

## THE FEMINIST VIEW OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VS SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

Note: This document was e-mailed to us, and while we have no idea whether its premise is accurate, we found it thought provoking enough to bring it to you.

If you find it objectionable, inaccurate or otherwise fucked-up, bitch to the authors -- NOT us. However, if you'll e-mail us material refuting [or further supporting] its premise, we'll be happy to put it in the Library. -- Staff

=====

### WHY THIS REPORT WAS SENT TO YOU

We are sending this report to those persons and agencies who deal with domestic violence in the hope that we can correct a serious misunderstanding about this very important issue.

We want to make it clear that we have been working to end domestic violence for over a decade. One of us is an original incorporator of our local abuse shelter. We are members of the "Century Club"; those who contribute over \$100 to the local women's shelter. We support the services they provide to victims. However, much of the women's shelter movement is seriously misinformed about the causes and scope of the domestic violence problem.

This misunderstanding of the domestic violence issue is so extensive that city and county governments, the courts, law enforcement, prosecutor's offices, mental health clinics, and other tax supported agencies are now structuring programs based on feminist propaganda rather than responsible scientific studies.

The following is a summary of domestic violence research. Please, help get this important research on the subject of domestic violence to the public.

### THE FEMINIST VIEW OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VS SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

One of the most pervasive myths of our society is that domestic violence is something men do to women. Solid scientific research reveals that domestic violence is something women do to men more frequently than men do it to women. While it is true that men account for most violence outside the home, women instigate most domestic violence and they injure men more frequently and more severely.

The Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire, under grants from the National Institute of Mental Health, recently finished the last of three national studies on domestic violence. The first two studies revealed results similar to the latest study. Anyone who would like a copy of the latest study may order it from the University of New Hampshire (ask for document V55). The data tape and documentation of the 1975 and 1985 studies are available from the Interuniversity Consortium For Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan. Original data is also available on CD-ROM from Sociometrics, Inc. in Palo Alto, CA.

The average results in the "severe assault" category, are reported below:

Wives report they have been severely assaulted by husband	22 per 1000
Wives report they have severely assaulted husband	59 per 1000
Husbands report they have been severely assaulted by wives	32 per 1000
Husbands report they have severely assaulted wives	18 per 1000

Husbands & wives both report wife has been assaulted	20 per 1000
Husbands & wives both report husband has been assaulted	44 per 1000

There are dozens of other studies that reveal similar findings. For instance:

- \* Women are three times more likely than men to use weapons in domestic violence.
- \* Women initiate most incidents of domestic violence.
- \* Women commit most child abuse and most elder abuse.
- \* Women hit their male children more frequently and more severely than they hit their female children.
- \* Women commit most child murders and 64% of their victims are male children.
- \* When women murder adults the majority of their victims are men.
- \* Women commit 50% of spousal murders.
- \* Eighty two percent of all people have their first experience of violence at the hands of their mothers.

There is much confusion about whom to believe in the debate about domestic violence. On one side we have women's shelter advocates and feminists who rely on law enforcement statistics. On the other side we have social scientists who rely on scientifically structured studies. Unfortunately, the results of scientific studies do not receive media attention. America's press is seemingly more interested in political correctness than scientific accuracy. Therefore, the public perception, and the perception of many well intentioned domestic violence activists, is radically skewed away from the more balanced perception of social scientists.

The typical response of the abuse shelter feminists upon first hearing the results of the scientific studies is to "shoot the messenger". You can almost hear their minds snap closed. On the other hand, abuse shelter personnel who have not accepted the feminist "party line" are grateful to have accurate information upon which to implement rational programs for prevention, intervention, and treatment of abusers and their victims. What is happening at the abuse shelter in your community?

We could not find studies which compare the efficacy of scientifically based programs to programs based on feminist politics. However we are willing to wager that scientifically based programs are more effective than programs guided by feminist propaganda.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

We think it is important to note that there have been the same kind of studies done in many countries. There is cross cultural verification that women are more violent than men in domestic settings. When behavior has cross cultural verification it means that it is part of human nature rather than a result of cultural conditioning. Females are most often the perpetrators in domestic violence in all cultures that have been studied so far. That leads many professionals to conclude that there is something biological about violent females in family situations. Researchers are now exploring the role of the "territorial imperative" as a factor in women's violence against men. Women see the home as their territory. Like many other species on the planet, we humans will ignore size difference when we experience conflict on our own territory. So, the scientific results that reveal the violence of American women are not unique to our culture, and do not indicate a special pathology among American women. World wide, women are more violent than men in domestic settings.

Below is a summary of the most recent and significant studies we could find about domestic violence in Canada. There were two waves of data collection. The first was done in 1990 the second was finished in 1992.

This study was done by "Ms." Reena Sommer, a research associate with the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation. We emphasize the "Ms" to call attention to the fact that scientific studies of DV are dominated by female social scientists. Someone mentioned that the figures might reveal a gender bias as if all scientists are male. In this field many of the recognized experts are women.

#### FEMALE VS. MALE PERPETRATED VIOLENCE AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL RESPONDENTS:

	% of females	% of males
Minor Violence		
threw an object (not at partner)	23.6	15.8
threaten to throw object	14.9	7.3
threw object at partner	16.2	4.6
pushed, or grabbed	19.8	17.2
Severe Violence		
slapped, punched, kicked	15.8	7.3
used weapon	3.1	0.9

A survey of couples in Calgary, Canada found that the rate of severe husband-to-wife violence was 4.8%, while severe wife-to-husband violence was 10%. Brinkerhoff & Lupri, Canadian Journal of Sociology, 13:4 (1989)

#### THE PROPAGANDA PROBLEM AND THE SCIENTIFIC SOLUTION

Abuse shelter advocates and feminists have severely distorted the DV picture and deliberately produce fraudulent statistics and disinformation. Even when they quote well grounded statistics, they misuse the information. Here is an example: One of the favorite statistics quoted by abuse shelter advocates is that a woman is the victim of domestic violence every 15 seconds. This statistic is deduced from a well conducted piece of research which was published in the Journal of Marriage and Family, a well respected professional journal for marriage and family therapists. The Abuse Shelter advocates arrived at this figure by using one of the conclusions of the study, i.e.; 1.8 million women suffer an assault from a husband or boyfriend per year. What abuse shelter advocates always ignore is another finding of the same study, i.e.; 2 million men are assaulted by a wife or girl friend per year, which translates as, a man is the victim of domestic violence every 14 seconds. This is typical of the wide spread deception practiced by abuse shelter advocates. America's press establishment is a party to this deception and shares the blame for exacerbating the DV problem by perpetuating a false diagnosis.

Women usually initiate domestic violence episodes (they hit first), and women hit more frequently, as well as using weapons three times more often than men. This combination of violent acts means that the efforts of finding solutions to the domestic violence problem need to focus on female perpetrators. We need to recognize that women are violent, and we need nationwide educational programs that emphasize the women's role as perpetrators. Other studies show that men are becoming less violent at the same time that women are becoming more violent. Educating men seems to be working. Educating women to be less violent should now be the main thrust of public education programs.

Any domestic violence program which accepts the "male abuser - female victim" paradigm is based on a false premise. These kind of domestic violence programs actually perpetuate the problem of domestic abuse and do not deserve to be supported by private citizens or government

agencies. Many government agencies, and legitimate charities, have been funding a feminist political cause, rather than funding rational, solution focused, domestic violence prevention programs. What kind of domestic violence prevention program do you have in your community? Does the domestic violence prevention program in your community devote as much attention to violent females, as it does to violent males? If not, why not?

Let us quote from a book on the subject by McNeely, R.L.. and Robinson-Simpson, G (1987) "The Truth about Domestic Violence: A Falsely Framed Issue":

"Yet, while repeated studies consistently show that men are victims of domestic violence at least as often as are women, both the lay public and many professionals regard a finding of no sex difference in rates of physical aggression among intimates as surprising, if not unreliable, the stereotype being that men are aggressive and women are exclusively victims."

However, part of the feminist agenda is to make men look as bad as they can. The American press cooperates with this libelous portrayal of men. The feminist view of domestic violence is part of the problem. The media boycott of news about the scientific studies is part of the problem. The scientific view gives us hope for solution. Please do your part to share this very important information with your community.

Thank you very much for your attention to this important issue.

Sam & Bunny Sewell - e-mail 72752.76@compuserve.com

#### NEWS CLIPS

Here are some exceptions to the usual media boycott of the science based stories about domestic violence:

SPOUSE ABUSE A TWO-WAY STREET  
USA Today June 29, 1994  
By Warren Farrell, Ph.D.

Just as bad cases make bad laws, so can celebrity cases reinforce old myths. The biggest myth the O.J. Simpson case is likely to reinforce is the myth that domestic violence is a one way street (male-to-female), and its corollary, that male violence against women is an outgrowth of masculinity.

When I began seven years of research into these issues in preparation for "The Myth of Male Power", I began with these two assumptions since I had been the only man in the United States to have been elected three times to the Board of Directors of the National Organization of Women in New York City, and these assumptions went unquestioned in feminist circles.

My first finding -- that in the U.S. and Canada more than 90% of the domestic violence reports to the police were by women, not men - seemed to confirm these assumptions. But, then the picture became more complex.

About a dozen studies in the U.S. and Canada asked BOTH sexes how often they hit each other; all of them found that women hit men either more frequently or about as often as the reverse.

Two of the main studies -- by Suzanne Steinmetz, Murray Strauss and Richard Gelles -- assumed men hit women more severely, so they divided

domestic violence into seven different levels of severity. They were surprised to discover that, overall, the more severe levels of violence were conducted more by women against men.

A caveat, though. Men hitting women did more damage than the reverse. However, this caveat carried its own caveat: it was exactly because men's hits hurt more that women resorted to more severe methods (i.e. tossing boiling water over her husband or swinging a frying pan into his face). These findings were supported by the Census Bureau's own survey:

As early as 1977, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted the National Crime Survey, surveying 60,000 households every six months for three and one half years. They found women use weapons against men 82% of the time; men use weapons against women 25% of the time. Overall, they found that even the women acknowledged they hit men more than men hit women.

The key issue, though, is who initiates this cycle of violence. Steinmetz, Straus and Gelles found to their initial surprise that women are more likely to be the first initiators. Why? In part, the belief that men can take it -- they can therefore be a punching bag and not be expected to hit back.

I was still a bit incredulous. I asked thousands of men and women in my workshops to count all the relationships in which they had hit their partner before their partner had ever hit them, and vice versa: About 60% of the women acknowledged they had more often been the first to strike a blow: among the men, about 90% felt their female partner had been the first to strike a blow.

I still felt violence was an outgrowth of masculinity. I was half right. Male to male violence is so much an outgrowth of masculinity we don't abhor it, we applaud it. We applaud Mike Tyson for his violence and then wonder why he is violent; we applaud O.J. Simpson for his violence and then wonder why he is violent. In fact, we call male to male violence entertainment: football, boxing, auto racing, ice hockey. When we protest it -- as with bullfighting -- it is due to the damage done to the bull.

We, the people, subsidize male to male violence with our money, respect, applause and love. Hopefully, the O.J. Simpson saga will help us understand this without forgetting that when men and women are together, the violence that erupts is a two-way street

=====

When Women Abuse Men: It's Far More Widespread Than People Think  
Excerpt from Special supplement to The Washington Post, December 28,  
1993

By Armin A. Brott

"Despite all the evidence about female-on-male violence, many groups actively try to suppress coverage of the issue. Steinmetz received verbal threats and anonymous phone calls from radical women's groups threatening to harm her children after she published "The Battered Husband Syndrome" in 1978. She says she finds it ironic that the same people who claim that women-initiated violence is purely self defense are so quick to threaten violence against people who do nothing more than publish a scientific study.

