

imagined involved in the affair with her husband. The jealous wife had played the social game according to all the conventional rules, but something had gone wrong. She now found herself alone, without usable skills, no longer with children, without her accustomed beauty. However, the situation is rendered doubly poignant by the fact that the woman is 'without words in which to frame her protest'. The protest against 'helplessness and potential meaninglessness takes the form of jealousy accusations'. This jealousy language is an indirect reference to the woman's exclusion from the man's world. Indirect, of necessity, because the exclusion is so complete as to deprive the woman of the language in which a direct protest could be voiced.

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to Dr J.B. Loudon for his help during the research and to the general practitioner who wishes to remain anonymous.

Notes

1. Permission to look at medical cards was obtained both from the doctor and in writing from each woman concerned.