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To: JUDtestimony
Subject: Testimony in SUPPORT of HR11 & HCR49 report on women DV perpetrators
Attachments: The Controversy over Domestic Violence by Women re family conflict vs crime studies Murray A Straus.doc

March 25, 2010

To: Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair
Rep. Ken Ito, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary
Via email to: JUDtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

From: Tom Marzec

Subj: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of **HR11 & HCR49** report on women DV perpetrators

Hearing: Thursday, March 25, 2010; 2:45 p.m.; Room 325, State Capitol

As an advocate for family court reform, I support this type of an investigation and report. More investigation and information, especially about Hawaii-specific domestic violence, helps educate the public, assists in the development of better public policy and hopefully prevents needless deaths, injuries and trauma.

A group to study family court legal interventions first came together in 2004, under the leadership of Senator Chun Oakland and Senator Fukunaga. Abuse of the TRO process with respect to domestic violence (DV) was one of the significant areas of concern. In one of those meetings a DV advocate said that when a man hits a woman, that is DV and she will get services, when a woman hits a man, it is only assault and the man should go to the Prosecutor. I asked why the difference and the reply was that the man always has the power and control. There was no middle ground.

In the mid 1990s, Sociologist Michael P. Johnson differentiated between various types of domestic violence and the associated theories and dynamics:
Intimate Terrorism (Violent Coercive Control)
-Coercive control theory
-Gender theory
-Theories of paternalism

Violent Resistance (Resisting the Intimate Terrorist)
-Coping
-Entrapment

Situational Couple Violence (Situationally-provoked Violence)
-Family conflict theory
-Communication
-Anger management
-Substance abuse

Mutual Violent Control (Two Intimate Terrorists)

Because the dynamics of each are very different, there are significant implications for screening, intervention, community response, and treatment. Professor Johnson stated: "We make big mistakes if we don't make big distinctions."

Intimate Terrorism, the worst-case DV and most visible to the public, is roughly 30% of the overall DV and involves power and control dynamics. Situational Couple violence is roughly 70%, does not involve power and control dynamics and is more mutual.

The problem is the Duluth model, based on power and control, is used for DV in general and public policy has not made these distinctions effectively. Resultingly, since the early 2000's, studies have shown that batterer intervention programs, based mostly on the Duluth model (power and control wheel) do not work or have a small effect.

The heart of this issue is a concerted effort to not recognize and address the issues of women battering men or other family members, with or with out power and control dynamics. The other issue is are we truly funding the programs and services, and establishing policies, that provide demonstrable, measurable results in benefiting all DV victims based on risks and needs?

Erin Pizzey was an early pioneer and started a women's shelter in 1971 and had difficulties because domestic violence was not seen as a problem. However, she found that many women who came to the refuge were as violent or more violent than the men they left. More recently, Erin Pizzey, in a 2000 Interview with journalist Philip W. Cook, author of *Abused Men-The Hidden Side of Domestic Violence*, discussed the situation when she opened her first shelter and compared it to how men victims of domestic violence are treated:

It's the same exact thing now with attempts to have domestic violence resources for men. The same attitude exists. However, it's even more difficult now to open something for men, or raise awareness, than it was when I opened the first shelter for women. There is now an established domestic violence industry which fears any acknowledgment of the well established scientific fact (through my own research and many many others) that women can be as violent as men with their intimate partners and are not always the victim or acting only in self-defense. This fear is based on a false premise, that acknowledging this fact or speaking publicly about it, or offering services, will take away

funding and hurt the established resources for women. That's nonsense. I proved and others can too, that offering help for abused men can be done within an existing system set up originally to help women, that is willing to deal with the totality and reality of domestic violence. There should of course, also be some support groups, shelter help, and crisis lines specifically aimed and publicized as such for men-what man for example, would even think to call a crisis line that called itself a "woman's crisis line." Of course, he's automatically excluded.

Rather than discuss statistics and research here, Murray Strauss, a respected researcher, Professor of Sociology and Co-Director Family Research Laboratory, described why there are two sides regarding statistics, crime studies and family conflict studies as they relate to DV (see the attached study: The Controversy Over Domestic Violence By Women: A Methodological, Theoretical, and Sociology of Science Analysis). His conclusion is:

The analysis in the preceding section suggests that neither side is motivated to understand the other. Rather, each seeks to impose its perspective because they believe the preferred definition is vital to advancing their moral agenda and professional objectives. In my opinion, that will continue. Moreover, society would lose if either side gives up their perspective because society benefits from the moral agenda and professional contribution of both sides. I for one do not intend to give up attempting to advance the "no violence by anyone" moral agenda that has informed my research on domestic assaults and spanking children for 30 years (Straus, 1994).
I believe humanity needs research inspired by the moral agenda and perspective of those who focus on the oppression of women, regardless of whether the oppression is physical, sexual, psychological or economic; and also research inspired by the moral agenda of those who focus on physical assault, regardless of whether the assault is by a man, woman or child. I even dare to hope that the controversy will be resolved by recognizing the need for both perspectives, and that this will bring an end to attempts to discredit those whose agenda and professional role requires a different approach and different perspective.

I hope that these types of Hawaii studies, investigations, reports and policy decisions are made with Dr. Murray's wise guidance in mind. These big distinctions must be made so we don't make big mistakes that result in needless suffering.

Lastly, David Woods, a domestic violence victim, prevailed in 2008 in a California lawsuit when:

the Third District Court of Appeals ruled in his favor, saying a state funded facility violated his rights when it turned him and his daughter away three times. "I'm glad that at least the way it seems right now at this moment, there are men out there who are in similar situations to mine that don't have to go through what I did," said Woods.
While the court said access to programs had to be equal, the actual services do not. And

therein lies the problem that will likely keep this legal battle going for years.

Your continuing support for these family court-related issues is very appreciated! Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY WOMEN: A METHODOLOGICAL, THEORETICAL, AND SOCIOLOGY OF SCIENCE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The methodological part of this chapter analyzes the discrepancy between the more than 100 "family conflict" studies of domestic physical assaults (those using the Conflict Tactic Scales and similar approaches), and what can be called "crime studies" (i. e. the National Crime Victimization Survey and studies using police call data). Family conflict studies, without exception, show about equal rates of assault by men and women. Crime studies, without exception, show much higher rates of assault by men, often 90% by men. Crime studies also find a prevalence rate (for both men and women) that is a small fraction of the rate of assaults found by family conflict studies. The difference in prevalence rates and in gender differences between the two types of studies probably occur because crime studies deal with only the small part of all domestic assaults that the participants experience as a crime, such as assaults which result in an injury serious enough to need medical attention, or assaults by a former partner. These occur relatively rarely and tend to be assaults by men. The theoretical part of the chapter seeks to provide an explanation for the discrepancy between the low rates of assault by women outside the family and the very high rates of assault by women within the family. The sociology of science part of the chapter seeks to explain why the controversy over domestic assaults by women persists and is likely to continue. I argue that neither side can give up their position because it would be tantamount to giving up deeply held moral commitments and professional roles. I conclude that society needs both perspectives. Neither side should give up their perspective. Rather they should recognize the circumstances to which each applies.
Note: A supplemental paper On the National Violence Against Women survey is appended.

