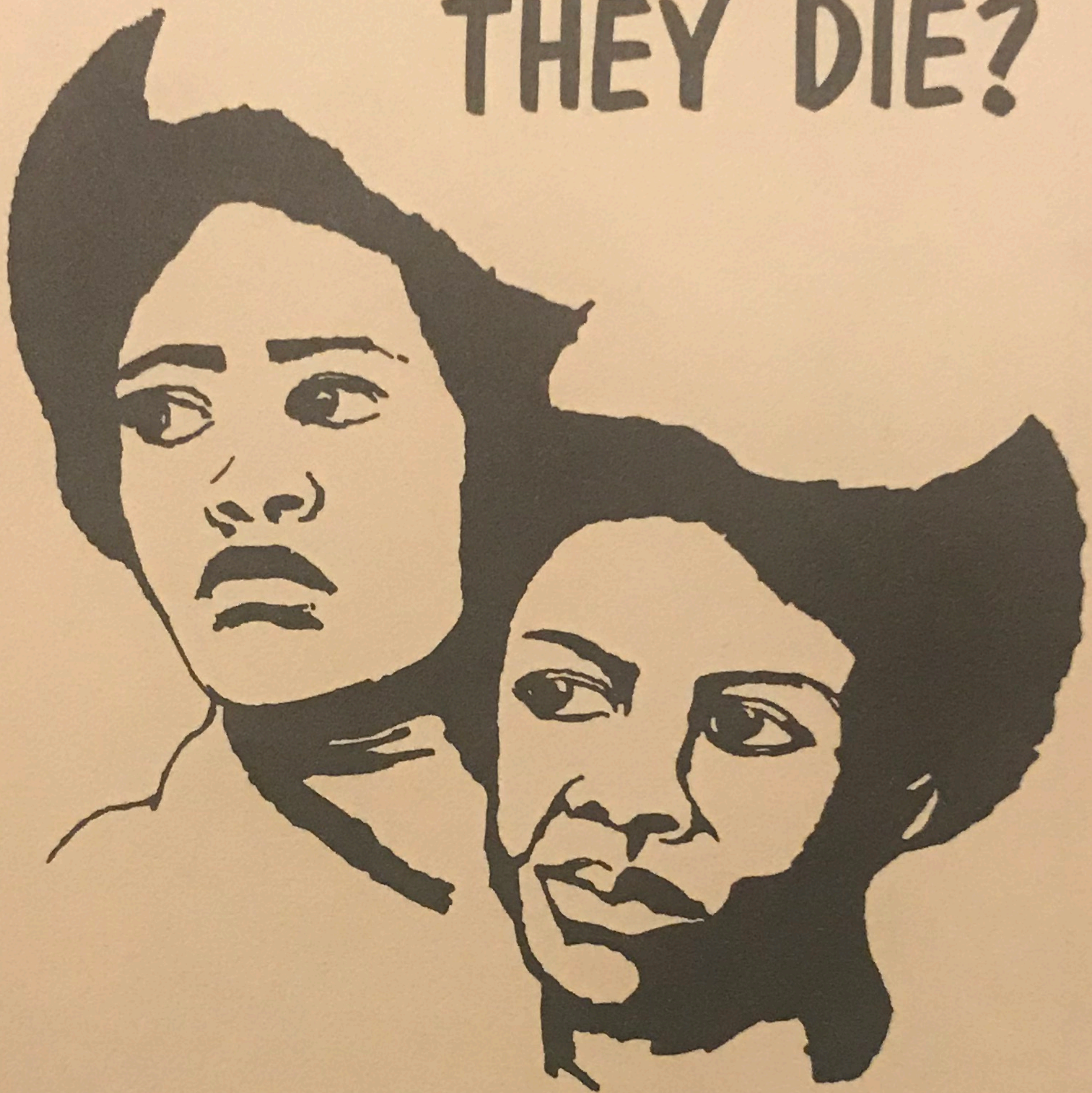


~~SIX~~ BLACK WOMEN  
87 WHY DID  
THEY DIE?



—This pamphlet was prepared by the Combahee River Collective, a Boston Black Feminist Organization.



## with no immediate cause

by ntozake shange (author of the play  
"for colored girls who have considered  
suicide. . .)

