

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

BY

JOHN J. XENAKIS



*A Book on Gender Issues for Men...
And For Women Who Care About Men*

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This book is printed on acid free paper.

To Jason, who makes it all worthwhile.

Nobody will ever win the battle of the sexes. There's just too much fraternizing with the enemy.

- Dr. Henry Kissinger

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Preface

Women file for divorce twice as often as men, and many studies have shown that men suffer considerably more in divorce, with much higher rates of depression, illness and suicide (see p. 39 and chapter 4).

And that should be no surprise. Many men work for only one purpose – to provide for their families, and to enjoy the benefits of family life. When their family lives are destroyed, many feel they no longer have any real purpose in working, or any real purpose of living. And then to be forced to make substantial child support payments to the ex-wife who, two out of three times, engineered that destruction, generates hatreds in him that last for decades (pp 42 and 283).

Then comes the next shock: The social workers, psychologists, and judges, mostly women, side against him consistently, *as a matter of policy*, and irrespective of the facts (p. 1). One man after another told me how they were treated acrimoniously and contemptuously by social workers and other women professionals, for no other reason than that they were men (p. 2).

I understand that Susan Faludi, the most widely quoted feminist author of the 1990s, has said that she's puzzled as to why men dislike feminists who, she says, only want equal pay and equal rights for women.

However, everyone agrees about equal pay and equal rights for women. The real face of feminism today is the acrimonious social worker who treats every man as an abuser, simply because he's a man.

So, some years ago, I decided that I would write a book on men and divorce – to tell men's stories, and what's happening to them.

But as I talked to people, I discovered that feminists have an enormous weapon, a weapon so terrifying that it sends any man running for his life (metaphorically).

All a women's group has to do is bring forward just one woman telling how she's been beaten by her husband, or raped by her father, and nothing else really matters. It doesn't matter if a million men's and children's lives are being destroyed by social workers and ex-wives, if just one woman was beaten by her husband or raped by her father, then none of that matters.

"So what if men are a little inconvenienced by social workers," these women would say. "You men harass, abuse and batter women all the time, so you deserve anything you get."

That's when I learned that writing about divorce was not enough. I had to greatly expand my research into other gender issues – sexual harassment, rape, child abuse and, of course, domestic violence.

What I found was frightening and depressing. As I researched one policy area after another, I found that there was nothing to any of it but bare-knuckle politics – by the open admission of the feminists themselves through their doctrine, "The Personal is Political" (p. 78). Research is routinely exaggerated and distorted, and researchers who disagree are sometimes even threatened or purposely misquoted (pp. 109 and 122). There were even some out and out hoaxes (see, for example, Lenore Walker's Super Bowl hoax on p. 119 and Professor Lenore Weitzman's child support hoax on p. 341), purely to gain political power and public funding.

Even worse, the evidence suggests that feminist politics and feminist organizations stand to gain the most by making false accusations of harassment or rape or domestic violence against innocent men, because innocent men are more likely to try to fight back in court, and more likely to fight to see their children. There are tens of thousands of false charges of domestic violence each year in Massachusetts alone (p. 160), and men fighting back against these charges generate millions or perhaps billions of dollars in grants and fees for various feminist organizations – social service organizations, court clinics, battered women's shelters, visitation centers, feminist legal services agencies, women's protective services – that collude with each other and with women judges, following the feminist policy of always siding with the mother against the father, to bring these false charges for the benefit of all of them (p. 47).

Worst of all, no one – least of all the feminists implementing the policies – ever claims that women are happier, less harassed, less raped, less abused, or less battered.

Indeed, there is evidence that just the opposite is true: Aggressive sexual harassment hyping may have cost women millions of good-paying jobs (p. 72); hyping domestic violence figures makes it seem normal, discouraging women from leaving violent relationship and men from trying to change things (p. 156), and also prevents couples in relationships with some violence from getting help (p. 174).

As I examined one feminist policy after another, I found that some feminist policies help women, many of the hurt women, but they all have one thing in common: They are designed to make money for private feminist organizations, usually by less than ethical means, to line the pockets of the people in charge, to provide money for their feminist friends (see summary, p. 177).

At the national level, the name of the game for feminists is money and power in the Democratic Party organization. This is the reason that feminists supported

and carried water for President Clinton, even after he had been credibly accused of being a serial rapist.

Now, let me say I'm pretty much apolitical. I thought Clinton was the best candidate for President in 1996, and in 2000, I would have been just as happy with Al Gore's winning as George W. Bush. I don't care much for Ralph Nader, but I do agree with him completely that there's not much difference between Gore and Bush♦ (though unlike Nader, I believe both candidates were pretty good, not pretty bad).

However, no matter how many pandering columns by Thomas Oliphant I might read, no matter how many times I might hear James Carville shriek, and no matter how many times I might hear feminist talking heads spout weak rationalizations, I cannot now and will not ever understand how the same people who had screamed bloody murder several years earlier because a black man had allegedly told a woman a few dirty jokes ten years earlier could now carry water for a credibly accused serial rapist (p. 85). I wonder if Patricia Ireland, former president of NOW, has ever speculated about how many rapes she's indirectly responsible for because of the messages she sent.

I've been a computer industry journalist for many years, describing products that range from games and word processors up to accounting and logistics systems that run entire corporations, and I've always tried to focus on "news you can use," information that you can put into practice right away. That's how I've treated this book.

Every chapter of this book tries to be "news you can use" if you're a man, or if you're a woman trying to help a man through a crisis: Information that you need to help you deal with social workers, human relations people, and other people, usually women, usually pro-feminist, who charge men with a variety of "gender crimes."

And I've tried to make this book as encyclopedic as I reasonably could, providing up to date information on almost every gender issue.

For example, are you interested in the subject of rape, perhaps because someone in your life is dealing with rape or an accusation of rape, or perhaps because you're involved in rape prevention programs on your campus or in your community? In chapter 2, you'll read about the feminist view of rape, the politics of rape, and the latest research on how serial rapists succeed at what they do, as well as information on evidence linking pornography and rape and the prevalence of date rape.

Or, suppose you need some information about child abuse, perhaps because you're divorced and you've been accused of abusing your children or you're afraid that your ex-wife or her boyfriend are abusing your children, or perhaps because you're looking for ways to reduce child abuse in your community. On page 18, you'll find out how social workers view child abuse, you'll find the latest child abuse statistics on page 127, and the differences between sociopathic or pathological and transactional child abusers, and how well public policy can find child abusers on pages 145 and 150.

When discussing all these topics, I try to provide my own interpretation and analysis, but I never let my opinions get in the way of presenting all sides of an issue. For example, I may disagree with feminists who claim that violence by women is unimportant, but you'll still find a full presentation of the feminist view of violence by women starting on page 139. This means that even if you disagree with some of the conclusions I reach, you can still read the full presentation knowing differing opinions have been presented to the best of my ability, and you can reach your own conclusions.

Of all the material in this book, I strongly urge any man who is going to be dealing with social workers (which, sooner or later, is every man) to read chapter 1 very carefully. This chapter is tough reading, but you'll find detailed information here on how social workers and other feminist professionals think and act. It literally took me years of confusion to figure this material out, and you won't find as thorough and complete and valuable a presentation of this subject in any other book.

In particular, if you expect to be going through a divorce, you should make a point of trying to understand the overwhelming hatred you may end up feeling for your ex-wife (p. 42). You will need to manage that hatred, so that your ex-wife won't be able to use it against you.

Here's a summary of the contents of all the chapters:

- Chapter 1, "My Story," tells you why social workers act the way they do. If you're a man going through a contested divorce, or dealing with social workers for any reason, then you may have already learned that most social workers deal with men pretty acrimoniously. Read this chapter to learn why social workers do what they do, what they're thinking, and what their point of view is.

Why are they so offensive to men? How can you recognize it? How do they rationalize it to themselves? And what effect does it have on men? The material in this chapter, which is geared to helping men, is unlike anything that's appeared in any other book.

- Chapter 2, "Real Rape," moves into the national political arena, analyzing how feminists have not helped women (they don't even claim to have helped women) and how they in fact have hurt women in their sexual harassment and rape policies.

The title of this chapter is an especially ironic one. *Real Rape* was the title of a book by Susan Estrich, who herself had been violently raped. When she became President Clinton's principal defender after Clinton was credibly charged with rape, she became one of the people whom, her book makes clear, she despises the most — people in power (usually men) who support rapists by refusing to condemn them. She (like other feminists) sold out herself and her most fundamental beliefs for purely political reasons.

Like much of this book, this chapter contains information that's intended to be educational, because I believe that the best way to help people — in this case, potential victims of rape — is to have the most accurate information available. It presents a summary of research on how rapists work, along with some suggests for changes to public policy with regard to rape.

- Chapter 3, "Family Violence," addresses the questions of domestic violence and child maltreatment. Once again, the latest research is presented, along with an analysis of how feminist policies have hurt women in violent relationships, and suggestions for public policies changes to reduce domestic violence.
- Chapter 4, "Liberation Day and the Dance of Renewal," came out of an attempt on my part to understand why it is that twice as many women as men file for divorce, often for trivial reasons. One of the conclusions of this chapter is that many women seek this "Dance of Renewal" (to quote one author) because she can take advantage of substantial child support payments she'll receive to fund her liberation, which takes place without regard to the enormous harm she does to her children and their father.

This chapter also contains the latest research — this time on predicting whether a marriage will end in divorce, and what can be done to prevent divorce. Although this information is targeted to men, many women in distressed marriages will also find this information useful, if they wish to try to save their marriages.

- Chapter 5, "Lawyers," is a short chapter on abuses by divorce lawyers.
- Chapter 6, "A Plea for Nonpartisan Male Activism," is an analysis of the many, many myths about fathers that prevail in society today.

Unfortunately, we men tend to leave gender issues to women; many men are simply afraid to talk about them. Unfortunately, women haven't done so well, in my opinion. This chapter urges men to become activists.

- Chapter 7, "Due Process," contains a "Model Harassment Policy." Feminists usually define sexual harassment as any action by a man which any woman at any times says is sexual harassment for any reason. This Model Harassment Policy, which was developed online by me and a sexual harassment activist working together, defines exactly what sexual harassment is, and describes procedures that a company can adopt to actually reduce sexual harassment in the workplace – something which feminist policies have so far failed to do.
- Chapter 8, "Miscellaneous Essays on Gender Issues," is a collection of essays on various gender issues. Many of these essays were previously published in my weekly online column, "Fraternizing With The Enemy." Some of these essays contain advice, some contain information, and others are just for fun.
- The Appendix, "Feminist Literature," is a survey of feminist books that I've reviewed over the years, and which have spoken to my understanding of how feminists act and think. I believe that every man should have some familiarity with feminist literature, if only to understand how preposterous and even bizarre it is. Nonetheless, many social workers and other women professionals actually believe this material, and understanding feminist literature means you'll have a better understand of these women professionals.

I think it's pretty safe to say that, at this point, this is not so much a book that I *wanted* to write as a book that I *had* to write.

This book has been an obsession with me, ever since my divorce in the mid 1980s. Almost every minute of my spare time for the last 15 years has been devoted to doing research, reporting or writing.

My anger and outrage keep getting renewed almost on a daily basis: a friend's ex-wife moves away so that he'll rarely see his children again, even though he'll have to continue making substantial child support payments to support her carefree lifestyle; a man whose ex-wife takes their son on vacation two or three times a year, but can't afford a vacation himself because of substantial child support payments, and who then wants to take just one vacation with his son after many years, but is prevented from doing so by his vengeful ex-wife; the

Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court forces a man to continue making large child support payments to a woman, even though DNA evidence proves that he's not the father and that his girlfriend had lied to the court several years earlier when she claimed that he was the father.

When I finally, finally, finished a first draft that I could live with, late in 2000, it was actually a great surprise to me. I had almost concluded that I would be working on this book for the rest of my life, and that I would never get it finished. (My own father had had that precise experience — he worked for years on a book on mechanical engineering, but it was never completed.)

I spent the first part of 2001 trying to find a literary agent to represent me with publishers. I look back on the stack of rejections, including some snide remarks, with amusement now. I finally decided to publish my book myself, using the service provided by 1stbooks.com.

I have long since disabused myself of the notion that publishing this book is going to make me any friends. I learned this years ago, when I found that if I told a new acquaintance that I was writing a book on "men and divorce," I would often get puzzled, sometimes disapproving looks. A lot of people simply dislike divorced fathers. Period.

However, I must say that this barrage of disapproval has probably had the perverse effect on me of making me even more determined to get this book completed.

Actually, strong disagreements about gender issues are more the rule than the exception, anyway. Everyone knows what an emotional issue abortion rights is, and that opinions usually split along party lines. But there are other issues that can cause an argument and a fight even among people in the same political party.

For example, you can start an emotional argument at almost any party just by raising the question of whether it's ok to spank the kids; I've started just such arguments among other people a couple of times, just for perverse amusement.

And recently I read a survey of new mothers that says that the bottle-feeders express disapproval of women who breast-feed in public,[♦] and breast-feeders think bottle feeders are "selfish and lazy." Other questions sure to raise blood pressure are whether a woman should change her name when marrying, and the value of home schooling.

So it's not surprising that practically everyone, even divorced fathers, will find something in this book to dislike. Some people confuse my criticisms of feminists with criticisms of all women, and dislike me for that. The Republicans dislike my criticisms of the Christian right, and the Democrats dislike my criticisms of the feminist left (pp. 74 and 230). Others dislike my comments on gender and race (p. 196), or my discussion of the O.J. Simpson case (p. 300).

Some of the experiences I had online in women's issues forums were appalling. While some women were sympathetic and supportive, many more were openly

hostile. I was attacked, flamed, purposely misquoted to discredit me, lied about, and called a variety of names like "misogynist" or "woman-hater" or worse. Fortunately, none of the lies held up, since complete records of everything I wrote were readily available online.

On the other hand, there are the words of Doris Lessing[♦], well-known feminist icon and author of many books, including *The Grass is Singing* and *The Golden Notebook*. The 81-year-old Zimbabwean-born writer recently said that men were the new silent victims in the sex war, "continually demeaned and insulted" by women without a whimper of protest. She added:

I find myself increasingly shocked at the unthinking and automatic rubbishing of men which is now so part of our culture that it is hardly even noticed.

Great things have been achieved through feminism.... We have many wonderful, clever, powerful women everywhere, but what is happening to men? Why did this have to be at the cost of men?

I was in a class of nine- and 10-year-olds, girls and boys, and this young woman was telling these kids that the reason for wars was the innately violent nature of men.

You could see the little girls, fat with complacency and conceit while the little boys sat there crumpled, apologizing for their existence, thinking this was going to be the pattern of their lives.

[The teacher tried to] catch my eye, thinking I would approve of this rubbish. This kind of thing is happening in schools all over the place and no one says a thing.... It has become a kind of religion that you can't criticize because then you become a traitor to the great cause, which I am not.

It is time we began to ask who are these women who continually rubbish men. The most stupid, ill-educated and nasty woman can rubbish the nicest, kindest and most intelligent man and no one protests.

Men seem to be so cowed that they can't fight back, and it is time they did.

Wow! I couldn't have said it better. Even so-called "fathers' rights" groups, which I speak of highly in chapter 6, often do no better than whine and whimper. So I guess I need to fight back.

And what about getting everything right?

I've read and reread and reread and reread this 180,000 word manuscript many, many times, and each time I do, I always find some things that need clarification or even correction. I know that if I read it ten more times, then I'd find ten more sets of things to clarify or correct.

That's why I'm setting up a web site, <http://www.fraternizing.org> . On that web site, I will be clarifications, corrections and controversies. You're invited to submit your comments or corrections to that web site.

I want to thank several friends for helping me get this book done.

Adriane Kuller is a friend who has been a sounding board and who has provided consistent support and encouragement. She frequently took on the arduous task of trying to help me understand women, and occasionally even got through.

Susan Pahigian is a researcher who was tireless in tracking down hundreds of research papers on a variety of subjects related to divorce and other gender issues. There was nothing that was too obscure for her to track down, usually in record time.

Cheryl Kondratow, president of Women Against Sexual Harassment (WASH), worked with me online to develop the Model Harassment Policy in chapter 7. Coming up with a sexual harassment policy that's acceptable to both men and women was a great deal of work for both of us, and I thank her for the effort.

There were literally hundreds of people online who contributed to this book in one way or another, sometimes by being supportive or sometimes calling me an idiot, but always telling me where I was going wrong and helping me to clarify my thoughts.

Although there are too many of these even to list, several are described in "Women I Have Known ... Online" on page 322.

However, there are two I'd like to single out. Deborah "Russ" Russell, former Sysop of the CompuServe Women's Wire Forum, and Cynthia L. Stern, Sysop of the MSN Feminist and Womanist Philosophy forum. Neither of these women could hardly be said to agree with everything I've written, but both of them supported me and the discussions I had in their respective forums because both women believed that open, honest discussion of the issues is what's best for women.

Finally, I'd like to thank Roxie, my mother, for all her help and support before she passed away. I could not have gotten through the last 15 years without her.

Special Features of this Book

This is a very unusual book for reasons beyond its subject matter.

This was formatted, cross-referenced and indexed from text files (see page LV for details). Because of the heavy use of computer automation in formatting this book, it has a number of special features, including the following:

- There are many cross-references ("see page xxx") throughout the book, relating one section of the book to another.
- Whenever you see the symbol "♦" appearing in the text, then there's a corresponding entry in the End Notes section (see page I, following page 356). This is usually a reference to another book or research paper.
- The index to this book (see page XIX) is a Concept Index. For example, in a discussion of child abuse, chapter 1 contains a reference to Simone de Beauvoir's classic book, *The Second Sex*. Suppose you're looking for that entry. Since the entire concept is indexed, you can find this quotation by looking up any of the words in the concept — including Simone, Beauvoir, second, sex, child and abuse — in the Concept Index. So if you're looking for information about some concept, you can find that information if you can think of just one word in the concept.

This book is still a "work in progress" — new information on gender issues comes out all the time. For that reason, I'm setting up a web site:

<http://www.fraternizing.org>

This web site will contain updated information, reader comments, corrections, controversies, and other information.

John J. Xenakis

Chapter 1 – My Story

"We always do what's best for the children," said the young social worker Carrie Phillips in 1986. "Whenever there's a disagreement between the mother and the father, we always side with the mother, because that's what's in the best interest of the children."

This was the first time that a social worker made it explicitly clear to me that they have a policy of always siding with the mother against the father, no matter what the circumstances. Carrie Phillips was speaking for the Middlesex Court Clinic, in Cambridge, Mass., a clinic associated with the divorce court. The clinic was supposed to provide therapy and mediation between divorcing or separating parents when custody, visitation and support issues are involved.

This clinic's charter is indeed "to do what's best for the children," but their interpretation of this doctrine is to always side with the mother against the father. This is, of course, strict feminist policy, but one of the many things that always astounded me when I dealt with these women was that they were so open about their policy. I'm not a lawyer, but it seems to me that Ms. Phillips' statement was literally in violation of state and federal law, but that made no difference. She openly discriminated against men, and she didn't care if I knew it.

This conversation took place when my son Jason was a little over 1 1/2 years old. I had actually requested this meeting (through my lawyer) because my ex-wife was relentlessly hassling me about visitation. Several months earlier, she had gone to Jason's pediatrician, whom she had selected, a woman by the name of Dr. Mary Scott of Longwood Pediatrics in Boston, and asked Dr. Scott to write a letter expressing the opinion that it would be bad for Jason to spend more than two hours at a time with me, even though there was no justification for that restriction.

Dr. Scott obliged by writing a letter[♦] saying that "a child less than 2 years of ages needs frequent short exposures to the non-custodial parents. ... No prolonged visits (more than 3 hours) are necessary or desirable for children in this age group."

Her use of the phrase "frequent short exposures to the non-custodial parent" indicates that she thinks of a father as more like an X-ray machine than a human

being. And the limitation to 3 hours has no basis whatsoever in pediatrics: She simply made it up out of thin air.

As we'll see, Dr. Scott was following a feminist policy that the only reason that a father would want to spend time with his children is so that he can abuse them. And like Carrie Phillips, Dr. Scott not only openly discriminated against men and didn't care if I knew it but might even have been committing malpractice.

I've never met Dr. Scott in person, but I tried to meet her once, to discuss her letter with her. I spoke to her on the phone, and asked to come and speak to her about the letter she had written. She refused, and said that she didn't want to spend time speaking to crybabies. (I guess I must have whined a little when I asked her about the letter.) Dr. Scott was extremely acrimonious and offensive to me, but once again it turns out that even that offensiveness is feminist policy.

The core argument of this book is that feminism has degenerated. At the national level, feminism is a very powerful political group caring about nothing more than money and power, even at the expense of women. At the local level, feminism is a large body of social workers who are for themselves and their budgets, salaries and head count. An important key is lucrative fees generated by making false charges of domestic violence against men; the more innocent a man is, the harder he'll fight back, and the more money, the feminist legal services, psychologist and social services firms make. It's a very cynical system, and a lot of good people are getting hurt.

In reaching these conclusions I did a great deal of research, including interviews and discussions with literally hundreds of feminists, as well as extensive review of feminist literature. Dozens of these interactions are documented throughout this book, and my review of feminist literature is summarized in the appendix, as well as through quotations throughout the book. Until someone is willing to pay for a more formal study, my research constitutes the best study to date of the attitudes, beliefs and practices of those who call themselves feminists.

However, part of this chapter is telling my own story and the story of other men. My story isn't particularly interesting, nor are the stories of other men, but I have to tell these stories in order to anchor the research conclusions that I reach. I've told these stories as briefly as I can, and I ask you to suffer through them, as you reach this chapter's conclusions. And as a reward, once you've read through this chapter, you'll find very little further discussion of my story in subsequent chapters.

Open Discrimination

Unfortunately, the open discrimination against men that I saw is all too common. One way that it comes about is that ordinary women seem to believe other women before they'll believe a man. This is a weakness that unscrupulous women can take advantage of.

It's been a particular problem for fathers simply trying to get grade reports and other school information about their own children, and unfortunately women working in these institutions seem to be exceptionally gullible when it comes to believing stories told by other women.

"My ex-wife is alcoholic and very controlling," said "Ed Meyer," a divorced father. "She was friends with our pediatrician's nurse, and told her that she had a court order forbidding me from interfering with any aspect of her life and the life of my children." There was no such court order, but the nurse simply believed the ex-wife, and prevented this father from getting medical information about his children.

Meyer ran into a similar problem trying to get his children's school records. "I discovered that my ex-wife had arranged to put a note in each of their school records saying that if I made any inquiries, she was to be notified immediately." In this case, he was able to do something about it though. "I contacted the superintendent of schools, who was a man and very savvy. At my request, he checked out my ex-wife's story and found it to be false, so I got the school records." Meyer found that other men are at least willing to check out his ex-wife's story, while women seem to believe anything a woman tells them.

In past years, it's been very difficult for divorced fathers to get grade reports and other information about their own children, since most school teachers are women. Here in Massachusetts, and in other states, fathers' rights groups have gotten laws passed that force recalcitrant schoolteachers to provide this information to divorced fathers. Nowadays, it's much easier for fathers to get information about their children.

However, it's a difficult, uphill fight for every divorced father, since too many women professionals automatically believe stories by vengeful ex-wives without question.

