

Number one; the auxiliary police, as stated in the Police Manual, are the "eyes and ears" of the Police Department and it states -- top line -- they are not to get physically involved in any situation. Nowadays, a criminal commits an act; O.K., you pull out a radio, call it in and you wait fifteen or twenty minutes for the police to arrive. What good is that? The person is in bed at home sleeping and laughing at you while you're there playing with the radio.

Now I think there are people who are suited to be auxiliary police and I think there are those people who are capable of embodying what the Guardian Angels do. And I think there is room for Guardian Angels in our society. If you're willing to take upon yourself a legal liability³⁶ and the physical implications of what you're doing, I can't see why it should be stopped, especially when your 'track record' has virtually been untouchable.

I mean the authorities -- when they look for arguments to argue against the Guardian Angels -- use clichés like, "You want mom, apple pie and the flag defending you on the train or do you want a trained police officer?", and when you have to reach to those levels, it clearly indicates that you are trying to compare the Guardian Angels to what -- God? I mean, really, 'mom', 'apple pie', 'the flag'? You think that highly of the Guardian Angels and yet you still put them down? I'd like to know what their factual reason is for trying to obliterate the Angels.

SECTION II

Different Standards

The Angels have continued since November, 1980 and they grow and flourish. Some of the kinds of resistances they had met among the members of city 'officialdom' either has relaxed or is so unpopular that it is not politically wise to raise 'anti-Angel' issues on the media. Slowly, they are becoming a part of the New York scene. More women are involved with the group. Lisa Evers has been a key figure in the general development of the Guardian Angels and her success in the organization has encouraged other women to join. Evers' organizational ability, her dedication and her superb control over herself on patrols (and, subsequently, of patrols) soon meant that her activities released valuable time for Sliwa to respond to the many requests for chapters of Guardian Angels in other cities. As the development of these new groups progressed, Evers became the National Coordinator of the Angels, the "number one female Angel" and second in command.

Evers first heard of the Angels in 1979 from her karate instructor (himself an Angel) and it was through him that she met Curtis Sliwa and started to become involved in patrols. At the time, she was one of a

bare handful -- less than five -- women in the organization. "Initially", she said, "it was like going into any other type of activity that is predominantly male. Unfortunately, it is like going into any other area in our society: the standards that are applied to women are different from those that are applied to men".

Evers: When I first started with the Guardian Angels, I got involved with the group because I already had the reputation of being a martial artist and a capable fighter through my experience with karate. I was good, 'particularly for a female' is how they put it.

I started out going on patrols and eventually became a member of the group and while the people who had initially recommended me to get in and who had encouraged me to get involved knew what I could do, I was constantly subject to challenges by other people in the group: 'OK Lisa, let's see what you know -- let's spar -- let's see you throw somebody; let's do this and that. And that kind of challenge still exists today; not from Angels anymore, but from the community -- from reporters or whoever, who say, "Are you really a black belt?" "Do you really know what you know?" Now, would they ask a man those same questions? No.

They would not probe in that particular way, they would not ask a person to prove themselves if it was quite obvious from what they are doing that they are what they say they are, yet for a female today, no matter how much you've done, it still exists. I've given countless martial arts demonstrations around the country, on television -- whatever -- and still they wonder 'can a woman really defend herself?'

I got so tired of this last summer that I started a program called 'Street Survival for Women'³⁷ to actually demonstrate that you don't have to be a black belt like myself to defend yourself. The average woman who is not trained in martial arts, can get out there and do a number on somebody who is going to mess with them.

In terms of the Angels, eventually the word went out, 'don't mess with Lisa, because if you do, you're going to get hurt' and that was the only thing that people understood. I had also decided, because of the attitude in the group when I was getting involved, that I wouldn't get involved 'outside'. It's like anything else: males and females are together, so naturally it's going to extend to some sort of social question or whatever.

I made it a point, right from the beginning: I will not go out with any Guardian Angel. Period. I was on patrol, I did my job and that was it. In terms of doing anything outside the organization, I didn't get involved in that. I removed myself immediately from the kinds of problems that confront a female when she is in a group and she is so overwhelmingly outnumbered by men.