Steinmetz's story is not unique. Ten years after that study, R.L. McNeely, a professor at the School of Social Welfare at the University of Wisconsin, and Gloria Robinson-Simpson published "The Truth About Domestic Violence: A Falsely Framed Issue." The article examined various studies on domestic violence and concluded that society must recognize that men are victims "or we will be addressing only part of the

phenomenon."

Shortly thereafter, McNeely received letters from a Pennsylvania women's organization threatening to use its influence in Washington to pull his research funding. Robinson-Simpson, who uncovered some of the most important data, largely was left alone. According to McNeely, "she, a young assistant professor, was assumed to have been 'duped' by the senior male professor."

=====

LEADING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESEARCHER CLAIMS ABUSE SHELTER ADVOCATES MAKE THE PROBLEM WORSE

Washington Times Jan 31, 1994  
Section A, Joyce Price

Murray A. Straus, a sociologist and co-director for the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire, blames "women in the battered [women's] shelter movement" for denying that women physically abuse husbands, ex-husbands and boyfriends, or playing down such abuse.

"There's this fiction in the shelter movement that in all cases, it's him, not her" who's responsible for domestic assaults, Mr. Straus said in a recent interview.

Mr. Straus said at least 30 studies of domestic violence - including some he's conducted - have shown both sexes to be equally culpable. But he said some of the research, such as a recent Canadian national survey, "left out data on women abusing men... because it's politically embarrassing."

Women and men "are almost identical" in terms of the frequency of attacks such as slapping, shoving, and kicking, Mr. Straus said.

Using information on married couples obtained from 2,994 women in the 1985 National Family Violence Survey, Mr. Straus said he found a rate for assaults by wives of 124 per 1,000 couples, compared with 122 per 1,000 for assaults by husbands.

The rate of minor assaults by wives was 78 per 1,000 couples, and the rate of minor assaults by husbands was 72 per 1,000, he said. For the category of severe assaults, he said, the rate was 46 per 1,000 couples for assaults by wives and 50 per 1,000 for assaults by husbands. \*

"Neither difference is statistically different," Mr. Straus wrote in the journal *Issues in Definition and Measurement*. "As these rates are based exclusively on information provided by women respondents, the near equality in assault rates cannot be attributed to a gender bias in reporting."

Dr. Straus's comments do not reflect the 1995 National Family Violence Survey

=====

WOMEN AND MEN EQUALLY AT FAULT FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

The article given below appeared in the Albany Times Union. It was written by Judith Sherven and James Sniechowski of Los Angeles. She is a clinical psychologist and he also holds a doctorate in the behavioral sciences.

Once again, the myth of the evil brutal male perpetrator and the perfect, innocent female victim is being broadcast and written about as gospel. The discussion is national. The rage and sorrow, palpable. Only when we come to terms with the fact that domestic violence is the

responsibility of both men and women, however, can we put a stop to this horrible nightmare.

Domestic violence is not an either-or phenomenon. It is not either the man's fault or the women's. It is a both-and problem. Both male and the female are bound in their dance of mutual destructiveness, their incapacity for intimacy and appreciation of differences. They need each other to perpetuate personal and collective dramas of victimization and lovelessness, and so, regrettably, neither can leave.

This is a very untidy idea for people who have grown up with movies in which the "good guy" triumphs over the "bad guy" rescues the damsel from distress. But to tackle the plague of domestic violence, we must alter our perspectives.

#### Facts:

Half of spousal murders are committed by wives, a statistic that has been stable over time. The 1985 National Family Violence Survey, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and supported by many other surveys, disclosed that women and men were physically abusing one another in roughly equal numbers. Wives reported that they were more often the aggressors. Using weapons to make up for physical disadvantage, they were not just fighting back.

While 1.8 million women annually suffered one or more assaults from a husband or boyfriend, 2 million men were assaulted by a wife or girlfriend, according to a 1986 study on U. S. family violence published in the Journal of Marriage and Family. That study also found that 54 percent of all violence termed "severe" was by women.

The Journal for the National Association of Social Workers found in 1986 that among teenagers who date, girls were violent more frequently than boys.

Mothers abuse their children at a rate approaching twice that of fathers, according to state child-protective service agencies surveyed by the Children's Rights Coalition.

Because men have been taught to "take it like a man" and are ridiculed when they feel they have been battered by women, women are nine times more likely to report their abusers to the authorities.

In 1988, R. L. McNeeley, a professor at the School of Social Welfare of the University of Wisconsin, published "The Truth About Domestic Violence: A Falsely Framed Issue" again revealing the level of violence against men by women. Such facts, though, are "politically incorrect". Even 10 years earlier, Susan Steinmetz, director of the Family Research Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University received threats of harm to her children from radical women's groups after she published "The Battered Husband Syndrome".

Why are we, as a culture, loath to expose the responsibility of women in domestic abuse? Why do we cling to the pure and virginal image of the "sweet young thing" and the "damsel in distress"? If we are sincere about change, we must acknowledge the truth: Women are part and parcel of domestic violence. The women's movement claims its goal to be equal rights for women. If that is so, then women must share responsibility for their behavior and their contribution to domestic violence. Otherwise, we remain in a distortion that overshadows the truth. Only the truth will show us the way out of the epidemic of violence that is destroying our families and our nation.

Brought to you by.- THE 'LECTRIC LAW LIBRARY(tm)  
The Net's Finest Legal Resource For Legal Pros & Laypeople Alike.  
WWW: <http://www.lectlaw.com> -- e-mail: [staff@lectlaw.com](mailto:staff@lectlaw.com)




[www.sfgate.com](http://www.sfgate.com)
[Return to regular view](#)

## DA: Were you hit? Wife: No! DA: You lie!

SCOTT WINOKUR

Feb. 16, 1999

©1999 San Francisco Examiner

URL: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/examiner/archive/1999/02/16/EDITORIAL1888.dtl>

REAL NAMES must remain confidential because they've been hurt enough. Their story should be told, however, because it gets to the heart of something very wrong with our city's legal system.

We're rushing to judgment in domestic violence cases because it's the politically correct thing to do. In our eagerness to take a stand against a terrible problem, we've made justice something less than our first priority.

The young man I'll call Jack was snitched off to the cops on a sultry July night last year while he and his wife, Jill, were noisily quarreling in their Mission District apartment. The snitch was a neighbor who had a "Stop Domestic Violence" bumper sticker on her car.

Physical violence? There was none, said Jack and Jill, who have been married two years. Yes, there were plenty of loud noises. Pots and pans were thrown. Tears were shed. Ugly words were spoken. And, yes, there was too much booze. But physical violence? No.

The cops saw drops of blood on Jill's blouse. Jack also had a bad attitude, they seemed to believe. So when Jill said, "It's no big deal," and begged them to leave, they refused.

The police report says she "was adamant about not cooperating with any type of criminal action towards her husband."

The blood was from a recurrent nose bleed caused by stress, Jill said. As for the bad attitude, Jack pleads guilty. "I was very obnoxious," he said. He also pleads guilty to being hot-tempered.

The short of it is that despite his wife's protests Jack was arrested, jailed and prosecuted. Today, the young man, a student at a local university, has a criminal record.

Jill pleaded with the district attorney's office and the court's domestic violence advocate to drop the case. They wouldn't.

Why not? Because prosecutors and women activists believe many victims in domestic violence cases are too dependent on their men to hold them accountable for their actions. The DAs, in other words, disbelieve the principal witnesses if they say the wrong thing.

"(T)he goal is to convict," Teri Jackson, until recently a top official in the DA's office, wrote in an article on domestic violence for "Prosecutor's Brief," the journal of the California District Attorneys Association.

Jackson made some intelligent arguments in the piece, but its basic premise was that female victims are the mental equivalents of rag dolls - totally useless as percipient witnesses if and when they say anything that helps their men.

Jill recalled: "I said to the advocate, 'No physical violence happened, this was a big mistake,' but she said, 'He hit you.' I said, 'No, he didn't.' It felt like they were trying to get me to say he did.

"The advocate said, 'There was another incident in the Haight.' I said, 'What are you talking about?' She had someone else's file. At that point I said, 'I'm not going to talk to you anymore.' "

But Jill continued to talk to the prosecutor, Machaela Hctor, and her boss, Susan Breall. Hctor has published a piece in the California Law Review entitled, "Domestic Violence as a Crime Against the State: The Need for Mandatory Arrest in California."

Jill said: "The prosecutor's idea was that we have to believe somebody and we have women like you all the time saying this hasn't happened. Basically, it didn't really matter what I said."

Jill then complained to Breall, co-chief of the DA's criminal division. Breall is a reasonable person, but she wouldn't budge.

"We feel intervening at this level was justified before the coroner had to go out there," Breall told me.

According to Breall, either Jill lied to me when she claimed there had been no battering or the police lied in their report. Breall thinks the former is far more likely.

Linda Mills, a former public defender and clinical social worker who is an associate professor at the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research, has studied domestic violence nationwide. She believes that law enforcement, in its zeal to end misogynistic practices in the courts, has gone to the other extreme.

A system that doesn't listen to the Jills who come to its attention, Mills told me, mimics the abusive relationship it's trying to end.

"The idea that women are too mentally ill or too much under the man's influence and that's why the state must intervene - that is not safe for women for a number of reasons," Mills said.

A study of battered women in Milwaukee showed that many were more at risk of violence after their man was arrested against their wishes. Other studies have shown that the only thing that works against recidivism is a strong, positive relationship between the alleged batterer and his community.

Jack was sentenced to three years probation and ordered to enroll in a program for batterers. There was no jail time and no fine. In three years, he can ask the court to expunge his record.

Meanwhile, he's got to tell any employer who asks that he was convicted of assaulting his wife. Jill will have to support him until he can earn a living again.

## Estimating Domestic Violence Injury Rates by Gender

Date: Fri, 26 Aug 1994 19:18:30 EDT  
From: Cathy Young [71774.1305@COMPUSERVE.COM]  
Subject: Injury in domestic violence cases

Another point to ponder about domestic violence:

It has been commonly said -- by those who concede that the rates of violence are roughly equal -- that, at the same time, women are six or seven times more likely than men to be seriously injured by their partners. Straus and Gelles themselves have said this. This is based on their finding that about 3% of female victims of domestic violence, but about 0.5% of the male victims, reported having sought medical care as a result of a dom. violence incident.

I have no doubt that women are more likely than men to be injured (let's face it, if we take the average man and the average woman and she punches him in the face as hard as she can, it's likely that the worst that will happen is a bruise and/or a sore jaw; if he responds in kind, he's likely to knock some of her teeth out). But I'm beginning to doubt that the discrepancy is that great. I think the 7-to-1 or 6-to-1 figure is partly due to the fact that more women than men may seek medical care for minor injuries such as a swollen lip or a superficial cut. I think it is generally true that females are somewhat more likely than males to seek medical attention for the same problems; this would be especially true, I think, in cases of domestic violence. The male with a bruised lip or a cut on his face may be especially reluctant to seek medical aid if he thinks medical personnel may find out he was hit by his wife. Some females, of course, may also be embarrassed to admit that they were hit by a partner; OTOH, if the woman is considering filing charges, she may go to the emergency room in order to have her injuries documented.

Studies that have asked about specific injuries rather than seeking medical assistance usually yield a smaller gap. In the recently published book *THE VIOLENT COUPLE* by Anson Shupe, Lonnie Hazelwood, and William Stacey (Praeger), based on case studies from the Family Violence Diversion Network in Austin, TX, the overall "injury index" (combined score of the percentages who have sustained a given type of injury) is 158 for men and 335 for women. In particular, 4% of men and 17% of women sustained broken teeth or bones (i.e., about 4 times as many women as men); 10% of men and 38% of women had a split lip; 4% of men and 21% of women had a black eye; and 10% of men and 47% of women had multiple bruises. Cuts were sustained by 22% of men and 31% of women; the same percentage of women and men -- 4% had cuts requiring stitches. More men than women (53% compared to 49%) had scratches.