Returning to my own situation, I had actually beaten my ex-wife in court a couple of times and kept getting court orders increasing the amount of time that I could spend with Jason, but I really wanted to do things more amicably, and that's why I had requested the meeting with Carrie Philipps. However, it was pretty clear that it was a complete waste of time talking to these feminist women, so I didn't go back there anymore.

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

Skip ahead to spring, 1988, when we got a divorce decree. My lawyer had followed a very aggressive strategy, and got the judge to decree, over my ex-wife's vehement but unsupported objections, to substantially increase the amount of time I would spend with Jason. I would see Jason three times per week, including one overnight per week, and on October 28, 1988, he would start spending one weekend per month with me.

My ex-wife was determined to stop the weekend visits, and this time it was she who (through her lawyer) applied to the court to have us return to the Middlesex Court Clinic. Incredibly, these meetings lasted over a year, and they were some of the most bizarre happenings of my life.

There was a backdrop to all this. At age 3 1/2, Jason was going through a difficult time. He had a remarkable form of mutism, where he was refusing to speak to anyone outside his immediate family. He would speak to me and my mother, and to his mother and her family — a total of seven people! — but he would not say a word to anyone else. He had had this condition for almost a year. In addition, Jason was showing signs of violence — getting angry, kicking and hitting people, and throwing things at them. My ex-wife, of course, decided that the reason for these problems was that he was spending too much time with his father. My response was that it was caused by his spending too little time with his father. Events later proved I was right.

My first meeting upon returning to the Middlesex Court Clinic was with Ms. Barbara Hauser, the social worker who headed the clinic, but without my ex-wife.

Ms. Hauser is an important public official here in Massachusetts. Not only does she oversee an important bureaucracy of social workers, but she's also important in setting social policy throughout the state. She testifies regularly before the state legislature, and is frequently quoted in newspaper and magazine articles.

The meeting with Ms. Hauser was as bad as my worst nightmare. She asked me general questions about Jason for about twenty minutes, then told me she was "concerned" that because of Jason's mutism and violence, and she wanted me to postpone the scheduled weekend visits until she could perform some sort of evaluation. (Whenever a social worker uses the word "concerned," you can be pretty sure you're going to hear some psychobabble.) I had expected her to say something like this, and in fact I had discussed this at length with my lawyer, who reminded me that I had a divorce decree from a court specifying the first weekend visit on October 28, 1988, and that if I agreed to postpone this visit by even one week, then my ex-wife and Ms. Hauser would be able to indefinitely postpone all further weekend visits for a long time. If I then tried to get her held in contempt of court, she would simply claim that I had agreed to a delay.

Talking to other divorced men, I've since learned that this is a trap that many men fall into. If you're in a similar situation, under no circumstances should you voluntarily give up visitation time. If your ex-wife wants to make a case, force her to do it in court, and save the paperwork to show to your children later. If you voluntarily give in, you and your children will regret it for years.

So I told Ms. Hauser: No, I have a court order specifying a weekend visit on October 28, 1988, and I expect to go ahead with that.

This answer was definitely not to the liking of Ms. Hauser, who is apparently used to getting everything she wants. Up until this point in our conversation, Ms. Hauser's demeanor was merely unpleasant; after this answer, she became noticeably angrier and very contemptuous. She became more and more agitated, more and more insistent that I agree to postpone the weekend visits, which I continued to refuse.

She became furious, and in a loud, angry voice, she screamed at me, "You don't want a traumatized kid on your hands, do you?"

I was shocked, appalled and aghast at this, and I said back in a loud voice, "I have NEVER traumatized my son." We then went through a period of glaring at each other for about 20 seconds.

By the time the meeting was over I was shaking like a leaf. I walked back to my car, and sat there for half an hour writing down everything that had happened, as I did after a number of these meetings.

The Feminist World View

At the time all this happened, I was actually very confused. Why were these women acting like this? Why would a woman pediatrician say that it's her policy, and the policy of her entire clinic, that no child of divorce under two years old should be permitted to spend more than three hours with his father? Why would one social worker say that she always sides with the mother against the father, and why would another social worker say that my son would be traumatized if he spent the weekend with me?

It took me years to find out, and only when I began to start studying feminism seriously. At this point, it's appropriate to leave my own story for a while, and take a brief tour to summarize what is called "feminist theory."

Feminist literature is loaded with references to "misogyny"♦ (hatred of women) and misogynists (people who hate women). For example, Susan Faludi, whose book *Backlash* is quite possibly the most admired and influential book of the 1990s among feminists, says that society is based on a "bedrock of misogyny"♦ — that is, our entire society is based on a bedrock of hatred of women.

Feminists find hatred of women almost everywhere. Ruth Sidel finds it even in popular movies,♦ when she condemns *Broadcast News*, *The Good Mother*, and numerous other films. She refers to nudity in *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* as proof that "misogyny in film may be far from dead." And she adds, "No discussion of misogyny in films would be complete without a mention of *Fatal Attraction* (1987)."

And Catharine MacKinnon, a feminist legal scholar♦ who has fought for years to get pornography banned, closes the loop by writing "I think the fatal error of the legal arm of feminism has been its failure to understand that the mainspring of sex inequality is misogyny and the mainspring of misogyny is sexual sadism." And "With sexual harassment law, we are having to deinstitutionalize sexual misogyny step by step."

To feminists, a society which is based on a bedrock of hatred of women is one in which rape and battering are common and acceptable. Feminists claim that rape and battering are pervasive in society, that we men — all of us including every man reading this book — either rape and batter or indirectly support and condone rape and battering.

For example, Catharine MacKinnon claims that over 90 percent of American women♦ have been sexually assaulted or harassed at some point in their lives and that this represents "the effectively unrestrained and systematic sexual aggression of one-half of the population against the other half." According to Susan Brownmiller,♦ a well-known feminist writer on rape, rape "is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear."

According to Jalna Hanmer,♦ "The fact that many husbands do not beat their wives, and many men do not attack women on the streets ... is not proof that wife-beating and other assaults are irregular, unsystematic practices ... but merely that it is not necessary to do so in order to maintain the privileges of the superior group."

Marilyn French, in *The War Against Women*,♦ puts it as follows:

The entire system of female oppression rests on ordinary men, who maintain it with a fervor and dedication to duty that any secret police force might envy. What other system can depend on almost half the population to enforce a policy daily, publicly and privately, and with utter reliability?

As long as some men use physical force to subjugate females, all men need not. The knowledge that some men do suffices to threaten all women. Beyond that, it is not necessary to beat up a woman to beat her down. A man can simply refuse to hire women in well-paid jobs, extract as much or more work from women than men but pay

them less, or treat women disrespectfully at work or at home. He can fail to support a child he has engendered, demand the woman he lives with wait on him like a servant. He can beat or kill the woman he claims to love; he can rape women, whether mate, acquaintance, or stranger; he can rape or sexually molest his daughters, nieces, stepchildren, or the children of a woman he claims to love. The vast majority of men in the world do one or more of the above.

My own informal survey of adult women suggests that very few reach the age of twenty-one without suffering some form of male predation – incest, molestation, rape or attempted rape, beatings, and sometimes torture or imprisonment.

Black feminist writer bell hooks writes:

We live in a culture that condones and celebrates rape.♦ Within a phallogentric patriarchal state the rape of women by men is a ritual that daily perpetuates and maintains sexist oppression and exploitation. We cannot hope to transform "rape culture" without committing ourselves full to resisting and eradicating patriarchy.

There are people who laugh off feminism, feeling that feminist beliefs are so bizarre that no one could really believe them. It's true that feminist beliefs are bizarre, but I disagree with the conclusion: my findings are that these beliefs are strongly held by social workers, pediatricians, and other women who work in the divorce field. I've met a number of feminist social workers and other professionals online, and they are quite uniform in expressing opinions like the ones I've quoted that are extremely offensive and insulting to men.

There are people who say, "these are radical feminists; most feminists, let alone most women, don't believe these things."

My experience with women online is quite the opposite. One woman wrote the following, which I consider to be a typical remark of feminist women: "As long we live in a patriarchal society, where women suffer continual discrimination, where misogyny is rampant, and where women must struggle daily to simply maintain the sorry socioeconomic status they've 'achieved' over the last two decades, we will remain a sub-group, both on-line and in the 'real' world."

What am I as a man supposed to make of all this? Whenever I enter the world of the feminist, I come out with a headache. The world that feminists describe is strange and overwhelming, a science fiction world completely unrecognizable to most men and women. It's a sordid, lightless, grimy, forbidding world, one in which there are angry, hostile, violent monsters around every corner, in every closet, under every bed, ready to beat and rape women. This is a world in which women are empty shells, little different from inflatable dummies, with nothing to give or receive, no way to act or react, with no purpose except to wait for their bodies to be, in Dworkin's words, used and abused. This is a view of the world

which is both as destructive and as self-destructive as anything I can imagine. Perhaps the greatest irony for this discussion is that the feminist world appears to be neither more nor less than the female equivalent of the most violent and degrading slasher pornography.

Whether this world is science fiction or not, it's the world that mainstream feminists believe they live in. Over the years, I've had literally thousands of online conversations with feminist women and pro-feminist men, as well as personal interviews with many feminists, and I've heard these same views expressed over and over, and never contradicted.

For example, why do some men seek custody of their children? I would say that these men love their children, but the feminists online don't see it that way. One wrote online, "There are many motives that men have for contesting custody: revenge, control, a way of continuing violence or sex abuse, financial leverage, and also a way of reducing or eliminating altogether child support payments."

This was an echo of the views stated by well-known feminist Phyllis Chesler:

The male legal ownership of children[♦] is essential to patriarchy. Women are supposed to breed, bear, and/or socialize father-owned "legitimate" children within a father-absent and mother-blaming family. The fact that fathers are often absent, or abusive when present (incestuous, infanticidal, infantile), doesn't change what patriarchy is about — literally, "the rule of fathers."

To another woman online, a social worker, the two-parent home is "the crucible producing violence," where a man is in complete control, and obtains that control through violence. To this social worker, a divorce is the means a woman uses to escape the control and violence, but it doesn't always work that way: "Batterers who lose control of their partners and children often escalate their attacks, stalk their families, kidnap their children, refuse to pay their child support, engage in year's long custody and visitation struggles against wives they have already impoverished. They attempt to continue to control the family through rumors, triangulating with the children, bribery."

This social worker, whose manner of phrasing reminded me a great deal of Ms. Hauser, the social worker that I described earlier in this chapter, was opposed to even the slightest compromise in divorce. "Women from all walks of life worked with us for more than ten years gaining legal rights for battered women and opposing 'joint custody,' 'friendly parent,' and other innocuous sounding legal maneuvers which would have sabotaged legitimate domestic violence intervention laws."

This is an extremely important point, and explains a lot about what's going on with feminist professional women like Scott, Phillips, and Hauser: these women are passionately opposed to joint custody or any sort of amicable agreement

between divorcing parties, because they view any amicable agreement as exploiting women.

I heard this view in a number of ways from different feminists, but perhaps the most forceful was Lundy Bancroft, one of Massachusetts' leading writers and consultants to the social services community. When I said in a phone interview that I was interviewing a number of different people for my book: "You're worse than a batterer," he said. "The more points of view you get, the more insidiously your views will support batterers. ... I think fundamentally if you're talking about reconciliation between exploiters and the exploited, then you're damaging the interests of the exploited, and advancing the exploiter."

He was blaming me for allowing anything but a strongly pro-feminist view to be expressed in print, since anything that wasn't strongly pro-feminist was, essentially, aiding and abetting batterers. In fact, I've often witnessed enormous intolerance by feminists to any non-feminist views.

In many colleges, expressing a non-feminist political point of view is considered *per se* sexual harassment,[♦] according to Paul Trout, professor of English, Montana State University. "The threat of 'sexual harassment' accusations is being used to enforce conformity to feminist orthodoxy," he points out.

A woman social worker online echoed the above views as follows:

One thing I have learned from life is this: only one or two people can mess up an entire social or community system. Liars cause serious problems. Neutral people who "see both sides" derail truthful discourse, confuse consensus, delay justice and derail peace. Liars and neutral people together create a deadly combination. The first (liars) intrude on others rights. The second (neutral people) never challenge the liars, object to their logic nor demand accountability.

I think the liars (or intruders or aggressors) count on the neutral (or uninvolved or ignorant or uncaring or unjust people) to just look the other way while the liars target scapegoats (Native Americans, African Americans, immigrants, women, queers, poor people, intellectuals).

What we see here is a pattern of thought which I've seen over and over again exhibited by feminist professionals online, like the feminists I ran into my divorce, and this raises a point that I've seen over and over again: these feminist women are contemptuous of men and are highly intolerant of any views that contradict their own. But in fact, these feminist women are also intolerant of *women* who express non-feminist views. We'll see in subsequent chapters that this intolerance is extremely damaging to women.

Some people believe that views like this are from "radical feminists," but as near as I can make out, these views are common to all women who call themselves feminists. For example, you can do what I did (on 7/27/2000): visit the National

Organization for Women web site (www.now.org), and do a search on the word "father". You get dozens of hits, but all of them are extremely hostile to fathers and to fathers' groups. Here, for example is one of the many press releases that claims that marriage is dangerous for women:

The Fathers Count Act purports to help poor men who owe child support by funding counseling and job training services. It would require programs to promote marriage as a solution to poverty. Yet we know that family violence is a major factor in keeping women poor; study after study has demonstrated that fact. Promoting marriage, for many poor women, is a dangerous policy.

This last sentence occurs in various forms frequently in NOW literature and other feminist writings, and it expresses the view, evidently widely held by feminists, that marriage is dangerous to women; that women are forced to marry for economic reasons, and marriage only exposes them to battering and abuse.

This brings us back to what happens with social workers and other feminists in court clinics like the ones I attended. These women aren't just talking the talk - they also walk the walk, and they're in a position to do so. They enforce policies based on the feminist view that to ever compromise with a man is to compromise with a batterer.

At the time I was going through my divorce, it made no sense to me why these women professionals were so acrimonious with me just because I'm a man. It took me years of studying feminism and interacting with feminists online to understand why the women I met during my divorce treated me the way they did. They considered me dangerous, simply because I was a man, and they believed compromising with a man on even a small point would automatically be to compromise with an abuser.

This lack of tolerance was confirmed by a social worker online who complained about "male patriarchal bashing" by feminists and women's groups, and added the following:

I can't stomach this. Male bashing is the #1 reason why certain more radical women's groups alienate me. I'm sorry, but I like men as friends and dating partners and want to figure out how we can live together. I worked as a social worker for a year for a transitional living facility for women and children. It was an all women's environment and I was psyched. However, three out of four of us on the staff left within the year due to the verbal and emotional abuse we endured at the hands of the executive director and her lover. It was awful - the female clients were victim to some of their behavior as well. The executive director and her [lesbian] lover felt that all the social problems in our society were due to "white men" and that all the

problems could be solved if we could overthrow this society. Meanwhile they would yell at us, belittle us and made me feel so awful about myself as a human being that it took me 2 years of healing to get over this. And this was a social service agency. ... For instance, I had a client, who had a 10 year old son that was starting to show violent behavior patterns. From the age of 6, this [boy] had been told how to call 911 when mommy was getting beaten a bit too badly. I felt that it was good psycho-social practice to try and get this guy a big brother - he clearly needed positive male role modeling before he became a copycat of his father. Well, I was TRASHED for this and told that "he doesn't need a male figure. We women can do a good enough job."

This quote illustrates the point I was making earlier - that feminists are contemptuous and abusive to even *women* who express non-feminist views. As we'll see, this is because feminists are more interested in politics than in the needs of women.

Returning to my personal story now, I knew none of this, of course, when I was going through my divorce in the mid 1980s, and it took me many years to understand all the reasons why Carrie Phillips would say that they always side with the mother against the father, why Dr. Scott said that no child of divorce should spend more than two hours at a time with his father, and why Ms. Hauser thought that my son would be traumatized by spending a weekend with his father.

Sidebar: Two Divorced Full-Time Parents

The following essay shows how things should be. I'm reproducing it here to make the point that this is the kind of thing that feminists are fundamentally opposed to, claiming that an amicable agreement between divorcing couples means that the wife is being victimized by a man, part of the patriarchy that abuses and batters all women:

Two Full-Time Parents♦ by M. Dee Samuels and Michael Samuels

In the beginning, we were typical of most couples going through a divorce. We felt a lot of pain and anger over our failed marriage and we were eager to put it all behind us. At the same time, we believed that our 1-month-old son Josh needed two active and involved parents. Although in some sense, we both would have preferred sole custody, we decided to try joint custody for Josh's sake.

As parents, who are also lawyers practicing family law, our initial reaction to the uncertainties of joint custody was to draft a watertight agreement that would spell out our fifty-fifty split. We wrote up a very complex arrangement that detailed how we were going to share Josh and even how we would communicate about him.

Then, a funny thing happened. As time passed, we realized that neither of us was going to try to undermine the other or take Josh away from the other. We started to relax, and that was the beginning of an important transition.

Now, nearly nine years later, we are both very pleased with our joint custody arrangement and how well it has worked for Josh. Certainly many people will roll their eyes when they hear that our time-sharing pattern is based on alternating days: Josh is with Mom on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and with Dad on Tuesday and Thursday; we share weekends as fits our needs.

Obviously, "home" for Josh is two houses, but we have very consciously done a lot to help minimize the differences. People who have seen his room in both houses have commented on the similarities in them. Though we

have worked hard to minimize differences in routines and approaches, we also accord each other a great deal of respect with regard to customs and practices followed in the other household. Thus, we don't ever say, "This is Mommy's house, and this is the way you do it here." Josh is more likely to hear, "Daddy thinks it's important for you to be in bed on time too." We are also liberal with our praise and support of each other, so it is not uncommon to hear, "Isn't that great that you and Dad got to go to the movies.... You have a great Dad!"

Another way we show respect for each other is to support Josh's love and affection for the other parent; this includes helping Josh pick presents for each other for Father's and Mother's Day, birthdays, etc., and reminders to call the other when he is away from home with one of us. When we find we've stepped on each other's toes, we say so and clear the air immediately.

We share information in a lot of ways. We realized a long time ago that no one in the world is or will be as appreciative of Josh's little bursts of genius and his antics as we are, so we share those little triumphs as they come up. We also realized the potential for a child with two households to play the parents off, one against the other, or try to get away with things like saying, "I took a bath at Dad's yesterday," when that didn't really happen. So we share information about Josh on a regular basis and let him know that we do. In this way, he has the security of knowing that Mom and Dad communicate about him and generally have the same fund of knowledge.

Sometimes the three of us go out for lunch or for ice cream together. This

gives Josh the opportunity for input and a chance to be with Mom and Dad at the same time. At least monthly, we have a parents' breakfast to talk about any issue or behavior of concern and to review schedules and activities. Additionally, we have a free flow of information about Josh and our coparenting by talking on the phone almost daily. We fax information back and forth between our offices, and we both go to practically all of his games, school and Sunday school events, parent/teacher conferences, and medical and dental appointments. Since his fifth birthday, we have given joint birthday parties and have included each other in the major family social events of our lives. Sometimes it seems that we have better and more frequent

communication about our child than do many married couples.

At times we wonder why joint custody cannot work for other as it has for us. Perhaps sharing our thoughts and feelings will help some other family. Though we did not start out feeling warm and fuzzy about all this, we were willing to put the commitment to our son above our own feeling. We realized it was so important for our little boy to have a full-time mom and a full-time dad and that our cooperation was necessary to make that work. We want our son to have the best life possible, even if we do not live together.

The 1988 Meetings

At the time the meetings with Ms. Hauser began in August, 1988, I was completely unaware of all of this, of course. I left the first meeting very frightened, and the second meeting was just incredibly bizarre.

The second meeting began a pattern that we followed almost every meeting after that. All three of us – Ms. Hauser, my ex-wife and I – would meet together in a room for an hour.

Ms. Hauser and my ex-wife were always on a friendly first name basis with each other. They would always begin by exchanging pleasantries, ask about each other's family members, and would often refer to phone calls they had had with each other. As nearly as I could tell, they had several phone calls every week; at any rate, they certainly made no attempt to hide them from me.

In fact, during our visits with Ms. Hauser, my ex-wife several times referred to her as part of her "support group," confirming the above observation.

Once again, it amazed me at the time that Ms. Hauser so openly discriminated against men. Ms. Hauser was supposed to be an unbiased mediator, and having these phone strategy sessions with my ex-wife was a major ethical violation and possibly illegal. But, like the others, she didn't care that it was perfectly obvious to me that she was performing these unethical and possibly illegal actions.

It was only years later, as I began to understand feminist theory as I've summarized above, that their actions made sense.

In the second meeting, as in subsequent meetings, Ms. Hauser would always begin the meeting by asking if anything had happened in the last week that "concerned" me. When we started, I didn't even know what she meant by that word, and in that meeting, I just said that I didn't have anything.

Later in this series of meetings, I did have some real concerns, as I'll explain later, but I quickly learned that this was just a silly game. No matter what I said, Ms. Hauser would just say condescendingly that it wasn't a problem. I quickly learned just to say I didn't have any "concerns," since anything else was a waste of time.

Either way, in a minute or two, we would quickly go to my ex-wife's "concerns." Each week, my ex-wife would pull a sheet of paper out of her purse, containing a list of five or ten complaints about me. I gathered that my ex-wife prepared each week's list based on suggestions by Ms. Hauser during their weekly telephone conversations. The first week's list contained about 8 complaints, including these two:

- Jason was sometimes wearing his coat indoors, and didn't want to take it off.
- Jason sometimes didn't want to finish his dinner that his mother had cooked.

I'm singling out these two complaints here for reasons that I'll explain, but all the others were all in a similar vein.

"Huh?" I asked, "What do those things have to do with me?"

That's what I asked, because I couldn't see what I had to do with the fact that Jason didn't always want to finish his dinner, something that's hardly a rare thing with kids, or didn't always want to take off his coat when he was with his mother and I was nowhere around.

However, Ms. Hauser and my ex-wife were happy to educate me by explaining why this was my fault. The reason that Jason was doing these things is because I was instructing, or directing, or influencing him to do so, and I was doing this in order to hurt my ex-wife.

At this point I was still very afraid of Ms. Hauser, for otherwise I would have laughed out loud. This was so paranoid, it was among the most ridiculous things I've ever heard. Jason had a mind of his own and would never have refused to eat or take off his coat just because I told him to, but incredibly these two women evidently believed that I had some sort of magical ability to tell Jason how to behave when he was with his mother. Or maybe they believed that, at my direction, Jason had already joined what feminists like to call the patriarchy that

abuses all women. At any rate, my fear kept me from laughing, and I just said again that I can't imagine what these things had to do with me.

This also showed how totally, utterly clueless both women were about Jason, a subject I'll return to. It was clear that neither Ms. Hauser nor Jason's mother had any clue whatsoever what motivated Jason or what was going on in his mind. One thing we see over and over again is that women who believe feminist "theory" not only know almost nothing about men, but also know almost nothing about children.

The whole meeting just went on covering my ex-wife's list. I was mostly astonished, and didn't say much except in answer to direct questions, though there were plenty of those.

Each week, my ex-wife pulled out another sheet of paper with another list of complaints about me, generally as moronic as the first list. However, I made a point of specifically mentioning the two above – keeping his coat on and not eating – for a particular reason.

During the next few days, I thought about all this, and it occurred to me what might be going on. A few months earlier, Jason and I had spent the evening with my mother at a time when I was feeling a bit ill, and I had kept my coat on and didn't want to eat anything. At the time, my mother had made a bit of a fuss over this, and we had argued, and it obviously made quite an impression on Jason. I thought that Jason might have simply been imitating my behavior with my own mother.

