



SPECIAL REPORT

Thirty-Years of Domestic Violence Half-Truths, Falsehoods, and Lies

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COALITION TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On October 19, 2009, Attorney General Eric Holder made this statement at a Domestic Violence Awareness Month event: “Disturbingly, intimate partner homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American women ages 15 to 45.”

The claim met with a wave of criticism¹ and was later refuted by the Washington Post Fact-Checker.² As a result, the Department of Justice appended this correction to the Holder statement:³

“PLEASE NOTE: These remarks, as originally delivered in 2009, cited a statistic naming intimate partner homicide as the leading cause of death for African-American women ages 15 to 45....However, recent figures indicate other causes of death—including cancer and heart disease—outrank intimate partner homicide for this age group.”

The process to correct the Attorney General’s erroneous claim consumed over five years.⁴

Hundreds of studies have probed the extent of domestic violence.⁵ With remarkable consistency, research demonstrates the following:

- Each year, men are more likely than women to be the victims of domestic violence:⁶
 - Males: 4.2 million victims
 - Females: 3.5 million victims
- Each year, men are more likely than women to be victims of coercive control by their partners:⁷
 - Males: 17.3 million victims
 - Females: 12.7 million victims
- Same-sex lesbian couples have higher lifetime rates than same-sex gay couples for domestic violence, rape, and/or stalking:⁸
 - Lesbian: 44%
 - Gay: 26%

In about half of all cases, the physical aggression is mutual.^{9,10} And women acting in self-defense account for only 10-20% of female aggression cases.¹¹ Similar findings have been reported in international studies^{12,13}

But over the past 30 years, domestic violence activists have promoted a series of half-truths, distortions, and lies that ignore this body of research. The false claims play on women’s fears, and on men’s sense of chivalry. These efforts have served to secure passage of controversial legislation, increase financial support for domestic violence programs, deprive abusive women of help, and promote negative stereotypes of men.

This Special Report documents these falsehoods and their harmful effects on society.

Patriarchal Power and Control

“Patriarchy requires violence, or the subliminal threat of violence, in order to maintain itself....The most dangerous situation for a woman is not an unknown man in the street, or even the enemy in wartime, but a husband or lover in the isolation of their home.” – Gloria Steinem¹⁴

Scientists have long known that domestic violence is associated with substance abuse,¹⁵ mental health problems,¹⁶ relationship problems,¹⁷ marital separation,¹⁸ and other factors.¹⁹ But domestic violence activists view the problem differently: Domestic violence is seen as arising solely from a power imbalance between the sexes, with men posited as the beneficiaries of the imbalance. This conceptualization is often referred to as the “patriarchal power and control” model of domestic violence.

Domestic violence activists do not define “patriarchy,” provide any evidence of its existence, or offer scientific support for the posited imbalance of “power and control.” But these concerns didn’t dissuade feminist Susan Schechter from issuing this invective:²⁰

“Since male supremacy is the historical source of battering, and class domination perpetuates male privilege, a long-range plan to end abuse includes a total restructuring of society that is feminist, anti-racist, and socialist.”

Beginning in the early 1990s, domestic violence activists sought to enact a law that would reflect this ideological outlook. They enlisted the assistance of then-Senator Joe Biden to draft a bill titled the “Violence Against Women Act.” To promote its passage, activists began to circulate a series of alarming domestic violence claims to counter the objections of skeptical lawmakers.

Most prominent was the claim, made in 1993, that “More women are victims of domestic violence on Super Bowl Sunday than on any other day of the year.” But the fact-checking group Snopes labeled the claim as categorically “False,” noting that “nearly every cause will encompass a sub-group of advocates who, either through deliberate disingenuousness or earnest gullibility, end up spreading ‘noble lies’ in the furtherance of that cause. The myth of Super Bowl Sunday violence is one such noble lie.”²¹

The Independent Women’s Forum identified other domestic violence “factoids” that were deployed to support passage of the controversial VAWA bill:²²

1. According to the FBI, a woman is beaten every [fill in the blank] seconds.
2. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the United States-more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined.
3. The March of Dimes reports that battering during pregnancy is the leading cause of birth defects and infant mortality.