Overall, the differences are obviously there but they are not as pronounced.

In the study "Determining Police Response to Domestic Violence Victims" (*AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST*, May 1993), based on police records from Detroit, MI, Eve Buzawa and Thomas Austin conclude that while 85% of the victims in the reported cases were female, only 14% of the female victims compared to 38% of the male victims had "serious injuries."  $85 \times 14\% = 11.9$ ;  $15 \times 38\% = 5.7$ . Thus, according to those numbers, women are about twice as likely as men to be seriously injured in a domestic violence incident.

If I had to guess, I'd say that 20 to 30% of serious injuries in domestic violence incidents are sustained by males. A minority, yes; but hardly an insignificant number. And it certainly doesn't justify 100% of public attention to domestic violence going to female victims.

---

From bobk@dogear.spk.wa.us (Bob Kirkpatrick)  
Newsgroups: alt.child-support  
Subject: Re: Something for nothing  
Date: 23 Jan 93 20:34:27 GMT

A previous exchange:

Of course, there are cases where fathers exhibit violence against their wife or children, so in those cases visitations must be restricted or eliminated altogether. (And please don't infer that I suspect you to be a violent sort of person.)

and

Yes, and an equal number of women exhibit violence against their children, so in those cases custody and visitation by women must be restricted or eliminated altogether, right?

I ran across this while doing some file searches the other day. It's kind of interesting. These are for the year 1990, and doesn't seem to give all of the reports. More on this below.

What's startling is the total of cases: 982 for one year... I sure hope these are statewide and not county.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Verified Case .....	144	091	177	159	133	278
Terminations .....	061	020	101	006	040	065
Foster Care .....	022	039	018	013	033	011
Guardianships .....	052	009	055	020	026	034
Returns .....	009	023	003	120	034	168

Category	Definition
1: Males 15-20	Verified Cases consist of physical abuse to biological offspring which required hospitalization on more than 3 occasions.
2: Males 21-25	
3: Males 26-up	
4: Females 15-20	Terminations are where the parental rights were revoked. Foster Care is semi-permanent placement of the children. Guardianships are temporary placements (18 mo. or less). Returns are where the child was returned to the care of the parent.
5: Females 21-25	
6: Females 26-up	

This \*seems\* to indicate that incidence of female perpetrated abuse is about 5-30% greater than male perpetrated abuse. These figures don't appear to take into account whether there was more than one child in the home or not, and only deals with cases where intervention by the Juvenile Court system was invoked. So cases from divorce and/or non-parent abuses are absent. CPS only cases (cases which didn't come to court) are also apparently absent. What I find a bit disturbing is the breakdowns --how the courts react to men versus women in these cases.

Bob Kirkpatrick  
Dog Ear'd Systems of Spokane, WA

---

From: bhv@areaplq2.corp.mot.com (Bronis Vidugiris)  
 Subject: Re: Why should men be blamed for domestic violence  
 Date: Wed, 22 Jun 1994 19:44:01 GMT

Responding to the comment:

Yes, my understanding is that that's one common reason why victims of domestic violence often stay in an abusive situation: They're afraid that if they try to leave they will die.

Sadly, I think it's clear by now that this fear is often quite rational.

Careful, here. I think women could be served with some hard information here, not scare stories. (Men, too BTW).

There's different ways of interpreting the data of course, but my own impression is that women are in fact protected better than men, just not as much as they'd really like. (Men seem more resigned to being hurt or killed occasionally for some reason). Furthermore, I have some very strong doubts about how rational the fear you mention above really is. This cannot really be addressed by statistics, but the rarity of homicide (see below) should make one question if it's really \*that\* likely.

The following is from "Highlights from 20 years of surveying crime victims" from the Bureau of Justice, but is general information (as opposed to data specifically on women). Criminal events are stated (boldface in original)

Event	Rate per 1000 adults per year
Accidental injury	220
Accidental injury at home	66
* Personal theft	61
Accidental injury at work	47
* Violent victimization	31
* Assault (aggravated and simple)	25
Injury in motor vehicle accident	22
Death, all causes	11
* Victimization with injury	11
* Serious (aggravated) assault	8
* Robbery	6
Heart disease death	5
Cancer death	3
* Rape (women only)	1
Accidental death, all circumstances	.4
Pneumonia/influenza death	.4
Motor vehicle accident death	.2
Suicide	.2
HIV infection death	.1
* Homicide/legal intervention	.1

Now the picture for women alone is different - on the whole their risks are lower for one thing. But in any event, it should be noted that homicide is a lot rarer than assault - a whole lot rarer. Not that it doesn't happen, but if one really wants to be rational and logical, one must start to wonder if perhaps the media is distorting the picture here just a tad? Or in other words, there are a lot of things that get a lot of publicity and that a lot of people (especially women) are scared of. But are they really that common?

Though I don't have any specific data like this for women only, I do have some general comparisons: ("Female Victims of Violent Crime", also from the Bureau of Justice)

Victim offender relationship	Rate of Violent crime	
	Women	Men
intimate	6.3	1.8
other person victim knew	7.0	12.1
stranger	11.4	29.4

All of the above is based on the national crime survey (NCS) and has the associated bias that the victim had to think of what was done as a crime (this becomes problematical in domestic violence, for instance). It is based on surveys, rather than police reports and covers the 1979-87 time frame. There's a lot more to say about the NCS but this should cover the basics.

Here's some breakdown on the violence for women. (I don't have the data for men, because the BJS hasn't written such a report for men, at least not yet :-)

Victim-offender relationship	average annual number (1979-87)	
Intimate	625,800	(rate 6.3 per 1000 per year)
Spouse	56,900	
Ex-spouse	216,100	
Parent	20,900	
Child	16,700	
Brother/sister	34,200	
Other relative	60,000	
Boyfriend	198,800	
Unspecified	22,400	
Other person victim knew	696,800	(rate 7.0 per 1000 per year)
Stranger	1,132,600	(rate 11.4 per 1000 per year)

---

# Opposing Bogus Feminist Statistics About Domestic Violence

From: throop@vix.com (David R. Throop)  
Subject: Opposing Bogus Feminist Statistics (long)

Why would a man get upset about feminist propaganda statistics? Has he been beaten? Why doesn't he sympathize more with the woman in a mutual battering situation? Isn't she the weaker and more helpless one?

I'll answer this in four parts.

This is Part 1. We have our own stories. The feminist propaganda hurts our ability to defend ourselves legally when women abuse us.

---

We want to get the truth out about battered men. We have experiences that are personal, or familial, or those of dear friends. Here's mine:

My girlfriend got violent last week. She'd never done this before. But I was frightened.

We are breaking up, primarily because of her out-of-control anger. There hadn't been anything physical, but I'd been subjected to too many hour-long tirades. Most of the time, she hadn't been angry at me. The anger was at parents. Or her job. Or a second-grade teacher who she's still mad at years later. Or at herself; often at herself.

The tirades escalated. She began destroying things around the house. She ripped the pages her Bible and strew them around. She destroyed a necklace I'd given her, and other jewelry, clothes. She became afraid of her own actions. I offered to pay for counseling. She skipped her counseling appointments. She threatened suicide.

She asked me if she should move out and get her own place. I love her. It was hard to say, "Yes, you should." She started to look for her own apartment.

We visited a friend and watched the NBA playoffs. Our team won. We had a good time, but she got very drunk. We came home, went to bed quietly.

I was awakened around 1am by the sound of breaking china. She was out on the porch (three stories up) throwing my best dishes off the balcony.

I ran out onto the porch. She cursed me out and accused me of all kinds of horrible mistreatment. She threw two chairs over the railing. And the glass top from a table, (fortunately no one was below.) And the table itself. And \$50 worth of my potted plants. And my radio. And an empty liquor bottle.

I didn't want to touch her. If we got into a struggle - the police here are trained to believe that it's ALWAYS the man's fault in a domestic struggle (see below.)

Finally, when she was wrestling a second table up over the railing, I stopped her. I took the table a way. She came after me, grappled with me. I pinned her arms at her side. I held her, pleading with her to stop. She kept cursing me, screaming. When she'd quit struggling, I let her go. We went back inside. She picked up another potted plant and threw it across the living room. I sat down. She cursed me and accused me, and cursed her parents and cursed God.

I cried.

Finally she went to bed and passed out.

A policeman arrived.

"What happened here?" He was on the ground with a flashlight, looking at the damage.

"My girlfriend got drunk and upset. I'll clean it up in the morning. I'd clean it up now, but I don't want to be down there while she's up here."

"OK." He left.

---

### HOW ARE POLICE TRAINED TO HANDLE DOMESTIC DISTURBANCES?

The Sunday before this happened, the Houston Chronicle did a special report on how our police are trained to handle domestic violence situations. They described the feminist police sergeants who do the domestic violence training. The paper quoted from the training sessions.

What preconceptions did the policeman have? What had he been taught?

He'd been taught that the man is to blame. From the Chronicle article (6/12/94, Sec G):

**"BATTERED MEN CONSTITUTE LESS THAN TWO PERCENT OF ABUSED ADULTS"** (emphasis in original.)

All the examples of abuse are of men abusing women. Women who **\*kill\*** their husbands are excused: it was the husbands fault; he must have been battering her. The sergeants supply several examples and even have a husband-killer come in and tell the police that it was the the fault of the **\*police\*** that she'd had to kill her husband. His side of the story is, of course, unavailable.

**"ONE-THIRD TO ONE HALF OF AMERICAN WOMEN WILL BE ASSAULTED IN A RELATIONSHIP AT LEAST ONCE. -FBI** (I contacted the reporter asking for a fuller citation but she didn't respond. I expect that this is only true under an extremely expansive definition of 'abuse.' And I don't believe it came from the FBI.)

The sergeants' lecture and the article use the word "batterer" interchangeably with "male."

**"TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT TO FORTY-FIVE PERCENT OF BATTERED WOMEN ARE ABUSED DURING PREGNANCY."** (They give no citation for this; it appears to have been inflated from the 1985 Second National Family Violence Survey. But even that number was challenged by Straus and Gelles, "Physical Violence in American Families," p285)

"The Family Violence Unit will often proceed with a case anyway, even without the women's cooperation."

What would have happened if I'd called 911, or if the police had arrived while I was struggling with her? What if she said I'd started it? (she was drunk enough to say anything.)



I truly believe that it would have been likely that they would have arrested me. (And I might have still faced the charges even after she'd sobered up.) I believe that they'd only have arrested her if she had attacked THEM.

---

I have other stories. My friend John divorced his wife. She alleged that he'd battered her. There was no record of police visits to the home, but John had had some previous scrapes with the law. The court believed her. She moved away and wouldn't let John see his son. Later, she got arrested and jailed for beating up her own mother. John petitioned for custody. The court denied.

And other stories ... stories I won't tell, stories I know that belong to other men for the telling.

---

And so, when someone recently asked:

"... you sound vehemently anti-feminist if not actually anti-woman. Were you ever attacked and injured by a woman, either emotionally or physically? Perhaps someone you're close to?"

Damn straight. [And I'm not real fond of the implication that to be anti-feminist is to be anti-woman.]

The point is, these feminist lies rob us of the ability to ask for help. They make us (rightly) afraid to call the police, or the social welfare agencies, when we're abused. They put us at risk of false arrest. They stack the cards against us. They make our friends and family disbelieve us. ("SHE abused HIM? Surely not. Why, just yesterday, I just read what the Houston Police said about claims like that...")

The heck with that.

So some of us are becoming activists.