After I was accepted by the Angels, I came to have my own place in the group: they looked at me in different ways. I could do anything that they could do, but I was also different because I had an emotional sensitivity; a psychological sensitivity -- a total view on life -- that they did not have.

Williams: I notice that in many journalists' articles about you, they stress over and over that although your volunteer work with the Angels disrupts your social life, that your male friends are supportive. This is not the kind of thing that would be said in newspaper articles about male Guardian Angels. How do you see yourself in relation to this kind of thing and what do you think about how men see you? ³⁸

A Woman's Role

Evers: I think that the men I have been friends with; that I have seen and associated with, have known -- they've gotten used to me doing things that were not 'normal'; things like my involvement with karate. They took a great pleasure in the fact of seeing that a woman was capable, and taking enough initiative to take care of herself.

The ones that didn't understand that, I never spent much time with anyway, because there were bound to be some kind of conflicts sooner or later in the course of the relationship. But I think that when we're talking about a woman's role in any type of organization -- within the Guardian Angels -- I would say that now I have an easier time of it. After those initial challenges within the group; once I was established in the group, once people accepted me, got to know me, I would almost say I have an easier time than I did in society as a whole because the men who were there could see.

They could see I'd gone through twice as much as the average guy had, even in terms of proving myself to the leader of the group, proving myself to everyone else that was involved with the organization at many, many different levels. The first thing was 'don't even take this seriously'. And this is the attitude that now, even though it doesn't exist in the Angels, is still around in our society. I mean, look at what's been done to Jo Foster right now.

You look at pictures of this poor girl: she's at Yale, she wears blue jeans and a baggy shirt. She's a lot heavier than she was when she was acting a prostitute, filming a movie on Thirteenth Street over here, and yet she's still portrayed -- there's still the connotation that she's some sort of 'sex symbol' or that she's some sort of a 'siren': you know, who's just looking to get it any way she can. And that somehow by her 'seductiveness' she enticed John Hinckley into making an assassination attempt on Reagan.

Nobody has actually come out and said it that way, but those are the implications. And you look at the photos of her now and she looks like an ordinary college student -- she looks like people going around N.Y.U. She would blend in the style around here. She's not out there hustling her ass on 8th Avenue. And yet, the image of her is that of a 'sex' symbol.

Think of a man in any type of position: is there any kind of challenge to what he does in his personal life? No. As long as it doesn't interfere with his job; as long as it does not interfere with what he is doing professionally or its effectiveness, no one bothers to find out who he's sleeping with when he goes home or what kind of orange juice he drinks in the morning or anything like that.

And yet, when a female figure comes forward, I don't care whether it's an actress, whether it's a person in any type of business (reference was made here to Mary Cunningham and the recent Bendix Corporation 'blow-up'), and even a college professor, the issue of their sexual life, the issue of what they do when they are not doing their job is most of the time given more prominence and more attention than what they are actually doing.

I'm constantly questioned about these sorts of things: 'what's this?' 'what's this?', 'where do you go -- who do you do this with, that with, and the other thing'. And I really feel that a woman in particular has got to insist upon being looked at, and insist upon being judged by her accomplishments, by her actions, and by her effectiveness, and not by what she does in her personal life.

I mean, look at the U.S. Congress (some women's names were here mentioned). They were not the only ones that were involved in sex scandals in Washington. If we want to look for that, Washington is the best place to go -- and it's probably the worst place in terms of sexual discrimination against women in the country. And it is the fault of the women who allow that.

No Real Progress

Yet, to be a woman today, to be doing anything that stirs up problems, that draws attention, the first thing everybody wants to know is, 'what happens when you close that door to your house?' And, 'whose house is it?' and, 'who paid for it?' And to me, that's really unfair. I think in many ways right now, things are no better. Especially are they no better for white women who have a 'double bind',³⁹ who are treated I would say worse than any minority, and yet there's an illusion that there is some kind of progress that's been made -- but there isn't, and there hasn't been. I've found this out from travelling all around the country.

Long before I went out (of N.Y.) organizing chapters with the Guardian Angels, the leader of our group, Curtis Sliwa, has said to me, "You know, Lisa, it's really time you speak out for women. It's really time you get more involved with the whole women's issue".