Now here's the funny thing about this story. Since I was going to tell Ms. Hauser that Jason was imitating me, I would essentially be telling her that she was right – that Jason's behavior was very indirectly my "fault" in some sense. And I thought that I might score some points with Ms. Hauser by essentially agreeing with her, in the hope that we might have a more cooperative milieu.

Anyway, all this dawned on me over a few days, and at the next meeting, I was very pleased to be able to tell Ms. Hauser that I might have figured out why Jason was keeping on his coat and refusing to eat. At this point, I was still pretty naïve, and thought we were actually there to solve problems. Dumb guy. Anyway, when I said that, Ms. Hauser looked at me with her expression of old schoolmarm who's annoyed with one of her students. She said, "Yes?" suspiciously. I said, "Jason's imitating me." She pulled herself up to her full height, hooked her nose, and said in her most contemptuous voice, "Mr. Xenakis, do you always have an answer for everything?" So I shrugged, and never told Ms. Hauser why Jason kept his coat on and refused to eat. Maybe she and my ex-wife will read this book and they'll finally find out.

Every week it was the same. There was a list of complaints, and then both women would harangue me for an hour. It was years later that I finally understood that the purpose of these meetings was to get me to lose my temper

and/or to say something stupid, which the women could then use to get the court to cancel the weekend visits. This is a pretty common trick by ex-wives during divorce proceedings, incidentally, and every man should be on guard against it. But I just answered all her questions truthfully, and never got particularly angry, and they never got anything they could use against me.

There was one meeting I remember clearly. One of the complaints on my ex-wife's list that week was that Jason would come into the bathroom while she was taking a shower, which they said was inappropriate. They blamed me for this, saying that I was permitting Jason to come into the bathroom while I was taking a shower. My response was that there was a difference between a boy coming into the bathroom when the father was taking a shower and when the mother was taking a shower. I said that I couldn't care less if he came in while I was taking a shower, and that if she didn't want him coming in when she was taking a shower, then she should tell him not to, or even lock the bathroom door. My answer was neither politically correct nor to the two women's liking. Ms. Hauser decided to get even.

Well, my ex-wife put her "really appalled" look on her face, and Ms. Hauser got really ticked off. She spent the next hour interrogating me about what happened when Jason went to bathroom at my home, what happened when he took a shower, when he got dressed or undressed, when he went to bed, and so forth. I knew what she was doing – she was trying to get me to say anything that she could use as a phony charge of sexual abuse. But I just answered her questions truthfully, and she had to give up. However, Ms. Hauser didn't subject my ex-wife to any such interrogation, even though statistically more mothers are child abusers than fathers.

Feminists and Child Abuse

This gives rise to one of the "concerns" that I *did* bring up in several of these meetings, always to no avail. Whenever Jason spent any length of time with me, he would always have to phone his mother, since she would get mad at him later if he didn't call. She would keep him on the phone for a long time, often well over an hour, and something very strange would happen. At the beginning of the phone call, Jason would be sitting in a chair talking to his mother on the phone, smiling in a lively manner, but as the phone call went on, he would become more subdued, and slump down in his chair, and eventually slide onto the floor and curl up into a fetal position.

On many occasions, the problems didn't end when the phone calls ended. Before these phone calls, Jason might be friendly and cheerful; afterward, he often

became a zombie, just sitting on the couch staring at the wall. I always just left him alone at these times, since I felt he needed the time to wind down from whatever had happened on the phone.

I wasn't the only one who witnessed this. On several occasions, when Jason was visiting my mother at her condo, Jason would call his mother with a portable phone while they were outdoors, while there were neighbors around. The neighbors would all watch with incredulity as Jason slumped down, slid onto the ground, and curled up into a fetal position while he was talking to his mother. These neighbors just stared in horror, and kept asking my mother and me what was going on. We could only shrug.

I raised this "concern" several times in our little meetings, but my ex-wife said nothing, and Ms. Hauser very condescendingly told me to ignore it.

I guess I should consider myself to be lucky that the situation wasn't as bad as some other fathers had experienced. In my interviews with fathers, I interviewed a few who were close to tears, whose children were being physically battered and abused by their mothers (or their mothers' boyfriends), and they couldn't do anything about it. Two of the fathers I interviewed couldn't even get any of these social workers to listen to them until their children's bones were broken – two broken fingers in one case and a broken wrist in the other case.

Frank, the first of these two fathers tried for years to get some protection for his daughter from the frequent beatings by her mother. He even documented his daughter's scars with photographs. He finally got custody only after his ex-wife broke his daughter's two fingers. "It took me several months and cost me thousands of dollars in legal fees," he said. He made a contrast to the fact that a woman making child abuse accusations is always believed immediately.

An ironic twist to Frank's story is that it was his ex-wife who had been the major breadwinner in their family, and had an extremely high income, substantially higher than his. She was ordered to pay child support to him, but she never made any payments. Here in Massachusetts, men can be jailed for non-payment of court-ordered child support, but women who don't pay are almost always excused, even when they're extremely rich, except for an occasional political show case. Frank wanted to take his ex-wife to court, but his lawyer refused to take the case. Since he really needed money, he got another lawyer to prosecute the case. "I wish I had listened to my first lawyer," he said. "Instead of the court ordering her to pay child support, I had to start again and go through the entire process of proving child abuse all over again," he said. "It took several months and more thousands of dollars in legal fees. And I've never received a penny of child support."

Feminist blindness to child abuse by mothers is well documented. As early as 1952, Simone de Beauvoir wrote "A mother who whips her child is not beating the child alone;♦ in a sense she is not beating it at all: she is taking her vengeance on a

man, on the world, or on herself. Such a mother is often remorseful and the child may not feel resentment, but it feels the blows."

In my own discussion of child abuse with feminists, both online and in person, I hear a common theme: Yes it's true, they reluctantly admit when pressed, that most child abusers are mothers, but that's because of men.

Lundy Bancroft, whom I quoted earlier, is an expert on domestic violence who was served as co-director of Emerge, a program for batterers in Massachusetts. He told me that a mother often hits a child in order to protect the child from worse punishment from the father. "A woman might be doing the right thing to hit her children, since if they've already been spanked then the man will leave them alone, and otherwise he'll hit them harder than she would."

Family violence researcher Richard J. Gelles, who is strongly pro-feminist but cares about children despite that fact, noticed the same thing:

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) and its head,[♦] Marian Wright Edelman, have for years been among the most widely respected and articulate advocates for children, especially minority children and children who live in poverty. Yet, oddly, the Children's Defense Fund has conspicuously omitted mention of child abuse and neglect in public presentations and advocacy activities.

In fact, you can verify this for yourself. Check out the web sites for feminist organizations, and you'll see a lot of criticisms of men, but little or nothing about child abuse. If child abuse is mentioned, it's only sexual abuse, which is mostly perpetrated by men, but is a small part (10%) of the child abuse problem. As we'll see in chapter 3, most child abuse, including very violence physical abuse and child battering, is perpetrated by children's mothers, and so the subject is avoided by feminists, including feminist web sites.

Andrea Yates

Watching feminists condone and excuse child abuse by mothers has made me increasingly cynical over the years, but nothing compares to my total astonishment and amazement at the enormous outpouring of support that feminists and pro-feminist journalists gave to Andrea Yates, the Houston mother who killed her five children on June 20, 2001.

Some of the facts are still under seal by the courts at the time of this writing, but we do know a lot. Andrea Yates has had a history of psychiatric problems, but nothing that explains the following:

Bruises indicate that four of Andrea Yates' five children struggled as they were drowned, likely hitting the sides or bottom of the family bathtub, according to autopsy results released Friday. The reports from the Harris County Medical Examiner's Office detail the conditions of the children, ages 6 months to 7 years. All were found dead at their Houston home June 20. ...

"This baby didn't put up much of a struggle, but the other ones — they did," [Medical Examiner Roberto] Bayardo said of 6-month-old Mary and her four brothers. The autopsy reports say each of the children died by "asphyxia due to drowning." All the deaths are listed as homicides.

A cut on 3-year-old Paul's lip indicates he most likely hit his mouth on the side of the tub, and bruises on 2-year-old Luke indicate he was being held down by a wrist, Bayardo concluded. Many bruises on 5-year-old John were fresh. The child's hands were wrinkled, suggesting he was in the water between 15 and 30 minutes.

Noah, 7, had a fresh scrape on his nose with the majority of his bruising on his legs, arms and near his hip bone. "That is an indication of a struggle ... banging his legs and arms against the bathtub," Bayardo said.

Police say Andrea Yates confessed to killing her children after they arrived at her home. The four youngest children were found wet on a bed under a sheet. Noah's body was in the tub.

Yates' husband, Russell, has said his wife suffered from postpartum depression, which was worsened by the death of her father in March. He hired an attorney for his wife and has publicly supported her.

I've included the above details because, as cynical as I've become over the years, I'm still finding it hard to believe that anyone could defend this cold-blooded murderer of her five children.

And yet, look at the words of pro-feminist *Newsweek* journalist Evan Thomas, published five days after the murder:

Most mass killers are sociopaths, utterly alienated from other human beings. They are callous or sadistic. Andrea was the opposite; if anything, she apparently cared too much. She may have felt she could never do enough for her demanding husband. In a horribly twisted way, she may have tried to be too good a mother.

She killed her five children because she was too good a mother??? Because of her demanding husband??? Because she cared too much??? Where do these people get this dribble?

One feminist and pro-feminist journalist and columnist followed another. Katie Couric, the feminist advocate on NBC's *Today Show*,[♦] advised viewers to send contributions to Andrea Yates' defense fund. Rosie O'Donnell expressed sympathy for Yates. The Houston chapter of NOW created the "Andrea Pia Yates Support Coalition"[♦] to raise funds and provide public support for Yates.

As a reason, these feminists say that all they want to do is call attention to the problem of "post partum depression" or "post partum psychosis." However, they could have done that without providing sympathy and support for this grotesque murderer, and without making her into a victim, and without insulting all women by implying that any women with post partum depression might, at any moment, decide to kill her children.

Here's what *Newsweek's* Anna Quindlen wrote:

But there's another part of my mind,[♦] the part that remembers the end of a day in which the milk spilled phone rang one cried another hit a fever rose the medicine gone the car sputtered another cried the cable out *Sesame Street* gone all cried stomach upset full diaper no more diapers Mommy I want water Mommy my throat hurts Mommy I don't feel good. Every mother I've asked about the Yates case has the same reaction. She's appalled; she's aghast. And then she gets this look. And the look says that at some forbidden level she understands. The look says that there are two very different kinds of horror here. There is the unimaginable idea of the killings. And then there is the entirely imaginable idea of going quietly bonkers in the house with five kids under the age of 7.

Houston feminist columnist Susan Howard found it very suspicious that Yates' husband was sympathetic to his wife's plight in a news conference, and decided that this may well be proof that *he's* responsible for the children's death, and that Andrea is the real victim:

It appears Andrea believed murdering her children was the solution to a problem relating to her perceived inadequacies as a mother. ... I now view Andrea as a victim of psychological and physical abuse for which I now cast a scrutinizing gaze upon her husband, Russell Yates as I ask what role did he play – or fail to play – in abating his wife's depression or journey into madness. It appears the Yates family's reportedly isolated and claustrophobic lifestyle and environment contributed to her murderous behavior. (*Incidentally, I've seen no news reports of psychological or physical abuse – apparently Susan Howard just made that part up. – JX*)

It goes on and on.

I've quoted this stuff at length because it's so sickening. I was never struck by my parents, and of course I've never struck Jason. Just seeing somebody strike his or her child in the supermarket or on the bus upsets me, and to read how Yates' poor children had to struggle and fight with their mother as she chased them and then pushed them, one by one, underwater, is horrible beyond belief.

From everything I've seen, Yates had an adorable infant daughter and four happy, healthy boys. News reports indicate that 7 year old Noah became horrified as he realized that his mother was killing his sister and brothers, and he ran away from her, trying to escape death. He tried to fight off his mother, but she caught him, overpowered him and no matter how hard he struggled, he couldn't prevent his physically more powerful mother from pushing his head under water, forcing him to choke and drown.

And then to see this bevy of feminists excuse and defend these actions is so hideous and grotesque to me personally, even by the standards that I've come over the years to expect from feminists, that I can hardly believe it's happening outside of a science fiction movie. If we men actually believed what these feminist fruitcakes are saying, we'd have no choice but to post guard on every new mother for fear that she might decide at any time to kill her children.

The actions of these feminists validates and is consistent with the absolute worst of every experience I had with the feminist professionals I had to deal with when I was going through my divorce. No matter what the situation was, Ms. Hauser and the other women in my ex-wife's "support group" found some tortured way to blame it on me.

That's why I say that I'm lucky. If my ex-wife or her boyfriends had been battering and beating my wonderful son, or performing even worse acts, I'm certain that neither Ms. Hauser nor any of the other feminist professionals I met would have done anything about it. Those women cared about nothing, absolutely nothing, except their own stupid, selfish political agenda.

What's so depressing about this is the following: If you're a man going through a divorce, and your ex-wife or her boyfriend is battering the shit out of your children, then there's nothing you can do about it, and if you appeal to these social workers or pediatricians, they'll not only excuse your wife's behavior, they'll find a way to blame it on you. Meanwhile, your children might suffer years of battering and abuse and molestation, and the more you complain, the more you'll be blamed. And it's worth repeating again: most child abuse and child murders are perpetrated by the child's mother (see chapter 3, starting on page 127).

I've spoken to several men who have had to watch helplessly as their ex-wives severely abused their children, with this behavior completely condoned and excused as a matter of policy by feminist social workers, pediatricians, psychologists, and judges. See the sidebar about Len Umina for a really bizarre example. This behavior by feminist professionals is inexcusable and should be

stopped, but the depressing reality is that there's little hope that it will. We live in a world where feminists are routinely excusing the mass murder of five helpless children by their mother, and any complaint by a divorced father doesn't stand a chance.

Sidebar: Len Umina

The story of Leonard Umina (real name) shows all too sadly how the feminist neglect of child abuse by mothers can have devastating effects. In fact, this story of a cross-country custody battle which Umina fought to save his children from abuse, was covered in the Boston Globe and other Massachusetts newspapers.

When Umina was divorced in 1986, he reluctantly had to say goodbye to his three daughters since their mother, Kathryn Malbica, was moving to Colorado and, as is true almost always, she got custody of the girls, leaving Umina with nothing left except a big child support bill.

However, early in 1987, Umina received a phone call from the brother of his ex-wife, saying that there were major unresolved problems between Malbica and their oldest daughter, Amy, and that they were going to send him their daughter. They bought Amy a one-way plane ticket, and sent her to Umina in Massachusetts.

Umina was shocked to see that his nine-year-old daughter had lost some ten pounds, and "looked like a famine victim," says Umina. "She said it was much worse than I had ever imagined. Amy said her mother hadn't been feeding them, and that she had been violent with the kids. She showed me

scars where her mother had hurt her. She had fingernail marks under her jaw, where her mother had grabbed her, she had bruises on her arms and on her back. And she was emaciated - I never thought I'd see one of my kids look like that. You could count her ribs from across the room. She told me horror stories from Colorado, such as how the kids locked themselves in the bathroom for hours to hide from their mother. I realized that although I had done the right thing financially [by settling the divorce with Malbica], I had done the wrong thing for the kids." (For more information on how the divorce was settled, see chapter 5, page 224.)

Umina realized that there was no point in going to legal channels with this information. With his wife and other two kids in Colorado, and with the bias against fathers, there was no chance at all that he would be believed. "I felt my kids were in real danger, and I really wanted to go to the Massachusetts DSS [Division of Social Services], but I knew they would never help."

He decided that there was no hope of doing anything until the summer came, when the other two kids would be visiting him. "I had a pretty tough four or five months," says Umina. "But when the two kids arrived, the first thing my son asked me was, 'Why are you

protecting Amy, and not protecting us." Umina acted right away.

He got the DSS to talk to all three kids and make a recommendation. Because of the obvious signs of abuse and neglect, they recommended that he get custody, and the court in Cambridge went along, and gave him temporary custody of all three kids, on the grounds that they were being neglected and physically and emotionally abused by their mother.

Fall 1987 arrived, and all three daughters – aged 10, 7 and 3, were living with Umina, his new wife Vicki, her young daughter, and the couple's year-old son.

One day, Umina received a call at work from Vicki. Sheriffs with guns had arrived at their home, grabbed their 3 year old out of bed, and taken her away still in her pajamas. The sheriffs told Vicki they were taking the girl to the Marlboro court house.

Luckily, Umina's office happened to be five minutes away from the courthouse and he rushed over there as soon as his wife called him. All three of his children were there - the other two had similarly been snatched out of school sheriffs armed with guns. "They weren't permitted to see me," says Umina. "They were hysterical, crying that they wanted to see me and didn't want to go anywhere, but they were held back by the armed guards."

The divorce case had been settled in the Cambridge Probate Court, but Umina soon learned that somehow his ex-wife, who was wealthy and had political influence, had gotten the entire case transferred to a Marlboro under Middlesex Probate Judge James Sweeney, a judge who, like many of the social workers, psychologists and pediatricians in Massachusetts, follows feminist policy

and always sides with the mother against the father, even when the mother is abusive.

"I confronted Mr. Sweeney, and asked to be permitted to contact my lawyer," says Umina. Of course, Judge Sweeney refused. "I could see what he was doing. He was trying to goad me into making some kind of emotional statement that he could use to justify holding me in contempt of court. He was trying to entrap me. I was smart enough to keep my mouth shut, and just say 'Yes, Sir!' to everything he said."

It turned out that Judge Sweeney had ordered that the kids be brought to court without any sort of hearing. He simply ordered armed guards to go out and grab them forcibly at gunpoint, so that he could send them back to the abusive mother in Colorado.

"I left the courthouse and called the newspapers, but they didn't even believe it at that point," says Umina. "They believed it later."

Umina then called his wife and told her to pack. "I didn't have any money left [after the divorce fight], but I still had my American Express card," says Umina. They were going to Colorado.

They got to the airport, found out what plane the kids were going to be on, and attempted to buy tickets on the same plane.

"My ex-wife's latest feminist woman attorney was there and called the police and attempted to stop me from buying the tickets," says Umina. "The attorney said I would try to hijack the plane, but I was just being reasonable. I pulled out my American Express card and said I wanted a ticket. The ticket clerk didn't know what to do, so she called the manager. The manager was another divorced man. He saw that I was a

reasonable guy, pointed out that I had money to pay for tickets, and told the other attorney to go to hell, and even threatened to have that attorney evicted. That was very comforting to me."

It was also very comforting that, through a combination of a lot of incredible luck and quick action, he was able to travel to Colorado on the same plane as his kids. Of course he wasn't allowed to talk to his kids on the plane, thanks to the government official accompanying them, but at least he could see them and be there for them.

If he hadn't been on that plane, things would have been a lot tougher for him. The kids would simply have been taken to his ex-wife's home in Colorado to live, and he would have had a great deal of trouble trying to extricate them from there.

As it was, when the plane landed in Colorado, the Colorado DSS was called in right away. "It was midnight, and they all had to get out of bed to service this request. They had had no idea that these kids were coming. They were shocked and appalled that the state of Massachusetts could actually do this."

Of course it was many hours past the kids' bedtime, so they were taken to a foster home in the middle of the night, and a hearing was scheduled for the next day. "The judge expressed total shock at what had happened, and decided that the kids would remain in a foster home until Colorado could figure out what was going on, and what was in the best interest of the kids."

The kids remained in that foster home for six weeks, while Colorado thoroughly investigated the situation. The Colorado officials did an extremely thorough investigation, and ended up producing a 500 page report which found

in favor of Umina. However, getting through that investigation was not easy.

Umina hired a Colorado attorney, but he needed to save money, so he ended up doing his own research and paperwork. For example, Malbica had claimed that she had called the kids regularly when they were in Massachusetts, but on his own he was able to obtain her phone bill, and proved that she was lying.

However, one part of the Colorado investigation presented a particular challenge for him.

"My ex-wife's attorney got the court to order that I be subjected to psychological interviews and testing. My ex-wife's father is one of the best known psychiatrists in Colorado, and I knew he was going to use his influence to nail me."

There are standardized psychological tests that are supposed to determine such things as whether someone is a good parent, or whether he's inclined to child abuse. The tests consist of several parts — written parts, ink blot tests, and interviews. Unfortunately, no test proves much of anything without interpretation by a psychiatrist.

Umina decided that the only way he could protect himself was to break the law. "I bugged myself during the psychological interviews. I attached a microphone and transmitter to myself, and had my wife sit outside in the car tape recording the conversations. Then we went back home each day and transcribed the conversations."

Since it's illegal to tape these interviews, Umina did not tell his lawyer what he had done. But on the day of the hearing, he went into court carrying the tapes and transcripts in his briefcase.

"The psychiatrist pulled out his notebook and started telling the court how bad I was. He said I was paranoid. He said I was a pathological liar. He said I was psychotic. He used every adjective that I've ever heard to describe someone who's a mentally deficient person."

The psychiatrist was reading from a notebook, supposedly containing the notes that he took during his psychological interviews of Umina. But there was only one problem. The psychiatrist was lying.

"These notebooks are like legal documents," says Umina. "He would read from the notebook, but I didn't recognize the questions and answers that he was reading. That's where we were able to trip him up."

When the psychiatrist's testimony had been completed, Umina took the tapes and transcripts out of his briefcase and put them on the table. He showed his lawyer the points in the transcript which related to the psychiatrist's testimony.

"My man began his examination. He said to the psychiatrist, 'Isn't this what your question was, and isn't this what his reply was?' He proved on a question by question basis that the psychiatrist was lying. When the psychiatrist saw the tapes on the table and realized what was happening, he completely lost his cool. He became panic-stricken, lost his cool, and turned absolutely red," according to Umina, who obviously enjoyed retelling this story to me.

The opposing lawyer objected to his questions, claiming that the tapes and the transcripts had been obtained illegally. "My lawyer got the tapes admitted on the grounds that it's legal to break the law to prove your innocence. I had broken the law by tape recording the

conversations without the psychiatrist's knowledge, but in using that data I was proving my innocence, since they were making outrageous accusations."

After this, the opposing attorney asked some closing questions. She first asked the psychiatrist to summarize his findings. According to Umina, he said, "Perhaps I've been remiss in some of my note taking, but this man definitely has some personality defects." She asked him to describe those in general terms.

"Well," the psychiatrist said, "this man has the same personality defects as Ronald Reagan."

There was a long pause after this. Then, according to Umina, "All of a sudden, everyone in the courtroom started laughing hysterically. The worst thing that this man could think to say of me was that I'm like the President of the United States. The judge banged her gavel to silence the courtroom, but then she suddenly got up and rushed to her chambers. As she closed the door, you could hear her break into laughter."

Umina says that he had a major victory, "but it took a lot of work. I had a good courtroom attorney, but all the investigative work had to be done by me. I had to grab every lie and disprove it by coming up with evidence. There was so much bias against me since I'm a man, and there was so little common sense, that to get beyond people's bias the evidence had to be overwhelming."

The abuses by the divorce bureaucracy in this case are almost too numerous to mention. There were greedy lawyers who milked the case to get Umina's money – and we'll discuss these later [chapter 5]. Innocent young children were taken hostage by armed guards under orders from a feminist judge for no other reason than to take

them from their father without giving him a chance to defend himself.