---

Magazine: National Review

Issue: June 27, 1994

Title: The New Mythology

Author: Christina Hoff Sommers

Thursday, January 27. A news conference was called in Pasadena, California, the site of the forthcoming Super Bowl game, by a coalition of women's groups. At the news conference, reporters were informed that Super Bowl Sunday is "the biggest day of the year for violence against women." Forty per cent more women would be battered on that day. In support of the 40 per cent figure, Sheila Kuehl of the California Women's Law Center cited a study done at Virginia's Old Dominion University three years before. The presence of Linda Mitchell, a representative of a media "watchdog" group called Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), lent credibility to the claim.

At about the same time a very large media mailing was sent by Dobisky Associates, FAIR's publicists, warning at-risk women: "Don't remain at home with him during the game." The idea that sports fans are prone to attack their wives or girlfriends on that climactic day persuaded many men as well: Robert Lipsyte of the New York Times would soon be referring to the "Abuse Bowl."

Friday, January 28.

Lenore Walker, a Denver psychologist and author of *The Battered Woman*, appeared on Good Morning America claiming to have compiled a ten-year record showing a sharp increase in violent incidents against women on Super Bowl Sundays.

Here, again, a representative from FAIR, Laura Flanders, was present to lend credibility to the claim.

Saturday, January 29. A story in the Boston Globe written by Lynda Gorov reported that women's shelters and hotlines are "flooded with more calls from victims [on Super Bowl Sunday] than on any other day of the year." Miss Gorov cited "one study of women's shelters out West" that "showed a 40 per cent climb in calls, a pattern advocates said is repeated nationwide, including in Massachusetts."

In this roiling sea of media credulity was a lone island of professional integrity. Ken Ringle, a Washington Post staff writer, took the time to call around. When he asked Janet Katz -- professor of sociology and criminal justice at Old Dominion, and one of the principal authors of the study cited by Miss Kuehl -- about the connection between violence and football games, she said: "That's not what we found at all." Instead, she told him, they had found that an increase in emergency-room admissions "was not associated with the occurrence of football games in general."

Mr. Ringle checked with Lynda Gorov, who told him she had never seen the study she cited but had been told of it by FAIR. Linda Mitchell of FAIR told Mr. Ringle that the authority for the 40 per cent figure was Lenore Walker. Miss Walker's office, in turn, referred calls on the subject to Michael Lindsey, a Denver psychologist and an authority on battered women. Pressed by Mr. Ringle, Mr. Lindsey admitted he could find no basis for the report. "I haven't been any more successful than you in tracking down any of this," he said. "You think maybe we have one of these myth things here?"

Later, other reporters pressed Miss Walker to detail her findings. She said they were not available. "We don't use them for public consumption," she explained, "we used them to guide us in advocacy projects."

It would have been more honest for the feminists who initiated the campaign to admit that there was

no basis for saying that football fans are more brutal to women than are chess players or Democrats nor any basis for saying that there was a significant rise in domestic violence on Super Bowl Sunday.

Ken Ringle's unraveling of the "myth thing" was published on the front page of the Washington Post on January 31. On February 2, Boston Globe staff writer Bob Hohler published what amounted to a retraction of Miss Gorov's story. Mr. Hohler had done some more digging and had gotten FAIR's Steven Rendell to back off from the organization's earlier support of the claim. "It should not have gone out in FAIR materials," said Mr. Rendell.

Linda Mitchell would later acknowledge that she was aware during the original news conference that Miss Kuehl was misrepresenting the Old Dominion study. Mr. Ringle asked her whether she did not feel obligated to challenge her colleague. "I wouldn't do that in front of the media," Miss Mitchell said. "She has a right to report it as she wants."

The shelters and hot lines, which monitored the Sunday of the 27th Super Bowl with special care, reported no variation in the number of calls for help that day, not even in Buffalo, whose team (and fans) had suffered a crushing defeat.

But despite Ken Ringle's exposé, the Super Bowl "statistic" will be with us for a while, doing its divisive work of generating fear and resentment. In the book *How to Make the World a Better Place for Women in Five Minutes a Day*, a comment under the heading "Did You Know?" informs readers that "Super Bowl Sunday is the most violent day of the year, with the highest reported number of domestic battering cases." How a belief in that misandrist canard can make the world a better place for women is not explained.

---

From: aw102@FreeNet.Carleton.CA (Frank D. Ferguson)  
Subject: Violence against women exaggerated!  
Date: Tue Jan 31 14:20:30 CST 1995

The Ottawa Sun, Tuesday, January 31, 1995  
Page 11

### Fictional figures - by Peter Worthington

Before Christmas, Robert Fulford had an excellent column in the *Globe and Mail* showing the oft-repeated statistic that "47% of all women will be raped in their lifetimes" was hogwash. Now journalist Betsy Hart, in the new *Women's Quarterly*, published in the U.S. (whose editor, coincidentally, is my daughter) takes issue with the claims of women's advocacy groups that "six out of 10 married couples have experienced violence," and with themes such as Gloria Steinem's that "the most dangerous situation for a woman is ... a husband or lover in the isolation of their own home."

Hart was provoked when the U.S. Congress allocated \$1.5 billion of its \$30 billion crime bill to combat violence against women. (The Violence Against Women Act) in the form of hotlines, research studies, "sensitivity training", educational programs for everyone from judges to school children, assorted shelters, publications and such. She says most of the \$1.5 billion will go to advocacy groups such as the Battered Women's Justice Project, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Resource Centre on Child Custody, Health Resource Centre on Domestic Violence, and such.

Hart and others (including me) don't deny that violence against women, in the home or out, is a problem. Clearly, violent and abusive people shouldn't get away with it. But Hart feels the \$1.5 billion (\$2 billion Canadian) will do little to curb violence against women because "These groups view violence against women not as a criminal problem but as an ideological one." She quotes a Battered Women's Justice specialist saying violence against women is a "societal problem" based on power and control, and part of the cultural development of male children.

Contrary to advocacy groups which insist that violence against women is widespread and "the majority of victims never tell" (Hart raises the valid question how does anyone know then, if victims won't tell?), the latest National Crime Victimization Survey issued by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics puts the issue in a different perspective. It says sexual assaults actually declined 20% in 1993 from 1992, and that women are 40% less likely than men to be victims of violent crime.

Contrary to mythology, husbands account for only 2% of attacks on women; lovers, ex-husbands and husbands combined account for 18% of violence against women. In fact, 44% of violent crimes against women are committed by strangers.

Contrary to militant feminist orthodoxy, marriage is a "safe haven" for women -- a married woman is 5 times less likely to be attacked than a single, separated or divorced woman, and 10 times less likely to be raped. (Statistically, widows are safest of all).

Hart concludes: "There is probably not one woman in America who will be safer" because of Congress' allocation of \$1.5 billion -- none of which is likely to be spent on increasing police forces, prisons, jailing repeat offenders. She quotes a Ford Foundation study that shows 50% of known batterers have histories of criminal violence.

Even those who oppose the crime bill aren't speak out against the funding of women's advocacy groups which have become as effective at lobbying as farmers, auto workers, gun advocates or any of the "good ol' boys lobbies."

All politicians (especially Republicans) are fearful of being branded anti-women. They are intimidated by anything labeled "women's rights" or "women's issues" and will pass them automatically, irrespective of merits.

"The Violence Against Women Act will do nothing to protect women from crime," says Hart. "It will, though, perpetuate false information, waste money and urge vulnerable women to mistrust all men."

But, adds the iconoclastic *Women's Quarterly*, women in America are not taking violent crime lying down -- they are participating in it more than ever. The FBI's Uniform Crime Reports show that in the decade between 1983 and 1992, women over 18 arrested for violent crimes rose 73%, while those under 18 rose by 83%. Arrests for forcible rape by women over 18 rose by 46%, under 18 by 91%.

For "offenses against family and children" the increase in arrests for women over 18 rose by over 235%, which provokes *Women's Quarterly* to the comment: "Warning to kids: Don't be too insistent the next time you want to watch -Mighty Morphin Power Rangers- when mom's crabby and Oprah is on."

What's true of America, is usually reflected in Canada, where the women's advocacy network extends its tentacles. Now that the likes of Fulford have found the courage to challenge the accuracy of horror statistics on violence to women, perhaps the mainstream media will find the nerve to raise an eyebrow and question rather than regurgitate sensational statistics that defy common sense and have little substance. Meanwhile, funding of these groups continues.

---

Worthington is the *Sun's* editor emeritus

---

Date: Sun, 16 Oct 1994 07:23:21 -0400 (EDT) From: Stuart Miller [smiller@cap.gwu.edu]  
Subject: Blather in Congress  
Compliments of: Cathy Young

## Blather in Congress

The Congressional Record for October 4, 1994 contains a number of speeches on domestic violence in conjunction with National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October). Unfortunately these speeches mostly recycle already disproved factoids about domestic violence. Here are some examples:

Olympia Snowe (R-Maine): "Domestic violence ... is the leading cause of injury to women aged 15-44, according to recent research by the surgeon general and the American Medical Association."

As you probably know, this factoid is based on a study (cited, but not conducted, by Surgeon General Antonia Novello) which showed that ALL VIOLENCE -- not domestic violence -- was the leading cause of injury to women 15-44 in a poor, urban, black neighborhood in West Philadelphia. The perpetrators were not identified in 81% of the cases; 12% were identified as husbands or boyfriends. So, not only is the finding based on an atypical population (in a high-crime area) but it applies to all violence, not just domestic battering.

Other members of Congress dropped the 15-44 caveat and simply asserted that domestic violence was "the biggest cause of injury ... to women, more prevalent than rape, muggings, or auto accidents" (Connie Morella, R-Md); "the leading cause of injury to women, causing more injuries than muggings, stranger rapes, and car accidents combined" (Bart Stupak, D-Mich.); "the largest single cause of injury to women in the United States ... spouse abuse accounts for more visits to hospital emergency rooms than car crashes, muggings, and rape combined" (David Price, D-NC). Eva Clayton (D-NC) also stated that "in 1 year more than 4,000 women have been killed by their husband or partner." The FBI statistics are somewhere between 1,200 and 1,400. Anna Eshoo (D-CA) said that "one out of every four female college students will be sexually attacked before graduating and one in seven will be raped." ..

Needless to say there was not a single mention of male victims. According to Rep. Morella "women are not the only ones affected by domestic violence. Nearly half of all incidencies of child abuse occur in the context of battering. Men who are abusing women are often abusing children as well." In other words she is not even willing to recognize any female responsibility for child abuse.

Write to your congressperson, dammit!

Cathy

# APPENDIX

3

From: gwood@tibalt.supernet.ab.ca (Garth Wood)  
 Subject: Announcing a new Magazine on Equality  
 Date: 27 Aug 1994 09:33:53 -0600

ANNOUNCING a new magazine:

*BALANCE: The Inclusive Vision of Gender Equality*

This society needs a new vision of equality between the sexes, one that rejects the old extreme of one-sex dominance and lock-step gender roles, and also rejects the contemporary extreme of gender-based hostility and separate standards for women and men. The ideal of full two-way justice, once endorsed by feminism, has in recent times been pushed aside by influences ranging from unenlightened self-interest to the return of groupthink. Yet most individuals, of both sexes and with a wide range of beliefs on other social and political issues, fundamentally believe in genuine equality and understanding between men and women -- all that is needed is for that belief to be actively supported in the public arena.

The purpose of *Balance* is to promote such a vision, through presentation of important insights and information not now being made widely available.

*Balance* is published quarterly by a non-profit organization. To receive the first issue, send \$2.50 US or \$3.50 CDN to the address below. To subscribe for a full year, send \$10.00 US or \$12.50 CDN to the same address: *Balance* Subscriptions #366, 9768 - 170 Street Edmonton, Alberta T5T 5L4 Canada

Prices include GST and mailing costs. Be sure to include your name and full address, carefully printed or typed. Mastercard is also an acceptable form of payment. Please, do NOT send credit card information via e-mail.

- "Why *Balance* is Needed" An overview of the reasons for creating this new magazine.