[1]. An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the Claremont Symposium on Applied Social Psychology on Violence in Intimate Relationships, Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA 28 February, 1998. I would like to thank the 1997-98 Family Research Laboratory seminar, Patricia Tjaden, and Kersti Yllo for many comments, criticisms and suggestions which greatly aided in revising the chapter. Their assistance does not necessarily imply endorsement of the views expressed. The research was supported by National Institute of Mental Health grant T32MH15161) and the University of New Hampshire. This is a publication of the Family Violence Research Program of the Family Research Laboratory, University of New Hampshire. A program description and bibliography will be sent on request.

In the mid 1970s my colleagues and I made the disturbing discovery that women physically assaulted partners in marital, cohabiting, and dating relationships as often as men assaulted their partners (Steinmetz 1978; Straus 1997; Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz 1980). This finding caused me and my former colleague Suzanne Steinmetz to be excommunicated as feminists. Neither of us has accepted that sentence, but it remains in force. So when Salman Rushdie was condemned to death for his heresy, we may have felt even more empathy than most people because we had also experienced many threats, including a bomb threat.

The vitriolic 20-year controversy (Straus 1990c; Straus 1992b; Straus 1997) had largely subsided by 1997. There are a number of reasons the controversy subsided. One reason is the overwhelming accumulation of evidence from more than a hundred studies showing approximately equal assault rates. Another is the explosive growth of marital and family therapy from a family systems perspective which assumes mutual effects. In addition, research by clinical psychologists such as O'Leary (O'Leary et al. 1989) brought psychologists face to face with the assaults by both parties. In November 1997, however, the controversy was suddenly

reignited by newspaper headlines declaring "Partners Unequal in Abuse" (Peterson 1997). These headlines were based on findings from the "National Violence Against Women in America Survey" (called the NVAW survey from here on). The NVAW surveyed 8,000 women and 8,000 men representing 16,000 households. The study was sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control (Tjaden and Thoennes 1997). The NVAW study found that men physically assaulted their female partners at three times the rate at which women engaged in such behavior.

Family Conflict Studies

The NVAW findings contradict findings from many studies of violence between dating, cohabiting, and married couples, including national household surveys in the U.S. and other countries. These studies, such as the National Family Violence Surveys (Straus and Gelles 1990), the National Survey of Families and Households, and British and Canadian national surveys (Carrado et al. 1996; Grandin and Lupri 1997) are presented to respondents as a study of family or marital problems. Following (Tjaden and Thoennes 1997) I will refer to them as "family conflict" studies. I started to compile a table summarizing all the family conflict studies that reported assault rates for both men and women partners. But I stopped after tabulating 39 studies out of about 120 in my files because at that point I received a bibliography of 70 studies, all of which found that "...women are as physically aggressive, or more aggressive, than men in their relationships... The aggregate sample size in the reviewed studies exceeds 58,000." (Fiebert 1997, pp. 273).

I then tallied the 39 studies in my own table and found that more than two thirds reported somewhat higher rates for assaults by women. Moreover, every one of the remainder found very high rates for women, usually rates as high or almost as high as the male assault rate. Whenever the study provided separate figures for "severe" assaults such as kicking and punching (as compared to "minor" assaults such as slapping and throwing things at a partner) the pattern of similarly high rates was also reported for severe assaults. In addition there is the tabulation of 21 studies of dating couples by Sugarman and Hotaling (1989) which led them to conclude "A...surprising finding...is the higher proportion of females than males who self-report having expressed violence in a dating relationship" (italics added).

Crime Studies

Despite the evidence from more than a hundred of these family conflict and dating violence studies, the finding from the recent NVAW study of three assaults by men to one by women cannot be ignored because it is based on a well-conducted survey and the study was sponsored by respected agencies. Moreover, two other major sources of data show an even greater predominance by men. In fact they indicate that assaulting a partner is almost exclusively a crime committed by men. I will call these "crime studies." I grouped the following four studies or types of studies under this heading because they have in common that they are presented to respondents as studies of crime, crime victimization, personal safety, injury, or violence, rather than as studies of family problems and conflicts.

- National Crime Survey (NCS)
- National Crime Victimization Study (NCVS). This is a revision of the NCS
- Police statistics studies
- National Violence Against Women in America (NVAW) study. Because of the importance of the NVAW study a detailed analysis is available in another paper (Straus, 1998) which is appended to this paper.

Chapter Objectives

Given the enormous discrepancies between over 100 family conflict studies and the fewer but excellent crime studies, the first objective of this chapter is to identify the source of these discrepancies. I will present evidence which suggests that the discrepancies reflect differences in the methodology of crime studies as compared to family conflict studies.

The second objective of the chapter is theoretical. If it is true that, in their domestic relationships, women are assaultive as men, that needs to be explained because it is inconsistent with cultural norms and beliefs which hold that women are much less violent than men, and inconsistent with data showing that in nonfamily situations, the rate of assault by women is only a fraction of the male assault rate. In short, the theoretical issue is how to explain the high rate of domestic assaults by women.

The third objective of the chapter is to explain why the controversy has persisted despite the evidence, and in my opinion is likely to continue. The most fundamental reason is that the controversy is rooted in deep seated differences in the underlying moral agenda and professional roles of the two sides.

WHAT IS VIOLENCE?

Much of the controversy over "violence" by women occurs because the participants in the debate use the same word for different phenomena. At one extreme are those who use violence as a synonym for any unjust or cruel state of affairs or maltreatment of another human being. Thus, marketing of baby formulas to mothers in underdeveloped countries is sometimes described as violence against children because of the harm it causes. At the other extreme, are those who restrict violence to physical assaults, i.e., to acts carried out with the intention of causing another person physical pain or injury (Gelles & Straus, 1979), regardless of whether an injury actually occurs. The concluding section of the chapter will explain why "violence" is used so differently.

My own research has been carried out from the perspective that defines violence exclusively as a physical assault. This perspective recognizes the importance of injury, and also that physical assaults are not necessarily the most damaging type of maltreatment. For example, one can hurt deeply - even drive someone to suicide - without lifting a finger. Verbal aggression may be even more damaging than being the victim of physical attacks (Straus & Sweet, 1992; Vissing, Straus, Gelles, & Harrop, 1993). Those like me who focus on the act of assault also recognize that women, on average, suffer much more frequent and more severe injury (physical, economic, and psychological) than men (Stets & Straus, 1990; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980; Zlotnick, Kohn, Peterson, & Pearlstein, 1998). Consequently, it is necessary to explain the reasons for focusing exclusively on physical assaults. The immediate reason is that, with rare exception, the controversy has been about equal rates of physical assaults, not about whether women experience more injury. The more important reasons have to do with legal, social policy, and ethical considerations.