Also abusive was the Colorado psychiatrist who testified against Umina. Men complain all the time that social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists are overwhelmingly biased against men, but what chance do most of these men have? The psychiatrist's word is taken as expert testimony, and in reality it's no more than one person's potentially very biased opinion. Umina was able to prove this one was lying, but only by taking the very great personal risk of breaking the law.

So Umina was able to save his children from his abusing ex-wife, but had to do so by fighting repeated battles in two states. "It introduced me to politics, and the injustice of the political system." He decided to run for Governor of Massachusetts in 1990, but didn't get too far.

In the aftermath, the kids may never fully recover from the ordeal they went through, according to Umina. "For at least a year after that, my youngest daughter would frequently wake up in the middle of the night with nightmares about the armed guards who had come to take her." She was 10 years old at the time that I interviewed Umina, and "it's

only recently that she's stopped having those nightmares."

And what happened to Umina's ex-wife? Part of his custody order required her to pay child support to him, and she owed him about \$15,000 in back child support at the time of the interview. He tracked her down to where she's living in Utah, but the Massachusetts Department of Revenue shows no interest whatsoever in going after her. If it were a man skipping out on child support, his face would be on a "wanted dead or alive" type poster, and the Department of Revenue would be taking all sorts of action against him, possibly jailing him.

In fact, when I spoke to him in 1993, Umina says Malbica had no contact with her children since Umina won custody in Colorado. "Her only interest in the kids was as a meal ticket. She didn't go to the foster home to say goodbye to them. It's been several years now, and since that day, she hasn't seen them, she hasn't talked to them on the phone, she hasn't sent them a birthday card, or a Christmas card, or a letter of any kind. She never had any interest in the kids, except for the child support check that came with them."

First Weekend

At any rate, as the weeks went by, Ms. Hauser and my ex-wife did everything they could to convince, cajole, trick, threaten or intimidate me into postponing my first weekend visit with Jason.

In one especially funny interchange, my ex-wife demanded that the first weekend visit be cut in half, because it would be too sudden a change for Jason to spend a whole weekend with me. There was still a month until the first weekend visit, so I chuckled and said, "That's easy to fix. Let's have him spend a couple of

half weekends with me before the first full weekend visit, and that way he'll be prepared for the full weekend." My ex-wife said something under her breath that sounded like swearing, and I chuckled again. Ms. Hauser just glared.

But the fact is, I was scared to death about the first weekend visit. What if something happened, even by accident? The two women would use any mishap as a weapon against me.

Fortunately, I had nothing to worry about. Jason and I had a wonderful weekend. And I have Jason himself to thank for that.

Over the years, Jason had always made our visits together as easy as possible for me. Whether it was dealing with a cut or deciding what to eat, Jason could always see when I was concerned about something, and he always told me what had to be done, whether it had to do with food, clothing, bedtime, or anything else. I always marveled at how he made everything as easy as possible for me.

When Jason first started spending one night a week with me, only several months earlier, I had been afraid that sometime he might have the flu or a virus or something, and I wouldn't be able to handle the situation. I don't know exactly what I was afraid of – maybe the unknown – but I was afraid. Well, the second time Jason spent the night with me, my worst fear came about – he had the flu. He was OK to start with, but later in the evening he started throwing up. I was getting worried that he'd be crying all night, and I'd be up all night, and maybe he'd get a higher fever, and I wouldn't know what to do. In my worst nightmare scenario, I remembered a story someone had told me about a friend's young son having died by choking to death in a bout of asthma. I knew that these worries were crazy, but there's no doubt I was afraid. I needn't have worried a bit.

I put Jason to bed, and he went to sleep, and I went to sleep. Three times during the night, Jason woke me up saying, "Daddy, I'm going to throw up." Each time, I jumped out of bed, scooped him up, took him into the bathroom, let him throw up, and held him till he felt better. Then I put him back to bed.

It was incredible! I needn't have worried about a thing! Jason not only made everything as easy as possible for me, but I hardly even lost any sleep!

So when October 28 came, and we spent the weekend together, Jason was true to form in making everything as easy as possible for me. I spent time reading with him, I visited my mother with him, I took him to MacDonald's to get a happy meal, I left him alone when he wanted to be alone, played with him when he wanted to be played with, and on Sunday we went to the zoo with a friend.

And a funny thing happened. By Sunday, he was a lot more relaxed.

Recall that Jason was "mute." Jason would talk a mile a minute to me and other members of his family, but would not talk to anyone else. The two women – Ms. Hauser and my ex-wife – of course automatically assumed that I, as a member of the evil patriarchy, must be the cause of the problem. My ex-wife brought out

her weekly list of complaints about me, and Ms. Hauser would automatically buy into all of them, unchallenged.

I was affected by this situation in quite a different way. I felt that in many ways I was in the battle of my life against these two women – or more correctly, Jason was in the battle of his life, and that he was counting on me. If these two clueless women won, then it would be a terrible loss for me, but it would be an utter disaster for Jason.

I actually had a pretty strong feeling as to what the problem was. From the time he was only a few months old, I was aware of Jason's sense of humor. He was very determined when he wanted something, but he was always willing to compromise, and he always appreciated the irony of any situation.

The sense of humor behind Jason's "mutism" was always pretty apparent to me. He developed quite an incredible arsenal of techniques for talking to other people. For example, if he and I were in a room with a third person to whom he wished to say something, he would talk to me so that the third person could hear what he was saying. Even if the third person asked him a question directly, he would answer it by talking to me. In short, he constructed a whole set of behaviors which allowed him to "talk" to people without actually talking to them. I personally found it fascinating and amazing. In fact it was really hilarious, and I knew that Jason also was very well aware of the humor and irony in what he was doing.

I felt that I was close enough to Jason that if I worked with Jason, then I could help him find a way to get past his mutism. All our meetings together in the past had always been relatively short, only a few hours at a time, because of his mother's unwavering refusal to let him out of her sight. During our short meetings, I always sensed a fair amount of tension in Jason, even when he was completely on his own doing something he enjoyed. During our weekend together, I wanted to give Jason a long period of time when he could just be himself and relax. I felt that by doing this simple thing, I could reduce Jason's tension, and thereby eliminate his need to pursue his mutism strategy. And sure enough, by Sunday Jason was visibly less tense than I had ever seen him.

When I discussed this later with my ex-wife and Ms. Hauser, all of this was completely lost on the two women, however. They were really both completely unaware of what was going on with Jason. You know, we men automatically assume that a child's mother knows him best, and we even assume that a social worker knows our own children better than we do, just because they're women. I know I had that feeling, at least at the beginning. And yet, as week after week had gone by, as my ex-wife brought out each of her little lists of complaints about me and the two women ceaselessly harangued me about nonsense, I really began to realize how totally, utterly clueless these two women were about Jason.

This is an important lesson for us fathers. We should realize that – incredibly enough! – we sometimes know more about our children than their mothers do, and we *certainly* know a lot more about our children than some social worker who's only spoken to them for at most a few hours. We have to have a lot more faith in ourselves and our ability to take care of our children, and not allow a couple of women with agendas to convince us otherwise.

However, I was still pretty naïve about Ms. Hauser and my ex-wife. I still didn't recognize the concept that they had an agenda. Our next meeting after the weekend together was two days later, on Tuesday. The weekend with Jason was a tremendous success; not only had Ms. Hauser's ridiculous prediction of a "traumatized boy" not come true, but he had had a wonderful time, and I was ebullient. I could hardly wait to tell how well everything went. Do you, dear reader, know how naïve I was? I actually thought that when I told the two women how well everything went, then they'd see the error of their ways, they'd stop being hostile to me. I'm not saying that I expected an apology from the two women, though heaven knows I deserved one, but I did hope that all the nonsense would be quietly dropped, and we could all move forward in a more constructive and cooperative manner. I hope that you, dear reader, chuckled as much while reading the last sentence as I did while writing it.

So I was genuinely surprised at the anger both women showed as I described the wonderful, successful weekend. Both of them blustered and spluttered, and Ms. Hauser lectured me at some length for taking Jason to the zoo, which she said was too "new" for Jason. I mostly just sat there, dumbfounded, listening to these two women babbling. Evidently both women were heavily invested emotionally in Jason being traumatized by spending the weekend with me, and were not at all happy to hear that he had had a wonderful time.

Neither of these women cared about Jason or what was best for him. These women were interested in having a feminist victory no matter how much Jason was hurt. In other words, Jason's own mother would have preferred to see Jason hurt than have a successful weekend with his father, and the female head of the Middlesex Court Clinic, who's supposed to do "what's best for the children," would have preferred to see Jason hurt than have a successful weekend with me. So much for the best interests of the children.

After this, I felt these meetings were completely irrelevant. Furthermore, I was a lot less afraid of Ms. Hauser. I had already proven her wrong in a major way, and I frankly thought she was an idiot, although I always treated her politely and respectfully. However, Ms. Hauser became even angrier and more antagonistic, and my ex-wife became increasingly sullen and angry. And, judging from their comments to one another, they were spending even more time on the phone with each other.

After a couple of successful weekend visits, my ex-wife made a formal request to Ms. Hauser that she recommend against continuing the weekend visits. Ms. Hauser would have liked to agree, but unfortunately for her (and fortunately for Jason), it wasn't entirely her decision. There was Dr. Hawkins, a Clinic-appointed child psychiatrist, a man, who had been spending time with Jason. A week later Ms. Hauser came back with the news that "Dr. Hawkins had recommended against ending the weekend visits." Ms. Hauser made this announcement grimly, and my ex-wife was clearly furious.

So, I was seeing Jason three times a week, including one overnight per week, and now the weekend visits were firmly established. This gave me plenty of time to work with Jason on the problems that concerned me.

Jason maintained his mutism, and also was refusing to give up his pacifier, although he was almost four years old. Frankly those things didn't concern me much, since I knew that he would give them up when he was ready to. But his violence concerned me more, and I was afraid that someone might get really hurt.

As a side remark, let me mention that I've heard mothers talk about this kind of situation with not a clue about what to do about it. When a young boy starts acting out with any kind of violence, it seems to me that most mothers don't have the vaguest idea what's going on, and this was certainly true of the two women I was dealing with. This is simply a measure of the fact that many women don't have much understanding of boys, and is another reason why boys need fathers.

At any rate, I formulated a plan that I would deliver a very strong message to Jason, and I conveyed that message to him as frequently as I could. The message was the following: "Jason, I don't care how long you go on not speaking to people, because it's your right to decide who you speak to, and the only person you hurt when you don't speak to people is yourself. And I don't care how long you continue using your pacifier, because that's totally up to you. But you have no right to hurt other people by hitting them or kicking them, even people who've hurt you." I repeated that message to him in many ways: "You have no right to hurt people, even people who have hurt you." There's no doubt that it took effect.

The mistake that his mother was making was lumping everything together. It was pretty obvious that Jason was selecting behaviors designed to annoy his mother. Whether it was not eating, not taking off his jacket, not speaking to people, or acting out violently, his mother would get equally "concerned" and upset.

I viewed this collection of behaviors quite differently. I wasn't particularly bothered even by his not speaking, since I knew that he could speak perfectly well, and would get past this when he was ready. More important, I respected his choices, and his way of trying to take control of his life — as long as he didn't hurt someone else. Unlike his mother, I drew a sharp distinction between violence and

the other behaviors, so that he would understand that, as far as I was concerned, he could continue with all of these behaviors except one.

Incidentally, I tried to explain all this to the women, but remember that this was going on in the context of these meetings whose purpose was to eliminate the weekend visits altogether. The women were sullen and angry, and were emotionally totally invested in making it my fault, so much so that they refused to even consider another solution, especially a solution that came from me.

However, Jason was much more receptive. The weekend visits were more and more enjoyable for Jason, and Jason was becoming more relaxed in our frequent short visits. Inside of three months, all my work paid off: he gave up his pacifier, he gave up his mutism, and the violence disappeared shortly thereafter.

These were momentous times for Jason, and he was very proud of himself. Giving up his pacifier was his way of saying that he was no longer a baby. And giving up his mutism became a standing joke that he would tell frequently: "It used to be that you couldn't get me to talk, and now you can't get me to stop talking!"

Today, as I write this, Jason is a wonderful teenage boy, very caring and responsible about others, excellent in school subjects, and a model of good behavior. I'm extremely proud of him and what he's doing with his life, and I'm very grateful that I was there at a critical point in his life when he needed me.

Sidebar: A Mother's Experience

A woman posted the following story online, about her own son becoming mute when separated from his father. I've seen other stories as well showing how children suffer severely when they don't see their fathers. This is the sort of thing that feminist social workers, psychologists and pediatricians are completely clueless about:

My son was 3-1/2 years old when my husband announced his intent to divorce me after several months of sleeping with another woman. I was distraught and moved 600 miles away from him, taking our child. For several months we had literally no contact until the first court hearing. From the time we moved until

this hearing, my son had become very quiet — literally had stopped speaking, in his own 3-year-old language — and introverted. Because I had had to drive all night to get to this hearing, I was beat and my ex took my son for the afternoon so I could get some rest before driving all night back. To my surprise, after just one afternoon, my son had started speaking again, laughing, responding. This made me realize how damaging it had been to remove him from his father. Within a year, I had moved back within 30 miles of his father — at great financial and other hardships — because my son needed his father and his mother in his life. This was the best thing for *him*. I

suffered from it, but he benefited. He is now 13-1/2... and one of the most well-adjusted, happy, responsible, caring kids I know. Of course, I have to give credit to his father for being the type of father he is — not such a great husband to me, but a good father and role model in other ways. I had to get over my anger and resentment of the divorce and consider my child. And I did the right

thing. And my son will be a better person for it. Granted, not all fathers take the kind of responsibility and nurturing role that my son's father has. But because he is that way, I think my son is a better person for having his father in his life.

The Aftermath

Meanwhile the meetings continued, my ex-wife's weekly list of complaints about me continued as her bitterness and anger increased, along with Ms. Hauser's very open hostility. As for myself, I knew I had won, so I mostly kept my mouth shut except to answer questions. At the same time, I began suggesting that it was time to end these meetings, something that both women completely opposed. Although I was no longer particularly afraid of Ms. Hauser, I was afraid of giving my ex-wife the ammunition to say in court that I refused to attend court-ordered counseling. So I felt compelled to continue.

Things reached a climax a few weeks later.

There was a young man age 22 named Charlie living next door to my mother, and he and Jason formed a close friendship. In particular, Jason was getting involved in playing and watching hockey, and Charlie had been a hockey champion in high school. So Jason and Charlie really hit it off, enjoyed playing hockey in front of my mother's condo, using a tennis ball as a hockey puck. I seldom saw Jason — and Charlie for that matter — have so much fun as when they were playing hockey together.

Well, Jason told his mother about Charlie, and for some reason she became furious. I never really understood why she was so furious, except that she always seemed to be furious about everything.

Well, my ex-wife complained about this to Ms. Hauser, and that was the setup for one of my meetings with the two women. As usual, I was astounded that this was even something that had to be discussed, but it became a "concern," so there was no stopping it. I said that the whole subject was ridiculous, that Charlie and Jason were having a lot of fun together, and there was nothing wrong with it. But my ex-wife, who was still hoping even then to get the weekend visits curtailed, insisted that "John just wants to get rid of Jason by dumping him on his mother, and his mother wants to get rid of him by dumping him on Charlie." I remember

wondering how I could ever have been so stupid as to marry this person, and also how she could be so totally clueless about her own son, but I didn't say anything except that there was nothing wrong with Jason playing with Charlie. They wanted me to prevent Jason from seeing Charlie again (and incidentally, neither of them had even met Charlie and knew nothing about him other than that Jason liked him). When I refused, Ms. Hauser became absolutely furious, and both women joined in screaming at me at the tops of their lungs. It was a total debacle.

I was concerned that Ms. Hauser was so emotionally involved with my ex-wife that the two of them would find some way to use Jason's relationship with Charlie against me, so I felt I had to curtail the amount of time they spent together. This hurt Charlie enormously, and he cut himself off from Jason, and didn't see him after that. Both Jason and Charlie had their hearts broken because of the stupid attitudes of my ex-wife and Ms. Hauser. Charlie, wherever you are, if you happen to read this, I am so sorry, sorrier than I can ever express on paper.

On the other hand, I was feeling confident enough that I was not going to have to put up with this nonsense much longer. By this time there had been several successful weekend visits, Jason's mutism and violence had almost disappeared, and I couldn't care less what these two women thought. While I was married to my ex-wife, at least there was only one woman screaming at me all the time, but now I had to put up with two screaming women. These meetings were just a forum for these two women to dump on me week after week, and I had better things to do with my time.

I told them I was going to stop coming to these meetings, but Ms. Hauser insisted that the meetings were important, so I agreed to keep coming for a while, but I would not tolerate another circus like the one that had just occurred. At least they forced themselves to be a little more cordial after that.

Then a couple of months later there was another dramatic turn of events. I had just picked up Jason and come home. I picked up my mail and said, puzzled, "There's a letter here from your mother's lawyer." Jason looked at me when I said that, and he seemed as puzzled as I was, because neither of us knew anything about this, since I had just had a meeting with her and Ms. Hauser the day before, and nothing had been said about any legal action. I opened the letter and couldn't believe my eyes. "She's going to sue me," I said out loud. Jason heard me and became very upset; he spontaneously came over to me and hugged me for a long time. It was a very emotional moment.

I made up my mind that I never wanted to be in the same room with my ex-wife again, and I promised myself that I never would again. Now, many years later, I've kept that promise except for only a couple of unavoidable exceptions. My only regrets about this policy have been the exceptions, since my ex-wife never failed to use any opportunity to speak to me as an opportunity to offend and insult me as a man and a father. Since that day, I've avoided my ex-wife like a

plague. I called Ms. Hauser and told her that I was canceling the meetings. She was surprised by the lawsuit threat herself, and said she'd get back to me.

She got back to me a couple of weeks later, and insisted that I keep coming. I told her that under no circumstances would I sit in the same room as my ex-wife. Ms. Hauser still insisted on meeting, but agreed that she would meet alternately with each of us alone, once every two weeks.

One thing that kept puzzling me is why she kept pulling me back. Why didn't Ms. Hauser drop us and go on to someone else? The answer, as I realized later, is that she wanted to justify her budget. Feminism is an industry based on "head count" (see p. 60), where you get more money by pulling people in, and the best way to keep people coming is to make their relationships as acrimonious as possible. Basically, it's very expensive to Ms. Hauser for a couple to reach an amicable resolution to anything, and she was well experienced at creating the acrimony which was her organization's life blood.

At any rate, these meetings dragged on and on, but they were more formal and much less contentious since my ex-wife wasn't present, since I refused to meet with my wife any longer. I wasn't in the mood for much more silliness. The main incident I recall in this time occurred after Jason spent the night with me and wanted to wear his daytime clothes to bed rather than wear pajamas. Of course, I let him wear anything he wants to bed. If he wants to wear his daytime clothing to bed, so what?

However, at the next meeting, Ms. Hauser wondered why I was allowing Jason to sleep with his daytime clothes on. Again I was amazed by the nonsense at these meetings, and I said, "It doesn't affect his health or his safety, so what difference does it make what he wears?" Ms. Hauser said, "Because it concerns his mother." So I said, "Look, she gets concerned about everything she doesn't like. I've got enough of my own problems to worry about without having to deal with her whenever she gets concerned about something."

Jason's flirtation with sleeping in daytime clothing ended within a couple of weeks, as I knew it would, since daytime clothes aren't particularly comfortable to sleep in. If I had listened to Ms. Hauser and forced Jason to wear his pajamas to bed, then it would have been my decision, and I would have deprived Jason of the opportunity to make that decision by himself. I knew that Jason was just experimenting harmlessly, even though the two women were completely clueless about it.

Anyway, I told Ms. Hauser that Jason had gone back to wearing pajamas, and I said that I hoped that this relieved any "concern" that she and my ex-wife had about this big problem. That was just about the end of the meetings, and they petered out after that.

Counting confrontations

I now would like to turn back to the subject with which I began this chapter: the fact that feminist social workers always side with the woman against the man. Carrie Phillips had said it was their policy. When I first met with Ms. Hauser, I repeated what Carrie Phillips had said, and Ms. Hauser said, "There's no such policy."

So when the meetings began with Ms. Hauser, I decided I would keep score. I decided to "count confrontations," as follows: I would count the number of times that Ms. Hauser criticized me, contradicted me or disagreed with me, and I would similarly count the number of times she criticized, contradicted or disagreed with my ex-wife.

Now, I wanted to be fair about this. I knew that I had to trust my own judgment in deciding what a criticism or disagreement was, and there was always the possibility that I would let my emotions influence me. I knew that. So I decided to compensate for it. First, I decided that a criticism or disagreement had to be clear enough so that there was no doubt. And second, I decided that if the score ended up 40% to 60% (40% of the disagreements with my ex-wife and 60% with me), or maybe even 30% to 70%, then I would call it even, and blame the difference on my own perception.

Well, as it turned out, I needn't have worried about it. As I started counting confrontations – one for me, two for me, three for me, etc. – it became clear what was happening. After the score was 20 to nothing, I stopped counting, though I would estimate that by the end of the meetings, the score was probably 200 to nothing.

Yes, dear reader, in a year and a half, Ms. Hauser had sided with my ex-wife against me some 200 times, but had never, not once, sided with me against her.

And this included the times when my ex-wife clearly violated the rules – screaming and starting fights in front of Jason, hassling me over visits, using Jason as a weapon against me, and so forth. It made no difference what the situation was, Ms. Hauser would always turn it on its head and find a way to blame me. Just like a good and obedient hard-core feminist.

Indeed, no matter what the circumstances, Ms. Hauser always found a way to blame me. In one incident, I protested vehemently that my ex-wife had started screaming at me in front of Jason the moment I got out of the car to pick up Jason. Ms. Hauser ignored me and changed the subject. I asked her, "Why don't you criticize her for starting a fight in front of Jason?" She became annoyed and said, "Why do you feel it's necessary to blame your ex-wife for something." I said, "Because you never hesitate to blame me for everything, no matter what the circumstances." Ms. Hauser just changed the subject again.

During the period when I was meeting with Ms. Hauser without my ex-wife present, I confronted her on this subject. After most of the meetings, I always had the habit of sitting in my car for about 15 or 20 minutes and writing down notes about what had happened during the meeting. Later, I typed these notes up, and they're still available to me. So I confronted Ms. Hauser by reading to her from my notes. I read four stories, four occasions where she had sided with my ex-wife against me. I said, "Ms. Hauser, I've told you four times when you sided with her, and if I went through my notes I could come up with dozens of times. Can you tell me even one time when you ever agreed with me and disagreed with her?"

Not much to my surprise, she couldn't even name one, and she changed the subject. So what Carrie Phillips had stated in principle turned out to be true in fact, and when Ms. Hauser said that "there was no such policy," she was simply lying, in that she was following that very policy herself.

Does Discrimination Matter?

I've spoken to enough feminist women and pro-feminist men to know that any of them reading this will object.

There are two arguments that feminists will make. The first is that I'm "biased, angry and bitter," and that Ms. Hauser didn't discriminate. However, even if Ms. Phillips hadn't openly admitted the discrimination, the fact that Ms. Hauser sided against me dozens of time and never once took my side would prove the point.