COMMENTARIES

- "Ontario's Bill 79: 'Equity' or Gross Inequity?" by Leo Groarke  
A pithy look at Ontario, Canada's new law mandating discrimination in employment, the most extreme one yet in North America.
- "Gender and Violence: False Consciousness" by Cathy Young  
An appeal for the end of blatant sexism regarding concern for victims of violence and for honesty regarding the origins of the violence.

"The Men's Movement in the U.K." by Malcolm George

A look at efforts to address "the other half of sexist discrimination" across the Atlantic.

FEATURES:

- <sup>P</sup>"Do Preferential Policies Raise the Status of Women?" by Prof. Ruth Gruhn  
Standard objections to preference in hiring based on sex or race focus on unfairness to individuals in the non-favored categories and on the lowering of performance standards. This article argues instead that, at least in the case of women, those meant to benefit from special preference are in important ways harmed rather than benefited.



- "Rebirth of the Women's Movement?"  
Concern over the directions establishment feminism has taken in the last ten or fifteen years has finally led to the formation of women's groups determined to return to a vision of genuinely equal rights and responsibilities between the sexes. Four such groups here describe their basic beliefs and plans.
  - "Reform in Family Law" by Dr. Manuel Matas  
Some of the harms and injustices done to children and parents by our inherited system of divorce are laid out here. Small recent attempts at reform in Canada are described, revealing the need for far more extensive efforts to solve these serious problems.
  - "Parenting-positive Enforcement of Child Support" by Attorney Ron Henry  
In a time of massive vilification of "deadbeat dads," attorney Ronald K. Henry delivered compelling testimony before a subcommittee of the United States House of Representatives about levels of and reasons for nonpayment of child support awards. He presents proposals for ways of "enforcement" of maintenance payments that are humane and genuinely effective. Henry's written testimony is reproduced here.
  - "The Other Kind of Rape: An Interview with Rape-trial Lawyer Kikki Klieman"  
A chapter excerpted from Jack Kammer's new book, *Good Will Toward Men*, which consists of insightful interviews with twenty-two egalitarian women. This particular interview reveals the horror felt by an experienced rape-prosecution lawyer at the current high level of injustice toward accused men.
  - "The International Male Conspiracy" by Sean O'Connell  
Sean O'Connell pushes the male-conspiracy claims of extremist feminists to their logical limit.
  - "Truth: First Casualty of the Gender War" (A review of Christina Sommers' book *Who Stole Feminism?*)  
*Who Stole Feminism?* reveals the massive power of the sexist-feminist establishment to control what the public hears regarding gender issues, and the large amounts of disinformation that are accepted as a result.
-

# Man Trouble

## Making sense of the men's movement

by Cathy Young

From: *Reason*, vol. 6, no. 3 (July 1994): pp 19-25.

Summary: Discussion of men's movement from July 1994 *Reason* magazine.

Keywords: men's movement, equal rights, divorce law, whining, victimhood

Copyright by Reason Foundation, 3415 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Suite 400, Los Angeles, CA 90034. Subscriptions are \$19.95 a year (11 issues) in the U.S.

*Mas-cu-lism*, n. 1. the belief that equality between the sexes requires the recognition and redress of prejudice and discrimination against men as well as women. 2. the movement organized around this belief.

Not to worry: This word is not in the dictionary. But it would be if the decision were up to Warren Farrell, Jack Kammer, and other activists in the men's movement.

The men's movement? Even the term evokes ambivalent feelings. Whenever, while working on this article, I mentioned that I was writing about the men's movement and added, "but not the guys who go into the woods and beat drums," the typical response from both men and women was, "Is there any other kind?"

In fact, there are hundreds of men's groups in the United States and Canada. Some are mainly "mythopoetic," geared to "healing" and rediscovering masculine archetypes (typified by Robert Bly's retreats for men). Most, however, emphasize social and political issues, protesting what they see as unfair treatment of men in certain areas ranging from divorce to health care.

Is sexism against men an oxymoron? A few points to consider:

- Despite gender-neutral laws in many jurisdictions, pro-maternal bias in custody cases remains widespread. In a Georgia court recently, a father who stated at a hearing on support payments that the child was with him nearly half the time was told, "It's admirable that you want to spend time and actually do spend time with your child, but the **mother** has the responsibility for nurturing, parenting, and raising the child. Your responsibility is to provide child support."
- Alleged bias against girls in schools has been the focus of great concern even though boys are more likely than girls to drop out of school and less likely to go to college. Studies indicating that boys get more teacher attention in the classroom have been widely discussed, while findings that boys are punished much more often and more harshly than girls for the **same misbehavior** are ignored.
- The judicial system tends to treat female defendants more leniently than males. When a man and a woman are accomplices in a crime, the woman is more likely to be offered a plea bargain. And violence against women is singled out for media attention and legislative action. The Violence Against Women Act, passed by Congress this year as part of the crime bill, defines many crimes against women as federal civil-rights offenses and allocates federal funds to areas with the highest rates of crime against women. Yet nearly 65 percent of violent-crime victims and 75 percent of homicide victims are male.
- While 35,000 American men a year die of prostate cancer and 43,000 women die of breast

cancer (at a somewhat earlier age), breast-cancer research gets six times as much federal money as prostate-cancer research.

- Abortion is widely available without the father's consent, but men can be forced by the courts to provide financial support for children they never wanted in the first place. Does this mean that only women have reproductive rights and that only men can be forced into parenthood?

The question is how to confront the real biases affecting men without lapsing into the whining and gender warfare that permeate modern feminism -- and also show up in some masculist publications, where men said to be unjustly convicted of sexual assault are described as "political prisoners" and the status of American males under feminist rule is compared to that of Jews in Nazi Germany. Men's advocates have had, at best, limited success in reaching the public. Whatever people may think of the National Organization for Women, they know about it; very few have heard of the National Coalition of Free Men (NCFM) or Men's Rights, Inc. Representatives of these organizations are rarely asked for their opinions by the media, let alone by legislatures.

"We must disabuse ourselves of the notion that women are the only gender with valid items for the agenda, and that men constitute the only sex that has advantages to share," writes Baltimore journalist and activist Jack Kammer in the introduction to *Good Will Toward Men* (St. Martin's, 1994). The book consists of conversations with 22 women, including me, who speak of cultural norms and biases that are hurting men today -- from the tendency to view sexual miscommunication as unilateral male victimization of women to the devaluation of fatherhood by both the welfare system and the treatment of divorced parents.

The interest in men's issues is a much-needed corrective to the increasingly obsessive tendency to focus on real or fictitious disadvantages affecting females and ignore those affecting males. Moreover, by encouraging more role flexibility for men as well as women, and in particular greater male involvement in home life, the men's movement may be an essential step in achieving the work/family balance often described as the key issue on the "women's agenda." Most men's activists see their cause as the other, neglected half of the feminist enterprise of gender-role transition. "The best constructive message of feminism," Kammer says, "was to ask men to examine whether they believe that they are inherently superior to women in any important ways. That's very good, but that's only half the problem."

Unfortunately, masculism also has a tendency to adopt the less constructive traits and tactics of modern feminism, including polarizing rhetoric, exaggerated claims of victimization as the basis of political demands, and the tailoring of facts to fit ideology. If the movement becomes simply feminism with a scratchy face, it will be rightly derided as an attempt to convince the world that white heterosexual men are victims, too. But if men's advocates are consistent in applying principles of fairness and equality, they will have to say of value to women as well as men.

Perhaps the main reason that male claims of gender-based inequities are not taken seriously is that, in the minds of most people, gender oppression is synonymous with oppression of women. In their effort to counter this perception, some men's advocates are challenging not only the view that women are oppressed today but the assumption that women were historically the oppressed sex.

The strongest attack on this assumption comes from an unlikely source: Warren Farrell, formerly an activist in the women's movement and the only man elected three times to the board of the National Organization for Women. Farrell is the author of *The Myth of Male Power* (Simon & Schuster, 1993), which Barbara Dority, co-chair of the Northwest Feminist Anti-Censorship Taskforce, says has the "potential for being *The Feminine Mystique* of the men's movement." Farrell writes: "Feminism justified female 'victim power' by convincing the world that we lived in a sexist, male-dominated, and patriarchal world. *The Myth of Male Power* explains why the world is bi-sexist, both male \*and\* female-dominated, both patriarchal and matriarchal -- each in different ways."

Farrell's book is filled with startling challenges to the standard view of gender inequity. Why, he

asks, do we hear about the clustering of women in low-paid jobs but not the clustering of men in dirty, physically demanding, hazardous, or about the fact that 94 percent of workplace fatalities are male? Why is it that the higher mortality rates of blacks compared to whites are seen as clear evidence of racial disadvantage but the higher mortality rates of men compared to women are overlooked? If women killed themselves four times as often as men, rather than the reverse, wouldn't we be hearing about it from NOW and from Pat Schroeder? How were men empowered by the fact that they were the ones who got killed in wars?

In short, Farrell wants us to see the sacrifices often involved in the male role, from risking one's life in battle to breaking one's back in a factory. (The traditional husband who wanted his wife at home also made himself work harder to support her and the kids.) According to this view, both sexes were equally enslaved by a division of labor that was historically necessary to ensure survival: Men provided and protected so that women could bear and nurse children -- and since the survival of the species required more females, men were more "disposable."

Technological progress, Farrell says, eliminated most of the need for the old division of labor, enabling people to seek personal fulfillment. But because men were seen as the powerful sex, the reexamination of gender roles focused solely on female disadvantage. So role restrictions that oppressed women were largely eliminated, but those affecting men, such as the male-only draft, remained.

This version of history is surely more accurate than, say, Marilyn French's *The War Against Women* (Summit, 1992), according to which the human male is always in search of ever more ingenious ways to abuse and degrade the human female. Traditional sexual arrangements always had elements of social contract, not merely subjugation.

And yet it is far too simplistic to say that men's dominance in the outside world was balanced by women's dominance in the family. "Doesn't Farrell understand that economic power outside the home translates into power within the home?" says feminist writer Wendy Kaminer. "Of course, if the man loves the woman more than the woman loves the man, she has a certain power, and that's a real power. But it's so different to generalize. We can find five relationships in which the woman has more power emotionally and five relationships in which the man does."

Even many of Farrell's admirers, such as Barbara Dority, have doubts about the lengths to which he takes the "equal oppression" argument -- particularly when it is not limited to recent Western history. On the status of women in Islam, Farrell comments, "If women had to promise to provide for a lifetime before he removed his veil and showed her his smile, would we think of this as a system of female privilege?" He forgets that men in Muslim societies generally have had the power not only to restrict their wives' movements, and in many cases kill them, but also to divorce them at will.

"If we can make meaningful comparisons," says Ferrell Christensen, a philosophy professor at the University of Alberta in Canada and co-founder of MERGE, the Movement for the Establishment of Real Gender Equity, "I'm inclined to say that in this culture and in this century men and women have been pretty equal. I would not say that this is true historically and at all times." It is more accurate to say, he writes in the pamphlet *The Other Side of Sexism*, that women often received compensations for the subordinate state (such as greater protection) and that men's dominant role often carried a high price.

One of the key issues that animated earlier feminists, from Mary Wollstonecraft to Simone de Beauvoir, was that the human condition was seen as embodied in men, and the activities that defined what it meant to be human were defined as male. "It is [the] unique human capacity...to live one's life by purposes stretching into the future -- to live not at the mercy of the world, but as the builder and designer of that world--that is the distinction between animal and human behavior," wrote Betty Friedan in 1963. "[M]an has always searched for knowledge and truth." Friedan knew that this destiny was not an easy one, and she even suggested that "men may live longer...when women carry

more of the burden of the battle with the world" (anticipating the men's movement's concern with the longevity gap). But she clearly felt that women were hurt more by being left out.