From a legal perspective, it is important to realize that injury is not required for the crime of assault. The National Crime Panel Report defines assault as "An unlawful physical attack by one person upon another" (U.S. Department of Justice, 1976). Neither this definition, nor the definition used for reporting assaults to the FBI requires injury or bodily contact (Federal Bureau of Investigations, 1995). Thus, if a person is chased by someone attempting to hit them with a stick or stab them and they escape, the attack is still a felony level crime -- an "aggravated assault" -- even though they were not touched. However, it is also true that police, prosecutors, juries, and are strongly influenced by whether the assault did result in an injury and the seriousness of the injury.

From a social policy perspective, despite the much lower probability of physical injury resulting from attacks by women, one of the main reasons why "minor" assaults by women are such an

important problem is that they put women in danger of much more severe retaliation by men (Feld & Straus, 1989). Assaults by women also help perpetuate the now implicit, but once explicit cultural norms that gave husbands the legal right to "physically chastise an errant wife" (Calvert, 1974). The legacy of that norm continues to make the marriage license a hitting license for both parties. To end "wife beating," it is essential for women to cease what may seem to be "harmless" slapping, kicking, or throwing things at a male partner who persists in some outrageous behavior or "won't listen to reason."

Assaults by women also need to be a focus of social policy because of the harm to children from growing up in a violent household. The link between partner violence and child behavior problems occurs not only when both partners are violent (about half of families with partner assaults), but also when the assaults are committed exclusively by the male partner (about a quarter of the cases), as well as when the assaults are committed exclusively by the female partner (Straus, 1992a).

The most fundamental reason for giving attention to assaults per se, regardless of whether an injury occurs, is the intrinsic moral wrong of assaulting a partner. Assaults by women are a crime and a serious social problem, just as it would be if men "only" slapped their wives or "only" slapped a fellow employee and produced no injury. Although this is a fundamental reason for morally condemning women who "only" slap their partners, it should not be allowed to obscure the fact that assaults by men are likely to be even more morally reprehensible because they result in injury so much more often than women. Nevertheless, an even greater wrong does not excuse the lesser wrong. A society in which dating, cohabiting, and married partners never hit each other is not a more unrealistic goal than a society in which co-workers never hit each other, and is certainly no less a hallmark of a humane society.

METHODOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS FOR THE DISCREPANT FINDINGS OF FAMILY CONFLICT AND CRIME STUDIES

Explaining Discrepancies in the Rate of Partner Assault

Before examining the differences between family conflict and crime studies that could explain the discrepancies in their findings on assaults by men and women, it is necessary to examine and explain the much lower rate of assault by both men and women found by crime studies. This is necessary because the same processes result in both the low prevalence rate for both men and women and the high ratio of male to female offenders.

The first row of Table 1 summarizes findings from many studies showing that, relative to family conflict studies, crime studies uncover a much lower number of domestic assaults. The rates form crime studies range from a low of two tenths of one percent to two percent, whereas the rates from family conflict studies tend to be about 16%. The second row of Table 1 shows that disclosure of domestic assaults in crime studies is only a small fraction of the rate obtained by family conflict studies. Even with the improvement in the National Crime Survey to deal with the extremely low prevalence, the rate obtained by the revision is still only one eighteenth of the rate obtained by family conflict surveys (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995). Similarly, the recent NVAW study found only one eighth of the number of assaults that have been found by family conflict studies.

The low rate of assaults by both husbands and wives found by crime studies, and especially the NCS probably results from a number of situational and unintended "demand characteristics" (Orne, 1962) of the study. These surveys were presented as a study of crime, or in the case of the NVAW study, "personal safety," injury, and "violence." Unfortunately when a survey of crime, violence, or injury is the context for estimating rates of domestic assault, the contextual message can take precedence over specific instructions to include all assaults, regardless of the perpetrator and regardless of whether injury resulted. This can lead some respondents to

misperceive the study as being concerned only with assaults that are experienced as a crime or as violence, or only assaults that resulted injury. However, only a small percentage of assaults are experienced as a crime or as a threat to personal safety or violence. For example, while people experience being slapped or kicked by their partner as a horrible experience, it takes relatively rare circumstances to perceive the attack as a "crime" (Ferraro, 1989; Fen'am & Johnson, 1983; Langan & Innes, 1986). One such circumstance is an injury. Injury serious enough to need medical attention occurs in only one to three percent of domestic assaults on women and one half of one percent of domestic assaults on men (Stets & Straus, 1990; Zlotnick, Kohn, Peterson, & Pearlstein, 1998). To the extent that it takes injury for a respondent in a crime survey to perceive there is something to report, the low injury rate is part of the explanation for the extremely low rate of partner assaults found by the crime studies. This does not mean that all respondents misperceived what was expected in this way. Indeed, 49% of NCVS domestic assault victims reported no injury, but this is still a fraction of the 97% to 99% reporting no injury in family conflict studies (see next paragraph).

TABLE 1. VARIATIONS IN DOMESTIC ASSAULT STATISTICS

	FAMILY CONFLICT STUDIES	NATIONAL CRIME SURVEY	CRIME VICTIM SURVEY	POLICE CALL DATA	NVAW STUDY[1]
ANNUAL ASSAULT RATE	10-35% (16%)[2]	0.2%	0.9%	0.2%[3]	1.4%
FRACTION OF FAMILY CONFLICT RATE	=====>	1/80 TH	1/18 TH	1/80 TH	1/12 TH
INJURY RATE	1 TO 3%	75%	52%	unknown	41%[1]
MALE (CENTER) & FEMALE RATE	12.2% 12.4%[4]	0.4% 0.03%	0.76% 0.11%	90% male [5]	not yet released
MALE TO FEMALE RATIO	1 to 1	13 TO 1	7 TO 1	9 to 1	3 to 1

NOTES:

1. Based on Bachman (1998) and my recall of data presented by Tjaden and Thoennes (1997). The statistics cannot be confirmed until the sponsoring agencies releases the data, which is still under review.
2. The lower end of this range is for married couples. The upper end reflects the large number of studies which show that rate for dating couples of 25 to 40% (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). Stets and Straus (1990) attribute the high rate to the youthfulness of dating couples. They found that, for young married couples, the rates were even higher than for dating couples of that age.
3. Based on all aggravated assaults known to the police in 1994 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1995). because the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) do not distinguish between domestic assaults and other assaults. In 1994 the UCR rate of assaults 430 per hundred thousand population (0.4%). An unknown fraction of these were domestic assaults. To be on the safe side, I used half of that as domestic assaults.
4. To avoid bias due to possible under-reporting by men of their own assaults, these rates were computed from information provided by the 2,994 women in the 1985 National Family Violence Survey. The rates given are for any assault. The ratio was essentially the same for minor and severe assaults. See Straus, 1994.
5. The rates for men and women cannot be given because police call data are only reported as the percent of cases with a male offender, not as rates per 100 or 1,000 men and women.

