

Janet

I had been married four times. My first marriage lasted seven years and began when I was 16 years old. I had five children by the time I was 23.

'When we were leaving the hospital [after I'd given birth] he said to me, "Well, sex is normal after you've had a baby. I mean you won't feel anything after you've stretched that far". I'd been having lectures from the doctors. I was to abstain for six weeks at least to make sure I wasn't going to get pregnant immediately. He was there when that conversation took place. He just completely ignored it.

'The one we just talked about was the first husband and he raped me continually. The second husband raped me a couple of times. The third one raped me once only.

'[With second husband] We started a sexual relationship and it was fine until the ring went on the finger. After that, there came a time when I said no. I was tired. I had five kids, a sick husband, I was sick myself, and I had a daughter who knew when something was on. This time I just said no, and it was the worst thing I could have done because from then it was worse. I learned fairly early on that if I said no, I was going to get it anyway so I might as well lie back and enjoy it as the old saying goes. I recognised it was rape, and I also recognised it as rape when you wake up in the morning and they're already doing it. There's no consent. No, "Do you want it?" It's just happening. What do you do then? That's probably when I recognised it as rape in marriage.