If masculinists often seem oblivious to this historical male advantage, it is in part because participation in the human enterprise no longer ranks high on the feminist agenda. In most universities today, the above passages from *The Feminist Mystique* would be branded as conservative. "Battle with the world" reeks of militarism; to speak of the search for knowledge and truth is to accept the patriarchal model of knowledge as possession; to exalt the capacity for building and designing one's world is to glorify white male rape of the earth; to elevate humans above animals is speciesist. We are now supposed to see male "separateness" rather than female dependency as the problem, and to scoff at "male" notions of unique genius rather than lament the absence of a female Shakespeare.

The irony is that when "male" civilization and its accomplishments are devalued, the notion of male privilege is much easier to question. If traditionally masculine qualities turn from virtues to defects, some men will say that gender oppression made them that way. And if individual liberty is declared to be a (white and bourgeois) male prejudice, the distinction between the burden of oppression and the burden of risk as the price to be paid for freedom will be blurred. Thus radical feminists undermine their own critique of patriarchy.

Similar contradictions can be observed within the men's movement. Many masculinists seem to be saying simultaneously that the works of men have been a boon for humanity and should be admired **and** that the roles which enabled and sometimes pushed men to do those things were oppressive and bleak. Although Warren Farrell writes that the socialization of both sexes should combine the best of the "male" and "female" heritage, the overall sense one gets from *The Myth of Male Power* is that being expected to strive is a dismal fate ("Men are not human beings, they are human doings.") and that to admire a man for his achievements is as sexist as it is to admire a woman for her large breasts.

Thus, although masculinism challenges the politically correct view of women as an oppressed class, it often shares some key elements of P.C.: the "politics of identity," which eclipse the notion of a universal human condition; an antipathy to such Western values as rationality, competitiveness, and individual achievement; the tendency to view human experience as shaped primarily by restrictive social forces rather than individual will and action. Even Kammer, who generally urges both women and men to embrace self-reliance and optimism, echoes academic radicals with their theories of subtly enforced self-policing in liberal societies. He writes, "Men...are in the most maximum security prison of all, the prison that convinces its inmates that they are right where they want to be...and that if they ever begin to think otherwise, they must have a 'personal' problem."

Kammer says the prison metaphor is simply a dramatic way to make a valid point: Men often fail to see their problems as related to gender bias because they have been taught that they are the powerful sex. Yet the result rings uncannily similar to the radical feminist position caustically summed up by Christina Sommers in *Who Stole Feminism* (Simon & Schuster, 1994): "If...some women point out that **they** are not oppressed, they only confirm the existence of a system of oppression, for they 'show' how the system dupes women by socializing them to **believe** they are free, thereby keeping them docile and cooperative."

At its worst, masculinism can sound like the **ne plus ultra** of political correctness: The pantheon of the oppressed is completed by the admission of straight white guys. (That leaves us with no oppressor, but an impersonal entity like "the sex/gender system" might do.) Men's advocates often rail against the victim mentality, but they are hardly immune to its temptations: High-school football is "male child abuse"; circumcision is socially sanctioned violence against infant boys comparable to female genital mutilation; women who walk around looking sexy yet remaining unavailable are abusing men; and anyway, men's higher mortality rates are unassailable proof of victimhood.

Barbara Dority has often joined men's groups in opposing pro-censorship feminists. "As long as we're talking simple egalitarianism, we're delighted to work together," she says. "But I refuse to participate

in anything in the feminist movement that went under the banner of victimhood, and I don't think the mantle of victimhood looks much better on men than on women." The tendency to adopt "the politics of victimization" also disturbs Asa Baber, who has written *Playboy's* "Men" column since 1982 and is a strong advocate of men's issues. "The focus on the male as victim," he says, "is simply going to deepen this culture of victimhood."

An ex-Marine, Baber has written about the damaging effects of the "masculine mystique," but he bristles at Farrell's description of the soldier as "war slave." He believes that the men's movement, including the "mythopoetic" groups, can play an important role in countering negative cultural messages about men. But he does not like to see the movement collude in attacks on traditional masculinity -- "the trashing of things like courage and fortitude is just absurd," he says -- or try to "get men into therapy." In a speech at the Chicago Men's Conference last February, Baber noted, "It turns out that the men of this culture have been told by both the men's and the women's movement that they are not okay."

Baber warns, too, that the strident, chip-on-the-shoulder, Us-vs.-Them mentality that has made much modern feminism a caricature of itself has made a mirror image on the men's side. As an example, he cites the angry mail he got from some regular readers after a column that advised men to be aware of the ways in which women often feel uniquely vulnerable in public places.

Other men sympathetic to the movement share these concerns. Mike Arst, a former photographer and typesetter in Seattle who became involved in men's groups a decade ago, moderates the men's issues forum on the Fidonet electronic bulletin board. Many of the complaints aired on such networks are understandable. A common theme is the perception that women want to have it all: to be equal in the workplace but to be protected from rough talk; to have the same opportunity to work in trades that require stamina, yet to enjoy special protection from violence. But Arst finds himself put off by "angry men" in search of causes. He recalls the activist who tried to draw him in to an anti-circumcision crusade, demanding, among other things, the right for "mutilated" men to sue the hospital for trauma 20 years later.

"I agree with much of what Warren Farrell says about men and power," says Arst, 43. "But if I think of men of my father's generation, the bottom line for them was **support**: They worked their asses off to support their families. It was something of which they were proud, and rightly so; they were **not** in a gulag."

It is easy to poke fun at male victimism, a stance likely to be dismissed as misogynist by the left and unmanly by the right. Yet it is ultimately male response to the "culture of complaint" in which, with major help from feminists, we are now enmeshed. If victimization is the way to gain status -- "authenticity," as Arst puts it, or "innocence," as Shelby Steele has written -- one can hardly blame men for figuring out what works and trying to claim their share of the moral high ground.

One reason that laughable tit-for-tat arguments about which sex was more oppressed 500 years ago continue is that many feminists still use the "centuries of oppression" as a stick to beat men. It is hard to argue with Farrell's remark that the perception of men as having all the power and women as powerless (which was never quite true, and is plainly ludicrous when applied to American women in the 1990s) makes us reluctant to question any expression of female power. Increasingly, people are coming to see that here and now, biases against men are as harmful as biases against women (even Naomi Wolf teeters on the brink of this idea in her latest opus, *Fire With Fire* ).

After all, feminism has not only displaced men from their traditional ground as the human norm but has often depicted them as less than human. While 19th-century notions of male superiority in intellect, creativity, and leadership are now taboo, Victorian views of female superiority in compassion, morals, and parental love are very much alive. Male putdowns of women are relegated to the lowbrow culture of Andrew Dice Clay; female putdowns of men ("What is the difference between bonds and men? Bonds mature.") are found on greeting cards and in the halls of Congress.

Recently at the publishing house HarperCollins, a woman editor irked by a male colleagues' behavior designed a "stamp out HarperCollins men" button (the male symbol and the letters "HC" in a red circle with a slash) that was spotted on quite a few female staffers.

Mike Arst speculates that most of the men drawn to the men's movement are reacting at least as much to male bashing as to a frustration with male roles. Some, like Warren Farrell and Ferrell Christensen, started out as champions of women's liberation but were repelled by the rise of anti-male feminism. Christensen says that he sought out men's groups such as the National Coalition of Free Men and Men's Rights Inc. because he was "more and more distressed at the hate movement that feminism was becoming."

The roles have changed as well as the images. One of Farrell's strongest points is that this century's social developments have reduced women's burdens far more than men's burdens. Childbirth became much safer and warfare became much deadlier. The notion that a husband owed protection to his wife outlasted the notion that a wife owed obedience to her husband. And since the advent of feminism, women have gained much greater role flexibility and much more choice between traditional and non-traditional lifestyles.

Accordingly, some activists see the "men's agenda" as a matter of truly equalizing the options available to both sexes. While young women today rarely see full-time homemaking as a viable long-term prospect (even if that is the way of life they would prefer), working part-time or taking a few years off to raise children is something many expect to do. Farrell's assertion that 90 percent of the men he has spoken to would like to do the same sounds a bit dubious. But even if it's only 33 percent, as a 1990 *Time* survey of college men showed, these men are likely to find that they have fewer opportunities than their female peers to exercise such a choice: For all the paeans to the new father hood, a great many people still look down on Mr. Moms.

"When [women] call and say, 'I have a family situation,' managers or employers think, 'Oh God, those women with their children,' but they think it come with the territory," says Karen DeCrow, a feminist attorney in Syracuse, New York, and a former president of the National Organization for Women who works with men's activists on fatherhood and custody issues. "When men do it, they're considered somewhat weird, or not really interested in their jobs." Many masculinists also complain that while women want equality in the "male" sphere of careers and achievement, they often want, at the same time, to preserve the superiority of motherhood.

This complaint has some validity. On a radio show I did with Jack Kammer, the host, Ann Devlin, chided us for our lack of outrage at the fact that women still earn less than men. When I suggested that the way to gain parity in the workplace was to encourage male participation in child rearing, Devlin huffily replied that I obviously didn't understand the "mystical bond" between mother and child that no other relationship could replicate.

In its attempt to change attitudes, the men's movement deals with some explosive issues, including false accusations of rape and alleged bias against men in the treatment of family violence. When men's activists insist that husband beating is as big a problem as wife beating, it seems a sure way to make most feminists see red. Even Wendy Kaminer, who is highly critical of the 'woman as victim' party line, comments that "it's like saying the moon is made out of green cheese." But while the claim is undoubtedly exaggerated, a body of solid research -- from the 1985 National Family Violence Survey sponsored by the National Institute for Mental Health to a number of studies conducted in communities and in marital therapy clinics -- supports the view that female violence is major part of the problem.

Most of the evidence indicates that spousal assault is usually mutual, initiated in equal numbers by men and women. (When only one partner is physically abusive, it is as often the woman as the man.) True, in those domestic violence cases in which one partner is completely controlled and terrorized by the other, most of the victims are female; but such cases make up a tiny percentage of abusive

couples. And while women obviously are at far higher risk of bodily damage in domestic fights, up to 15 percent of the serious injuries are to men. Researchers such as Anson Shupe, chair of sociology and anthropology at Indiana University/Purdue University in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and co-author of *The Violent Couple* (Praeger, 1994), confirm that male victims of even severe violence by female partners encounter widespread bias if they try to get the authorities involved. This side of the story, men's advocates say, is ignored by the media and by government, which see domestic violence as synonymous with woman abuse.

Meanwhile, the outcry over battered women is increasingly leading to a situation in which men in some jurisdictions are virtually helpless against the flimsiest charges of abuse. This claim is made not just by men's advocates but by Massachusetts Bar Association President Elaine Epstein, who recently wrote in the bar association newsletter: "The recent media frenzy surrounding domestic violence has paralyzed us all.... The truth is that it has become impossible to effectively represent a man against whom any allegation of domestic violence has been made.... In many [divorce] cases, allegations of abuse are now used for tactical advantage.

The men's advocates clearly have issues, but do they have a movement? Many men and women who are sympathetic to men's issues don't think so. It is difficult for most men, especially if they are not in the midst of a custody battle, to see any of their problems as gender issues. The movement's image can also be a handicap. Armin Brott, a Berkeley marketing consultant and writer who got involved in men's issues after becoming a father four years ago, says, "If you get labeled as being part of the men's movement, you're either out there dancing with wolves, or you're a woman hater. There's really no place to go if you're a progressive-thinking man."

One way to escape what can become a vicious cycle of masculism and feminism trying to outshout and out-whine each other is for men's activists to focus on specific issues, particularly disparities in the legal or social treatment of women and men. Divorce is a good example. The traditional paternal role may not have been such a bad deal in the past, with unique satisfactions that were not necessarily inferior to those of maternal nurturing. But high divorce rates mean that many men bear the burden of providing without the rewards of any kind of real fatherhood -- old or new.