The last row of Table 1 gives the injury rates from family conflict and crime studies. It shows rates of under 3% for family conflict studies, and rates of 75% and 52% for the National Crime Survey and the National Crime Victimization Survey. These implausibly high injury rates from

the NCS and NCVS are probably the result of the crime framework of those studies, i.e., partner assaults tend to not be reported unless there is something, such as injury, that moves them from the category of a "family fight" to a "crime". So assaults resulting in injury make up an extremely large proportion of the cases that are reported.

Another similar process probably accounts for the extremely high rate of assaults by former partners in crime studies. That is, one of the circumstance leading a respondent in crime studies to report an assault by a partner is if the attack is by a former spouse. That makes it a "real crime" because a former spouse "has no right to do that." Even with the revisions, intended to avoid this problem, the NCVS found 25 times more assaults by former partners in the previous 12 month period than by current partners (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995). Given the vastly greater time exposure to current spouses during the 12 month referent period, that ratio does not seem plausible.

In summary, assaults by a partner are most likely to be experienced as a crime if the attacks result in injury or if it is an attack by a former partner. To the extent that this is correct, it helps explain the drastically lower prevalence rate for intimate partner assaults in crime studies because those circumstances are relatively rare.

Explaining Discrepancies in the Ratio of Male to Female Offenders

The third and fourth rows of Table 1 show the contrast between family conflict and crime studies that is the main focus of this chapter. What can explain the discrepancy between the roughly equal rates in Table 1 for family conflict studies and the predominance of men in the crime studies and the NVAW study? Although a number of factors are likely to be involved, the methodological differences described in the preceding section are an important part of the explanation. Specifically, the same "demand characteristics" of a crime study that produced the extremely low rates for both men and women, also produce the high ratio of male to female offenders. If one of the circumstances that leads a respondent to experience being hit by a partner as a crime, or one of the circumstances that leads a police officer to make an arrest, is an injury that needs medical attention, and if assaults resulting in injury are much more likely to occur when a man is the offender, it follows that men predominate in statistics based on crime surveys or crime reports. The following paragraphs examine each of the sources of data from that perspective.

National Crime Survey and National Crime Victimization Survey.

In 1992, after ten years of considering revisions to reduce demand characteristics such as those just discussed, the NCS was revised to secure more complete reporting of crimes in which the offender is often an intimate, such as rape and assault, and renamed as the National Crime Victimization survey (NCVS). The result of these changes, as predicted, was to quadruple the overall prevalence rate from 2.2 to 8.7 per thousand, i.e., from 0.2% to 0.9% (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995, Table 5). A change that was not predicted by the NCVS sponsors, but which follows from the demand characteristics explanation for the low prevalence rate in crime studies, was to decrease the ratio of male to female assaults on partners from 13 to 1 to 7 to 1. The injury rate also decreased (as predicted on the basis of the demand characteristics explanation) from 75% to 52%. Thus the redesign helped to reduce the demand characteristics that probably account for the extremely low prevalence rate, the implausibly high injury rate, and the high ratio of male to female assaults. Nevertheless, the evidence just presented suggests that the demand characteristic problem persists 'to a significant degree.

Another consideration that may lead to under reporting of assaults on partners by women as a crime or a threat to safety is that such attacks are often discounted as a joke because, for men, the risk of injury and therefore fear of injury, is relatively low. In one of my early interviews on domestic assaults, I asked the husband if his wife had ever hit him. He stood up and shoved his

shoulder toward me as if I were his wife. He said "Yeah, I told her, go ahead and hit me." For still another group, the idea of being assaulted by one's wife may be so threatening to their masculine identity that they would be ashamed to report it to the NCVS interviewer.

Police Statistics.

Statistics based on analysis of police calls for domestic disturbances result in a rate of assaults by men that is hugely greater than the rate of assaults by women. Dobash and Dobash (1979), for example, found that 99% of intrafamily assault cases in two Scottish cities were assaults by men. Since then, a number of studies of statistics based on police calls show that men are eight or nine times more often the assailants than women. However, the proportion of men may be declining slightly. To take one recent example, Brookhoff (1997) found that 78% of assailants in police calls were men. This is less than 90 or 99%, but it is still extremely high.

The proportion of incidents of partner assault known to the police, like the proportion in the NCVS, is only a small faction of the number of such incidents estimated on the basis of family conflict studies. Kaufman Kantor and Straus (1990) for example, examined a nationally representative sample of domestic assaults and found that 93% were not reported to the police. Given the absence of such a large proportion of cases from police statistics, an understanding of what might be filtering out most of the cases can provide a clue to gender differences in police statistics on partner assault.

The high percentage of male offenders in police statistics reflects the circumstances that lead to a police call. An obvious circumstance is that a call to the police for help is much more likely if there is injury or imminent danger of injury. Because injury is more likely if the assailant is a male, assaults by men are much more likely than assaults by women to occasion a police call. If the injury rate for assaults by men is about seven times greater than the injury rate for assaults by women (Stets & Straus, 1990) and if injury is a virtually a requirement for the police to be called in, that alone would contribute importantly to producing a 7 to 1 ratio. It is also one of the main reasons why I have always insisted that "...although women may assault their partners at approximately the same rate as men, because of the greater physical, financial, and emotional injury suffered by women, they are the predominant victims (Stets & Straus, 1990; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). Consequently, first priority in services for victims and in prevention and control must continue to be directed toward assaults by husbands" (Straus, 1997).

Other reasons assaults by women are rare in police statistics probably include the reluctance of men to admit that they cannot "handle their wives." In addition, although police in some jurisdictions are now arresting female offenders more than previously, analogous to their former reluctance to make arrests of husbands, they remain reluctant to make arrests in such cases (Cook, 1997). Still another factor that probably influences the probability of police involvement is drunken, loud, and destructive behavior and those are more often male than female accompaniments of partner assault. This is especially likely to be the case among the low income and education families where partner assaults and police calls for partner assaults are most common.

The NVAW study.

I classified the National Violence Against Women (NVAW) study as a crime study because, it was presented to respondents as a study of "personal safety" and the term "personal safety" is used repeatedly. The second question asks the respondent "Do you think violent crime is more or less of a problem for men today than previously", which can signal to respondents that the study is about crime. The tone of the NVAW keeps threats, injuries, violence, and safety before the respondent at all times. In this context, reporting that one's partner has done any of the things asked about is the same as saying that the partner is a criminal or is about to injure them.

These and other aspects of the wording and questions which are detailed in a supplemental paper (Straus, 1998) may have created a set of "demand characteristics" that led many respondents to perceive the NVAW as a study of crime, and therefore to restrict their reports to "real crimes," thus excluding most instances of assault by a partner, and especially the "harmless" assaults by women. These unintended demand characteristics probably account for the low prevalence rate found by the NVAW and for and 3 to 1 ratio of male to female offenders found by the NVAW. To the extent that this occurred, the NVAW study does not contradict the large number of family conflict studies which show that women initiate and carry out assaults on male partners at about the same rate as men attack female partners.