And I said, "No. You know. It's no big deal. If you're really doing what you're doing and you're successful at it, you can get by. I've always been able to get by". And no sooner did I say that than I went to Atlanta, than I went all around the country and I started finding out that when Lisa Evers would go into a city as the Guardian Angel leader, I wasn't described as the National Coordinator, which is a title that I earned, like everything else, but I was just plain Lisa Evers, a Guardian Angel from New York. Not even spokesman or spokesperson -- and it was several days, and sometimes several weeks, and sometimes not until my second visit into a city, before they would realize that 'yes, yes, this girl knows what she's talking about. Yes, she's for real'.

It's that type of a scepticism that women have to face and that women are confronted with. And yet we, and many women, take the attitude that I took. It all looks as though it's equal. I mean, nobody is going to stop you from going to N.Y.U. law school if you're female, and yet it's not equal at all because the standards are different. But as long as we continue to expect those standards, as long as we continue to support the system; support the people who promote those standards, answer those kinds of questions and cater to that type of ideology, we are only feeding their prejudice and fuelling their prejudice.

We have a situation now in this country where women are told that to be a success, they have to follow the male pattern. You want to be a success in business? Great. Don't let your emotions get involved in the office at all. Forget about your intuition. Forget about your sensitivity to human needs. Get as much pin-stripes on your body as you possibly can. Tone the whole act down and then maybe you'll have a chance to be a V.P. if you're lucky. That's what we're told.

This is in business, but that's what's been the main area, the main battleground, for equal rights for women; just look in any magazine, any newspaper. If you don't have warts on your nose, ⁴⁰forget about it if you're female, because then you're losing your looks to 'get over'. In a man, looks are considered an asset, and in a female it's always a question of 'hey, is she a hot number; is everyone -- you know -- getting on her case?' What's she given up to get where she's going?

Williams: You more or less became a nationally known figure last year in late spring when you took a group of Angels to Atlanta, Georgia, to see if you could contribute positively to the rash of child-killings there. Could you tell us about the main features of your experience there and how it is connected with what you have already said?

More Than Opposition

Evers: Well, we had more than opposition in Atlanta. There were many, many dangers that we encountered; personally, I was drugged while I was down there. Our group encountered an armed patrol -- with semi-automatic weapons -- we could not go anywhere in Atlanta without being

followed, and this was just something we learned to deal with -- we had to deal with, in order to do what we wanted to do, which was to help the community.

You know, the Guardian Angels have come a long way since last March (1981): that was prior to our agreement with Mayor Koch. That was prior to the national expansion. The only chapters we had outside of New York City then were Los Angeles, Trenton, New Jersey, Newark, New Jersey and a couple of small cities around the metropolitan area here.

So, people thought when we went down there: 'what is this street gang doing hitting the road?' And everybody freaked out! The F.B.I., the Georgia Bureau of Investigations, the Atlanta police -- every cop-shop in the country sent representatives to Atlanta, because they wanted to be the ones to break the case. And yet, while they were sitting around in their offices, with their computers and their statistics and their clues and everything like that, none of them thought to put anybody out on the street where they were actually snatching the bodies -- where they were snatching the kids -- where they were burying the bodies.

It wasn't until about twenty-two months into the investigation that it occurred to the Atlanta Police that maybe if they started patrolling the areas where the bodies were found, that maybe they might come up with something.

We Can Help

Now, when we first went down there, the first thing they knew was that we didn't have money to go touring the country -- we didn't have money to do anything. I went down with a group of ten men. We had about twenty dollars between all of us. We did not even know anybody in Atlanta except for ⁴¹one church group, and that was it, and we survived for three weeks.

We felt, O.K., if it hasn't occurred to anybody yet to just get out and patrol the neighborhoods where they are snatching the kids, let's bring them the idea: at least -- you know, we can help. We can do that. So we went down there. We went into the housing projects.

Before we went down there, before we even set foot in Atlanta, Mayor Jackson had said, "There are no subways in Atlanta" and the Public Commissioner said, "So, we don't need vigilantes. We have the investigation under control". This was after nineteen months and fifteen kids. That's control?

