agency while I was in undergrad at the University of Missouri. The experience changed my life and I have volunteered and/or worked in the field ever since.

Why do you think the work of The Mary Byron Project is important? MBP's Appellate Advocacy program is the only program in the state that can provide crucial support for victims who have been denied justice through the legal system, and we've heard time and time again from victims just how important this service was in their quest for freedom and safety. In addition to serving these individuals, our appellate work and legal training program seek to create much needed change in the overall justice system, which in my opinion, is what it will take to truly begin to decrease rates of intimate partner violence.

Tell us about your family: My husband, Scott, and I have been married for almost 13 years. We have two kiddos, Sam (5) and Lucy (2).

What is your favorite (pick one: music artist/song/book/movie)? One of my most persistent qualities is that I am VERY indecisive and it's nearly impossible for me to choose a favorite anything. I love anything written by [Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#) and Jhumpa Lahiri, and most every song by Regina Spektor, Frightened Rabbit and Death Cab for Cutie.

What do you like to do for fun? I love to refinish furniture and am a woodworker-in-training. I enjoy making things with my hands- sewing, painting, crafting, you name it. I also like to run and to read and I am forever thankful for audiobooks, which let me accomplish both at the same time. I am a hopeless reminiscer- I could look through old photos and watch home movies endlessly.

What are the best toppings for a pizza? Green peppers and onions.

SURVIVORS SPEAK

Testimonials from MBP Clients

“ For me it was a miracle, a miracle that God was taking care of everything even when my faith was so small, even when my voice was not heard. Thanks for making my voice and my rights be heard. ”

-M.F.



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