Family conflict Studies.

The near equal rates of assault found by family conflict studies has been attributed to a different set of methodological problems. These include purported defects in the Conflict Tactics Scales or CTS (Straus, 1979; Straus, 1990a; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996), under reporting of assaults by male respondents, and failure to take into account self-defensive violence by women and injury.

Family conflict studies often interview one partner to find out about the relationship, i.e., what the respondent has done and also what the partner has done. When men are the respondents, they may minimize their own violence and exaggerate violence by their partner. However, that cannot be the explanation for the equal rates because, regardless of whether the information comes from a male or female respondent, family conflict studies have found about equal rates of assault by the male and female partner.

Most of the family conflict studies used the Conflict Tactics Scales or CTS, and the near equality in assault rates of assault by men and women has been attributed to purported biases in the CTS (See Straus, 1990a; Straus, 1997, for a discussion of the purported biases). Consequently, it is important to examine studies that used other methods. An early study by Scanzoni, (1978) asked a sample of 321 women what they did in cases of persistent conflict with their husband. Sixteen percent reported trying to hit the husband. Sorenson and Telles's (1991) analysis of 2,392 households in the Los Angeles Epidemiological Catchment Area Study found that "Women reported higher rates ...(than men)." The National Survey of Families and Households asked "During the past year, how many fights with your partner resulted in (you/him/her) hitting, shoving, or throwing things at (you/him/her)". (Zlotnick, Kohn, Peterson, & Pearlstein, 1998) analyzed this data for the 5,474 couples in the sample and found very similar rates for assaults by men and women (5% rate for assaults by men and 4% for assaults by women).

In my early research, it seemed so obvious that women were injured more often and more seriously than men, and that domestic assaults by women were primarily in self defense, that I did not collected data on injury and self defense. I simply asserted it as a self-evident fact (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). So, when, in the 1985 National Family Violence Survey, I did ask who was the first to hit, I was surprised to find that half of the women respondents reported they had hit first (Stets & Straus, 1990). Several other studies (Bland & Om, 1986; Carrado, George, Loxam, Jones, & Templar, 1996; Demaris, 1992; Gryl, Stith, & Bird, 1991; Sorenson & Telles, 1991) also found about equal rates of initiation by men and women.

Family conflict studies rarely measure who is injured. The original CTS did not obtain data on injury. The CTS2 (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) includes a supplemental scale to measure injury, but retains the system of measuring assaults regardless of injury. However, when injury data has been obtained along with the CTS and this is used as a criterion for estimating "violence," the rate drops to a rate that is similar to the extremely low rate found in crime studies, and the percentage of assaults by men also increases to approximately the ratio found in crime studies (Straus, 1991; Straus, 1997). These findings further support the idea that

one of the main reasons crime studies find that domestic assaults are overwhelmingly committed by men is because they tend to omit so many assaults that do not result in injury.

Appropriate Uses of Family Conflict and Criminal Justice/Injury Data

The explanations just offered for the discrepancies between family conflict studies and crime studies or injury studies suggests that the findings from the two types of studies apply to different groups of people and reflect different aspects of domestic assault. Most of the violence that is revealed by surveys of family problems is relatively minor and relatively infrequent, whereas a large portion of the violence in crime studies and clinical studies is chronic and severe and often involves injuries that need medical attention. These two types of violence probably have a different etiology and probably require a different type of intervention (see Johnson, 1995). If this correct, it is important to avoid using findings based on cases known to police or shelters for battered women as the basis for understanding and dealing with the relatively minor and less frequent violence found in the population in general. That type of unwarranted generalization is often made and it is known as the "clinical fallacy."

Family conflict studies pose the opposite problem. It can be called the "representative sample fallacy" (Straus, 1990b). Family conflict studies contain very few cases involving weekly or daily assaults and injury. Consequently, family conflict studies may provide an erroneous basis for policies and interventions focused on these relatively few but extreme cases. This is a serious shortcoming because although the numbers may be relatively low, they are the cases that pose the most serious problems and which need to have priority in respect to interventions.

Much of the controversy over assaults by women stems from assuming that data from family conflict studies on assaults by women apply to cases known to the police and shelters, and the similar unwarranted assumption that the predominance of assaults by men in data from crime studies and battered women shelters applies to the population at large.

Both family conflict study data and also data from crime and battered women shelter samples are needed. Findings based on crime studies are needed to provide information on the more serious types of domestic assaults and therefore to provide a realistic basis for programs designed to aid the victims and to end this type of domestic violence. At the same time, to understand assaults on partners in the general population, which seldom involve injury, and for informing "primary prevention" efforts (Cowen, 1978), it is crucial to have family conflict data, including data on the most minor and "harmless" slap. In fact, understanding assaults that respondents do not think of as "a crime" may be the most important information for purposes of primary prevention because that is where more serious assaults start.

A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ASSAULTS BY WOMEN WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE FAMILY

One reason the repeated findings on equal rates of partner assault by men and women have been suspect is the absence of a theory to explain those findings. A similar doubt and incredulity existed when the extremely high rate of partner assaults by men was first brought to public and scientific attention by feminists. This was soon followed by a rich theoretical analysis from both a feminist and other perspectives (Gelles & Straus, 1979; Straus, 1976).

Although that sort of theoretical development has not yet happened for domestic assaults by women, some of the principles explaining domestic assaults by men also apply to women; for example, the proposition from criminology and exchange theory that the prevalence of crime is partly a function of what one can get away with. Since domestic assaults usually occur in private, both men and women can get away with it and this contributes to the high rate of domestic assault for both genders. However, the unique circumstances explaining assaults by women have not been analyzed theoretically. Table 2 makes a start in developing such a

theory. It identifies variables that are likely to or hypothesized to inhibit physical assaults by women outside the family and variables that are likely to facilitate physical assaults within the family by women. I label it a sociological perspective because, not surprisingly, as a sociologist, most of the processes I identify, refer to social norms, social relationships, and social control processes. It is also important to keep in mind that many of the starting propositions are in the form of assumptions rather than empirically demonstrated propositions. So what follows is intended as a basis for further theoretical development and empirical research.

Different Cultural Norms For Women and Men

Violence Is Rule Following Behavior.

Row A of Table 2 is based on the assumption that most human behavior, including acts of violence, are governed by cultural norms. For most behavior, the actors are unaware they are following cultural prescriptions. I have often asked students in my introductory sociology class to do small experiments (based on the work of Garfinkel, 1964) to demonstrate behavior following unperceived cultural rules. For example, I asked them, the next time they go home, to be very polite and always say please and thank you. Their notes on what happened almost invariably reveal expressions of concern such as "Are you OK. Are you sure everything is OK?" · This exercise brings to light an implicit cultural rule which allows and expects a relaxation within the family of the usual standards of civil social interaction.