Whether or not pro-maternal bias exists in the courts is the subject of intense debate, with men's advocates (and many divorce lawyers of both sexes) on one side and many feminists on the other (claiming that, on the contrary, men with more money to pay for legal services can ride roughshod over their ex-wives). But it seems that many judges still take the view that the father's main post-divorce function is to provide financial support -- what Al Lebow, founder of Fathers for Equal Rights of America, sums up as the "men as wallets" attitude. To many, the fact that non-custodial fathers' child-support obligations are enforced for more vigorously than are their visitation rights is a bitter symbol of the low regard in which fatherhood is held.

"The availability of the father is a crucial issue, and it's also one of the key issues around which a political men's movement can organize," says Laurie Ingraham, a family therapist in Milwaukee who was drawn to men's activism as a result of her relationship work, in which she "noticed that men were always being painted as the bad guys." And indeed, disenfranchised fathers are the political vanguard of the men's movement. Lebow, a Michigan salesman who lost custody of his two daughters and spent six years in courts battling for visitation enforcement, started his organization in 1979. Today, he says, there are about 275 fathers' rights groups in 47 states.

These groups have been pushing for joint custody laws, with varying degrees of success, and for better treatment of non-custodial parents. They complain that divorced fathers are unfairly stigmatized as "deadbeat dads" and viewed as targets for punitive action, even though studies find that support non-compliance is related to many factors, from insolvency to denial of contact with children.

As the example of Ingraham shows, the issue of how parents are treated after divorce has attracted



interest from women as well as men. The Children's Rights Council, founded by David Levy in 1985, advocates shared custody and has often addressed fathers' concerns. But it is also affiliated with Mothers Without Custody and Grandparents United for Children's Rights. About 40 percent of its members and state chapter coordinators are women. Palo Alto, California, attorney Anne Mitchell is the founder and executive director of The Fathers' Rights and Equality Exchange (FREE) electronic net; in Michigan, lawyer Kay Schwarzberg works with Fathers for Equal Rights of America.

Basic fairness is not the only reason for women to work on behalf of men's issues. Perhaps the ultimate lesson we have still to learn is that most gender issues are women's **and** men's issues. As Brott says, "You can't achieve the goals of sexual equality without getting men involved." The most obvious example of this is the issue of parenthood: Greater male involvement in child rearing is essential if women's opportunities in the workplace are to be expanded.

Men and women of good will working together is a theme *Playboy's* Asa Baber frequently emphasizes. "What is needed is an equal rights movement, not a men's movement and a women's movement," he told the Chicago Men's Conference, which had a record number of women this year (about 30 out of 200 attendees). "Not men's rights, not women's rights -- equal rights. That should be our goal."

Baber is encouraged by signs that "victim feminism" is waning, and he is confident that "victim masculism" will not prevail either: "As the complaints build, we're going to get tired of it, both sides, and then both men and women are going to ask, OK, now what are we gonna do? And so the culture of complaint will eventually burn itself out."

---

Contributing Editor Cathy Young is a writer in Middletown, New Jersey. She is the author of *Gender Wars*, forthcoming from The Free Press.

---

From: dean@primenet.com (Dean Hughson)  
Newsgroups: alt.child-support  
Subject: The famous Michigan case  
Date: 5 Aug 1994 21:16:05 GMT

Cathy Young wrote the following article which appeared yesterday in the Philadelphia newspaper----

---

The often bitter debate over women, babies, and careers got a new twist last week when Michigan circuit court Judge Raymond Cashen gave custody of a 3-year-old named Maranda to her father, Steve Smith, in part because the mother, Jennifer Ireland, has placed the child in a day care center while she attends the University of Michigan. Smith also studies and works but his mother, who is not employed, is willing to help him care for the little girl at home. (Both mom and dad were 16 when Maranda was born.)

"Under the future plans of the mother, the minor child will be in essence raised and supervised a great deal of the time by strangers," Judge Cashen wrote. "Under the future plans of the father, the minor child will be raised and supervised by blood relatives."

Predictably, this has sparked an outcry from feminists who see a backlash against mothers who do not fit the 1950s mold. "A kind of Donna Reed cultural terrorism," columnist Anna Quindlen called the decision.

But others argue that 69-year-old Judge Cashen is no enemy of working women: his own wife taught at a community college most of her life and some of their children were in day care. Moreover, the decision was influenced by other factors: the judge felt that the child would generally have a more stable environment with her father. "Under the mother's plan, the child will not have a specific residence, being moved periodically between the University of Michigan and the maternal grandmother's home," he wrote. "Under the father's plan, the child will reside at the paternal grandparents' home for an indefinite period." (This reasoning should not endear him to fathers' rights groups that favor joint custody arrangements under which the child lives with each parent part of the time.)

Michigan attorney Kay Schwarzberg, who handles many divorce and custody cases, believes that concerns about the possible negative impact of day care on very young children can't be dismissed as mere backlash. But mainly, Schwarzberg is amused that there should be such outrage over Judge Cashen's reference to day care vs. home care in giving custody to the father, when for decades judges cited that issue in awarding custody to moms: "No one got excited about all the wonderful men who couldn't have custody because they were working and had to put their children in day care."

This theme is echoed by Al Lebow, founder of the Michigan-based Fathers for Equal Rights of America, one of nearly 300 fathers' rights groups across the country: "The real crux of this issue is that if the situation were reversed, there would be nobody from the media making inquiries." There are, he says, "thousands upon thousands of horror stories" of men denied not only custody but any meaningful access to their children. Though custody laws are now gender-neutral on the surface, fathers' advocates -- and most family law attorneys -- contend that a double standard lingers: a father has to show that he is a better parent (sometimes, a much better parent) to get the kids; a mother has only to show she's not a bad parent. Women are still presumed, particularly by older, traditional members of the bench such as Judge Cashen, to be naturally possessed of superior parenting skills.

Fathers' rights activists claim that just five percent of divorced dads get custody. The figure may be too low; since there is no system of tracking custody decisions, precise numbers are hard to come by.

(According to the Census Bureau, 13 percent of children in single-parent families now live with their dads.) Some feminists claim that fathers win two-thirds of all contested custody cases, due to their greater resources and male bias in courts. But they apparently get that figure by counting joint-custody decisions as unilateral male victories. And some divorced fathers' advocates say that men rarely ask for custody unless they feel they have a very compelling case (and can afford huge legal fees), because they believe the deck is stacked against them.

Indeed, the motives of fathers who seek sole or joint custody are often treated as suspect. Quindlen transparently insinuated, as did a New York Times editorial, that Smith had no interest in his child and started the custody fight to avoid paying Ireland \$8 a week in child support -- as if anyone could think that \$8 a week was worth the inconvenience of having an unwanted child in the house, not to mention the expense of raising her! (Some activists in the battered women's movement promote the even more sinister notion that most dads who fight for custody are abusers who want to use the children to continue controlling the mother.)

Those who are up in arms about Jennifer Ireland losing her child should ask themselves if they would have been as upset if Jennifer had been James. According to Lynne Hecht Schafran, an attorney with the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, "Women should not be penalized for working outside the home." True. But if taking a child away from a parent is a penalty, are good fathers who lose custody of their children penalized for being male?

"We don't understand why, in this day and age, the women's movement is not interested in equality," says Lebow. Supporters of broader custody rights for fathers include former NOW president Karen DeCrow. Yet pro-maternal custody feminists argue that the child should live with the mother because she is usually the "primary caretaker." Day care clearly seems to undermine this argument: as DeCrow once quipped, if this standard were consistently applied, the children of women lawyers would be living in the Caribbean with their nannies.

Perhaps the only way to avoid biased and arbitrary decisions, and the destructive win-lose mentality of custody battles, is to institute the presumption of joint custody as the norm. No fit parent should be penalized -- whether for his gender or for her career -- by being reduced to the status of a visitor in his or her child's life.

---

Date: Mon, 29 Aug 1994 17:06:49 EDT  
From: Cathy Young [71774.1305@COMPUSERVE.COM]  
Subject: Health & gender

Column by Cathy Young  
DETROIT NEWS  
August 30, 1994

These are troubled times for feminists who think their cause requires dramatic claims of women's oppression. In the August issue of *The Atlantic*, Dr. Andrew Kadar of the UCLA School of Medicine challenges another such claim: that women have been shortchanged by the health care system.

*"Medical research has mainly been done on men, largely to the benefit of men only,"* cries a National Women's Health Network mailing. "[T]he often-cited study touting the benefits of aspirin in preventing heart attacks involved 22,071 men *and not one woman*."

Except that, Dr. Kadar points out, there was a similar study around the same time with 87,678 nurses, all women.

In response, NWHN board member Dr. Adriane Fugh-Berman pooh-poohed the nurses' study as less rigorous. Nonetheless, it is a respected study which followed its subjects a year longer than the one involving men. "To say that the benefits of aspirin in preventing heart attacks have been studied only in men," concludes Dr. David Gremillion of the Wake Medical Center in Raleigh, North Carolina, "would be completely false."

In 1990, Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) cited the fact that the National Institutes for Health "spent less than 14 percent of their research budget on women's health projects" as "blatant discrimination." Yet the NIH spent *6.5 percent* of its budget on men's health projects; the rest went to research into diseases afflicting both sexes.

But wasn't that research done mainly on men? While fertile women have been excluded from some clinical trials because of concerns about reproductive damage and birth defects, a 1993 article by Drs. Judith LaRosa and Vivian Pinn of the Office of Research on Women's Health of the NIH concedes that the overall extent of this exclusion is unknown. Generally, Dr. Kadar says, health problems tend to be studied in the groups they affect most. Studies of eating disorders, osteoporosis, and nausea at the time of surgery have used primarily female subjects.

Aren't drugs tested only in men approved for general use? Not quite. Women have been excluded only from the early phases of testing dealing with basic safety; FDA surveys in 1983 and '88 found that before drugs were released on the market, both sexes had been proportionately represented in the trials.

Some of the most passionate charges of sexism have had to do with breast cancer, which kills approximately 46,000 women a year. Yet prostate cancer kills about 35,000 men a year (though at a later age). Last year the National Cancer Institute spent \$51.1 million on prostate cancer research and \$213.7 million on breast cancer -- about three times as much per death. This year, breast cancer research funding is scheduled to increase by 23 percent, partly due to women's activism; prostate research gets a 7.6 percent increase.

Feminist critics of the health care system have some valid points. Dr. Kadar and Dr. Gremillion agree that more women should be enrolled in medical research. Dr. Pinn of the NIH notes that even in clinical trials including both sexes, the results often haven't been analyzed for gender differences. She also stresses that our goal should be better care for all, not pitting the sexes against each other.

But that's not what happens when gender warfare is injected into medical debate. I asked Dr. Fugh-

Berman (who believes that neglect of women's health reflects their status as "second-class citizens") about new research contradicting earlier studies which suggested that female heart patients received inferior care. She replied that she had "just skimmed" the new studies: "I guess I feel like we don't really need that evidence to show that women are treated badly in the medical system."

Charges of victimization can be a potent political weapon. Recently, advocates for the inclusion of abortion coverage in the national health plan ran ads saying, "Once again, women are not being treated equally. This time it's health care reform." Funny they should mention that. As a new activist group called the Men's Health Network points out, the Clinton plan covers Pap smears, pelvic exams, and mammograms for women -- but not testicular or prostate cancer screening for men.

---

# APPENDIX

4

**MINORITY REPORT AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES  
COMMISSION ON CHILD & FAMILY WELFARE**

**BY JOHN GUIDUBALDI, D.Ed., L.P., L.P.C.C.**

**A COMMISSION CREATED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF: P.L. 102-521 10/25/92 U.S.  
Code Citation: 42 USC 12301**

**REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES JULY  
1996**

# **Abstract of Guidubaldi Minority Report**

July 1996

For full text of this document: [www.erols.com/afc/minority1.htm](http://www.erols.com/afc/minority1.htm)

## 1.0 Sound Bites

If the child enjoys greater financial and emotional support from both parents, how can one justify continuation of sole custody?

