

This dangerous practice can cause extreme pain, infection, injury to other tissue, infertility, cysts, and complications during intercourse and childbirth. **The Centers for Disease Control now estimates that around 513,000 women and girls are living with FGM in the U.S.**⁷

Unfortunately, honor crimes go widely underreported or not reported at all. According to Detective Chris Boughey of the Arizona Police Department, this happens mainly because

“Currently, we (authorities) don’t have a system in place to track these issues.”⁸

But there is also another reason, and it is a very hard fact to face. Honor violence frequently goes unpunished because these women often have no one in their corner to fight for them. Think about it; when a crime is committed against a person, who is usually the first to respond? The person’s family. In situations such as honor violence, the family is the perpetrator. This leaves the victims voiceless and alone.

Lastly, Americans tend to stay out of issues in order to avoid disrespecting others’ beliefs or cultural practices. However, the issue is not about a religion or culture, but a human rights issue. Det. Boughey put it plainly,

“I am not quite sure when we, as a country, decided that it was more important to be politically correct than to do the right thing.”⁹

Footnotes:

- ¹Ali, A. H. (2015, April 30). *Honor Killings in America*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from The Atlantic: <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/04/honor-killings-in-america/391760/>
- ²Srivastava, A. (2013, September 20). *Indian Man who Killed Daughter for ‘honour’ has no Regrets*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from Fox News: <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/09/20/indian-man-who-killed-daughter-for-honour-has-no-regrets/>
- ³Myers, A. L. (2011, June 15). *Arizona ‘Honor Killing’: Iraqi Immigrant Sentenced To 34 1/2 Years In Prison For Running Over, Killing Daughter*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from The Huffington Post: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/15/arizona-honor-killing-iraqi-immigrant-sentenced_n_849999.html
- ⁴Honor Diaries. (n.d.). *Honor Violence Factsheet*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from Honor Diaries: <http://www.honordiaries.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/HD-FactSheet-HonorViolenceEast.pdf>
- ⁵Anderson, L. (2012, November 19). *FACTBOX: Forced Marriage in the United States of America*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from Thomson Reuters Foundation: <http://www.trust.org/item/?map=factbox-forced-marriage-in-the-united-states-of-america/>
- ⁶The AHA Foundation. (2015). *Female Genital Mutilation*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from The AHA Foundation: <http://www.theahafoundation.org/female-genital-mutilation/>
- ⁷Topping, A. (2015, February 5). *FGM affects three times more people in the US than previously thought*. Retrieved May 18, 2015, from The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/feb/05/fgm-numbers-affected-us-women>
- ⁸Mauro, R. (2014, April 10). *On the Front Lines: Combatting Honor Violence in the U.S.* Retrieved May 18, 2015, from The Clarion Project: <http://www.clarionproject.org/analysis/front-lines-combatting-honor-violence-us>
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- Link to the original article: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/female-genital-mutilation-honor-violence-in-the-name-of-virtue-138920/>

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Pray:

- For the women who have been/are being victimized through honor violence
- For law enforcement to have wisdom in knowing how to handle cases of honor crimes.

Act:

- Educate your community and encourage them to go to authorities when they perceive any threats to themselves or others.
- Contact and work with your CWA state director to show the *Honor Diaries* video to friends and family in your home.



Concerned Women for America

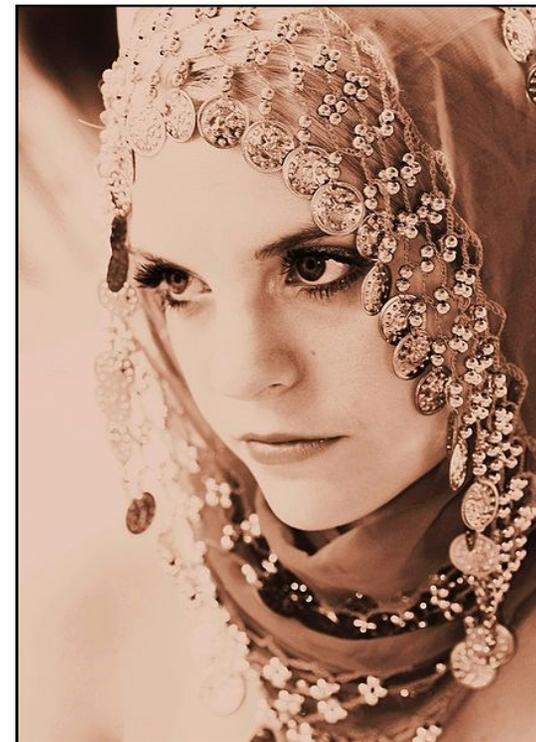
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HONOR CRIMES IN THE NAME OF VIRTUE?

Honor Killings, Forced Marriages, and Female Genital Mutilation



... It’s happening in your back yard.

Concerned Women for America Resource

HONOR VIOLENCE ISN'T HAPPENING IN THE U.S. ... RIGHT?

Wrong.

There is despicable torture going on right under our noses, and little is being done to combat it. This unabated violence is due, in large part, to **under-education, underreporting and underrepresentation**. In order to be effective in exposing and eradicating the injustice, however, we must first define what honor violence is and the different ways in which it is manifested.



WHAT IS HONOR VIOLENCE?

Honor violence refers to the forceful — even fatal — treatment of women who are said to have brought “shame” to their family by violating cultural or religious customs. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, founder of the AHA Foundation (the leading organization working to end honor violence), explains it well:

“Honor violence is rooted in the perception that the behavior of a woman or girl, betraying her chastity, is an affront to the honor of her family or community.”¹

Honor violence is usually carried out by the relatives of the victim — their father, mother, sibling, or husband; in most cases, that relative feels that they have done the right thing.

Take, for instance, Billu Pehlwan, the Indian man who had no remorse for beating his daughter and her then husband. He believed that he did nothing wrong and was simply preserving his family’s honor. When asked, he said, “I would do it again. I have no regrets.”²

This is not just happening overseas, though; it’s happening right here in the United States. There have been cases like that of Faleh Hassan Almaleki, who ran over and killed his daughter, Noor Almaleki, in the family Jeep for becoming “too westernized.”³

It appears that in some cultures, a family’s pride and honor are more important than their daughter’s life. Therefore, if she acts in a way that brings perceived disgrace to her family or community, then she is to be punished. Her chastisement is seen by the members of the family as the way to reinstate the family’s name. According to one United Nation report cited in the *Honor Diaries* fact sheet, **victims have been “shot, stoned, burned, buried alive, strangled, smothered and knifed to death with horrifying regularity”** in the name of restoring honor.⁴

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FORCED MARRIAGE

Another major issue that needs to be addressed is forced marriage. This is not to be confused with the cultural practice of arranged marriages where a child agrees to have their parents choose a mate for them. A forced marriage involves coercion, threats, or even trickery where young girls are forced to marry against their will — frequently to a man who is much older, has multiple wives, and is often abusive.

“3,000 known or suspected forced marriages occurred in the U.S. over a two-year period.”

What is worse, if a young woman does not go through with the marriage, she may run the risk of being subjected to injury or further brutality. One study showed that 3,000 known or suspected forced marriages occurred in the U.S. over a two-year period.⁵ Many believe the numbers are actually much higher but are going unreported.



FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

What is FGM? The AHA Foundation states that FGM includes:

“Any procedure that involves the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs ... often performed on girls between the ages of 4 and 14 to ensure their virginity until marriage.”⁶