Interpersonal violence, both within the family and outside the family also tends to follow unperceived rules cultural scripts (Black, 1983; Kennedy & Sacco, 1998; Luckenbill, 1977; Zimring & Hawkins, 1997). For example, lashing out physically when infidelity is discovered, is typically experienced as something that happens when a person "loses control." A large percentage of the population finds hitting an unfaithful partner to be "understandable." This indicates an implicit cultural norm that permits one to "lose it" when a partner is unfaithful, and even more so when the partner is flagrantly unfaithful. Thus, "losing control" under those circumstances is culturally expected (Ptacek, 1988).

An implicit norm that helps explain the high rate of domestic assaults by women makes the marriage licence a hitting licence (Straus & Hotaling, 1980). That implicit norm is a carry over from a previous explicit legal norm that held sway until the 1870's when the courts ceased to recognize the common law right of husbands to "physically chastise an erring wife," i.e., the right to use corporal punishment (Calvert, 1974). Other norms regulating violence include the legal right of parents to hit children for purposes of correction and control.

Gender Differences in Rules for Violence.

There are also norms about violence that are different for men and women, and different for behavior inside the family. These are illustrated in Row A of Table 2. As indicated in this row, physical assaults by women, if outside the family, are considered "unfeminine" but in the family and other intimate partner relationships, physical attacks by women are expected and lauded under certain circumstances. For example, in my generation, probably millions of young women were told by their mother "If he gets fresh, slap him" rather than "If he gets fresh, leave immediately." Then as now, slapping a man who does or says something outrageous is often seen as quintessentially feminine. Kathleen Willie, who charged President Clinton with unwanted sexual touching, said that she should have slapped his face "..but I don't think you can slap the president of the United States." In short, because of his position of power, she failed to follow the culturally prescribed script. Other examples can be seen every day on TV or in films.

Perhaps the most direct evidence of the norm permitting assault by women against male partners comes from the survey done for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, appointed in the wake of the upsurge of violence in the 1960s (National

Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, 1969). My colleagues and I replicated that study in 1985, 1992, and 1995 (Straus, Kaufman Kantor, & Moore, 1997). In 1968, more than one out of five American adults (22%) believed there are circumstances when it is permissible for a wife to slap her husband's face. That percentage has remained essentially the same up through our latest survey in 1995. The percentage approving a husband slapping his wife was slightly lower in 1968 (20%), but it declined to half that by 1995. So society is becoming less tolerant of assaults by husbands, but continues to find such assaults acceptable if done by a wife.

TABLE 2. WHAT EXPLAINS EQUAL ASSAULT RATES BY WOMEN IN THE FAMILY, BUT MUCH LOWER RATES ELSEWHERE?

INHIBITORS OF ASSAULT BY WOMEN OUTSIDE THE FAMILY	FACILITATORS OF ASSAULT BY WOMEN WITHIN THE FAMILY
A. CULTURAL NORMS: "Unfeminine" for women to hit, but "manly" for men	A. CULTURAL NORMS: An indignant women slapping a man's face epitomizes femininity to many ·**"if he gets fresh, slap him"** ·**survey data "ok for a wife to slap"** ·**examples in media**
B. LESSER SIZE AND STRENGTH: Makes women fearful of retaliation and injury by someone who is not committed to them	B. LESSER SIZE AND STRENGTH: "I knew I wouldn't hurt him"
C. SELF DEFENSE OR RETALIATION: Low because women assaulted less often (Except for rape)	C. SELF DEFENSE OR RETALIATION: High because women assaulted frequently by partners
D. GENDER NORMS FOR CONFLICT: Outside the family, women interact more with women and men more with men and male culture is more Pro violence as a means of conflict resolution	D. GENDER NORMS FOR CONFLICT: In couple relations, male partners may be less reachable with non-violent problem solving that works in woman-to-woman relationships. This increases probability of violence to force attention to the problem
E. SOURCE OF IDENTITY: Women's identity is not as strongly based on extra family interests. Therefore less need to defend interests and reputation by violence	E. SOURCE OF IDENTITY: Women's identity is as strongly or more strongly based on family than men's. Therefore equal need to defend interests and reputation
F. VIOLENCE LEVEL OF SETTING: Women are less often in high violence occupations: those requiring violence (police, military, some sports) and jobs with high violence rates such as heavy physical labor jobs	F. VIOLENCE LEVEL OF SETTING: Women spend more time at home, and 90% hit toddlers. Mothers get five to 14 years of practice in hitting as morally correct through corporal punishment of their own children
G. CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT Police involvement not greatly different for men & women	G. CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT ·**Men not likely to call the police** ·**Police not likely to arrest women** So women can get away with it even more than men

Size and Strength Differences

Row B of Table 2 suggests that the smaller average size and muscle development of women contributes to both the lower rate of assaults outside the family and the equal rate within the family. Outside the family this physical disadvantage tends to make women fearful of retaliation and injury by someone who is not committed to them, and hence to avoid physical confrontation.

But inside the family, a combination of belief that the partner will not really hurt them, and the belief that hitting is ok because, as many women told me "I knew I wouldn't hurt him" (in the sense of no physical injury as compared to causing pain) reduces inhibitions about hitting the partner and limits fear of retaliation. Statistical evidence consistent with this interpretation comes from a study by Fiebert & Gonzalez (1997). They found that 29% of their sample of 978 women college students reported having hit a male partner. Of the women who had hit, two thirds (62%) checked as one of the reasons "1 do not believe my actions would hurt my partner' or "1 believe that men can readily protect themselves so I don't worry when I become physically aggressive." The lower probability of injury for assaults by women is probably also one of the reasons why the cultural norms are more tolerant of assaults by women on their partners.

Self Defense or Retaliation

Row C of Table 2 is based on the fact that the risk of a woman being assaulted by a stranger (including the risk of being raped) is less than half of the risk to which men are exposed (Craven, 1996). But within the family, the risk of a woman being assaulted by a partner is very high. The implications of this difference stem from the fact that almost all assaults are attempts to correct what the assailant perceives as the misbehavior of the victim, such as "making a pass at my wife" or not paying back a loan, or an insulting remark. The probability of a woman getting into a physical fight with a man other than her partner who has attacked her to correct some perceived misbehavior is low. Hence the probability of a non-family assault is also low. On the other hand, the probability of being attacked by a male partner for some perceived misbehavior is high. Given the norms of American society which favor retaliation (as illustrated by a parent advising a child "If hit, hit back") the probability of a woman physically retaliating against her partner is therefore also high.