COALITION TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

4. Family violence has killed more women in the last five years than the total number of Americans who were killed in the Vietnam War.
5. Women who kill their batterers receive longer prison sentences than men who kill their partners.

Such inflammatory claims are lacking in factual accuracy.

For example, Steinem's pronouncement that "The most dangerous situation for a woman is ...a husband or lover in the isolation of their home" easily can be shown to be false. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the leading causes of injury deaths for women are falls, poisonings, and traffic accidents, in that order.²³ Domestic violence injuries do not appear on the list.

The Violence Against Women Act was approved by Congress and signed into law in 1994 by Bill Clinton. Approval of the Violence Against Women Act by a strong majority of mostly male lawmakers can be seen as a refutation of the "patriarchal oppression" theory. Nonetheless, the existence of a federal law named the "Violence Against Women Act" served as a powerful reinforcement of the men-as-abuser stereotype.

The establishment of the Office on Violence Against Women in 1995 multiplied the funding for domestic violence programs that typically included education, training, and public awareness efforts. For example, VAWA funding was deployed to fund a technical assistance effort of the Domestic Abuse International Programs,²⁴ which promoted the widely criticized Power and Control Wheel that highlighted the controversial notion of "Male Privilege."²⁵

In conclusion, family violence researcher Richard Gelles has noted that domestic violence "policy and practice seemed to be more influenced by ideologies and political values than actual research and evidence."²⁶

The following sections evaluate the statements by five leading groups to assess whether they are disseminating information that is consistent with the scientific research: Department of Justice, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National District Attorneys Association, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the American Bar Association. The analysis reveals that overall, the most egregious misrepresentations are being disseminated by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. In contrast, the National District Attorneys Association is providing generally accurate information.

Department of Justice

The introduction to this Special Report highlights the highly publicized statement by Attorney General Eric Holder, which the DOJ later conceded was false. Holder was not alone in promoting abuse misinformation.

HALF-TRUTHS, FALSEHOODS, AND LIES

Office of Violence Against Women

In the past, domestic violence fact sheets and similar publications listed on the website of the DOJ Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) contained major factual errors. For example, the four-page *Facts about Domestic Violence* summarized OVW's understanding of the problem.²⁷ But a careful review reveals that every statement in the OVW "fact sheet" is misleading, one-sided, outdated, and/or false – see Appendix A.

A 2011 analysis found that overall, less than one in 10 of the domestic violence educational materials posted on or linked from the Office of Violence Against Women website were found to meet basic standards of accuracy, balance, and truthfulness.²⁸ Fortunately, a 2021 review of the OVW website revealed that all of its inaccurate "fact sheets" had been removed.

Office for Victims of Crime

Other DOJ components continue to promote domestic violence myths. For example, the website of the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) features a sidebar titled, *Facts About Domestic Violence*, which makes the following claims:²⁹

- Intimate partner violence made up 22 percent of the violent crimes against women and 5 percent of the violent crimes against men in 2010.
- In 2010, 407,700 women and 101,530 men were victimized by an intimate partner.
- In 2010, 37.5 percent of all female murder victims were killed by a current or former spouse or boyfriend.
- From 2001 to 2005, one-half of female intimate partner violence victims were physically injured and 18.5 percent were treated for their injury.
- Approximately one in three adolescent girls in the United States is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner.

A perusal of these OVC "facts" reveals that all of them are based on findings from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) or are otherwise untrue. Because of the NCVS's focus on persons' experience of "crimes," and because most domestic violence incidents are not viewed as crimes, the NCVS underestimates and distorts the problem of domestic violence – see Appendix B.

International Association of Chiefs of Police

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) sponsors a number of programs that are supported by the DOJ Office on Violence Against Women:

COALITION TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1. A *National Law Enforcement Leadership Initiative on Violence Against Women*, which is described as assisting law enforcement “in developing proactive strategies to enhance their response to violence against women crimes.”³⁰
2. A train-the-trainer program, *Considerations for Small Agency and Rural Response to Violence Against Women*, which is touted as an “interactive virtual training for law enforcement instructors [that] will instill deeper understanding of response to violence against women crimes”³¹
3. A *Violence Against Women Library*.³²

Ironically, the IACP does not offer any leadership initiatives, train-the-trainer programs, or libraries devoted to male victims of domestic violence.