However, few feminists even bother to make that argument. They make a second argument. These feminists say, "So what? Social workers should always side with the mother against the father." These feminists feel that it's perfectly all right for women social workers, psychologists and pediatricians in the divorce system to be as confrontational and offensive to fathers as they can, given that, in their view, all men are part of a patriarchy that abuses women. Well, let's look past the rhetoric at some of the consequences.

First, if a social workers always sides with the mother, then she is rewarding the mother for bad behavior. The reason is that if the mother behaves badly, and the social worker puts down the father when he complains, then the mother receives a benefit. Therefore, the mother is rewarded and encouraged to behave badly.

Now, if you believe that starting fights in front of the kids is very bad for the children — and there are a number of studies that indicate so — then social workers should not be rewarding mothers for starting fights in front of the children. By

rewarding the mother for hurting the children, the social worker is "training the next generation of batterers," a subject which I discuss later in this chapter.

Even worse, I've already noted that I've spoken to several divorced fathers whose children were being abused by their mother. My interviews with fathers show that, once again, the women social workers, psychologists and pediatricians refused to do anything about the situation (unless the mother had broken the children's bones), so that once again these women excused and therefore condoned and even rewarded violence and child abuse on the part of the mother. As I pointed out, one father whose story I recounted earlier in this chapter, could not get a response from the social workers until his ex-wife broke their daughter's fingers.

Here's another example, from my own experience. One day, I dropped off Jason at his mother's house, and a man, whose identity I won't disclose other than to say that he's a relative of her family, came running and calling after me as I was driving away. I had never seen anything like this and, concerned that something was wrong, I stopped and got out of the car to inquire what had happened. He physically attacked me, and since I am totally incompetent when it comes to fighting, I was actually afraid for a moment that he might kill me. I filed charges with the police, but I later dropped them, telling the court that the episode has been a nightmare, and I didn't believe it would happen again.

I wrote a letter to the Middlesex Court Clinic blaming Ms. Hauser for this violence. Ms. Hauser had made it clear that no matter what my ex-wife did, and no matter what the consequences, she would not be blamed. This gave my ex-wife and her family carte blanche to adopt any behavior they wanted, including violence.

I would like to quote from the letter that I wrote to the Clinic, because the text of that letter leads to my next subject:

In closing I would like to make it clear that I put a good share of the blame for all this on you people at the Middlesex Court Clinic.

For years I have seen Clinic personnel, especially Barbara Hauser, treat [my ex-wife] as a victim and me as the problem. The message to her was that no matter what disgusting things she did, and there have been many of them, you would turn it on its head and find a way to blame it on me. She is no victim: She's cynical and manipulative, and she's backed up by a multi-million dollar law firm, all of which she uses to great advantage. And her family is filled with hatred and vengeance, which the Clinic has only encouraged.

In my opinion, you are part of a much larger social problem. Millions of fathers don't see their kids, and violence against women is increasing. I have interviewed literally dozens of divorced fathers, and they all talk about the constant, grinding, unending humiliation they

feel, largely at the hands of institutions like yours. In my opinion, it is this grinding humiliation which is causing the social problems. And until society in general, and organizations like yours in particular, are willing to stop treating women as the automatic victims, and instead give fathers the respect they deserve, then the social problems will continue to increase.

I've quoted my letter to the Clinic at length, because it reflects my belief which has only become stronger over time: that feminist professionals like Dr. Scott, Ms. Hauser and Ms. Phillips are a social problem.

Depressed Men

For those of you wondering how such a conclusion could be possible, keep in mind that it isn't such an unreasonable conclusion given the fact that most social workers appear to be feminists, and feminists believe things like (as we've previously quoted Marilyn French as saying), "The entire system of female oppression rests on ordinary men, who maintain it with a fervor and dedication to duty that any secret police force might envy. What other system can depend on almost half the population to enforce a policy daily, publicly and privately, and with utter reliability?"

My experience with social workers both in person and online has led me to the conclusion that not only do these women *say* that they believe this, but in fact these women actually *believe* that this is true.

When a man starts going through a divorce, it's typically the worst time of his life. In most cases, it's the wife who wants the divorce, and the husband who opposes it (see chapter 4). Unlike his wife, a man loses everything. He may have had a comfortable home, but he loses his home, and now has no place to live; he may love his children, and may have read to them and put them to bed every evening, but now he's cut off from his children; and frequently he doesn't have enough money to do more than barely survive.

Men at this time feel extremely depressed, frightened, desperate and trapped, and suffer considerably more than women in a divorce. One group of researchers found that while divorced mothers experience a fourfold increase in such symptoms[♦] as depression, hospital admissions, and work problems, divorced fathers experience a *nine fold increase*, and these gender imbalances last as long as ten years.[♦] Suicide rates for divorced were found to be five times higher than for married men,[♦] and significantly higher for divorced men than for divorced women. And divorced men had substantially higher rates of hospital admissions to psychiatric facilities[♦] than divorced women. Another study found that the

hospital admission rate for men who were divorced or separated was an astounding 21 times higher than for married men.

A man at this time needs a transition period where he gets plenty of help and plenty of time with his children. Instead he meets extreme hostility, contempt and humiliation at every turn, largely at the hands of feminist social workers, psychologists and pediatricians who always side against him and who believe that he abuses women and children for no reason other than just because he's a man.

I began thinking about all this some years ago when a friend of mine told me a story. Larry, a friend of hers, a high-powered marketing executive and "one of the nicest guys I've ever known," had gotten married in the 1970s, and moved to the Midwest with his wife and two kids to take advantage of a high-salaried position. They were divorced, and then during the recession of 1982 he lost his job, and because of the location in the Midwest, no other such high-paying jobs were available to him. His child support payments were based on his salary prior to his losing his job, so as a result, he was paying 70% of his new salary in child support to his ex-wife.

He went back to court to request a reduction in child support payments, which is theoretically what the law prescribes. However, the judge, a woman, told Larry that in her opinion he had lost his job on purpose, so as to deprive his ex-wife of child support. She refused to permit a reduction in child support payments of 70% of his salary, and since child support payments are not tax deductible, he would literally not have a penny to live on.

Soon after, Larry waited outside his ex-wife's home. When his wife and two kids came out, Larry shot and killed all three of them, and then shot and killed himself.

When I heard this story, I was astounded by how stupid that woman judge was. If you were in the jungle facing a desperate grizzly bear, would you handle the situation by prodding the grizzly bear with a stick in order to enrage him some more? That would be stupid, but that, in essence, is what this woman judge did.

I've interviewed dozens of men who went through divorces, and have spoken with women like this judge, like Ms. Hauser, like Carrie Phillips, and like Dr. Scott. It's clear from their stories that these women have a knob in their minds that are stuck in "be as contemptuous as possible to men" position. These women don't know how to act any other way.

This is what it means that feminists always side with the mother against the father. (Although it's not the subject of this book, recent studies of violence in schools and in the work place often find that the perpetrator had been greatly humiliated by his boss or teacher and other superiors; however, social workers like Ms. Hauser have an even worse effect because they're supposed to be unbiased mediators.)

This is the same message that I heard over and over again from men.

And how do these men react? Well, ask yourself how you'd feel if a stranger tried to prevent you from seeing your own kids, and when you complained, the stranger responded by being gratuitously offensive. If you care about your kids, you would be enraged.

These feminists create hatreds and rages in men that last for years and decades. I really became aware of this when I began interviewing men. I placed the following ad in a magazine:

"Are you a divorced father? I am a divorced father writing a book on men and divorce. If you would share your thoughts through a questionnaire (anonymity guaranteed), please contact John Xenakis, [phone number]."

When I first ran this ad, I imagined using some sort of questionnaire, but as it turned out that was never used. Thanks to this ad and a couple of others, I did about 60 or so formal telephone interviews. These formal interviews were supplemented by hundreds of informal interviews with men I met in casual situations.

The ad that I wrote was quite neutral as to whether I was seeking aggrieved men, and in fact I was expecting to hear stories from men with a range of feelings from very satisfied to very unsatisfied. As it turned out, the range of feelings ran from enraged to murderously enraged. A common theme was the offensive treatment by feminist women and pro-feminist men in the divorce system.

John Patryck

Like many men, "John Patryck" entered the divorce process expecting a fair shake from the divorce courts. Like most of us, he didn't understand what the divorce bureaucracy is, and how it treats many divorced fathers. But let's let him tell his own story.

"My own parents got divorced when my father disappeared, and I didn't want to be like that," says John, explaining why he felt such guilt over his divorce. "I've heard all the talk about deadbeat dads, and I had the feeling that men in divorce are bad and evil people, and that they create more problems than women in divorce, and that women are at a disadvantage in divorce."

This was John's frame of mind as his own marriage began falling apart. "We had years of counseling when we decided we were tired of trying to save the marriage. I thought everything would go smoothly, we would be friends, there would be no difficulties, and we would resolve everything quickly."

Rather than go to court, they decided to use mediation. "It was the dumbest thing I could have done," says John, in retrospect. "I was suffering from enormous depression, I felt shame, guilt and embarrassment from what my father had done."

Incidentally, this shows how feminist social workers get away with what they do. At the time of separation, many men blame themselves, whether fairly or unfairly, for the breakup. Feminist social workers, psychologists and pediatricians know this, and instead of being helpful and supportive, they exploit these emotions.

John went on: "So I felt pretty bad, and didn't want to be one of these bad fathers, and so I was going overboard not leaving my wife in a disadvantaged position." According to John, the mediator, a woman, simply cooperated with John's wife in taking advantage of his depressed state of mind.

"The agreement that came out of the mediation was a disaster," says John. "It left me with all the debts of the marriage, and none of the assets, as well as a big child support payment."

What's worse is that the agreement placed no restriction on what his wife could do with the kids. As soon as the agreement was signed she announced she was moving away from the area, and he would only be able to see his kids on some weekends, after driving several hours.

He had a startling realization about his father and his childhood at that time. "I was talking about my father with a friend, and she asked me why my father had left me and my mother. He was a military man stationed at a base, and *for the first time in my life I realized that my mother had taken the two kids and moved away from him to another state.* I had never thought about that before, since my mother had always said he left us. Who knows what effect that had on my father, and on his relationship with his kids?"

His realization that his mother had lied to him all those years caused him to reevaluate his situation.

Suddenly, now that his own childhood was clearer to him, John realized he and his children really were facing a disaster. He tried to draw the line, "especially in the parenting situation, where I began to say, 'Look, I can't live with this.'"

So they went to another mediator. "If anything, he was worse," he says. "He just let my wife humiliate and berate me in every single session. He told me to accept the fact that my wife was moving away and taking the kids, and that even though it would effectively take them out of my life, I should just accept it. He said that I could drive out to pick up my kids and have a relationship with them in the car."

His wife had had a lawyer all along, but it was only in this period that he started interviewing lawyers. "One lawyer after another said 'Tough luck, you can't change a thing, don't even bother to fight it.' One lawyer, a woman who was

supposed to be progressive, said, 'It's biological. The mother should get everything she wants.'

Interviewing lawyers paid off, and he finally found one that he was comfortable with and who was willing to fight for him and his kids.

"I started relaying back to my lawyer what was going on in mediation. She was appalled, and she called the mediator twice to complain."

The situation was made worse by the fact that his wife's lawyer was never willing to compromise about anything. "My lawyer is fighting a very tough feminist firm, which has the reputation of really trying to sock it to fathers, without any sense of trying to equalize things. My lawyer complains about the other lawyer consistently misrepresenting agreements that my wife and I come to. The other lawyer scuttles the agreement without even telling my wife."

(Incidentally, the reason that so-called "feminist" lawyers never want to compromise is that they want to keep the fight going in order to build up their own fees. This has less to do with the fact that they're feminists, and more to do with the fact that they're lawyers, as described in chapter 5. Divorce lawyers exploit and take advantage of the wife's naïveté in order to get all the marital assets for themselves and for the husband's lawyer. It's always amazing how, when the husband runs out of money, the lawyers suddenly find a way to settle everything. This is discussed further in chapter 5.)

When I interviewed John, he was still waiting for the case to go to court to see if he can get some relief from the mediation agreement. Like many men, he's gone from feeling sorry for women in divorce to a state of rage, fury, and almost incredulous disbelief about how much the divorce process favored his wife, and how its working to destroy the relationship between him and his children.

Murderous Rage

One man after another told me about the hatred and rage he felt towards his ex-wife for taking advantage of him, and for the social workers, mediators and others who cooperated with her. And this hatred has been confirmed by at least one study (see p. 283).

I'm providing the information in this section for two reasons: So that men will know what to expect and will be less likely to do something rash that they'll regret later; and so that feminists will have a better understanding of the unintended consequences of their actions.

The first time I heard just how murderous the hatred that men feel for their ex-wives can be was from "Joe Eastman," a man who had been divorced nine years

earlier. His wife had repeatedly lied to the judge, and as a result Joe had been paying an enormous amount of child support for years. Since he was now remarried, his second marriage was suffering as a result.

Eventually, the ex-wife got a live-in boyfriend who didn't work and was abusive to his daughter. Joe's daughter then moved in with Joe and his new wife. Now since child support is supposed to be for children (duh!), he went back to court and asked the judge to reduce the amount of child support. The judge was the same Judge Sweeney of Massachusetts whom we previously met in the sidebar about Len Umina, where he had a three year old dragged out her bed at gunpoint and taken forcibly to the airport in order to send her back to an abusive mother. Joe asked Judge Sweeney, "Why should I have to pay child support for her boyfriend?" Judge Sweeney replied, "She has no other way to get money. The only way you'll ever get out of paying child support is if you die, she dies, or she gets married." Joe's lawyer said that it's hopeless. "My lawyer advised me just to give in," he says.

It was at that point that Joe said something rather startling. "I can understand why men kill their ex-wives. These women can work themselves, but the man has to keep paying more and more to these women, not to the kids. It's the system that makes these men turn to killers. If a man has to pay all this child support, what's the guy supposed to do to live? If she has little kids, I can understand that. But if the bimbo can work, and has a boyfriend living off her, that's not right."

"I thought child support ended at age 18, but I was wrong," he says. "The judge says that the only way it ends is if you die, or she dies, or she remarries. A friend of mine told me, 'if you had murdered your ex-wife eight or nine years ago, at least you'd be out of jail by now a free man.' That's why men kill their ex-wives. I shouldn't have to pay this woman for years. I should be a free man by now, but I have to pay child support because she blackmailed me."

This story illustrates how intense the hatred is that many men feel toward their ex-wives.

As I interviewed father after father, I was startled by how often I heard the same sort of remarks of a desire for vengeance through violence. Here are some examples:

If my ex-wife and her husband were killed in an automobile, that would be a good solution, and it would be God's solution.

I was ready to kill her. I can understand why men kill their wives. Anyone in that situation would feel that way. If a man gets pushed too far, you do things you'll regret later. I was very afraid of losing my cool. I didn't want to go to jail. I didn't want my emotions to take over. I'm a level-headed non-violent person, and that's probably why I never did anything. But someone a little less intelligent than

me, or who has a temper a little more dangerous than mine, might have done something.

I feel bad for men who don't have the kind of money it takes to force their wives to let them see their children, and who don't recognize that they could be violent, and do something about it. I know why that man killed his kids last summer - his wife was going to take his kids away from him. I feel bad for these other men who can't control themselves because of their kids - it's a scary thought that you're not going to see your kids every day. I haven't seen my kids since Thursday night. It's now Sunday - and I miss them terribly. I wish I were with them today.

There have been times when I was homicidal, especially when she fucked around so badly with the visitation. I'd drive for an hour to see my kids, and half the time she wasn't even there. She'd say she forgot to call me. I was just livid on a couple of occasions. I wanted to go over and strangle her, kill her. I really did. But I said to myself, that won't get me anything. She's pushed me hard, very hard, but thank God I haven't done anything, and thank God I don't drink. I don't say that women deserve it, and don't get the idea that I would ever do anything, but she's pushed me real close. She's formidable.

I was absolutely infuriated by what she did. I can't tell you how furious and humiliated I was. If I were inclined to drinking, I would have gone on a binge. If I were inclined to violence at all, which thank goodness I'm not, then I might well have killed my ex-wife at that time, and all the restraining orders in the world wouldn't have made a difference. Women don't seem to understand this stuff. As it stood, all I did was argue with her.

If she were killed in an auto accident, and my son wasn't in the car, I would dance.

Other men didn't put it so strongly, but many men said something like, "I would never do anything myself, but I understand why men kill their ex-wives." None of these men were violent, and none of them condoned violence. They were using violence as a metaphor for their hatred they felt for their children's mother.

It's possible for hatred to completely overwhelm a man's entire life. When I interviewed these men, I saw how much their hatred for their ex-wives had overwhelmed their lives, and how the same thing had happened to me, something that I would not have thought possible earlier in my life.

Also, let's dispose of the feminist claim that men like these are angry "because they can no longer control their wives." This is a rationalization used by women to justify their actions, which they know are morally wrong. None of these men —

and there were quite a few of them – said anything to me that even vaguely resembles the desire to control or have sex with their ex-wives, any more than they would want to control, for example, a cockroach. All of these men feel nothing but contempt, disgust and hatred for their ex-wives and for the shameful acts of their ex-wives, fully supported by feminist social workers and pediatricians, in keeping their children away from their fathers, and shutting fathers out of their children's lives.

In fact, I think this hatred is perfectly natural. A man is programmed, through millions of years of evolution, to love, protect, guide and care for his children. Men are programmed to take pride in their children on a daily basis, watching them grow, listening to their problems and helping them get around them.

If somebody tells that father that he can only be with his children a few hours a month, that father will hate that person, even if that person is the children's mother, more than he's hated anyone in his life. And if, on top of that, these men are confronted by gratuitously contemptuous feminist professionals, then an extremely hate-filled situation is created.

It's good for men who are contemplating going through a divorce to understand that this going to happen to them, so that their ex-wives won't be able to use it against you.

Unfortunately, the system is getting worse and worse, at least here in Massachusetts.

Since the mid-1990s, the state is building a series of "visitation centers"♦ throughout the state. Already there are 13, and more are coming. As these centers get built, more and more fathers are forced to visit their children only at these centers, in the presence of social workers. Fathers are forced to pay as much as \$120 to see his own child for 90 minutes.

A mother can force all visitation to go through these centers simply by making a false charge of domestic violence against the father. A simple accusation by the mother, whether true or false, is enough for a judge to require all visitation to occur at a visitation center.

"If A says that B is abusive, then B has to pay the money," says Pamela Whitney, Director of Domestic Violence and Family Support Services in Massachusetts, defending the visitation centers.

And what if the father doesn't have \$120 to spend? According to Robert Straus, who runs the Cambridge visitation center, and is head of the nationwide Supervised Visitation Network, the father is given "a week's grace," and then he's cut off from having any contact with his children.

One man painted a picture for us of these visitation centers (see sidebar). A father has no privacy with his children in these centers, and every word they say is written down. The counselors frequently humiliate the father in front of their

own children, and if the father objects, the counselor identifies those objections as evidence that he's violent.

Another man told me, "They treat these guys like animals. It's no wonder why some of these guys get to the point where they could kill."

Neither he nor I know any men who have killed, but I've provided these quotes by men so that men will know what to expect and will be less likely to do something rash that they'll regret later, and also to educate feminists so that they'll have a better understanding of the unintended consequences of their actions.

My personal view is that these visitation centers are so hateful and loathsome that it's hard to imagine any man being willing to see his children under such humiliating circumstances. A man may well decide, it seems to me, that his children are better off not seeing him at all, than to see him under circumstances where he's being constantly humiliated by social workers and by his ex-wife.

And once a father is drawn into this system, it's practically impossible for him to get out. According to Straus, his program never recommends that supervised visitation end, no matter how happily the father-child interaction is going.

And finally, it's worth pointing out again that these visitation centers do not protect children, since most child abuse is perpetrated by the child's mother or her boyfriend, and these visitation centers simply leave children in the hands of their primary and most vicious abusers.

These visitation centers can only hurt children, since they're so humiliating to fathers that they'll drive fathers away from their children.

Sidebar: One Man's Experience with Visitation Centers

Rick Brita (real name) has become something of an activist against Massachusetts visitation centers, as a result of his own experience. As a result, he's spoken to a number of people, and he's been able to establish the connection that shows how false accusations of domestic violence generate funds for social worker organizations.

Brita is the father of two children by his estranged girlfriend, who is not an American citizen. His troubles started in 1995, when his girlfriend was being threatened with deportation. Since their

two children were American citizens, he wanted the children to stay in the country.

"The only way she could get a green card to stay in the country was to take out a restraining order against me," says Brita. His girlfriend got the help of the South Middlesex Legal Services, a grant-funded group of lawyers whose purpose is to educate women on how to get restraining orders and to provide free legal support. Their clients are instructed to stay away from their husbands in order to be able to collect money. As

we'll see below, this arrangement has been extremely lucrative for this legal services firm.

As a result of her completely unsupported accusation, the judge held up any deportation orders, and also ordered that Brita could only see his children at the Visitation Center at 5 Sacramento St. in Cambridge.

Brita has spoken to a number of men who attend the same Visitation Center, and has put together a picture of what attending these is like.

"There's no privacy," says Brita. "Every visit is supervised by a counselor from a battered woman's shelter. She writes down everything you say, and if you raise your voice, she writes down that you're violent. You can't hug your kids without her permission. If you say the wrong thing, she reprimands you in front of your kids. They lecture you on parenting in front of the children. If you ever object, that's part of the validation that you're a violent person. If you tell your child to do something, she'll say to the child, 'You don't have to listen to him. You just have to listen to your mother.'"

According to Brita, the counselors set a number of arbitrary rules, and change them constantly. As an example, he points to a time when he brought a birthday cake for his daughter, having asked permission and set it up with the head of the center well in advance. When he got there, the counselor made a scene and reprimanded him in front of his children for breaking the rules and bringing a cake. His protestations that he had obtained advance permission were useless. "It's like a black man being judged by the Ku Klux Klan," he says.

The charges are steep, and they get steeper as time goes on. For Brita, they started at \$20 per visit, and kept

increasing up to \$120. Even worse, "the visits started out at two hours, then they cut it down to one and one half hours, sometimes less, because they don't have a counselor available." In addition, if a father wants to obtain the notes taken by the counselor during a visit, they charge \$25 in "copying fees."

There are a number of other expenses as well. "They can require you to go to counselors, they make you go to a child psychologist. You have to pay for that, in addition to visitation fees, copying fees, child support and alimony. They make you pay thousands of dollars just to have a relationship with your children, all from a false charge of abuse or domestic violence."

With this remark we're beginning to see the nexus between money and false charges of abuse or domestic violence – each man who is charged – falsely or not – is worth thousands of dollars to the social worker community.

Brita says he's investigated how these visitation centers are funded, and indicates that the more charges of abuse – true or not – that they can generate, the more money they receive – and not just from fees paid by fathers.

"These are all private agencies, and they all receive grants from the government and United Way, in addition to the fees they collect from the fathers," he says. He says that the battered women's shelters, visitation centers, psychologists, pediatricians and the DSS (Massachusetts Division of Social Services) all cooperate with each other to keep the money coming in.

"They get a woman to make false allegations of abuse, then they talk to their friends in the DSS and get them to recommend Visitation Centers," he says. "They all make sure that they get paid first. Everyone makes a buck out of this."

Brita has been to trial several times, and brought material witnesses who were able to disprove all of the false charges. "For example, I was able to prove that I was out of the state at the time of several of her claims." Even the Framingham police testified in his favor.

