

# It's Time to Tell the *Truth* About Partner Abuse

## **Partner Violence: An Equal Opportunity Problem**

What is the truth about intimate partner aggression? Nearly 200 scientific studies point to this simple conclusion: **Women are at least as likely as men to engage in partner aggression.**

This is what leading researchers say:

*"Research indicates that women can be just as violent as their partners."* – Irene Hanson Frieze, Psychology of Women's Quarterly, 2005

*"Recent evidence from the best designed studies indicates that intimate partner violence is committed by both genders with often equal consequences."* – Donald Dutton, Aggression and Violent Behavior, 2006

*"Differences were observed in the rates of male and female partner violence, with female violence occurring more frequently."* – Renee McDonald, Journal of Family Psychology, 2006

### **What Does the Latest Research Say?**

- A national survey of married and co-habiting partners found that 8% of women engaged in severe partner violence, while only 4% of men were involved in severe violence. *Renee McDonald, Journal of Family Psychology, March 2006.* [www.smu.edu/experts/study-documents/family-violence-study-may2006.pdf](http://www.smu.edu/experts/study-documents/family-violence-study-may2006.pdf)

- An international study of over 13,000 university students in dating relationships reported that 11% of couples had experienced severe violence in the past year. Among those couples, 29% had female-only violence, 16% had male-only violence, and in 55% of couples both persons were violent. *Murray Straus, conference on Trends in Intimate Violence Intervention, New York University, May 23, 2006.* <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2/ID41E2.pdf>

Men are often injured by their wives or girlfriends. According to a 2000 meta-analysis by John Archer, PhD, men suffer 38% of all injuries arising from partner aggression. But men often don't report the incident, so they endure their pain in silence.

As a result, the media often presents a one-sided view of domestic violence.

## **What's Wrong with Making False Claims?**

Domestic violence industry advocates often make claims such as "95% of DV victims are women." Such statements make the problem worse because:

- Service providers refuse to help male victims.
- False allegations of abuse escalate partner conflict and sever parent-child bonds.
- Abusive women can't get the help they need.
- Domestic violence laws unfairly promote overly-aggressive prosecution efforts against men.

*Warren Moon was the first Black quarterback to be elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. One evening Warren Moon got into a fight with his wife. The police were called and Mr. Moon was arrested. Against Mrs. Moon's wishes, the case went to trial.*

*Placed on the witness stand, Mrs. Moon admitted that she was the one who had started the fight by throwing a candlestick, and that her husband had only acted in self-defense. Warren Moon was acquitted.*

**Domestic violence is not a gender-specific problem.**

The logo for RADAR, featuring the word "RADAR" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. To the left of the text are three vertical red bars of varying heights, resembling a radar screen or signal.

### **Respecting Accuracy in Domestic Abuse Reporting**

*RADAR is spearheading the VAWA Reform Coalition, a group of organizations around the country that is working to educate the public about VAWA abuse:*

[www.mediaradar.org/docs/VAWA-Reform-Coalition-Declaration.pdf](http://www.mediaradar.org/docs/VAWA-Reform-Coalition-Declaration.pdf)

*For more information, contact:*

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