One IACP publication, *Intimate Partner Violence Response: Policy and Training Content Guidelines*, begins with these “Facts” about domestic violence:³³

“Experts estimate that a woman has between a one-in-three and a one-in-four chance of being physically assaulted by a partner or ex-partner during her lifetime. On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men.”

All three of these statements are flawed:

1. The first sentence neglects to mention domestic violence against men.
2. The “nearly 20 people per minute” claim is a good example of a “factoid from nowhere” that cannot be verified.
3. The “more than 10 million women and men” statistic is wrong because it comes from an outdated version of the National Intimate Partner and Violence Survey.

Such one-sided programs serve to promote harmful stereotypes of men. One law enforcement officer described the local domestic violence training he attended as “so dripping with male hatred that everyone in the class felt uncomfortable, male and female officers alike.”³⁴ Not surprisingly, male victims of domestic violence are less likely than female victims to summon law enforcement for help.³⁵

National District Attorneys Association

The National District Attorneys Association is the leading trade organization of elected district attorneys across the nation, and is a long-term recipient of funding from the Office of Violence Against Women.

The NDAA website correctly states, “anyone can be a victim of domestic violence irrespective of age, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status.” The

HALF-TRUTHS, FALSEHOODS, AND LIES

NDAA then goes on to make this unsupported -- and incorrect -- statement: “However, studies support the fact that the majority of the victims are females.”³⁶

The NDAA offers a number of publications on “Violence Against Women.” One of these publications, titled *National Domestic Violence Prosecution Best Practices Guide*, states:³⁷

“Nationally, about 31.5% of women and 27.5% of men have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner during their lifetimes. Of these, about 22.3% of women and 14% of men have experienced severe physical violence. In addition to immediate physical injuries, victims of domestic violence suffer long-term social and psychological harms such as being fearful or concerned for their safety; developing symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder; missing school; and finding themselves in need of housing, legal services, and medical care. About 47.1% of women and 46.5% of men have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner during their lifetimes.”

Although this information is more accurate than the “facts” provided by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, it relies on lifetime numbers, which are distorted by problems of memory retention and selective recall.

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Judges play a pivotal role in the interpretation, implementation, and enforcement of the nation’s laws.

Another recipient of DOJ funding has been the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, an association of over 1,800 judges and judicial officers. In 1999 the NCJFCJ released *Effective Interventions in Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice*,³⁸ a publication that gave rise to the decade-long Greenbook Initiative. The Greenbook Initiative engendered countless training programs, practice guidelines, protocols, position papers, and general readings for judges, child welfare service providers, and domestic violence service providers.

One Greenbook publication, *Bringing the Greenbook to Life: A Resource Guide for Communities*, explains its purpose is to “serve battered mothers and their children more effectively.”³⁹ Indeed, the words, “battered mothers” and “battered women” appear 27 times in this publication. The phrases, “battered fathers” or “battered men” do not appear once in the 72-page document.

Such one-sided portrayals call to mind the Yiddish proverb, “A half-truth is a whole lie.”

American Bar Association

The American Bar Association, the national trade organization for the legal profession, has published domestic violence documents that reveal pronounced sex bias.

The ABA report, *When Will They Ever Learn? Educating to End Domestic Violence*, opened with this claim: “Experts estimate that 2 to 4 million American women are battered every year.”⁴⁰ But family violence researcher Richard Gelles derided the “2 to 4 million battered women” statistic as an unverifiable “factoid from nowhere.”⁴¹

In 2006, the ABA Commission on Domestic Violence published a two-page flyer, *10 Myths about Custody and Domestic Violence and How to Counter Them*. A detailed critique of the ABA document concluded, “of the 19 claims, only 2 [10.5%] are correct... Overall, the great majority of assertions and conclusions in the CODV flyer were found to be unsupported, misleading, or wrong.”⁴²

To its credit, the American Bar Association has removed these two documents from its website. But the propaganda-style *10 Myths about Custody and Domestic Violence* has now been posted on the website of the Leadership Council on Child Abuse and Interpersonal Violence.⁴³

Child Abuse and Parental Alienation

The Department of Health and Human Services reports that women commit the majority -- 53% -- of all child abuse incidents.⁴⁴ Regarding child homicides committed by a parent,⁴⁵ 71% involved the mother, with the remaining 29% involved the father.*