every 3 minutes a woman is beaten  
every five minutes a  
woman is raped/every ten minutes  
a lil girl is molested  
yet i rode the subway today  
i sat next to an old man who  
may have beaten his old wife  
3 minutes ago or 3 days/30 years ago  
he might have sodomized his  
daughter but i sat there  
cuz the young men on the train  
might beat some young women  
later in the day or tomorrow  
i might not shut my door fast  
enuf/push hard enuf  
every 3 minutes it happens  
some woman's innocence  
rushes to her cheeks/pours from her mouth  
like the betsy wetsy dolls have been torn  
apart/their mouths  
menses red & split/every  
three minutes a shoulder  
is jammed through plaster & the oven door/  
chairs push thru the rib cage/hot water or  
boiling sperm decorate her body  
i rode the subway today  
& bought a paper from a  
man who might  
have held his old lady onto  
a hot pressing iron/i dont know  
maybe he catches lil girls in the  
park & rips open their behinds  
with steel rods/i cdnt decide  
what he might have done i only  
know every 3 minutes  
every 5 minutes every 10 minutes/so  
i bought the paper  
looking for the announcement  
the discovery/of the dismembered  
woman's body/the  
victims have not all been  
identified/today they are  
naked & dead/refuse to  
testify/one girl out of 10's not  
coherent/i took the coffee  
& spit it up/i found an  
announcement/not the woman's  
bloated body in the river/floating  
not the child bleeding in the  
59th street corridor/not the baby  
broken on the floor/  
"there is some concern  
that alleged battered women  
might start to murder their  
husbands & lovers with no  
immediate cause"  
i spit up i vomit i am screaming  
we all have immediate cause  
every 3 minutes  
every 5 minutes  
every 10 minutes  
every day  
women's bodies are found  
in alleys & bedrooms/at the top of the stairs  
before i ride the subway/buy a paper/drink  
coffee/i must know/  
have you hurt a woman today  
did you beat a woman today  
throw a child cross a room  
are the lil girl's panties  
in yr pocket  
did you hurt a woman today  
  
i have to ask these obscene questions  
the authorities require me to  
establish  
immediate cause

every three minutes  
every five minutes  
every ten minutes  
every day.

(This poem appears in ntozake shange's book  
nappy edges, St. Martin's Press, 1978.)



# SELF-PROTECTION

- \* Do not accept rides from strangers.
- \* Do not get into unlicensed cab services or cabs with 2 people in the driver's seat.
- \* Lock your car doors at all times. Check back seat before entering.
- \* Lock your house door at all times, make sure all windows are locked.
- \* Vary your route to and from home. Stay on well-lighted main streets. Avoid side streets and alleys.
- \* Travel in pairs or groups.
- \* Learn some simple self-defense like how to get out of a hold or how to use available objects as weapons: comb, keys, hair brush, lighted cigarette, edge of books, whistles, salt, red/black pepper.
- \* Always have your keys ready in your hand as you enter your house.
- \* Let someone know where you are at all times and your planned route. Phone ahead to your destination.
- \* Get to know your neighbors on your street. Keep an eye out for each other. Make an effort.
- \* If you hear someone in distress, don't ignore it. If you can't safely investigate, call 911.
- \* Call your local hotline number at 445-1111 if you need to talk or if you have information.
- \* If you feel like you are being followed. . . . check first—change directions, then REACT. . . . Stay calm, change your pace, cross street, walk next to curb or in middle of street against the traffic. . . .DO NOT GO HOME, the attacker will follow. . .run to the nearest lighted place.
- \* Yell FIRE! if someone is attacking you, people are more likely to come to your aid, than if you call "Help".
- \* Encourage your friends to take these precautions.



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Weekly neighborhood meetings organizing against the recent murders.

HARRIET TUBMAN HOUSE  
7:00 TUESDAY EVENING  
566 Columbus Ave.  
Boston (South End)  
536-8610

ASWALOS HOUSE  
7:00 WEDNESDAY EVENING  
246 Seaver St.  
Roxbury  
442-9645 or 442-9646

COOPER COMMUNITY CTR.  
7:00 THURSDAY EVENING  
1891 WASHINGTON ST.  
LOWER ROXBURY  
445-1813

Community organizations providing services in connection with the recent violence.

WOMEN INC. 442-6166  
(Forming a network & information clearing house for all the groups working on the recent murders.)

Dorchester GREENLIGHT PROGRAM 427-4910  
(Building a safe-house network where women can go to designated houses when in danger on the streets.)

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT (C.P.A.S.A.) 442-9603  
(Services for preventing rape, support for women who have been assaulted.)

BLACKSTONE COMMUNITY SCHOOL 262-2190  
(Classes in self-defense.)

HOTLINE: ROXBURY MULTI-SERVICE CTR. 445-1111

Other organizations working against & providing services for violence against women.

CASA MYRNA VAZQUEZ 262-9581  
(Temporary shelter for women and their children in crisis.)

JAMAICA PLAIN BATTERED WOMEN'S TASK FORCE 524-9206 9AM to 1PM Monday Thru Friday  
(Assistance for battered women.)

TRANSITION HOUSE 661-7203 24 hour#  
(Temporary shelter for battered women and their children.)

WOMEN INC. 442-6166  
(Residential drug program for women and their children.)

ELIZABETH STONE HOUSE 522-3417  
Temporary refuge for women in emotional crisis.

BOSTON AREA RAPE CRISIS CENTER 492-RAPE  
(Information, counseling, support services.)

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT 492-0120  
(Organizers of August 26, 1978 march against violence against women. Another march is in the planning stages.)

WAVAW: WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN c/o The Cambridge Women's Center 354-8807  
(Organizing against pornography, violence in the media.)

AASC: ALLIANCE AGAINST SEXUAL COERCION

482-0329  
(Information and services for women who are sexually harassed at the workplace.)

EMERGE 267-7690  
Men's Counseling Service on domestic violence.