Brita was able finally to get a judge in Marlboro Probate Court to lift the restraining order, and order that he be allowed to visit with his children in his home.

"The lawyers at the South Middlesex Legal Services took immediate action," he said, "and somehow got the whole case reheard in front of judge Sheila McGovern in Cambridge." McGovern, who is in charge of the Middlesex Probate Court in Cambridge, is well known as a militant feminist judge.

(I once was in front of her during my own divorce, and she lectured me and threatened me for several minutes that I had absolutely no right to have input into my son's schooling or medical or any other decisions, and that my only job was to pay child support and keep quiet about everything else. She indicated that my punishment would be quite severe if I opened my mouth again.)

When Brita appeared before this judge, his lawyer explained that his girlfriend had never provided even one piece of evidence to back her claims, and that in fact previous court trials had proven him innocent several times. Sheila McGovern just asked his girlfriend, "Are you afraid of this man?" The girlfriend said, "Yes." McGovern reinstated the restraining order that had just been lifted. "I'd rather be safe than sorry. We're on the side of protection."

This clearly illustrates the fact that the collusion that we've previously described between social workers also

extends to women judges. We've shown how the Middlesex Court Clinic, headed by Barbara Hauser, has a policy of always siding with the mother against the father, irrespective of any facts.

In fact, the Middlesex Court Clinic is part of the Middlesex Probate Court, headed by Sheila McGovern. This suggests that the policy of always siding with the mother against the father is approved by McGovern, and here we see that the actual policy appears to extend to McGovern herself. Obviously the lawyers at the feminist South Middlesex Legal Services firm knew in advance that McGovern would take jurisdiction away from the Marlboro court that had lifted the restraining order and would reinstate it even with no evidence whatsoever, which is what she did.

Furthermore, the sole effect of McGovern's reinstatement of the order was to force Brita to continue returning to the Visitation Center which is down the street from McGovern's court in Cambridge, and which also works closely with McGovern. As a result of her order, this visitation center would receive thousands more in fees and grants. This shows how all these feminist organizations, — the Probate Court, the Court Clinic, the feminist legal services firms, the feminist-run visitation centers — all work together to generate lucrative fees and grants.

According to Brita, "Female judges are taking over the family courts, so that women have total control over the court systems, social services, and the visitation centers. They all cooperate with each for their mutual benefit, so you may think that you're having a dispute with your ex-wife, but you're actually having a dispute with a number of women's activists. There are male judges, but they're older,

and they just want to get their pensions, so they go with the flow. So the women have total control of the court system, the DSS and the visitation centers."

This is very lucrative for these women's activist organizations, according to Brita, especially South Middlesex Legal Services firm.

"My girlfriend has cost the state of Massachusetts close to \$750,000," he says. "She's had three different lawyers representing her against me, and she's had four immigration lawyers, all paid for by the state," he says. "She's picked up and driven to and from court by the South Middlesex Legal Services. She's on welfare, and gets free housing, food, and all these other services, all paid for by the government."

He adds that she has a job. "She works every day, and sends all that money back to her relatives in Brazil," he says.

And, as we'll see in chapter 3, tens of thousands of false charges of domestic violence are generated each year in Massachusetts alone. Judging by Brita's research, these false charges are extremely lucrative for all these private feminist agencies, probably generating millions or perhaps tens of millions of dollars per year. This might mean billions of dollars nationwide.

And obviously the most lucrative accusations are the false ones, for a couple of reasons.

A man who is guilty is less likely to fight back, and is probably less likely even to bother to try to see his kids. He won't generate any revenue for these feminist-run organizations.

But a falsely accused man will fight back in court, and will fight to spend time with his kids. For both of these reasons, all of this generates fees, budgets

and grants for all the feminist organizations – the probate court, the court clinic, the visitation centers, the feminist legal services firms, the child psychologists, and so forth.

Even worse, Massachusetts is one of several dozen states where, once a restraining order is issued*, all the woman has to do is call the local police and say that she thinks the restraining order has been violated, and the man will automatically be arrested, with no hearing or anything. This is a tool that the feminist organizations can use at will against any man who has done absolutely nothing wrong – and judging from my interviews with men, it's used quite often.

And it's a sure bet that the feminist organizations are going to win, because they have a policy of always siding with the mother against the father, in accordance with feminist "theory," as we've shown.

As we'll also see (p. 166), feminists vehemently oppose mandatory arrest for alleged batterers, since a man accused of an actual crime would have Constitution rights. McGovern didn't actually charge Brita with anything, since then he could have demanded that evidence be presented; instead she simply reinstated a phony restraining order, which was not a criminal charge, but which generated the desired lucrative fees and grants.

Most important, nobody is claiming that restraining orders protect anyone, including the feminists that implement the various policies. As we'll see in chapter 3, page 161. research has found no difference in abuse between women with and without restraining orders. Sheila McGovern surely knows that, and when she said to Brita, "I'd rather be safe than sorry. We're on the side of protection," with no evidence whatsoever,

she was surely aware that there was no evidence against Brita anyway, and the only thing being protected was her own power and budget and the lucrative incomes of her feminist friends in other feminist organizations.

There's an interesting legal wrinkle associated with Brita's girlfriend's strategy. Brita says that she's using the restraining order to prevent him from paying her any child support. Under advice from his lawyer, Brita has tried to get several agencies to accept his child support payments, but they've all refused, including the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), which normally collects child support payments from fathers through payroll deductions. "Since I'm self-employed [as a home improvement contractor], they refused to take my money," he says.

So, following his lawyer's instructions, he's been placing his child support payments into a bank escrow account. "If she collects the child support, then she can't collect welfare or get subsidized housing," he says, adding that her strategy is force him to pay tens of thousands of dollars in back child support as a lump sum when the children come of age. "I'm trying to find a way to stop that," he says.

Brita faces an additional hardship because he went to court to fight for his rights. The Visitation Center counselors threatened to keep him from seeing his children at all if he took them to court. He did so, and now they've refused to let him see his children since 1999, possibly to intimidate other fathers who might try to fight back.

In addition to getting to know a number of men who are being forced to use Visitation Centers, he's also gotten to know a number of young women who

are involved in the domestic violence scene from the women's point of view. On one occasion, he wanted to help a female friend who was applying for subsidized housing by going with her to the housing office in Framingham. With him standing there, she spoke to a social worker. He describes the conversation she had with the social workers as follows:

"There's a two-year wait for subsidized housing. Are you married?"

"Divorced."

"Did your husband abuse you?"

"No."

"Well, there's a two-year wait for subsidized housing, but if your husband has been abusing you, then we can put you into a battered women's shelter for two months, and then put you into subsidized housing. Now let me ask you again: Did your husband abuse you?"

[Hesitating] "Yes."

She was instructed to fill out forms establishing her need for housing and to claim that her husband was abusing her. She was told that she *must* move into the battered women's shelter for two months in order to qualify for the subsidized housing.

"Women like my friend are golden geese to the agencies," says Brita. "They make a lot of money this way."

These experiences establish a clear nexus between false charges of domestic violence and a great deal of money, and show how these Massachusetts social services organizations may be making

millions or even tens of millions of dollars from these false charges.

Brita says, "I've spent the better part of eight years just trying to find out why this happened to me. Before meeting her I've never been accused of anything. I come from a family that's never had a divorce – my parents' marriage, both my grandparents' marriages are all intact. I don't understand why any of this stuff happened. I have no concept of this."

Brita has some very strong advice for any father who's being forced to see his children at a Visitation Center: "Don't go!"

He says that once you go to the Visitation Center, they'll never let you out. "They document everything you say do," he reminds me. "If you break a rule, or raise your voice, then they can use anything you say as proof that you're a violent person, and they can force you to continue going. But if you don't go, then they have nothing on the record to use against you.

He recommends taking parenting classes or doing some volunteer work with children, and then getting a letter of recommendation saying how good you are with children.

"That way *you're* in control instead of the counselors at the Visitation Center," he says. "After six months, you can go back to court and show them the letters of recommendation and ask to visit with your children at home. They'll have nothing that they can use against you, so you'll probably win."

Of course, this kind of legal strategy might not work for every man's situation. Before attempting this or any other legal strategy, be sure to check with your attorney first.

Brita says ruefully, "If I'd never gone to the Visitation Center in the first place, none of this would have happened, and my kids would probably be here at home with me right now."

"Anchors Around My Legs"

A number of studies have shown that divorce causes much more loneliness and depression in men than in women. This results in greater illness and mortality for men. According to one researcher,

Perhaps the role that loneliness plays for men, but not for women, in mediating illness exists because, for many men, withdrawal from their ailing marriages often spells complete social isolation, given their tendency to have extremely lean social support systems. For women, withdrawal from their ailing marriages implies calling on a rich social support system of friends and kin that are known to provide buffers against illness and mortality.

High suicide rates are another problem. Al Bonica, head of Waltham, Mass., based Divorced Fathers for Action and Justice, counsels men who are going through a divorce, and has seen 11 suicides over the years. "One person died with pictures of his children all around him," he says.

Earlier, I compared the behavior of feminist social workers and judges, by treating men contemptuously at this time of their lives, as being similar to poking an enraged grizzly bear with a stick. In view of that comparison, it's not surprising that some men are provoked into violence, against either themselves or others.

But men aren't grizzly bears, and the vast majority don't resort to violence when some social worker prods them with a stick.

However, the actions of most men are far less dramatic. Most of them simply vote with their feet. They leave their ex-wives and they leave their children. (Some statistics show that the average child living with his single mother sees his father six times per year.)

As I've said, I made a pledge in 1988 never to speak to my ex-wife again unless absolutely avoidable, and I guess I should count myself lucky that I've been able to shut her out as completely as I have. There have been many times when I've been tempted to stop seeing my son just to force my ex-wife to deal with the inevitable behavioral problems. It would have served her right, but I would never do that to my son, especially since I see my son three times a week, plus one overnight per week and one weekend per month.

However, "Edward Graves" wasn't so lucky, in that he hasn't seen his kids for five months, although he lives nearby.

"When we were married, I had a very close relationship with the kids," says Edgar Graves of his two girls, 5 and 3 1/2 years old. "My wife was working nights and evenings as a caterer, and so I fed the kids and changed the diapers and put them to bed. I was a regular Mr. Mom. They're still the most important things in my life, but now I'm so bitter, I hardly ever even try to see them."

Graves had been married — happily he thought — with a \$250,000 job, living in Utah. He lost his job, and they had to cut back. His wife got him to move to Massachusetts, and in retrospect he now realizes she was planning a divorce all the time, and wanted to take advantage of the high child support rates in Massachusetts.

Several months after moving, he was lying in bed with his daughters one day, watching cartoons, when his wife walked in and said, "Daddy and I are going to have a talk about something now."

They went to talk in private, and his wife said she wanted to separate. "I was in complete shock. I never had any idea this was going to happen." He moved into a rooming house. "I went back home crying, crying, saying I don't understand. She just said she didn't love me anymore. To this day I don't understand why we're getting a divorce. Now I don't know if she ever loved me."

I've spoken to several men who believe that their wives married them just have children and collect child support, and from the beginning never had any

intention of staying married. I believe that women who do this are much more common than is generally realized, and this is discussed in chapter 4.

Since he hoped to reconcile, he kept giving in to his wife in reducing visitation with this children. This is a mistake that many men make. Finally, she refused to let him see the kids at all, and he felt so humiliated he's given up.

"She got a lawyer who's just pouring gasoline onto the flames. She's lied about her income, and she's lied about her assets, in order to make me pay more. I'm \$15,000 in debt with no end in sight. I used to live in a nice place, but now I live in a shithole, and sleep on a mattress on the floor."

As a result of all this, he went "cold turkey," and he's barely seen the kids for a for a few months.

"I'm in a dilemma now. I can't talk to her – I get so emotionally upset the way she's screwing me – and at the same time I can't be there for the kids, so they're suffering. I don't know how to resolve that. I'm so angry because of her greediness."

He says that his lawyer hasn't attacked her the way her lawyer has attacked him. "I made a choice to keep a civil atmosphere," says Graves. "Now in hindsight, that may well have been a mistake, since I keep giving and giving, and I get nothing in return. Now I'm at the point where I'm not seeing my kids because I have such hatred, such bitterness, that I can't even go near that house. The logical side of my head says, 'Grow up and get a life.' But the emotional side makes me hate her. If someone told me this story, I'd tell him to just grow up. But I'm tired of being the one that's always been bending over. I've been bending over for two years, and I keep getting screwed."

He says that the hardest part of his dilemma is dealing with the kids, with whom he used to be so close when he was married. "I feel horrible about the kids. I love them so much and they're the most important things in my life. But now they're like anchors around my legs. I had a good life when I grew up, and wanted them to have an even better one, but those dreams are gone now. I'm no longer their father, just a distant uncle. I want to be able to look back five years from now, and say that I did the right thing, but everything is so superficial. It's like I'm a prisoner. If it weren't for them, I would get away from here, get away from her, get away from all this pain."

My advice to people like Graves is to get another lawyer immediately, take his ex-wife to court and get an immediate visitation schedule. If he can prove that she lied about her income and assets, then he may be able to use that against her, perhaps even to get custody of the children.

Edward Graves' story isn't that unusual. The media likes to portray men who don't see their children as deadbeats who don't care about their children, but this is far from true.

But in fact the media has it backwards, which seems to be true many times.

The fathers who are *most* likely to see their kids after divorce are the ones who were *least involved* with the kids prior to divorce; the fathers *least* likely to see their kids after divorce are the "Mr. Mom" types like Graves, the ones who fed their kids, changed their diapers, and read to them at bedtime.

This is completely the opposite of the message that the media puts out.

For fathers who were close to their children during marriage, "'visiting' their children tended to engender persistent feelings of loss and depression, ... and signified the loss of the former relationship," making it very painful to visit them, according to Edward Kruk, professor at the University of British Columbia in the School of Social Work, On the other hand, many fathers who weren't as involved with the children during marriage "were able to eventually establish a satisfying relationship with their children," and in fact just "visiting" their children "often presented an opportunity to develop an enhanced relationship, independent of mothers as mediators in the relationship."

Unlike the media portrayal of fathers as not caring, fathers who lose contact with their children suffer enormously. Here are the words of three fathers who have lost contact with their children:

"I have been a very attentive father, and spent a lot of my nonworking time with my children [before the mother moved the children away]. They are a large part of who I am. At times the guilt that I feel in not being with them is overwhelming. I feel as though a part of me has been amputated."

I feel very bad – I feel I am lost with nowhere to go, with no direction. And I feel no one can save me; I don't know how I can survive like this. I can't sleep – all the time I think about them.

I feel numb – I don't feel anything anymore. At first I felt completely terrified – for about 4 years. And then I just started losing all feeling. I don't know what I feel right now.

According to Kruk, divorced fathers that lose contact with their children suffer more severe health problems than those who remained in contact. The physical and mental health problems resulting from the divorce were greater in "frequency, intensity and duration," according to Kruk. These men "experienced stress severe enough to result in the development of new physical and mental health problems," and also had "a significantly higher level of negative effects on their work or career," he says. By contrast, fathers who maintained regular contact with their children had "no new physical or mental health problems."

Why are feminists the way they are?

I was totally baffled as to what was going on during my divorce, and it's that bafflement that led me to spend so much time online with feminists, trying to figure out what the hell was going on.

I saw what these women were doing during my divorce as absolutely crazy. My view, even while I was totally baffled, was that Ms. Hauser, Dr. Scott and the others were making my divorce much, much worse. By refusing to make even the simplest, most trivial compromise, and by being relentlessly acrimonious for absolutely no reason at all, they gained absolutely nothing, except to make the divorce much more bitter. (I didn't understand the money connection at that time.)

I experienced the same kind of craziness from feminists online, and as time went on, I began to form an understanding of how the feminist mind works.

Some understanding came for me when a feminist friend posted the following message:

I know of 3 situations where a batterer beat a pregnant woman. Two of them resulted in miscarriages. In the third one, the woman was 8 months along and fortunately he only hit her twice in the stomach before he was stopped. His words before he started punching her.... "Why didn't you buy me any cigarettes?" She said she didn't know he wanted any. He got pissed and threw his cigarette lighter at her. She started leaving and said she wasn't ever going to see him again. He then went after her and started punching her. He said that she wasn't going to keep the baby. He'd kill it first.

The other woman that lost hers was only a few months each time. This husband was always beating on her even when he knew she was pregnant. It was more fun to him to see if she'd have a miscarriage. He loved watching her laying there bleeding. Too weak to stand, made her crawl into the bathroom and flush it down the toilet.

Of course I found this horrible and disgusting, as almost anyone reading it will. I thought that this couldn't possibly be true, short of the worst possible Hollywood horror movie.

But several women in the forum immediately posted supporting messages. One said that her sister was battered while pregnant, and added the following remark:

[My former brother-in-law] didn't actually *hit* his pregnant wife in the abdomen. In the interest of accuracy, I would like to point out that he *kicked* her in the abdomen. Further accuracy forces me to point out that not every kick connected with my sister's abdomen –

two of the kicks resulted in broken ribs, one in a concussion. (the broken jaw was a result of the first blow that knocked her off of her feet to put her abdomen in easy range of his boots.)

Other women told stories of this sort, and some quoted a brochure from a battered women's advocate group quoting a study that said that one out of four pregnant women is battered.*

I was astounded by all this. What kind of man would ever do something like this? If it wasn't someone who's psychotic, then I can only think that the man would have to have been under the influence of drugs or alcohol, would have to have been physically abused himself as a child, *and* would have to have an enormous hatred of babies and children. And I just couldn't believe this happened to more than one in a million pregnant women, not one in four.

So I called up two women friends of mine to ask them if they've ever heard of anything like this. Both women were in their 40s.

The first woman was in her second marriage. She has two adult children and a few grandchildren. She said that she's never of such a thing – women being abused and kicked in the stomach while they're pregnant – except that she's read of it. But she's never heard of it from her friends, even being reported as second or third hand information.

The second woman was divorced. She had two children around age 20. She said she once knew of one woman who had such an experience – her husband would get drunk every once in a while and come home and beat her up, including while she was pregnant. But she's never heard of anything like that except in this one case. She said that it must be very, very rare.

So let's do a little bit of arithmetic. Let's assume that I've known 100 pregnant women during my life, and that each of the two women I spoke to also knew 100 pregnant women. That's 300 pregnant women, and if the one in four statistic were true, that would mean that, among the three of us, we would have known 75 pregnant women who were being battered during pregnancy. Even accounting for the fact that these 75 women would be trying to maintain some secrecy, we would be aware of 10 or 20 of the 75 that had been battered during pregnancy. And yet, not one of us knew a single one.

So there I was, listening to two completely different stories that really were quite inconsistent with each other. The women in the forum said that battering of pregnant women was quite commonplace – and that it happened to one pregnant woman in four. However my women friends – and this was supported by my own personal experience – were telling me that this kind of behavior was so disgusting and so rare that they'd never even heard of it, except in one case she'd heard of years ago. It almost seems that there were two completely different worlds in this

country. In one world (my world), abuse is rare, and in the other world women are abused all the time.

So it began to dawn on me that there are two worlds in our society, and that feminists live in a completely different world than I do, though we both live in the same society. I began to feel like an anthropologist, living in one world, who was trying to explore the other world and make sense of it.

The "Two Worlds" Theory

I had actually had the first inklings of this "two worlds" theory years before.

When I first started writing this book, in the late 1980s, it was originally going to be a book on "men and divorce." Whenever I was talking to a new acquaintance – just an ordinary person I would meet in the course of a business or social situation – I would often mention to him or her that I was "writing a book on men and divorce." I was frequently somewhat startled by some of the reactions I got from just this simple statement.

Most of the reactions, of course, were very positive. Most people were enthusiastic and might say "How exciting!" or "Good for you!" or "I'm glad you've found a way to work through your divorce."

But what startled me was that some small percentage of the people I told this simple bare statement – that I was writing a book on men and divorce – had some sort of negative response – a strained look, a puzzled question, an embarrassed "Ohhh," as if I were writing about something unsavory. After a while I began to conclude that there are people who just have this feeling in their guts that they don't like divorced fathers. Period.

And I also noticed that it didn't seem to make much difference whether the person was male or female; as nearly as I could make out, men and women reacted positively or negatively pretty much the same percentage of time.

I puzzled over this for a very long time. What is it that makes someone like or dislike divorced fathers, simply because they were divorced fathers? The same question might also be asked of other things – what makes someone like or dislike African-Americans, Italians, or whatever?

In the case of divorced fathers, it also occurred to me that whether a person liked or disliked divorced fathers was directly related to whether the person tended to take "the man's side" or the "the woman's side" when discussing gender issues. Thus, someone who favors father's rights would be more likely to like divorced fathers than someone who doesn't.

The following theory – and this might be considered a precursor to the "two worlds" theory – finally occurred to me: that whether a person tends to be more

comfortable with the men's position or the women's position on gender issues depends less on whether a person is a man or a woman, and more on the relationship the person had with his or her father and mother, especially the father.

Basically, the theory is that if a person liked his or her mother more than his or her father, then s/he will prefer the women's side of gender issues; but if s/he liked his or her father more, then s/he will prefer the men's side.

I tested this theory out by asking people, when it was possible, what kinds of relationships they had with their parents. For example, I tested it out with three women I dated during a period of a couple of months.

- One was deserted by her mother as a child and had a good relationship with her father; she generally favors the men's side in gender issues.
- One never saw her father after her parents were divorced. She generally favors the women's side.
- One came from an intact family, but had a very close intellectual relationship with her father which her mother was jealous of. She favors the men's side.

In all of these cases, incidentally, I discussed with these women that I was writing a book and what it was that I was trying to prove, and they all agreed that it seemed to be reasonable. And indeed it does — that your attitude toward fathers in general today depends on your experiences with your own father. It's not really so surprising, and yet when you think about it, it has startling implications.

This was my first exposure to understanding the concept that people's views on such things as feminism and women's rights is really mostly determined by their relationships with their fathers.

Of course we all know that people do many things and hold many opinions for emotional reasons, but for the first time I was becoming aware that many people's gender-related opinions depend almost *solely* on their relationships with their fathers, and that reason and intellect has very little to do with it.

There's another thing that I came to realize about this time: I've been participating in online discussions since 1984. In all those years, I have watched and sometimes taken part in hundreds or perhaps even thousands of gender-related discussions, some of which became very vehement. And yet, I have almost never seen anyone change anyone else's mind on a significant core issue. Whether the subject was anything from abortion to dating, people ended up with the same positions that they started with.

I was beginning to think that basic views on gender were established in early childhood, and never seemed to change much after that.

Here's the thing: I spent a long time online on several feminist forums and got to know many feminist women, and almost every single one of them, at one time or another during those months, told a personal story of abuse by her father. Some said they were beaten by their fathers, others said they were ignored by their fathers. But all of them were very angry with their fathers, and that seemed to affect their view of men for their entire lives.

Now, the "two worlds" theory extends this observation forward. Once a girl has had a bad relationship with her father, she makes choices that reinforce her initial attitudes towards men and fathers as she goes forward in life.