Neither parent should lose parenting privileges or responsibilities as a result of divorce.

Not linking child support with physical visits is taxation without representation.

The depression of 1932-33 had the lowest rate of divorce and the highest rate in the 1980's during the period of economic achievement. p.8

"But one should not forget that money can buy a bed but not sleep, finery but not beauty, a house but not a home, medicine but not health, luxuries but not culture, sex but not love and amusements but not happiness.

## 2.0 Facts & Figures

Over two million children experience either divorce or unwed motherhood each year.

We now have over 20 years of research studies to draw from for making laws.

The decline in socially responsible behavior by youths coincided with the rapidly escalating divorce rate. p.3

From 1970-73 serious assaults on peers increased by 85.3%

serious assaults on teachers increased by 77.4%

rapes and attempted rapes increased by 40.1%

homicides increased by 18.5%

Drug & alcohol offenses on school property increased by 37.5%

Number of weapons confiscated increased by 54.4%

The divorce rate doubled between 1965 - 1978.

From the mid-60's to the late 70's, there was a steady decline in nationally administered standardized test scores (SAT, ACT for high-schoolers and Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for mid-elementary). This could not be explained by differences across the years in pupil composition or alterations in tests.

William Bennett asks "How did American children fare during those 20 years of unparalleled financial commitment?"

- - birthrate for unwed teenagers increased 200%
  - homicide more than doubled
  - juvenile arrests more than doubled
  - no way to estimate drug use

From 1970 - 1990, the state of Ohio saw:

- - 35% increase in serious emotional disturbances in child and adolescents
  - a 158% increase in learning disabilities
  - a 65% increase in state facilities juvenile confinement rate for crime and violence
  - 175% increase in confinement rate in private facilities

From 1994 Kids Count Data Book (Annie E. Casey Foundation) from 1985 - 1991 Ohioans:

- - 74% increase in violent crime arrest rates
  - 31% increase in teen births (single teens)
  - 8% increase in teen violent deaths
  - Children living in single parent homes increased from 9% to 22.5%

This study also concluded: (p.4)

- 1. the effects of divorce are not temporary stressors but long-term influences.
  2. boys have more difficulties adjusting to divorce, particularly as they approach adolescence
  3. the decline in socioeconomic status after divorce is not a sufficient explanation for children's decreased performance (contrary to Bane, 1979).
  4. authoritative child-rearing style and structure in home routines such as bedtimes, meal times and TV viewing habits relate to better child outcomes.

51% of children from sole mother custody families see their fathers "once or twice a year or never." p.4

the most frequent reason for fathers' disengagement (90%) was obstruction of parental access by the child's mother and her desire to break contact between father and child. p.4



In 33% of the time, fathers mentioned that they ceased contact because of their inability to adapt to the constraints of the visiting situation. p.4

"...boys fare much more poorly than girls in post-divorce households. Since more than 88% of divorced family children are in sole mother custody homes and half of these have almost no contact with dads, it is clear that many boys are being reared without benefit of a same-sex parental figure.

In our studies of urban children in special education (Guidubaldi & Duckworth, 1996), we find that 70% of children (mostly boys) with severe behavioral handicaps have no father contact at all according to the mother's rating.

Who initiates divorce? from Monthly Vital Statistics Report, May 21, 1991:

- o from 1975-88 in families with children, wives filed approx 67% of the cases each year

In 1975, 71.4% of divorces were filed by women

In 1988, 65% of divorces were filed by women

These statistics raise the hypothesis that some women anticipate the advantages to being single.

### 3.0 Books, Articles & Studies

Division 16 of the American Psychological Association - studies that support both parents are best.

Sen. Birch Baye's Senate Subcommittee (1975) report on juvenile crime & violence over 20 years ago reports these problems.

"Families: Current Status and Emerging Trends", School Psychology Review, John Guidubaldi, 1980 p.3

unnamed, American Psychologist, 1987

This interpretation is supported by Kruk (1992) who notes the most frequent reason for fathers' disengagement (90%) was obstruction of parental access by the child's mother and her desire to break contact between father and child. p.4

Beth Doll, VP for Social Council and Ethical Responsibility and Ethnic Minority Affairs, Div 16, American Psychological Association, June 14, 1995 reviewed the results from 23 studies on joint custody and found they support the conclusion that joint custody has positive effects on 1) father involvement, 2) best interest of the child, 3) financial child support, 4) relitigation and costs to the family and 5) parental conflict. p. 7

Albistoma, C. R., Maccoby, E. E., & Mnookin, R. R. (1990). Does joint legal custody matter? Stanford Law and Policy Review, 2, 167-179

American Psychological Association. (1995). Preliminary summary: Empirical research describing outcomes of joint custody.

Washington, DC.

Annie E. Casey Foundation. (1994). Kids Count Data Book.

Bane, M. J. (1976). Marital disruption and the lives of children. Journal of Social Issues, 32, 109-110.

Bennett, W. J. (1987). The role of the family in the nurture and protection of the young. American Psychologist, 42, 246-250.

Committee on the Judiciary of the United States Senate. (1975). Our Nation's schools-a report card: "A" in school violence

and vandalism (Preliminary report of the Subcommittee to investigate juvenile delinquency). Washin ton DC, Government

Printing Office.

Furstenberg, F., Nord, C., & Zill, N. (1983). The life course of children of divorce: Marital disruption and parental contact.

American Sociological Review, 48, (Oct), 656-668.

Guidubaldi, J. (1989), Differences in children's divorce adjustment across grade level and gender: A report from the NASP-Kent State nationwide project In S. Wolchik & Karoly (Eds.) Children of Divoce: Perspectives and adjustment (pp.

185-231). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books

Guidubaldi, J. (1988), The legacy of lost families: Divorce and the next generation. The World & I, Nov, 520-534. T

Guidubaldi, J. (1980). The status report extended: Further elaboration's the American family. School Psychology Review, 9(4), 374-379.

Guidubaldi, J., & Duckworth J, (1996, March). Enhancing fathers' involvement in child rearing: An empirical basis for consultation and parent education, Symposium presented at the National Association of School Psychologists Annual Convention Atlanta, GA

Guidubaldi, J., Perry, J., & Nastasi, B. (1987), Growing up in a divorced family: Initial and long- term perspectives on children's adjustment In S. Oskamp (Ed.). Applied social psychological annual: Volume 7 family processes and problems: Social psychology aspects, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Johnston, J. R. (1994). High-Conflict Divorce. In R. E. Behrman The Future of Children 4(1) (pp.165-182 ), The Center for

the Future of Children, The David and Lucile \_ Packard Foundation

Kazi, N. I., & Azizun, N. I. (1994). Islam. Marriage and the Family in today's world: Interreligious colloquium, (pp. 65-74),

Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Pontifical Council for the Family, Vatican City, Rome.

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization. In T. Lickona (Ed.), Moral development and behavior: Theory, research

and social issues. New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston.,

Kohlberg, L. (1969). Stage and sequence: The cognitive developmental approach to socialization. In D. A. Goslin (Ed.),

Handbook of socialization theory and research. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Mondale, W. F. (1977). Introducing a special report: The family in trouble. *Psychology Today*, May, 39.

Wiley, D. (1977). *Declining achievement scores: Do we need to worry?* St. Louis: CEMRELL

#### 4.0 People

##### 4.1 Friends

Bennett, William, Sec of Education

Guidubaldi, John

Braver, Sanford, child research (pros of joint custody) p.5

Kelly, Joan, child research (pros of joint custody) p.5

Warshak, Richard, child research (pros of joint custody) p.5

Biller, Henry, child research (pros of joint custody) p.5

Zill, Nicholas, child research (pros of joint custody) p.5

##### 4.2 Foes

Cathcart, Mary (-1), Commission Chair - didn't do a sincere job.

Johnston, Janet, study that is anti-joint custody p.5

#### 5.0 Quotes

Walter Mondale as VP, 1977 has a damning quote against govt programs in preface

"...it is abundantly clear that existing divorce procedures have not worked "in the best interest of the child."

"Repeatedly, in study after study, since the mid-1970's, divorced-family children have been shown to function more poorly than children from biologically intact two-parent families on a wide range of academic, social and emotional issues. p.4

Guidubaldi's study of 699 children from 38 states confirms the substantial decrement in performance of divorced family children on standardized tests, self-reports and independent ratings by parents and teachers. p.4

"...even after an average age of 11 or 12 years following the divorce event, adolescents who have good relationships with their ncp fathers have fewer teacher-ratings of behavior problems, fewer attention or aggression problems, higher grades in language and social studies and are less likely to abuse drugs or alcohol according to their own self-ratings.

"No study has ever found that joint physical custody is disadvantageous to children." testimony from Richard Warshak p.5

Only a few emperical studies raise concerns about joint custody - but upon closer examination, they contain data samples that are not representative - and even then, 97.5% of all families would be better off. The authors of these studies conclude themseleves that joint physical custody "is not detrimental to the majority of children." p.5

"...to expect mothers to be dependent economically on their divorced spouses neglects their capabilities to become self sufficient, productive wage earners and in fact, may promote attitudes of learned helplessness.

Sole custody has disadvantages including a feeling of continued economic dependency, inability to move forward into new employment and no chance to take a break.

"Coupled with economic independence, fertility control and cultural permissiveness, the "no-fault" divorce option provided the enabling legal vehicle for quick and easy exits from unfulfilling marriages. The judicial sole-mother custody award enabled millions of mothers to divorce with absolution. p.8

"If women can anticipate a clear gender bias in the courts regarding custody, they can expect to be the primary residential parent for their parent. If they can anticipate enforcement of child support by the courts, they can expect a high probability of support moneys without the need to account for their expenditures. Clearly, they can also anticipate maintaining the marital residence, receiving half of all marital property and gaining total freedom to establish new social connections and intimacy relationships. Weighing these gains against the alternative of remaining in a marriage with a spouse who may in the wife's judgment, be oppressive, unfaithful or just plain boring, could result in a seductive enticement to obtain a divorce." p. 9

"Once the decision to divorce is seriously considered, a powerful set of forces that enable and promote this process is brought to bear. It includes judges, attorneys, psychologists, social workers, property appraisers, accountants and others who stand ready to make a profit from the misfortunes of the divorcing couple."

"To date, our tripartite government has defaulted on this topic to a monopolistic judiciary."

"Of all the parties in the divorce process, domestic court judges clearly play the most influential roles." p. 9

"Domestic court judges, at this moment in our history, are extremely powerful persons, controlling the most important decisions of childrearing privilege and asset distribution for millions of families. p. 9

The courts entrusted with these potentially earth-shattering decisions are among our lowest status courts and judicial personnel are often elected without regard to their knowledge and understanding of family dynamics, home economics or child development. Moreover, they are on the bench for extended periods of time and have little likelihood of public criticism from attorneys in their communities since these players in the divorce game depend on the goodwill of their local judges to ensure their success rate and financial livelihood. Finally, their decisions - good, bad or unfair - are largely impervious to modification." p. 9

"Thus, citizens desperately require a more effective set of remedies for bad judicial decisions and a more efficient and viable procedure for removal of judges who repeatedly abuse their power. Judges must be held accountable for the drastic changes they mandate in the lives of their constituents.

"From my professional experience, it seems that the combination of sympathy for the perceived underdog and envy for those more successful than ourselves has led to a Robin Hood approach that pilfers funds from those with deep pockets, extracts an exorbitant commission and distributes the rest to those considered too weak to fend for themselves." p. 10

## 6.0 Myths

MYTH: "Joint custody should not be awarded where conflict exists between parents." p. 2

MYTH: "There is no bias in the courts against fathers since they are likely to be awarded custody when they request it." p.2

MYTH: "...payment of child support and access to children are separate and distinct issues."