Gender Norms for Conflict

Row D of Table 2 is based on the assumption that women are more inclined to discuss disagreements and men are more inclined to use an avoidance strategy. Conversely, physical attacks are more acceptable as a means of conflict resolution among men than women. Consequently, the fact that, outside the family, women interact more with other women than with men means that they interact more with a less violence-prone part of the population, and this reduces the chances of a nonfamily conflict escalating into violence relative to the same conflict between two men. In couple relations, on the other hand, women interact with male partners who may be less reachable through discussion than in woman-to-woman relationships. When faced with a man who withdraws and refuses to talk about a problem, and the problem persists, as it often does in the family, many women resort to slapping, kicking, and throwing things in an attempt to coerce the partner to attend to the issue. Fiebert & Gonzales's (1997) data on 285 college women who had assaulted a partner are consistent with this line of reasoning. When asked about reasons for hitting the partner, 38% checked "1 wished to gain my partner's attention" and 43% checked "My partner was not listening to me." Because there was likely to be some overlap of the two responses, these data can only indicate that somewhere between 43% (complete overlap) and 81% (no overlap) indicated violence to physically coerce the partner's attention.

Source of Identity

Row E is based on research (discussed earlier) indicating that most violent acts are intended to correct the misbehavior (as the assailant sees it) of the victim. One of the most important categories of misbehavior consists of slighting or denigrating personal identity. The identity of women is less closely linked to the public world outside the family than is the identity of men. Women, on average, therefore have fewer occasions and less motivation for defending

nonfamily interests and reputation by violence. On the other hand, the identity of women is as strongly or more strongly based on what occurs within the family than is the case for men. Consequently, the need for women to defend their interests and identity in family roles is at least as great as for men. Moreover, the probability of needing to do so is increased because of cultural norms which presume that the husband is the head of the household. This creates a situation in which male partners feel privileged to direct and evaluate the behavior of their partners in the very spheres of life that are so crucial for a woman's identity. Far more women than men, for example, are likely to be deeply offended and hurt by negative comments on their cooking, tastes in household furnishing, or methods of child care.

Violence Level of Setting

The left column of Row F in Table 2 is based on the sex segregation of the labor market. The large differences in type of employment that are typical of men and women locate many men, but few women, in job settings where the assault rate is high. This includes occupations directly involving violence such as the and the military, and some sports. It also includes occupations requiring heavy physical labor, which perhaps because they are male occupations, tend to have higher rates of violence than do white collar occupations. Thus, women are not involved in the violence associated with many male occupational settings and this keeps their nonfamily assault rate down. The same principle applies to the lower involvement of women in many violence prone recreational settings, such as visiting bars (Felson, 1997).

The right column of row F refers to the domestic setting. Ironically, the domestic setting tends to be high in violence, even in the households of college educated couples (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Straus, GeNes, & Steinmetz, 1980). The violence in domestic settings that has come to public attention in recent decades (but has always been present) is assaults on spouses. But in addition, households are the locus of the most violent relationship in American families -- the relation between parents and children. Over 90% of parents hit toddlers (Straus, 1994; Straus & Stewart, 1998) and over a third are still doing it when the children are in their early teens. Because mothers are the primary caretakers, more of this is done by women.

The violent child rearing that American children experience under such euphemisms as "physical punishment," "spanking," "a good swat on the behind," and "a good slap on the face for mouthing off," has many profound negative consequences which are only now starting to be recognized (Straus, 1994; Straus & Paschall, 1998; Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims, 1997). One of these is that both having been hit repeatedly by parents as a child (the typical experience of American children) and hitting one's own children, provides role practice in violence to correct misbehavior, and this tends to spill over to correcting the misbehavior of the mother's partner (Straus, 1994; Straus & Yodanis, 1996, Chart 7-3), thus constituting one more factor contributing to the high rate of partner assault by women.

Criminal Justice System Involvement

Traditionally, police and prosecutors have been reluctant to become involved in the crime of assault, regardless of whether it occurs outside the family or inside (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1996). One of the reasons is that arrests and prosecutions for assault do not receive the public recognition of arresting, for example, a robber. Moreover, assaults are typically in the form of "fights" involving both parties and, legally, both parties should be prosecuted regardless of who started it. Under those circumstances, the probability of a case actually being tried, much less resulting in a conviction, are low relative to arrests for other crimes. Such cases are regarded as "trouble." Police and prosecutors do not get much recognition, and may even be faulted if there are very many such cases in their record. Outside the family, those principles apply to both men and women and the risk of police involvement is not greatly different for men and women.

For domestic assaults, both women and men as well as the police have been even more reluctant to involve the police (Kaufman Kantor & Straus, 1990; Straus, 1977). As a result of the women's movement, this has changed. In most jurisdictions in the United States, state laws or police regulations now require or recommend arrest. However, consistent with the greater injury rate for women, these laws and regulations may state or imply a male offender. Although on average, when there is an injury, this is correct, it may deny male victims equal protection under the law. In fact, there are a growing number of complaints that attempts by men to obtain police protection may result in the man being arrested (Cook, 1997). That ironic situation is an additional reason that men are reluctant to call for police protection. The main reason is one already discussed in explaining gender differences in police statistics: the injury rate is much lower when the offender is a woman and there is therefore less perceived need to call for protection. The fact that assault is a legal and moral crime, regardless of whether there is injury is lost from view. '

Men are also less likely to call the police, even when there is injury, because, like women, they feel shame about disclosing family violence. But for many men, the shame is compounded by the shame of not being able to keep their wives under control. Among this group, a "real man" would be able to keep her under control. Moreover, the police tend to share these same traditional gender role expectations. This adds to the legal and regulatory presumption that the offender is a man. As a result, the police are reluctant to arrest women for domestic assault. Women know this. That is, they know they are likely to be able to get away with it. As in the case of other crimes, the probability of a woman assaulting her partner is strongly influenced by what she thinks she can get away with (Gelles & Straus, 1988).

The Theoretical Agenda

To convert the present discussion of factors that inhibit and facilitate assaults by women in different settings into a theory requires expanding the number of etiological factors considered and less exclusive reliance on social factors. It requires tracing out the links and interactions among the factors. Although developing such a theory is a large task, even the limited discussion in this chapter may help advance research on gender differences in partner assaults. Such a theoretical development is needed because one of the paradoxical aspects of science is that although empirical data are the ultimate determinants of what is "scientific knowledge," empirical facts by themselves are suspect until there is a plausible theory to explain them. My hope is that by providing at least part of the needed theoretical understanding, this chapter may contribute to transforming the question of gender differences in partner assault from the realm of polemics and recrimination (Straus, 1990c; Straus, 1992b) to the realm of theoretically based empirical research.

A SOCIOLOGY OF SCIENCE ANALYSIS OF THE CONTROVERSY

The previous paragraph assumes that the parties involved would like to see the controversy over domestic assaults by women transformed from the realm of polemics to the realm of theoretically based empirical research. But that is not necessarily the case. In order to understand why it may not be the case, it is helpful to return to the question how violence is defined. This is because much of the controversy over violence by women occurs as a result of each side using "violence" to refer to something different. I will call these two approaches broad and narrow definitions. The focus on broad versus narrow conceptions of violence is a heuristic device to help identify some of the underlying issues. Moreover, some of the differences are artificial in the sense that they are not mutually exclusive. Finally, not every basis for this controversy is linked to the issue of broad versus narrow definitions.

