

Truths About Domestic Disputes

SPOUSAL CONFLICT

- ◆ Only 4.1% of all violent crimes in 1987 to 1988 were perpetrated by a spouse or ex-spouse [Chadwick and Heaton, 1992].
- ◆ Only 6.7% of married individuals reported a physical altercation from 1987 to 1988, with the wife initiating the altercation in 58% of reported instances [Chadwick and Heaton, 1992].
- ◆ Only 4% of serious spousal violence occurs in intact families, while 96% occurs in separated or divorce families [Chadwick and Heaton, 1992].
- ◆ Of every 100 families, 3.8 experience severe husband-to-wife violence — but 4.5 experience severe wife to husband violence [Straus, 1975].
- ◆ From 1976 to 1986, the rate of violence by husbands against wives dropped from 12.1 to 11.3%, while the rate of violence by wives against husbands rose from 11.6% to 12.1% [Straus and Gelles, 1986].
- ◆ Of every 100 domestic assaults on men, 82 involve weapons used by females; of 100 domestic assaults on women, 15 involve weapons used by males [McLead, 1974].
- ◆ While 1.8 million women annually suffer one or more assaults from a husband or boyfriend, 2-million men were assaulted by a wife or girlfriend — 54% of all violence termed “severe” was by women. [Journal of Marriage and Family, 1986].
- ◆ “According to the 428 women who responded to the question regarding who initiated the physical conflict, their partner struck the first blow in 42.6% of the cases, they hit first in

52.7% of the cases ...” [Straus, 1989].

- ◆ Of every 100 dating couples, 33 men commit a violent act upon their partners, but even more women — 39 — commit such acts [Sugerman, et. al., 1989].
- ◆ Of 472 homicides reported in Alabama in 1993, only 105 were domestic homicides, where 55% of victims were male and 45% of victims were female.
- ◆ The wife is 402% more likely to desire ending a relationship than the husband [National Survey of Families and Households, 1987].

From *Physical Assaults by Wives: A Major Social Problem* [Straus, 1993]:

- ◆ “It is important not to use findings based on cases known to the police or shelters for battered women as the basis for deciding how to deal with the relatively minor and infrequent violence found in the population in general. That type of unwarranted generalization is often made; it is known as the *clinical fallacy*.”
- ◆ “One can conclude that the research on who hit first does not support the hypothesis that assaults by wives are primarily acts of self-defense or retaliation.”
- ◆ “The Kentucky [Commission On Women] study brings out a troublesome question of scientific ethics, because it is one of several in which the data on assaults by women were intentionally suppressed.”
- ◆ “Studies of residents in shelters for battered women are sometimes cited to show that it is only their male partners who are violent. However, these studies rarely obtain or report information on assaults by women, and when they do, they ask only about self-defense.”

- ◆ “Without an adjustment for injury, the National Family Violence Survey produces an estimate of more than 6 million women assaulted by a male partner each year, of which 1.8 million are “sever” assaults (Straus & Gelles, 1990). If the injury adjusted rate is used, the estimate is reduced to 188,000 assaulted women per year. The figure of 1.8 million seriously assaulted women every year has been used in many legislative hearings and countless feminist publication to indicate the prevalence of the problem.”
- ◆ “It is painful to have to recognize the high rate of domestic assaults by women.”
- ◆ “It follows from the above that efforts to prevent assaults by husbands must include attention to assaults by wives.”

CHILD ABUSE

- ◆ Of every 100 children who are abused, 47 are abused by mothers; 25 are abused by their fathers [Texas Department of Human Services].
- ◆ Of every 100 children victimized by violence, 62 are victimized by their mothers [Steinmetz, 1980].
- ◆ Mothers caused 14.3% of fatal child abuse, while natural fathers caused only 24.1%, and boyfriends only 16.1% [Missouri Department of Social Services Task Force on Fatal Child Abuse, 1990].
- ◆ Of every 100 dating youthful males who are sexually molested, 60 of the molestations are by women [Fritz, et.al., 1981].