The image shows the cover of the book 'Don't: A Woman's Word' by Elly Danica. The cover features the word 'DON'T' repeated five times in a large, bold, sans-serif font, stacked vertically. The author's name 'Elly Danica' is printed in a smaller font above the title. The title 'DON'T: A WOMAN'S WORD' is at the bottom, with 'DON'T:' in black and 'A WOMAN'S WORD' in red. The background is a light, textured grey.

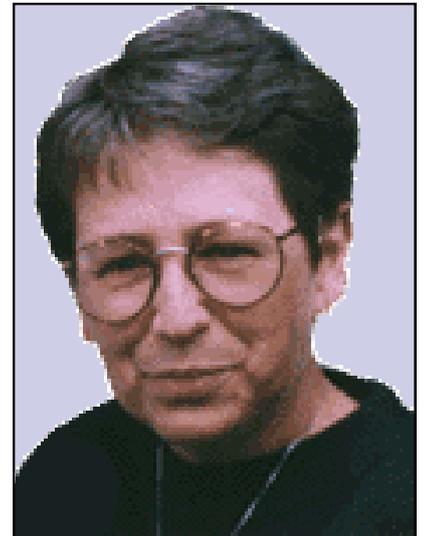
Patriarchy has been part of our society for ever. Women being empowered and diminished are only a few examples of what patriarchy is about. Until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, many women and children were battered and these victims could not even sue the men who did it. Men had the power to lock up the women they thought mad, which meant rebellious and powerful, so women couldn't say anything about the domestic violence they suffered from. Elly Danica, born in 1945, is the author of the novel *Don't: A Woman's Word*. This autobiography exposes the horrors of her child abuse and how patriarchy was still part of her everyday life in the mid-twentieth century.

### Reception and Critics

Elly Danica is an author and a professional speaker who delivers powerful messages regarding child abuse and women's rights. With her book *Don't: A Woman's Word*, the author gained international attention and changed the lives of countless individuals. Some say this book is disturbing to read because of its subject matter, but the majority are positively touched by it. "Other incest narratives have been published, but none has had quite the same impact on its readers as Danica's. *Don't* connects with its readers and elicits powerful responses. At public readings, **women** line up not only to speak with Danica but also to touch her. "They want to connect with me," she comments. "They want eye contact, they want to have verbal contact, and they want to hold my hand while they do this" (Once, 90) A lot of women healed from reading her first novel, since it set certain women who had lived the same pain as Elly Danica. Freesome even say to the author that her book completely changed their lives. Reviews of Danica's book say that readers responded with powerful emotions.

The book not only refers to a woman's awful past, but also engages readers to take action and make society change. By writing about her life experiences, Mrs. Danica wants readers or hearers (when she gives speeches) to know that this abusive behavior existed and still exists. She wants people to take action and protest against sexual violence. She wants women to relate to her story and talk about it. Writing "Don't: A Woman's Word" was a challenge for her after 40 years of pure silence and good-girl behavior. By writing this book she wanted to be able to speak about her childhood and help other women or children having bad experiences. As mentioned earlier, this speaker, author and consultant helped a lot of women. We can say that Elly Danica is a real hero and a survivor.

- By Marie-Pier Blouin



## Work Cited

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