As shown in the first two rows of Table 3, the narrow definition restricts violence to the act of assault, regardless of injury, whereas the broad definition defines violence to include multiple modes of maltreatment and the resulting injury. One reason each of these definitions is unacceptable to those who adhere to the other is that more than scientific issues are at stake. Each definition also reflects an underlying moral agenda and professional role. Consequently, to abandon one or the other definition is tantamount to abandoning that agenda and professional role.

As indicated in Row C of Table 3, those using a broad definition tend to be service providers and feminist activists and those using a narrow definition tend to be researchers, but there are many researchers who use a broad definition. A broad definition is essential for service providers. It would be ridiculous and unethical if service providers such, as shelters, batterer treatment programs, or marital therapists, restricted their focus to physical assaults and ignored the psychological assaults, sexual coercion, subjugation, and economic situation of battered women, or the behavior of men who engage in these other forms of degradation. On the other hand, those who use a narrow definition tend to be academics and researchers. They tend to focus on investigating one specific type of maltreatment, such as physical assaults, because each type is complex and difficult to investigate. Much can only be learned by a concentrated research focus. I believe that most of those who focus on just one form of maltreatment also recognize the need for research that takes into consideration multiple modes of maltreatment, even though they themselves do not conduct that type of research.

The difference in emphasis on injury reflects the different needs of service providers and researchers. For a service provider, it is essential to know if the assault resulted in injury because different steps are needed to deal with cases involving injury. For a researcher who is investigating such things as the type of family or type of society in which partner assaults are most likely to occur, injury may not be a crucial issue because it can be assumed that injury occurs in a certain proportion of cases. Moreover, for some purposes it is necessary to exclude injury as a criterion. One of these is research that seeks to estimate the prevalence of domestic assaults. If injury is one of the criteria, it restricts the data to more serious assaults and, as we have seen, the overall prevalence rate is vastly underestimated. Thus, the widely cited figure from the National Family Violence Survey of 1,800,000 women severely assaulted each year becomes only 188,000 when the criteria for a severe assault includes injury (Straus, 1990b; Straus, 1991; Straus, 1997). Of course, this is a false dichotomy. As indicated in a previous section, both figures are needed. Feminist activists, for example use both figures (see rows D and E of Table 3). They have made extensive use of the 1,800,000 figure (often presented as a woman is battered every 15 seconds) to mobilize resources. At the same time they also use police, crime survey, and emergency room statistics to show that there are many more women victims (in the sense of injured).than male victims.

TABLE 3. VARIABLES UNDERLYING BROAD VERSUS NARROW DEFINITIONS OF VIOLENCE.

	BROAD DEFINITION	NARROW DEFINITION
A. COVERAGE	All Types of Maltreatment	Only Physical Assault
B. ROLE OF INJURY IN CONCEPT OF VIOLENCE	An Inherent Part of the Concept	One of Many Possible Consequences to Be Investigated
C. OCCUPATION/ ROLE	Service Providers/Feminist Activists	Academics/Researchers
D. STATISTICS FAVORED TO DESCRIBE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM	Police and Crime Survey Because They Show More Women Victims and Suggest Cause Is Patriarchy	Family Conflict Because They Show Ubiquity of the Problem and Suggest Multiple Causes

E. STATISTICS FAVORED TO MOBILIZE RESOURCES	Family Conflict Because Rates Are Many Times Greater	Family Conflict Because Rates Are Many Times Greater
F. PRIMARY (BUT NOT EXCLUSIVE) MORAL CONCERN	End Oppression of Women, Regardless of the Type of Oppression	End Physical Assaults, Regardless of the Gender of Perpetrator or Victim
G. PRIMARY USE OF RESEARCH USING THE DEFINITION	Cessation of Assaults on Women, Especially Assaults Experienced as a "Real Crime"	"Primary Prevention" of Physical Violence of All Types, from Spanking to Murder

Row F of Table 3 was included to suggest that, underlying the differences just discussed is a deep seated difference in moral agenda. Those who use a broad definition tend to be primarily concerned with the well being of women. They are, of course, also concerned with physical assaults regardless of who is the victim, but their primary concern is ending maltreatment of women. Moreover, as is to be expected, they are hostile to research that might be used by critics of feminism, and this includes research on assaults by women. On the other hand, those defining violence as a physical assault, tend to place ending physical violence at the CENTER of their agenda, regardless of whether the offender is a man, woman, or child. Of the two evils, physical violence and the oppression of women, physical violence tends to take priority, even though (as in my case) they are also concerned with ending all types of gender inequality and maltreatment.

The last row of Table 3 brings us back to the idea that research using a broad definition and emphasizing injury, may be most useful for informing programs designed to treat offenders or help victims. By contrast, research focusing on the act of assault, most of which does not involve injury but does involve millions of couples, may be most useful for informing programs of "primary prevention," i.e., steps that will prevent physical assaults from ever happening.

It is also important to realize that some of the participants in this controversy do not realize or deny that moral agendas and professional roles are involved. For example, Patricia Tjaden (personal communication, March 11, 1998.) wrote "1 certainly hope that you are not suggesting that I or my colleagues are motivated by any type of moral agenda when we developed and implemented the NVAW Survey." In fact, a moral agenda is evident from the title of her study, the "National Violence Against Women Survey" and from the fact that the original plan was to interview only women and to ask only about their victimization, omitting violence perpetrated by women. Perhaps Tjaden meant that this moral agenda was specified by the sponsoring agencies. I hope she did not mean that because research to provide a deeper understanding of violence against women is a worthy moral goal, it is necessarily unscientific. My own insistence that we also study assaults by women is driven by a different, but I think also worthy, moral agenda -- that of ending violence, regardless of who is the perpetrator.

WILL THE CONTROVERSY END?

The analysis in the preceding section suggests that neither side is motivated to understand the other. Rather, each seeks to impose its perspective because they believe the preferred definition is vital to advancing their moral agenda and professional objectives. In my opinion, that will continue. Moreover, society would lose if either side gives up their perspective because society benefits from the moral agenda and professional contribution of both sides. I for one do not intend to give up attempting to advance the "no violence by anyone" moral agenda that has informed my research on domestic assaults and spanking children for 30 years (Straus, 1994).

I believe humanity needs research inspired by the moral agenda and perspective of those who focus on the oppression of women, regardless of whether the oppression is physical, sexual, psychological or economic; and also research inspired by the moral agenda of those who focus on physical assault, regardless of whether the assault is by a man, woman or child. I even dare to hope that the controversy will be resolved by recognizing the need for both perspectives, and that this will bring an end to attempts to discredit those whose agenda and professional role requires a different approach and different perspective.

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