Child abuse may become more pronounced if the parents undergo a divorce and one of them seeks to gain the allegiance of the children, a well-documented syndrome known as “parental alienation.”⁴⁶ Common forms of parental alienation include:⁴⁷

- Criticizing the targeted parent in front of the child
- Limiting contact with the targeted parent;
- Attempting to erase the other parent from the child’s life;
- Creating the impression that the targeted parent does not care for the child;
- Forcing the child to “choose sides”

But domestic violence activists insist that parental alienation is rare. And when it occurs, they claim, ignoring the DHHS statistics shown above, that the father is engaging in child abuse, and then alleging parental alienation to cover up the abuse.⁴⁸

Attorney Joan Meier took the argument even farther, claiming that mothers who alleged their children were abused were more likely to lose custody of their children than were fathers.⁴⁹ But an exhaustive review of 967 appellate cases failed to confirm Meier’s implausible claims.⁵⁰

* In 2019, 584 child homicides were perpetrated by the Mother Only or Mother and a Nonparent, and 238 homicides were perpetrated by the Father Only or Father and a Nonparent.

Researchers

Even family violence researchers have been targeted by domestic violence activists, with leading expert Murray Straus revealing seven tactics used to conceal, deny, and distort the domestic violence research:⁵¹

1. Suppress evidence
2. Avoid obtaining or analyzing data on female perpetration
3. Cite only studies that show male perpetration
4. Conclude that results refute abuse symmetry when they do not
5. Create “evidence” by citation
6. Obstruct funding of research that might contradict the idea that male dominance is the cause of domestic violence
7. Harass, threaten, and penalize researchers who produce evidence that contradicts feminist beliefs

Regarding the seventh tactic, Straus cited this troubling example:

“Suzanne Steinmetz made the mistake of publishing a book and articles which clearly showed about equal rates of perpetration by males and females. Anger over this resulted in a bomb threat at her daughter’s wedding, and she was the object of a letter writing campaign to deny her promotion and tenure at the University of Delaware.”

Coronavirus Abuse Hoax

On March 23, 2020 the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (NTF) issued an Alert with this alarming coronavirus claim: “Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are facing extreme danger and risk.”⁵² The NTF Alert did not provide any evidence to support its claim. Subsequently, a plethora of media accounts predicted an imminent “spike” and “spurt” of abuse, often featuring heart-rending — but unsubstantiated — anecdotes.

But the predicted catastrophe never came to pass. Four separate studies concluded that overall, there was no increase in domestic violence or sexual assault. And some locales saw a significant decrease:

1. The National Commission on COVID-19 and Criminal Justice concluded, based on reports from 11 cities, that “Domestic violence did not increase in the first quarter of 2021 over the first quarter of 2020.”⁵³
2. The Marshall Project found declines in domestic violence cases in Chicago, IL, Austin, TX, and Chandler, AZ, ranging from 13% to 23%.⁵⁴
3. The Coalition to End Domestic Violence compiled police reports from 33 police departments around the country, which revealed steady numbers of domestic violence

calls in 19 departments, small increases in three departments, and modest decreases in 11 jurisdictions.⁵⁵

4. In 67 large cities across the country, the Major Cities Chiefs Association reported that during the first 9 months of 2020, the number of rapes dropped from 32,234 to 27,273, compared to 2019. This change represents a 15% decrease.⁵⁶

Harm to African-American Men

It is difficult to overstate the harmful effects of this sustained misinformation campaign on the workings of our criminal system. “Police, prosecutors, judges, social workers, psychologists, parenting evaluators, counselors, et al, have been indoctrinated...that men commit 95 per cent of all domestic violence, [and] are more likely to abuse their children,” according to one Washington State attorney.⁵⁷

In addition, male victims often are unable to get help, as reflected in these disparities in the provision of victim services:⁵⁸

- Legal Assistance: 6% male, 94% female (Page 162)
- Rural Assistance: 10% male, 90% female (Page 174)
- Sexual Assault Services: 4% male, 96% female (Page 184)
- Transitional Housing: 1% male, 99% female (Page 204)
- Indian Tribal Governments: 5% male, 95% female (Page 222)
- Tribal Sexual Assault: 14% male, 86% female (Page 237)
- Services to Underserved Populations: 14% male, 86% female (Page 248)