And so they didn't want us there. They were freaked out. And they were so totally mis-informed about the Guardian Angels that at

the press conference they held, to denounce our arrival in the city which was prior to our arrival (we knew nothing about this because we were on a train -- on a thirty-six-hour train ride from New York to Atlanta), they held a press conference to denounce the Guardian Angels, they made so many errors -- they said we used weapons -- that the reporters from around the country and from New York in particular, were correcting the Mayor, saying, "That's not true. What you're saying is not true". So they were really angry by the time we got there.

All We Did...

All we did in three weeks was to patrol the area; the S.E. section of Atlanta particularly, where most of the people who were taken (who were killed) lived, where most of the bodies were found. We also conducted a public children's safety program, where we went around to basketball courts, playgrounds, recreation centers -- Atlanta has a lot of neighborhood recreation centers that are highly organized for the kids -- yet they were totally under-utilized.

So, we would go out there, we would have a demonstration for the kids: just show them something that they could do -- just to give them some hope to counteract this fear. They have this tremendous fear. And yet, what do we come across? We have cops on our tail like you wouldn't believe. We couldn't pick up a telephone without 'click-click-click-click'. We couldn't go anywhere without these people following us and with constant accusations about what we were doing, and yet the first day we were there, without a public telephone number, we received over two hundred telephone calls from parents asking "Is there something you can do?"

It blew our minds that when we got into the S.E. area of Atlanta, we were all expecting the people to say, "Hey, Guardian Angels, we're glad to know you're here, but we've had enough people come through here already".⁴² We were shocked when we found out that none of these people -- not the Indiana Dog Patrol that came in with their canine crew to sniff out clues, not the F.B.I., not the Atlanta Police, none of the special investigating teams -- not one of those groups had been out on the streets in the S.E. section. And none of them had been along Memorial Drive, which if you cut back to where the person was last seen, where the bodies were found, where the best friend lived, where they hung out and so on and so forth, it's black on either side of it. It was obviously a key route in the whole case.

Direct Contact

And so they got very nervous, because all of a sudden we were having direct contact with the people and this made them very nervous,

because the Guardian Angels had a message: we wanted to talk to the people -- relate to them directly -- because we knew what the problems were. And we thought the only way to stop it; the only way to turn it around, was for the people to get out on the streets themselves, to show that they were not going to stand for this any more.

We left Atlanta after three weeks because we had to get back to New York and to the things we were doing there. That was about as long as we could stay, just in terms of taking time off from work, or taking time off from school and so forth.⁴³ And also, by the time we left, we had received an invitation from a group called 'The City-Wide Advisory Council on Public Housing' (representing eighteen out of twenty-five housing projects in Atlanta) to form a permanent chapter in Atlanta. They offered to provide us with apartments for Guardian Angel Training Coordinators who would come down and work to get a group established. We had a lot of young people who in the course of our patrols had just been joining us and patrolling with us.

And so I felt that by the time we left, we had left enough of a nucleus there so that they could carry the ball on their own -- which has always been our whole idea. You see, we don't have this 'invasion mentality' that people think -- that we have a jumbo jet that flies Guardian Angels from Bedford-Stuyvesant⁴⁴ into L.A. when there's a problem and patrols the streets there -- then maybe we fly to Pittsburgh, and if there's something going down in Chicago, we'll go there. It's not like that. The program's got to fly based on the abilities and the support of the people in that community. We would never even have lasted in Atlanta for three weeks if we hadn't had people who opened up their doors to us. I went down to Atlanta with a group of six black guys, three Hispanics and one other white person.

Widespread Support

For some of the guys in my group it was -- some of the guys in my group had never seen a single family house, because of where they came from in New York, they did not know what a detached house looked like. They'd never been inside of one.

Yet, the first place we were offered lodging was by a Southern Baptist Senior Citizens' Retirement Housing Complex of white (so white that even I was too dark for the place!) -- a senior citizen Housing Project of middle income people who opened their doors to Guardian Angels. There was that kind of support for us. It wasn't just people in the S.E. section, in the black neighborhood, saying, "Yeah, come on in, we need you". It was city-wide, because everyone down there at the time was concerned about the problem.

Williams: One of the striking features of your organization is the wide public support it has gained from people of all walks of life, all economic strata...