Here's one simple example of how this works: Suppose two women work in the same factory. One is being abused by her husband, and she asks the other, "Are you married?" If the second woman says, "Yes, and Joe is wonderful husband who treats me like a queen," then the conversation probably won't go too much farther, and these two women will probably remain in their separate worlds, even if they're working at adjacent desks. But if the second woman says, "Yes, but I'm worried because he drinks a lot," then the two women may very quickly discover that they have something in common – husbands who become unpleasant when they get drunk. They may very well start sympathizing with each other, comparing their husbands with their respective fathers, and with their friends' husbands and fathers.

Back in the 70s it was, in my opinion, fairly easy to be partly in and partly out of the "women's lib" movement. You could support equality for women in home and in the workplace, reject extreme radical positions, and still be a "woman's libber." But today, as women have achieved most of the political goals they were striving for in the 70s, "feminism" has become polarizing, in my opinion.

Today, you're either a feminist or you're not. To be a feminist today, you pretty much have to be committed to the whole patriarchy / misogyny package. According to polls, the number of women willing to buy this package has been getting smaller and smaller since the early 90s.

A young woman essentially has to make a choice: Do I enter the "feminist" world of battered women, rape victims? Or do I enter the "non-feminist" world, of women who want to get married, have kids and a "normal" life.

The "two worlds" theory is the feminist and non-feminist worlds are becoming more and more mutually exclusive. In one world, rape, abuse and battering are common, every day things; in the other world, they are rare.

The Domestic Violence Industry

The Two Worlds theory provides a kind of emotional/behavioral view of feminism today, but the picture isn't complete until we look at other polarizing factors: money and politics. As we're showing in this and the next two chapters, feminism is drenched in politics, and driven by money.

Earlier in this chapter, I was able to show a connection between charges of abuse and a great deal of money (p. 46). Each false charge of domestic violence brings feminist organizations thousands of dollars in fees and grants. As we'll show in chapter 3 (p. 160), there are tens of thousands of such false charges each year in Massachusetts alone, and this translates to millions or tens of millions of dollars to feminist organizations.

In fact, as you'll see, I've examined many feminist policies, and there isn't a single one that isn't guided by anything other than money. As we'll see, not even feminists claim that their policies actually work — to reduce harassment, rape, abuse, and domestic violence.

And we'll argue that some feminist policies actually increase domestic violence. This is particularly true of feminists' excusing violence by mothers against their children, which I call "training the next generation of batterers" (p. 18). However, criticizing women for violence doesn't bring any money in, so it isn't done.

In his article, "The Booming Domestic Violence Industry,"[♦] journalist John G. Maguire chronicles his attempts to find out how much money Massachusetts spends on social workers and other mostly hard core feminist professionals like the ones I ran into.

There are new programs every month — clinics, shelters, research institutes, counseling centers, visitation centers, poster campaigns. According to one expert, John Flaherty, co-chairman of the Fatherhood Coalition, "This industry is an octopus. It's got its tentacles in more and more parts of everyday life."

Still, getting exact figures proved difficult. Maguire made repeated calls and visits to officials in the administration of Republican governor Paul Cellucci, especially to Jean Hurtle, the Executive Director of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence. Like a good politician, she stonewalled Maguire.

Finally, he got some figures from his local representative, Sen. Steven Panagiotakos, a Lowell Democrat. The budget for these social services has been growing at 7% per year since 1993, "significantly higher" than other programs, and reaching \$24 million.

The key to keeping the social worker budget increasing year after year is to keep more and more people in the system: more and more of the hateful visitation

centers described earlier in this chapter; more and more battered women's shelters; more and more accusations, false or otherwise, of domestic violence. And as we'll see in chapter 3, the Holy Grail of feminism is to get the volunteer staffing of battered women's shelters replaced by state and federally funded paid employees.

One of things that always puzzled me during my divorce was why Ms. Hauser kept insisting that I and my ex-wife keep coming back, and why she kept making the discussions as acrimonious as possible. Now I know that the way to keep getting budgets increased is to keep as many people as possible coming back, and make people need to come back by making their relationships acrimonious.

The same reason explain why, as indicated earlier, the people who run the visitation centers never recommend returning to a normal father-child relationship, no matter how happily the relationship is going.

In the chapters to come, we'll be discussing other gender issues. As we'll see, feminist policies sometimes help women and children, and frequently hurt women and children, but they all have one thing in common: they're designed to maximize social services budgets, irrespective of whether anyone is helped or hurt.

Philosophy

As I look back over my life, I tend to get philosophical. In my career, I've accomplished many things, including some major computer software systems. (Having been married twice and not having had any relationship survive, I certainly can't claim to have the skills necessary to be with a woman. As the character Gary said in *ThirtySomething*, "I think I'm missing the relationship chromosome."*)

But of all my life's accomplishments, the one that stands out above all others is the time that I saved my son at a time when he really needed me.

Sometimes the experience seems to be an almost mystical fight between good and evil to me. My son was in enormous danger, and it was up to me to save him, and I succeeded.

Forgetting the mysticism, there's no doubt I won a real war against my ex-wife and the women who supported her. They were determined to separate me from Jason, and I beat them. If they had won, then they would have deprived Jason of whatever help I could give him; it would have been a tremendous loss for me, and a disaster for Jason.

We men tend to idolize women and their ability to deal with children and their problems, and we assume that when a child has a problem, then the women will know what to do and will do the right thing. This is especially true of female

social workers, psychologists, and pediatricians, with whom we naturally vest with special powers where children are concerned.

But my experience shows that in fact women, even professional women, don't have any special powers. These women, for all their professional qualifications, were totally clueless as to what was happening to Jason, and simply fell back on political nonsense that if a child has a problem it must be the father's fault.

Advice for Men

As I spoke to one father after another, and listened to their pain, depression, anger and resignation over how they're being prevented by their ex-wives and by various social workers from seeing their own children, one message became clearer and clearer: Men have got to fight harder in courts to see their own children, and this means that they've got to fight harder against their own ex-wives and the feminist social workers who support them.

One man I spoke to hoped to get back together with his wife, and so rather than start a fight with her, he agrees to "postpone" weekend visits with his daughter for a while.

Another man told me how he wanted to save the expense of getting his own lawyer, so they both used hers, which put her in almost complete control of the visitation schedule; now, five years later, he hasn't seen his kids in six months, and wants my advice about what to do about it.

I don't know how to put this diplomatically, so I'll just say it straight out: The dumbest thing you can do, at the time of divorce, is to give in to your ex-wife and the social workers when they try to prevent you from seeing your children. You'll be making decisions at that time that you and your children will have to live with for years, even decades, and you must fight right up front to get an agreement which guarantees as much time as possible with his children.

With regard to the two examples I just described, they were both men who asked my advice.

The first man was putting off weekend visits with his daughter because he hoped that his wife would change his mind and get back with him. He didn't want to do anything that might anger her. This is really dumb.

I warned him that he was in danger of making some decisions he'd regret for the rest of his life, in that he'll be establishing a pattern of not seeing his daughter. I told him that it was overwhelmingly mostly women who file for divorce, almost always against the husband's wishes, and that it was evidently a common tactic by women at the time of divorce to hint that they might get back together if only

he'll give into her requests. If he really wanted to get back together with his wife, I told him, he should fight her as hard as possible, so that she won't think that getting divorced will be easy for her. "And besides, what ever makes you think your wife will find you more attractive if you don't even have the guts to fight to see your own daughter?"

Not surprisingly for these situations, I don't think he listened to me, since the last I heard he was seeing his daughter only rarely and, of course, he and his wife didn't get back together. Surprise, surprise!

I spoke to the second man about five years after he'd been divorced. To save money, he'd never hired a lawyer, and allowed his wife's lawyer to draw up the divorce agreement that they both signed. The agreement specified that all visitation would be at his wife's "discretion," and now he hadn't seen his children for six months. "Every time I schedule a visit, she reschedules it or just stands me up," he said. Once again, Surprise, surprise!

He was surprised when I told him that this kind of treatment was not the exception but the norm, and that I'd spoken to literally dozens of men who were constantly harassed by their ex-wives over visitation. "It's an old story, and it happens all the time," I said. I told him that if he even wanted to see his children again, he would have to get a lawyer, take his wife to court immediately – within a week if he could – and force her to agree to a regular visitation schedule. And then he has to be willing to take her back to court and charge her with contempt if she violates the agreement. "If you care about your children's welfare and well-being, as well as your own welfare and state of mind, then you're going to have to be very legally aggressive with your ex-wife, and don't let her get away with anything."

And most of all, don't accept the word of a social worker or psychologist or pediatrician just because she's a woman. You know your children much better than someone who's only spent a few hours with them, especially when that someone has an agenda.

And, if you have boys, my experience with social workers, teachers, and my own ex-wife is that women are pretty much totally clueless about boys.

With these women, unfortunately, it's worse than that. Based on my experience, and the experience of other men I've spoken to, you have to expect that these women will side with your ex-wife against you, and so you have to assume that they're your enemy, rather than neutral advisors. At any rate, don't believe anything they tell you without checking it with a third party whom you trust.

You *must* do these things, if not for yourself then for your children.

Children of Divorce

We've heard from the divorced fathers. Now what about the children of divorce?

Except for the ones who were abused by their fathers, all the adult children of divorce that I spoke to deeply regretted that they hadn't had a closer relationship with their fathers. And most of them blame both their mothers and their fathers.

When children of divorce become adults, it's not uncommon for them to go in search of their father, in much the same way that an adopted child might, as an adult, search for his or real parents.

"Claire Figgen" is a daughter of divorce, now in her mid-twenties, who went on such a search. Her parents divorced when she was young, and her mother moved with her from California to Massachusetts, so she very seldom saw her father. She grew up blaming her father, but a couple of years ago she decided to go out to California to try to establish a relationship with him. She finally decided that there was plenty of blame to go around – her mother was to blame for trying to push him out of his daughter's life, and her father's new wife was to blame because she didn't want his first wife's daughter around. But she also blamed her father for going along with this, and not fighting hard enough to overcome the objections of these two women.

This is a theme expressed by many children of divorce and by experts as well. If your ex-wife is keeping you from seeing your children, you don't want them to think it's your fault. That's why you have to fight as hard as you can to see them.

"You need to create a paper trail and an album of all you've done* to see your kids," says Brian B. O'Brien Esq., a Waltham, Mass. lawyer specializing in divorcing men. "You're going to need to do this even if you lose, because if you lose, how are you going to explain to your teenage child later how you gave up on being a full time parent? With the paper trail, you can say you really tried and were discriminated against. It's important to be able to say, even if you lose. Otherwise, the mother will tell the kids that you just gave up, and it's going to be hard to explain what you did."

Here is how Claire put it:

Lots of people say that parents shouldn't fight, and that it's bad for the children. I don't agree. If my father had fought to see me, at least I would have known that he was fighting for me, and I wouldn't have thought he didn't care about me.

Don't walk out on your kids. I've forgiven my father, but it's really too bad things couldn't have been different. I really missed out

on a father/daughter relationship, and I've always wondered how things might have been different for me.

Not all adult children blame their fathers. Some, like "Ellen Rileman" blame themselves and their mothers. Ellen deeply regrets the pain she put her father through. "I've seen my father regularly since my parents split up when I was four," she says. "We didn't get along for many years, especially when I was a teen. I was a big defender of my mother, and treated him like a jerk, and told him he was a jerk."

Ellen says her attitude has begun to change only recently. "I'm now 30, and the last couple of years it's been different. I realize he just wanted to be a good father. It wasn't easy for him. Of course he has his own faults, but in the situation I was in you only see it from one perspective."

Ellen says that it's hard to develop a close relationship in a divorce situation. "He felt left out, because he didn't live here. I blamed him a lot, but now I realize that it wasn't really his fault, it was just the situation he was in. It's very hard both of us when your father isn't here, you only see him once every week or two, and it's something you don't even look forward to."

Another father-daughter relationship didn't end so well, and I learned when I spoke to another daughter of divorce, now 22.

"I can remember being a spy for my mother when I was 13. I would visit him and secretly look in his checkbook to see what happened. I was mom's private investigator, and was taught to distrust him."

She says that the battles over child support continued for years, and as they did, the relationship between father and daughter deteriorated further. "On my 21st birthday, my father called me, and all he said was that he wasn't going to pay my rent any more. Goodbye."

Questions and Answers

During my years of online activity, many people asked me questions, argued with me and flamed me. In some chapters, I've include questions that people have asked me, along with my answers.

1. Q: You appear to be excusing violence by men by blaming it on feminists.

A: I would never excuse violence by men in the way that feminists excuse violence by women who batter or kill their children (p. 18). I believe that violence should be fully punished, even with the death penalty when the jury and the legal system consider that to be appropriate.

The kind of analysis I'm providing is no different than the analyses you frequently see in newspapers and magazines about workplace violence or situations like Columbine school. My analysis doesn't excuse violence any more than those analyses do.

I have two reasons for providing this analysis: So that men will know what to expect and will be less likely to do something rash that they'll regret later; and to educate feminists so that they'll have a better understanding of the unintended consequences of their actions.

2. Q: Why are you picking on women? Men are awful during a divorce.

A: Yes, men and women are both awful during a divorce. But that's understandable. After all, a divorce a contested legal action, and whether it's a divorce or some other kind of legal action, both sides are going to be as nasty and aggressive as they can.

The problem is that the women I'm criticizing are not the wives going through the divorce but the professional women social workers, psychologists and pediatricians who participate in a divorce. These women have a moral and legal obligation to play a neutral role between the parties. But by always siding with the mother against the father, they violate their professional responsibilities, and may even be violating the law.

Remember that one professional woman said that no father should be allowed to spend more than three hours at a time with his children, another said that she and the other social workers always side with the mother when she disagrees with the father, and the other social worker said that my son would be traumatized if he spent the weekend with me. These women violated their professional responsibilities.

3. Q: Aren't you afraid of hurting your son by criticizing his mother in print?

A: This book does not criticize my ex-wife or any mothers except insofar as they follow the advice of lawyers and social workers. I cannot respect any woman, or condone her actions, if she limits the time her children spend with their father, but we live in a world where women are advised to do exactly that in order to hurt the father. The best interests of the children are seldom an issue. Lawyers advise keeping the children from the father in order to increase the acrimony and thereby increase the legal fees (see chapter 5), and social workers and pediatricians advise the same thing in order to justify their own budgets. This book criticizes the women

professionals, not the mothers who follow the advice of the women professionals.

4. Q: You've had a bad experience with particular women. How can you be sure that other women social workers and pediatricians are like the ones that you ran into?

A: That's exactly the question I had and I was very, very confused when it was all happening. But I was determined to find out what happened, and that's why I interviewed hundreds of divorced men, and then spent years online having discussions with feminists.

However, the criticism is correct that I'm drawing conclusions from anecdotal evidence. It's a lot of anecdotal evidence, but it's still anecdotal. I don't have anything like the funds that would be necessary to perform statistically valid research. I did all I could with the meager resources that I had.

My response is that we should fund the statistically valid research. Is it true, as I believe that most professionals in the divorce system are feminists with a political agenda? This is something that research accurately measure, and our society ought to do so.

5. Q: Has any woman (or, for that matter, any man) ever accused you of being a rapist, a batterer, a child molester, or child abuser?

A: No.

6. Q: I'm a divorced man / woman, and I have a very good, friendly relationship with my ex-wife / ex-husband.

A: Whenever someone tells me this I always ask what sort of custody and visitation arrangement they have for their kids, and the invariable answer is "We don't have any kids." A couple without kids can split up and go their separate ways, or remain friends without interfering with each other's lives. But a couple with children are forever bound together, and it's rare for that relationship to be amicable.

7. Q: You seem to imply that a father knows more about his son than his mother does. Does that mean you think that a mother knows more about her daughter than her father does?

A: That's a great oversimplification of what I said. Many fathers don't know much about their sons, and many mothers know a lot about their sons. You can't assume anything though, having said that, there's some common sense that says that a male would likely understand a male better and a female would likely understand a female better.

However, the problem with the women in the situation I was in was that there was an agenda, and this colored their judgment. They could easily have understood what was going on with my son, but they didn't want to listen to a man.

So don't assume anything. If you're a man with a daughter going through a divorce, and you're not sure what's going on with her, then try to get some advice about your daughter from a third party, such as your mother or sister or a girlfriend.

8. Q: On the subject of domestic violence, I agree that the wholesale issuance of restraining orders is not the solution and this approach renders the court order an all-but-useless piece of paper.

Still, I would rather that judges err on the side of caution. If one partner feels that his/her safety is in danger, then he/she ought to be able to get an order that says, in effect, "don't come within 10 feet of this person for any reason whatever." It seems to me that the court should be able to issue such an order "without prejudice."

A: I wonder if you've given any thought to question of whether restraining orders actually do any good.

I'm coming more and more to the opinion that many (perhaps all) angry divorced men do something to "get even." Getting even may take many forms – not paying child support, deserting one's kids, writing a book on divorce, committing suicide, kidnapping one's children, killing one's children, killing one's ex-wife.

As I think about all of these things, it strikes me that all the methods for getting even have something in common: They're not done in a moment of passion. They are all long-planned actions, based on resentment and hatred building up over a long period of time.

Now, if a man plans out how he's going to commit the crime of, say, killing his ex-wife, then how could a restraining order make any difference whatsoever?

I could see that a restraining order might prevent some man from harassing his ex-wife, but when does a restraining order actually prevent violence? Isn't it in fact the opposite – the catalyst for revenge violence? So when does it actually do any good to, as you say, "err on the side of caution"?

Study and Research

Writing this book has always been for me not only a voyage of personal discovery but also a serious research project.

For this reason, I'm taking the liberty of suggesting avenues of further study and research for the interested reader. These suggestions will vary all over the map – from thinking about gender issues in your own life to doing graduate level or scholarly research projects.

My hope is that these suggestions will lead to further serious results that will help all of us.

1. It seems that we're always reading in newspapers and hearing on TV that men are biased against women, but if you've gone through a divorce yourself, did you believe that the women social workers, psychologists and pediatricians were biased toward women? Did you have an experience similar to mine, where the professional always took the mother's side against the father as a matter of policy?
2. Some feminists agree that these women social workers, psychologists and pediatricians are heavily biased in favor of women, but argue that they *should* be biased, to make up for, they say, men's oppression of women in the general society. Do you believe that it's proper for women professionals in the divorce system to be biased against men?
3. The text claims that bias against men by social workers can lead to violence – for example by appearing to condone violence by women. Extend this concept to other fields and areas of life. What happens when a parent plays "favorites" with one of his or her children? What happens when a judge or mediator in the business arena is biased against one side or another?
4. My ex-wife and I went to several couples counselors prior to our divorce, and there's one thing that we both agreed on: That all the counselors we'd seen seemed to be biased, or seemed to favor, one of us or the other, and naturally any person wants to see a counselor that favors him or her. Is it possible for a couples counselor ever to be perceived as unbiased by both parties? Is it even possible for a couples counselor to be in fact unbiased, given that the counselor must be either a man or a woman, and always brings some baggage of his or her own to the table?
5. Based on observations and anecdotal evidence, it appears to be true that most professionals in the divorce system are feminist women. Most people I've discussed this with seem to agree. What do you think? Can you devise and implement a statistically valid research project to

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determine the answer one way or the other — for example by interviewing all the social workers in the divorce system in your city or county?

6. Some people believe that only a very small number, 2-5%, of men abuse their wives or girlfriends regularly. Feminists, on the other hand usually put the figure much higher, often at 25-50%; there are even some feminists who say that *all* men (100% of them) abuse women regularly. In your opinion, based on your own life experiences and observations, what percentage of men abuse their wives or girlfriends regularly?
7. What percentage of women abuse their husbands or boyfriends regularly?
8. Applying the same criteria of abuse, what percentage of fathers abuse their children regularly? What percentage of mothers?
9. Can you think of any people you know who are hostile and constantly humiliate others? One theory is that they were humiliated as children. Were the people you know humiliated as children?
10. Were you humiliated as a child? How do you compensate for that humiliation, now that you're an adult?
11. Suppose you were a social worker or other profession in the divorce system, and a woman came to you, crying, and said that her husband was abusing her and the children, and she wanted you help in doing everything possible to keep her husband from seeing the children at all. Would you assume that she was telling the truth, or would you investigate to see if she might be lying?

Chapter 2 – Real Rape

"As women and as lawyers, we must never again shy from raising our voices against sexual harassment. All women who care about equality of opportunity – about integrity and morality in the workplace – are in Prof. Anita Hill's debt." – Hillary Rodham Clinton, during the 1992 presidential campaign.

"Most people are getting sick and tired of women coming out of nowhere and making unsupported sexual charges." – VP Al Gore, speaking of Paula Jones, on the *Today Show*, May 6, 1994.

The country's largest feminist organization, NOW (The National Organization of Women), began the 90s by vocally and defiantly screaming harassment at a black man who allegedly told a woman a few dirty jokes, and ended up the decade by defending, condoning and carrying water for a white man who allegedly and credibly is a serial rapist, a man who gropes, flashes, uses and abuses every woman in his life.

If the great, all-powerful male patriarchy had wanted to hatch a plot to cause as much damage and destruction as possible to women and feminists, they could never have done anything so destructive as NOW did to women during the 90s. NOW has damaged men, women, and society so much that it will take years, perhaps decades for the country to recover from it. The only good thing about what happened is that they've totally discredited themselves by carrying water for Clinton, arguably the country's most abusive politician.

Long before the Clinton sex scandals, the policies advocated by NOW and other feminist groups, the relationship between men and women in the marketplace became enormously hostile, and this hostility ended up hurting women.

For example, one man is a friend of mine who runs a professional office with his wife. They had had the practice since the 70s of hiring a married woman college graduate each year to serve as an intern for a year. Many of these women went on to become professionals in their own right. However, following Anita

Hill's testimony, this man changed his policy, and decided he would never hire another woman intern. Since that time, he's only hired male interns.

Another example: Another friend of mine ran an office where he normally had about a dozen women social workers working for him. He told me, "I don't dare even tell an employee, 'You look nice today,' because I'm afraid she'll bring sexual harassment charges. The only exception is my secretary — she's worked for me for ten years, and I can trust her." In other words, this man could not trust the other women working for him.

"These Women are Crazy"

*Our great Mikado, virtuous man,
When he to rule our land began,
Resolved to try a plan whereby
Young men might best be steadied.*

*So he decreed, in words succinct,
That all who flirted, leered or winked
(Unless connubially linked),
Should forthwith be beheaded.*

— Gilbert and Sullivan, from *The Mikado*,
which opened at the Savoy on 3/14/1885

Almost every man I spoke to had some story. One man told me that he'd seen a condom machine in a men's room, and he mentioned briefly to a woman associate how shocked he was to see it; she brought a sexual harassment complaint. He told me, "There's something wrong with women today. They're crazy."

In fact, I've tended to call these stories "crazy women stories," because every man I asked always seemed to have some story, and always seemed to add to it some words like, "These women are crazy."

One man after another told me they didn't want to have anything to do with women in the workplace. By extrapolating the examples I heard, I would estimate that literally millions of jobs nationwide suddenly became unavailable to women. And women in the workplace were viewed by men as being unstable, unreliable, or "crazy." Frankly, I think that in many cases the only reason that women got jobs at all is because they were willing to take lower pay than men.

It's easy enough to blame men about all this, and I'm sure any feminist reading this automatically does so, but this catastrophe was brought about by NOW and other feminist organizations encouraging women to act this way. That's why, throughout the decade, more and more women refused to identify themselves as feminists. Women knew in their hearts that what NOW was doing was wrong.