The gender profiling that arises from one-sided and false claims has been especially harmful to Black men. Each year, Black men are more likely than Black women to be victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, or stalking committed by a partner.⁵⁹

- Black men: 1.47 million victims
- Black women: 1.38 million victims

But even though Black men are more likely to be victims of partner abuse, inexplicably, Black men are also more likely to be arrested for domestic violence.⁶⁰ The “criminalization of social problems has led to mass incarceration of men, especially young men of color,” reveals the Ms. Foundation for Women.⁶¹ According to a recent report to Congress, domestic violence mandatory arrest policies may “produce disproportionate arrest rates among marginalized populations, including people of color, and particularly African American men.”⁶²

These palpable injustices have created collateral consequences in terms of employability, family stability, and the willingness of minority victims to seek police assistance.⁶³

Rediscovering the Truth?

During its 2013 reauthorization, the language of the Violence Against Women Act was amended to be sex-inclusive.⁶⁴ As a result, groups commendably began to update their fact sheets and issue reports on domestic violence against men:

- The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence offers a three-page fact sheet on *Male Victims of Domestic Violence* that features the accurate NISVS numbers.⁶⁵
- Safe and Together Institute sponsored a podcast on *The Male Victim*.⁶⁶
- WomensLaw.org website has a page on *Male Victims*.⁶⁷
- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence published a report on *Serving Male-Identified Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence*.⁶⁸
- Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence includes a chapter in its *Sheltering with Care Manual* on the topic of *Serving Male Survivors in Shelter*. The Coalition also offers a video on the topic.⁶⁹
- New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence features a report on *Violence Against Men in New Hampshire*⁷⁰ and has a webpage titled, *Unique Challenges Faced by Male Victims*.⁷¹

But these reports appear to be the exception to the rule. More often, groups continue to promote misinformation that serve to confuse the public and downplay male victimization in several ways:

1. Depict images and provide training examples of only female victims.
2. Use vague-sounding statements, e.g., “About one in three...” when precise numbers are available.
3. Rely on lifetime rather than annual incidence rates – lifetime numbers are less reliable because of problems with selective memory and biased recall.
4. Misrepresent CDC statistics on male sexual victimization, which needs to be assessed by asking whether the man was “made to sexually penetrate.”⁷²
5. Aggregate data on sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking into a single number, even though the relationship among these offenses is tenuous.⁷³

Mass Incarceration of Men

“*When I grow up, I will beat my wife.*” and “*One day my husband will kill me.*” – Bus placards promoted by the Dallas Area Rapid Transit system⁷⁴

Researcher Denise Hines has pointed out that domestic violence programs are “unlikely to work if they have little basis in objective information about the problem.”⁷⁵ The accuracy of this prediction is borne out by the fact that there is little or no evidence that VAWA-funded programs have succeeded in reducing rates of domestic violence:⁷⁶

- “Between 2000 and 2010, rates of domestic violence actually fell less than the drop in the overall crime rate – at a time when VAWA was pumping hundreds of

millions of dollars into the criminal system.” — *Leigh Goodmark, Professor, University of Maryland Law School*

- “We have no evidence to date that VAWA has led to a decrease in the overall levels of violence against women.” — *Angela Moore Parmley, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice*

Since the 1980s, scientific studies have shown that women are at least as likely as men to engage in domestic violence.⁷⁷ This Special Report documents that the disinformation effort, which began in the early 1990s, has been systematic, well-organized, and widespread, with intentions that may be less-than-honorable.⁷⁸ As a result, men are no longer regarded as the protectors of women; instead, men are now widely viewed as potential abusers and predators.

Commentator Christina Villegas argues that protecting persons from partner abuse “has never been the primary intention of VAWA.” Instead, the domestic violence campaign has been a “political movement that seeks to change social norms and redistribute resources, power, and control to women, with the long-term aim of a genderless, socialist society.”⁷⁹

One analysis concludes that the domestic violence policies arising from this disinformation campaign have been a major contributor to the mass incarceration of men:⁸⁰

“More aggressive criminalization of more broadly defined domestic violence is central to the extraordinary growth in incarceration in the U.S. since about 1980. Domestic violence policies have contributed significantly to increasing the number of persons living in violent places: prisons and jails.”