Evers: That's true. If you made a list of all of the people; organizations or whatever around the country that have supported the Guardian Angels -- and I'm talking about, like we need to use a telephone for five days when we come to a city, we'll use their telephone, or, we need to go to dinner, so the guy who's there will, you know, pay for the dinner, or we'll crash (sleep) on somebody's couch, or whatever -- if you made a list of these organizations, you wouldn't believe it!

You wouldn't believe that some of the names could even co-exist on the same sheet of paper! The John Birch Society, all these groups that we have -- city-wide housing projects, Tenants' Councils, all sorts of diverse groups. I think that the key is, instead of focusing on the differences between people, instead of breaking it down so that we get special interest groups and box ourselves into a corner -- you know, this is what we have allowed to happen, thinking that this is the way to solve problems.

Caring

As an organization, the Guardian Angels don't practise discrimination; our policy is non-discrimination. Instead of taking the philosophy of uniqueness -- looking at what makes us different, we say, 'let's look at the problems that we all share, let's see what we all have in common and we'll address those -- we'll deal with those together. I don't care whether you're black, white, Hispanic, Indian, Italian or whatever, you're still faced with the problem of crime. It doesn't matter any longer whether you live in what was once a 'safe' neighborhood, you're still facing those same fears. You're still exposed to those same dangers.

Clearly, with the assassination of Anwar Sadat, it's demonstrated again, grotesquely and very horribly, that you can have a whole army behind you. It does not matter. It doesn't matter whether you have one of the best personal bodyguard forces in the world -- as the Pope does -- you're still open to the threat of violence. So this violence is something that affects all of us right now.

The major goal of our group is a very simple concept that has been misunderstood time and time again and has been misunderstood in such a variety of ways that it's amazing that people really haven't caught on to what we're really doing, which is one human being caring about another human being. Instead of saying, "O.K., I care about you. I'm concerned about you", we're not even saying that, we're going out there and we're doing it.

If you're having a problem or if you're going through a rough time in your life or whatever, you have people who call you up and go, 'Well, Hi, Lisa, how're you doing? (or whatever -- Suzie, John or whatever) What's going on? How're things going?' You say, "Not so well". They go, "Well, if you have any problems, give me a call". But the person who's a real friend, when they know you're in trouble, when

they know you need help, they're not going to wait for you to ask -- they're simply going to be there. And that's the whole idea of the Guardian Angels: we're there when people need us, and we are there if they need us, and what that means is that we will get involved to help in whatever way we can.

Psychological Deterrent

We're trained so that our people can get involved to an extent, safely, beyond what a normal individual acting alone can, and we help anybody regardless of where they are, who they are or what they look like. Our first and foremost objective is to serve as a psychological deterrent to crime.

What this means is that the people who are out there ripping off chains, the people who are out there picking pockets, the people who are out there raping people, molesting them; they know that there are other people also out on the streets -- not in air-conditioned squad cars, not at the snack bar, not at the restaurant on their third or fourth break on an eight-hour shift -- but out there in the streets -- where the action is, where the crimes are taking place, who are going to stop them when they do something to harm another person.

So, what it is that we actually do is to make a citizen's arrest: and by that I mean when we visually see a crime taking place, we will get involved to the extent that a certain number of members of that particular patrol (a group of eight) will physically restrain the suspect, hold them, and turn them over to the police. When we go out on patrol, within the patrol, the members have learned in advance (through various drills, through the training program that they have all undergone) how they're going to respond when they encounter a violent situation.

If you asked yourself right now what you would do if you saw somebody's purse being taken, you probably would not know. You wouldn't know how to react, you wouldn't know what you would do; you might question whether or not you would even get involved or whether you would call the police or even bother to do that. But as Guardian Angels, when something breaks, we have to know like that what we're going to do. That's why we have five people in an eight person patrol who are trained to chase the suspect if they need to -- to take them down. One person informs the police immediately, another person deals with the person who is a victim, and the final person collects information from the witnesses, if there are any, so that we don't see the type of scenario that so often happens on our streets and on our subways: where the police arrive on the scene and it's a half hour before they can even figure out who had what taken and what was going on and meanwhile, in the whole mess that is there, somebody else is getting mugged and the guy that did it is long gone. So what we do is train our people so that they can get involved, they can help out other people with a minimum of risk to ourselves.