Professor Murray Straus ominously concludes, “*History is full of atrocities carried out in the service of a moral agenda.*”⁸¹

Analysis of OVW’s “The Facts about Domestic Violence”

Page Number	Statement	Assessment	Explanation
1	“Domestic violence is a gender-based crime with women being more likely to experience domestic violence than men.”	False.	Many studies show women are more likely to instigate partner aggression than men.
1	Regarding nonfatal violent victimizations: “Of these, 85% were against women.”	False.	Crime statistics are not a valid source of information on domestic violence.
1-2	“The NVAWS [National Violence Against Women Survey] also found that 22.1 percent of women surveyed, compared to 7.4 percent of men, reported being physically assaulted by a current or former partner in their lifetime.”	Outdated and biased.	The NVAWS was published in 1998. Lifetime estimates are invalid due to selective memory and biased recall effects.
2	“Women are 2 to 3 times more likely to report minor physical attacks (pushing, grabbing, shoving) than men. By comparison, women are 7 to 14 times more likely than men to report serious physical attacks (beating, strangulation, threats of weapons or use of weapons).”	False.	The NISVS shows for both minor and serious violence, women are more likely to be the offenders.
2	“The NVAWS found among women over the age of 18, ‘[a]pproximately one-fifth of all rapes, one-quarter of all physical assaults, and one-half of all stalking perpetrated against female respondents by intimates were reported to the police.’”	One-sided and false.	Reporting by victims of spousal domestic violence: ⁸² Males: 53.8% Females: 60.1%
2	“Existing small-scale studies report that nearly 40% of women with disabilities report being victims of domestic violence”	One-sided, possibly false.	Similar studies have not been replicated with male populations.
2	“The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reported that African-American women experienced domestic violence at a rate 35% higher than Caucasian women.”	One-sided and misleading.	African-American men are more likely than African-American women to be victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. (NISVS:

COALITION TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

			2010-2012 State Report. Tables 5.3 and 5.6)
3	“Statistics demonstrate only ‘39% of such crimes against women age 50 or older were reported to the police. In contrast, between 1993 and 1999, 57% of the violence sustained by females age 25-34 and those age 35-49 was reported to the police.’”	False.	Statement is one-sided and not confirmed by the 2005 DOJ report. ⁷⁰
4	“A 2003 survey found that 1 in 4 homeless mothers reported being physically abused by an intimate partner in the last year.”	One-sided.	Statement does not comment on homeless fathers.
4	“The CDC found that victims of intimate partner physical assault lost 7.2 days from paid work, while victims of intimate partner rape lost 8.1 days.”	Misleading.	Misrepresents the study results, which only apply to female victims.

Shortcomings of the National Crime Victimization Survey

The National Crime Victimization Survey is the premier survey of persons' experiences of crime in the United States. The NCVS is administered to a nationally-representative sample of persons regarding the types of crime they have experienced.

The NCVS instructions repeatedly remind the respondent that the survey's purpose is to study *criminal* actions.⁸³

- The survey begins with this introduction: "The Census Bureau is conducting a survey here and throughout the Nation to determine how often people are victims of *crimes*."⁸⁴
- Question 33 starts, "Before we get to the *crime* questions, I have some questions that are helpful in studying where and why *crimes* occur."
- Question 36 begins, "I'm going to read some examples that will give you an idea of the kinds of *crimes* this study covers."

A single question identifies acts of domestic violence. Question 42a asks if the respondent was "attacked or threatened by...a relative or family member."

But most persons do not consider actions such as a slap on the face to be an attack or a crime. These distortions are compounded when a male is a victim of the aggression. Most men do not consider a shove to be an "attack," especially if the act is perpetrated by a wife or girlfriend.⁸⁵ As a result, the NCVS states that each year, fewer than 1% of persons are victims of domestic violence:⁸⁶

- Males: 0.9/1,000 persons
- Females: 4.2/1,000 persons

Far more reliable is the CDC National Intimate Partner and Violence Survey, which does not limit its scope to self-identified "crimes."⁸⁷

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