The Guardian Angel 'Space'

When you see Guardian Angels on patrol -- and many of you have seen the Angels on the subways, or walking through Washington Square Park, and around this neighborhood⁴⁵ -- when you see the Guardian Angels on patrol, there is definitely a Guardian Angel 'look'. To some people it's an intimidating look, it's a 'tough' look, but what it means is that we're serious. We have our minds focussed on one thing and that is making sure that nobody gets hurt.

We're not out there on patrol talking with each other and joking around; laughing, the guys paying attention to girls, the girls flirting, talking -- whatever. It's a question of our whole concentration focussed on that whole space that we occupy: to let those people know -- anyone who comes through that area -- that we're going to get involved.

And I can't stress this enough, because in this society in this day and age we've become so apathetic about helping other people: we've become so indifferent to the pain and suffering that is inflicted and borne by other people that you're lucky today if your body's lying on the street with a gun bullet through your head, you're lucky if someone's going to dial 911 to call the ambulance to cart your body away.

That's how insensitive we've become.

There have been reams that have been written about what causes that insensitivity -- television violence or whatever; people are more isolated than they used to be, we don't have contact with each other. But the fact is that we have to regain that sensitivity to each other and realize that when this man is getting mugged, that's the same thing as me getting mugged.

We can no longer take the attitude 'well, O.K., the entire contents of my next door neighbor's apartment has been robbed; they've been ripped off, but thank God they didn't get me, so I'm going to buy one more bolt for the door. I'm going to wire up the house, I'm going to make sure I've got a big dog barking in there all day long and then maybe they won't get me'.

What happens next door, what happens around the world, what happens to the person sitting next to us is exactly the same thing as if it were happening to us, because the people who are victims of crime today -- that's going to be us tomorrow, unless we do something to stop it and unless we do something to channel this tremendous force that right now is being directed in violent means.

Forgotten Concept

Our concept is so simple, it's so fundamental, and it's so much ingrained in everyone; we grew up with it and yet we've kind of forgotten about it because of the way we live now, because so many changes have happened to shake the way that people used to live. We don't realize how different it actually is. The public trusts us because they can meet us, see us, talk with us in person and they can tell that we're for real. Now, it doesn't matter that Mayor Koch hated the Guardian Angels, and that William McKechnie, the head of the Transit Union, who never even rides the subways, vowed to destroy the Guardian Angels. It was the best thing for us that the Mayor and the Public Safety Commissioner of Atlanta came out so violently against the Guardian Angels, because that showed the public just how far off they were. So, in cities, it's been our experience that when we have a lot of support from political officials, it's a lot harder for us to drum up the support we normally have, because people go, "Uh-oh. If the politicians like 'em, there's something wrong with 'em". So when we go into a city as we did in Chicago, where Mayor Jane Byrne said, "If There's anything I can legally do to prevent Curtis Sliwa and his group from New York from coming into Chicago, I will prevent them at the city limits"; Chicago went nuts about the Guardian Angels.

The same thing in Houston, Texas. In Houston, the Police Chief in an interview, called us "hemorrhoids from the north", and we were flooded with telephone calls from people in Houston who said he doesn't know what's really going on. We want the Guardian Angels. We need the Guardian Angels. So, of course what we said to him (and there was only one thing we could say) was, "Get out your Preparation-H⁴⁶ because we're not going to go away". When someone who is responsible for law enforcement is making comments like that, people go, "Oh my God! It's worse than I thought it was". It doesn't matter -- again -- whether you're in the ghetto or whether you're in a really affluent area, the police departments have built up such unrealistic expectations on the public that they're paying the price for it right now.

This whole trend towards getting citizens less involved with their lives; you know -- giving you ten more inches on the diagonal on your colored television sets, and that gives you five more nights away from the community that maybe used to spend the time out walking or whatever, just having some kind of contact with people -- that they're paying the price for it now, because everyone feels that the cops aren't doing their jobs. I can tell you all the things that policemen do wrong: number one, they aren't out on the streets, but what good is that going to do? Everybody knows what the problems are.

So what we felt was "O.K., let's see what it is we can do" -- without any money, without any kind of big grants from the Federal crime this or crime that -- let's see what we can do, and we knew because we were already doing it in our neighborhoods, which was watching out for each other.

Keep Moving

Williams: It has been said that in order to qualify for the Angels that it is necessary to be able to 'block'. This is a key concept in the body language you use. One must be able, specifically, to block (i) a kick, (ii) a knife, (iii) a stick, and (iv) a punch. Can you talk more about this?

Evers: First of all, there's one thing I wanted to bring up earlier, about the idea of women (just to finish that off) and self-defense: a woman, whether biologically or whatever because of cultural conditioning or whatever, is the one that has to adapt to the situations.

O.K., I'm the female. It's the personal relationship or if it's an organization and there are difficulties, the woman's the one who adapts. Now when it comes to a violent situation, the reason a lot of women are easy victims is because when some guy grabs them, they go, "O.K., well I'll just adapt to this. I'm not going to make a big deal out of this". And yet a man, if somebody comes up and grabs him on the rear-end, forget it! You know -- they're ready to fight. And so are some women, but the whole idea is that the female is the one that adapts to the situation, which is great, but a woman should not adapt to the situation to the extent where it's jeopardizing her own safety.

Now in terms of movement: a whole concept in any type of a fight (and street fighters know this, Guardian Angels know this and a lot of people do -- it's no big secret), that if you keep moving, you're going to be O.K. It doesn't matter that you know where you're going ten years from now. It doesn't matter where you're going to run to but as long as when somebody grabs you, when somebody comes up to you or comes on to you, if you keep moving, you're not going to get hurt.

You're in a fight and somebody has a knife; they start slashing away and you keep moving, you're going to get cut, sure, but you're not going to get stabbed. It's much more safe. And I think this extends into a person's life; your emotions and the way you think about things. If you're constantly moving -- if things are moving through you, if you see yourself as a channel, rather than as some sort of a dead-end; you know, a dead-end route where everything sort of piles up all along the wall, a person is much healthier. There's not time for problems to build up. It's the same thing in a fight.

And it's the same thing in terms of the Guardian Angels -- our whole movement. We have gone from, as I said, a couple of chapters last March to thirty right now around the country, and if you don't think we've given the people who've been advising us, the people who're friends of ours or whatever heart-attacks! Like our attorney (who said) "I didn't know you were in Pittsburgh. When did this happen?

You know, it's like overnight. It's like we have to move. There's a certain energy level that we have got to move with. There's a certain -- intuitive sense of timing that we have. There are the needs of people that become apparent at any one time. There are needs: some rise to the surface, when they are at the top where you can no longer ignore them, those are the ones you gotta' deal with right away. Those are the priorities. Those are the crises.

And in terms of physical movement, it's exactly the same thing: whatever is touching you, whatever is closest to you, that is what you deal with first. Now in terms of why we have our people block a kick or block a punch.

'Miaows'

The two most common street fighting techniques that the average, what we call a 'miaow' (which is a trouble-maker) on the streets knows, is how to throw some sort of a punch -- how to throw some type of a kick, and so those would be the two most common things we'd be blocking against.

And a knife attack and a stick attack: a lot of people have knives -- a lot of people carry knives now, and sticks, because if somebody wants to walk through the park and pick up a weapon, they can get a stick or a bottle -- just about anything, so they're very common types of attack and that's why they were selected by us. They are also upper and lower body defenses.

SECTION III

In December, when we spoke to Evers, she was a 'full-time' Guardian Angel, but it is wrong to think that she is 'employed by' the organization, because none of the Angels receives any salary. Evers does Guardian Angel work "...about seven days a week, about twenty-four hours a day". She lives on some small savings that she had and she had a very cheap apartment in the East Village. She told us that she was "living completely hand to mouth" -- on what friends gave her, fed her, and the like. She does make some money from speaking to groups like SASHM.

Her 'uniform' (not really a 'uniform' at all, in one sense) is ordinary, except for the T-shirt and beret. She usually wears sneakers, so that she doesn't have any fancy dress requirements or clothing needs. All of this is important because everyone in the Angels' organization is either going to school full-time or they have full-time jobs, except for Sliwa and Evers (now 'the Sliwas'). All of them function in a completely 'normal' fashion in terms of American standards. Their additional commitment doesn't make life necessarily 'easy', because often, they have to take time off to be in court cases for those whom they have apprehended.