And did women gain anything from all this turmoil? They didn't, and for a reason that feminist "theory" didn't anticipate. When a sexual harassment complaint roils a workplace, a lot of hostility gets generated, and that hostility appears to break half against the alleged victim and half against the alleged perpetrator.

I've heard from women who brought sexual harassment complaints against someone, and it was always disastrous for the accused man, but it also backfired against the accusing woman. These women were treated with hostility by everyone else, including other women.

In fact, I attended a sexual harassment conference, with a session where about a dozen women told of their experience bringing sexual harassment charges. One after another, they told how they were harassed *more* after they had brought charges, and often by women. Life was always much worse for them after they brought charges.

I saw one occasion like this with my own eyes between two people I knew at work. The man said something dumb to a woman and got her angry. She complained to the HR rep. The HR rep, a woman, called the man into her office and accused him of harassment. He got pissed off, stormed out of her office, and quit, and got another job immediately elsewhere, at higher pay. The company lost a valuable worker, and everyone, especially the women, *especially* the man's (female) manager, were pissed off as hell at this woman who brought the sexual harassment complaint and caused so much trouble.

The problem with NOW is they're not a women's organization; they're a political organization. Their job is not to help women, but to gain political power in the Democratic party. Whenever helping women conflicts with gaining political power, they always choose to hurt women if that means getting more political power. As the old joke goes: How can you tell if a politician is lying? By whether his (or her) lips are moving.

Incidentally, lest anyone think I personally favor one political party over another, let me add that the conservative women's organizations are no better. They're mostly one-note organizations, the one note being anti-abortion, and their goals aren't to help women either, but to gain political power in the Republican party.

The Political Orientation of Feminism

Many people are confused about the political orientation of NOW and other feminist organizations, but in fact feminist leaders make it very clear that they consider themselves arms of the Democratic Party.

Now, there's absolutely nothing wrong with being an arm of the Democratic Party, but the problem is that NOW is supposed to represent women, not just Democratic women.

However, when NOW elected Kim Gandy as its new president, replacing outgoing president Patricia Ireland, she was asked in an interview what her top priority is. Is it abortion rights? Is it education?

No, she said, her top priority was to send "George W. Bush back to Texas in 2004." So although NOW claims to represent all women, right away Gandy cut out half the women in the country.

Not only are feminist organizations part of the Democratic Party, they are in fact the wealthiest factions in the Democratic Party, as measured by their ability to collect and disburse money through political action committees (PACs).

The fund-raising arm of feminist organizations is Emily's List. According to Federal Election Committee figures, Emily's List collected of \$21 million during the 2000 election, making it the top PAC in America. Emily's List's collections dwarf those of a number of other well known organizations – the National Education Association (\$6 million), the UAW (\$6.7 million), the Realtors (\$4.3 million), National Right To Life (\$3.8 million), to name a few.

The PAC in second place is the National Rifle Association (NRA), which collected just under \$18 million. The NRA PAC has been trying to catch up to Emily's List, but ever since the 1996 election, Emily's List has always been number 1.

It's tempting to consider Emily's List and the NRA to be similar organization, one focused on women's issues and one focused on gun ownership issues, but there's a big difference: although NRA supports mainly Republican candidates, it does have a history of supporting some anti-gun-control Democratic party candidates.

However, Emily's List has no similar history. Emily's List supports *only* Democratic Party candidates, who must be women and who must support abortion rights. In that sense, Emily's List is more of a political organization than NRA is, and NRA is more of an issue organization than Emily's List is.

Even though Emily's List and NRA are similar in fund raising, in my opinion feminist organizations are more similar in spirit to the Christian right organizations.

It's my opinion that the feminist left and Christian right are really very similar organizations. (I like to joke that they should party together, since they're so similar). These two organizations really hate each other, which I attribute to the fact that they're so similar. They're both extremely judgmental and moralistic, they both portray both men and women (except for themselves) as morons, with women as helpless dupes of men who are under robot-like control of their penises. Both base their positions on pure emotion or dogma rather than on facts or scientific data. And both have as their goals fund raising and political power.

I keep wishing that feminists would choose another organization to supply leadership – some organization that had no political affiliation. Once an organization becomes political, it sells out its constituents and its core beliefs to political power. This has happened to both feminist left and Christian right organizations.

I think that a strong women's organization with no political affiliation would be beneficial to both men and women. Unfortunately, it doesn't appear to be possible. A women's organization with no political affiliation would not last because it would have no way to collect contributions.

The Anita Hill Disaster

Whenever I criticize feminist policies, I generally don't bother to describe how they've hurt men, since few people particularly care about men being hurt. Instead, I focus on how feminist policies have hurt women, and that's usually not difficult, and definitely not difficult in this case.

The Anita Hill testimony against Clarence Thomas in 1991 has been an absolute disaster for women, in my opinion. I knew it was bad for women from the beginning, but I didn't realize how bad it was until I heard Anita Hill interviewed on television on the fifth anniversary of her testimony against Clarence Thomas. She was asked how women have benefited in five years from her testimony, and her answer (I don't have an exact quote) was: Almost every company now has sexual harassment training, and human resources departments with procedures to punish sexual harassers.

I thought her answer was very clever and very strange, not because of what she said, but because of what she didn't say. For all the turmoil she'd caused, you'd think she would have claimed that women were better off, that women in the workplace were happier, that women in the workplace were less harassed. Why did the whole country go through all this turmoil if women weren't less harassed as a result?

In fact, I've asked many women, including many feminists, if they believe, or if they're willing to make the argument, that women today are better off, happier, or less harassed than they were in 1990. Not one woman has accepted that challenge. If any woman reading this would like to accept this challenge, I would be very interested in hearing the argument.

Anita Hill is the prototype of the purveyor of what many people believe is a frivolous sexual complaint. The story behind Hill's testimony is pretty well known. NOW wanted to defeat Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas for political reasons – he had refused to indicate that he favored abortion rights – and NOW had been casting a nationwide search, even running newspaper ads, looking for any woman to bring any sort of gender-based accusations against him. They finally found Anita Hill and brought her forward, and she testified against Thomas, reluctantly, we're told.

So Anita Hill made sexual harassment charges against Clarence Thomas for purely political reasons - to help NOW defeat him. And Anita Hill and NOW lost – Clarence Thomas was confirmed by the Senate, and serves on the Supreme Court today.

Meanwhile, what happened to Anita Hill is the same thing, but in a grand way, what we described happens to individual women who bring complaints. Today, tens of millions of people admire Anita Hill, and tens of millions of people hate and revile her. Is this what Anita Hill signed up for when she agreed to go along with NOW to attempt to defeat Clarence Thomas? I doubt it. Would Anita Hill be happier today if she'd never did what she did? There's no way for me to know of course, but barring some other personal tragedy, it's hard to see how she could be enjoying the fact that so many people who pass her on the street think she's a jerk, even while many other people think she's a saint.

Many people (including this author) thought that the charges she brought against Clarence Thomas, even if true, were fairly trivial. Many people thought the charges were racist, supported by many people who disliked him not only because he's black but also because his wife is white. Thomas himself tapped into that feeling when he accused his opponents of engineering a "high tech lynching," alluding to the lynchings that occurred in the United States between 1865 and 1932 which followed a particular pattern: A white women would accuse (almost always falsely) a black man of raping her, enraging the white men in the region to track the black man down and kill him. (We'll come back to these lynchings later in this chapter, p. 91.)

Thomas related the two by claiming that Hill's accusations were false. The fact that Anita Hill was a black, not white, woman added particular irony to his counter-accusation. His reference to "high tech" referred to the fact that although charges of telling dirty jokes was not *per se* as inflammatory as the historic charges of rape, the use of television and credulous television news reporters had the same

effect of enraging people. In retrospect, I believe that this "high tech lynching" counter-accusation saved his confirmation, since it changed the political frame from a "man versus woman" battle, which he would have lost, to a "gender versus race" battle, which he was able to win.

Thomas was accused of having told her a few dirty jokes, which by Hill's own admission she never objected to, and of asking her out at a time when they were both single, which she turned down. Even so, he kept promoting her and increasing her pay. When he moved to another job, she followed him.

But while many people thought these charges were trivial, others, with NOW in the lead, argued that the charges were substantial. He was head of the EEOC, they argued, and so higher standards should apply.

This split in opinion spilled over into the general society, and the atmosphere in many workplaces became extremely unpleasant. It's hard to remember now, since things have cooled off, but at that time there were feminist talking heads, mostly from NOW, on TV all over the place saying that if a man makes any personal remark to a woman in the workplace then it's sexual harassment. The *Wall Street Journal* published a joke, I believe around 1992:

He: You look nice today.

She: You're dead, mister!

It's not as bad now, but the amount of workplace hostility and acrimony between men and women at that time was enormous. A man with a sexy picture of a woman on his desk, even if it was a picture of his own wife, could well be the subject of a sexual harassment complaint by some flaky woman, even if that complaint seems like nonsense to other people.

Although things have cooled down, the tension isn't over. Author Francine Prose, in a recent interview on PBS's *Fresh Air* said that male college professors are constantly on guard. "A professor won't meet alone with a female student unless the door is wide open," she said. "And a lot of professors keep a tape recorder in their desk drawer, ready to turn on in case things get dicey."

I will admit that I'm still extremely cautious with women in the workplace. Generally speaking, I will not talk to a woman unless my job requires it, and if I find myself attracted to a woman, I'll avoid her like the bubonic plague. Of course, if I get to know a woman over time well enough to feel that I can trust her, then I'll talk to her informally at work, but not before. I've spoken to other men who feel the same way.

Feminists evidently had the fantasy that if women acted as offensively and irrationally as possible, then men would say, "Oh, now I see how wrong we've been all these years. I'm going to change now." Well, it didn't work that way.

"The Personal is Political"

When NOW and other feminist groups encourage all women to bring sexual harassment complaints for even trivial complaints, they're following a specific doctrine, "The Personal is Political," which encourages women to use their sexuality to put men at a disadvantage and gain political power over men. Specifically, following this doctrine, women tell stories about rape, abuse, incest, harassment, and so forth, to gain this political power over men.

The "theoretical" basis of the need for a new political technique was provided by feminist Robin Morgan and by the Redstockings Manifesto of 1969:

"Women are an oppressed class. ♦ Our oppression is total, affecting every facet of our lives. We are exploited as sex objects, breeders, domestic servants, and cheap labor. We are considered inferior beings whose only purpose is to enhance men's lives ... we have been kept from seeing our personal suffering as a political condition ... the conflicts between individual men and women are *political* conflicts that can only be solved collectively... We identify the agents of our oppression as men. Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination... *All men* receive economic, sexual, and psychological benefits from male supremacy. *All men* have oppressed women."

According to feminist historian Valerie Bryson, ♦ "the personal is political" was born around 1970 when the Women's Lib movement became active. "Women were involved in a revolutionary struggle against men that could not be won by polite requests for equal opportunities or changes in the law; far from seeking respectability and acceptance within the system, feminists were now committed to its overthrow. ... As new groups spread rapidly, the key message was that 'the personal is political', and that a new theory and strategy for women's liberation could only be based on women's shared experiences, not on abstract speculation. From this perspective, no aspect of life lacked a political dimension and political struggle could therefore take many new forms; women's struggle could not be postponed until 'after the revolution' but was a matter for immediate political action, and was to be waged against the universal oppressor - man."

The conclusion in 1970 was that women could only gain relief from their male oppressors through political action, and so "the personal is political" was born: the doctrine of using female sexuality for political purposes.

Here's what leading feminist Susan Faludi has to say about it: "Feminism is an ideology; ♦ always has been, always will be. That's the whole point. Imagining that a politics-free feminism will advance women's cause is about as realistic as trying to rouse the masses with six-packs of caffeine-free Coke."

Back in fall, 1994, I had an online conversation with a woman on this subject. I wrote back that if you depend too much on politics then you're bound to be disappointed, because politics can change so much. Little did I know how true my warning would be. Less than a month after I posted that message, the Republicans, led by Newt Gingrich, took control of both houses of Congress. The pundits attributed this surprise to "angry white men," who were said to have been getting revenge in reaction to the "Year of the Woman" following the Anita Hill incident. Later, of course, the Clinton situation proved to be even more of a disaster for "the personal is political."

How does "the personal is political" work? You can see it in many of the major scandals that have occurred in the last ten or fifteen years. When the Democrats wanted to score a political victory over Clarence Thomas, the Republicans' Supreme Court nominee, NOW attacked him by bringing forward a woman to accuse him of sexual harassment. In other words, Anita Hill's sexuality ("the personal") was used to attempt to deny Thomas a Supreme Court nomination ("the political").

However, this technique works as well at the local level in the national spotlight. Just accuse someone of rape or battering or harassing a woman, and all of a sudden nothing else matters.

I saw this happen myself in April, 1996, when I sat in on a legislative meeting sponsored by the Governor of Massachusetts. The major agenda item was a discussion of the hateful visitation centers that I described in chapter 1 (see p. 45), where fathers are charged \$50-120 to visit their own children. These centers provide a stream of additional income to fund social worker organizations.

At this meeting, women's groups were mobilized to do everything they could in support of this law. For a while, the pros and cons of the law were debated in a logical manner. But then a social worker testified about a case she said she was currently working on.

It was a horrible story. There was a divorced woman whose ex-husband had beaten her up several times and was still stalking her. She was hiding at a residence unknown to the ex-husband, but he was using a court order to let him visit with his kids to get the location of the kids and the mother.

Once this social worker testified, everything in the room changed. No one would dare, except in the most apologetic and tentative terms, oppose this proposed law. There was no more logical discussion, only deference to the social worker, who said she was only trying to protect that battered women from further violence by her ex-husband.

In addition, no one even challenged the story. I looked for the story in the newspaper, but didn't see it. That doesn't mean she was lying, but the fact is that no one knows, because no one even challenged this social worker. Her story was accepted at face value, without any challenges.

Once again we see how it works. A woman tells a horror story about another woman being victimized by a violent man ("the personal") to gain funding for a program that will aid feminist organizations ("the political"). Fact or fiction is irrelevant.

The irony, of course, is that these visitation centers drive fathers away from their children, meaning that more children will grow up without contact with their fathers, meaning that there will be more batterers and battered women in 10-15 years. Even worse, since most child abusers are the child's mother or her boyfriend, these visitation centers leave children in the hands of the worst abuse.

This is what I've referred to as "training the next generation of batterers." Nonetheless, one social worker who wanted to see her budget increased was instrumental in getting the whole thing passed.

Was Susan Estrich Really Raped?

As I've indicated, I spent years online, sharing probably thousands of discussions with feminists in a number of women's issues forums. Rape was always an offensive and insulting weapon by these feminists, and I frequently heard variations of, "You're a man, therefore you're a rapist."

As I indicated in chapter 1, many mainstream feminists point to rape as a common occurrence which men use to maintain power over women. For example, we quoted Catharine MacKinnon[♦] as pointing to "the effectively unrestrained and systematic sexual aggression of one-half of the population against the other half."

Feminists argue that rape has to do with political power rather than sex.[♦] "It is a manifestation of men's hatred and contempt for women rather than of ungovernable lust, and the fear which it engenders in women is central to their subordination and control by men. This means that rape is a *political* act, and that although of course not all men actually rape, all men benefit from the sexual violence that curtails women's lives and leads them to seek the protection of one man against all others."

All of this gives feminists a problem: Criticizing rape as "bad" because it's not consensual sex seems to imply that consensual sex is "good." And if you're a feminist, then once you concede that consensual sex is good, then your political argument is weakened, especially by the many women who openly claim they enjoy consensual sex. Some feminists (presumably the ones that in fact don't enjoy consensual sex themselves) solve this problem by coming very close to claiming that all sexual intercourse is rape. For example, Andrea Dworkin writes:[♦]

There is deep recognition in culture and in experience that intercourse is both the normal use of a woman, her human potentiality affirmed by it, and a violative abuse, her privacy irredeemably compromised, her selfhood changed in a way that is irrevocable, unrecoverable. And it is recognized that the use and abuse are not distinct phenomena but somehow a synthesized reality: both are true at the same time as if they were one harmonious truth instead of mutually exclusive contradictions. Intercourse in reality is a use and an abuse simultaneously, experienced and described as such, the act parlayed into the illuminated heights of religious duty and the dark recess of morbid and dirty brutality.

A supporting view comes from feminist law professor Robin West, who implies that any woman who claims to like consensual sex is lying. In her essay, "The Harms of Consensual Sex." She says, "I want to argue briefly that many (not all) consensual sexual transactions are [harmful to women]." She says that the woman who experiences no such harm is actually greatly harmed because she fails to recognize the injuries she suffers. "Women who engage in unpleasurable, undesired, but consensual sex may sustain real injuries to their sense of selfhood." West summarizes her position as follows:

Women have a seemingly endless capacity to lie, both to ourselves and others, about what gives us pain and what gives us pleasure. This is not all that surprising. If what we need to do to survive, materially and psychically, is have heterosexual penetration three to five times a week, then we'll do it, and if the current ethic is that we must not only do it but enjoy it, well then, we'll enjoy it. We'll report as pleasure what we feel as pain. It is terribly difficult to get to the bottom of these lies, partly because we convey them not just with our words, but with our bodies. It is now a commonplace that women don't "feel at home" with male language – but this is no wonder, when what we've mainly learned to do with it is lie.

Other feminists compare marriage to slavery,[♦] According to feminist Ti-Grace Atkinson, "If you look at the laws, it is legalized rape, causes unpaid labor, curtails a woman's freedom of movement and requires no assurances of love from a man."

Because of all this kind of flak, I started researching rape on my own. I read a number of books on the subject, and one of the books that I found most influential to me was *Real Rape: How the legal system victimizes women who say no*, by Susan Estrich. The book, which was published 1987, just as Estrich was becoming a leading figure in the Democratic Party, where she became national campaign chairman for Mike Dukakis' 1968 presidential bid, described her 1974 rape experience in highly personal terms. According to Estrich, the most commonly perpetrated form of rape[♦] is "acquaintance rape" or "date rape." She says, "the

overwhelming majority of women who contacted rape centers had been attacked by men they knew."

The women that I conversed with online reinforced Estrich's claims. After all these online discussions and the reading I did, I began to wonder if perhaps feminists were right that rape was more prevalent than I'd previously thought. I'm not saying that I ever came close to buying the whole feminist package on rape — marriage is legalized rape, rape is about politics not sex, one in four college girls are raped, and so forth — but I *am* saying that I began to consider the possibility that there was something more to the feminist argument than I'd previously thought.

At this time, early in the 90s, I thought, naively perhaps, that Susan Estrich and other women in feminist organizations really believed what they were saying about rape. These women seemed so earnest and so hurt — hurt by men who raped women, and hurt by men who refused to believe what women were saying. Perhaps I had been ignorant, I wondered.

Then along came the line of Jane Does, reportedly alleging that Clinton had raped them, and then along came Jane Doe #5, Juanita Broaddrick, telling a story of how Clinton tricked her into his hotel room, violently assaulted her to keep her quiet and get her to do what he wanted, and then raped her — twice.

And then who did I see on *ABC Sunday News* show? There was Susan Estrich, the author of the book I had read, saying that maybe Juanita Broaddrick was lying about having been assaulted and raped, and women do indeed lie about being raped. And we really shouldn't take Juanita Broaddrick too seriously. I was ready to throw up. Here was someone, Susan Estrich, whom I liked and whose opinion I relied on, someone who was credible and likable, and who had impressed me with her story. And there she was, literally selling herself out to the Democratic party establishment. Other feminists did exactly the same thing.

So what am I supposed to conclude from this? Maybe Susan Estrich wasn't really raped — maybe, according to her own logic, she just made up the whole rape story in order to get material for a book.

After all, she wrote her book in 1986, 12 years after the alleged rape, and two years before she became national campaign chairman for Democratic presidential candidate. Maybe she wrote the book just to generate political interest in herself. Maybe she fabricated some or all of the rape allegations for political purposes. If you apply the logic of Estrich and other feminists, then that's what it looks like.

Hey look, for those of you who read the above and are already moving to your computer keyboards to start writing me flame messages, let me say that I think she's probably telling the truth. The problem is that I also think that Juanita Broaddrick is probably telling the truth.

My real point is that Susan Estrich and other feminists have sold themselves out, for political purposes, and have turned into the people they claim to hate the most – people who support rapists by refusing to condemn them.

Yes, Susan Estrich had to support her boss, President Clinton, in order to keep her job. But how is that different from a police officer who chooses not to believe a girl claiming she was raped because the police officer is afraid he'll lose his own job? Or from a small town district attorney who won't prosecute the mayor's son for rape because he believes that the father has been a good mayor, and the town needs him in that job?

Yes, Susan Estrich felt that attacking Juanita Broaddrick was necessary for the greater political good, but how is that different from a local district attorney attacking an alleged rape victim's credibility because the alleged rapist is some bigwig's son, and you wouldn't want to tarnish the bigwig's reputation?

At the very least, the Estrich reaction shows that women are no different from men when it comes to believing rapists. Feminists claim that women are more likely than men to believe rapists, but as we've seen, whether you believe a rapist is lying depends less on whether you're a man or a woman and more on where your political interests lie.

Back in 1996, when the charges brought against Clinton were "merely" sexual harassment and not rape, here is what Estrich wrote in an online dialog with Stuart Taylor:

Are we inconsistent in supporting Anita Hill and not Paula Jones?♦ Consistent with what? With the goal of protecting women from sexual abuse? I think that goal is served by supporting Bill Clinton. I think that it is important for us, feminists in particular, to acknowledge that taking sexual harassment seriously doesn't mean that every time a woman complains, the man should be damned. How you think about feminism is relevant.

So what if Jones is telling the truth? ... He got elected, and appointed Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Steve Breyer to the Supreme Court, signed the Family Leave Act, vetoed the partial-birth abortion ban.

In response to further probing by Taylor, Estrich continued:

You believe in principle. I believe in politics.♦

Here is what I learned in law school. I learned that if you push any legal question hard enough and far enough, principle turns into politics. No avoiding it. We live on the slippery slope. ...

We took our kids to vote with us on Election Day. I told my children that Bill Clinton was a good man, not a perfect one but a good one, doing his best in a difficult job, and that most of the time,

I agreed with him, and hoped he would succeed, and that I believe the country will be better off if he does. I teach my children to respect the president. I do. Do you?

With these paragraphs, Estrich has laid out the case that Bill Clinton should be excused from sexual harassment charges, even if they're true, because he supports women's issues.

I was aware of these statements by Estrich long before Broaddrick appeared on the scene, and I was troubled by them. She seemed to be confirming the argument that sexual harassment was really not a crime, or not a very important crime — in fact it was kind of trivial — but it was a useful tool for political purposes.

Let me make clear that I'm not a Republican or a conservative, and even during the impeachment hearings, I was honestly struggling with the question of whether Clinton was guilty of an impeachable offense.

I agreed that his having an affair with an intern was a personal matter, especially since news reports indicated that he and his wife had a deal to ignore such liaisons.

That's the kind of thing that I always felt was a personal matter, but it was always feminists who commented darkly on such things, talking about them as "constructive rape." I'm relieved to see that now that Clinton has led the way, it's OK with feminists for fifty-something men to have affairs with young interns that work for them, and that the term "constructive rape" is no longer heard.

But when I heard Susan Estrich take her arguments about sexual harassment — it doesn't matter if he harassed Paula Jones, since he supports women's issues — and make essentially those same arguments in support of Clinton after he'd been accused of rape — it doesn't matter if he actually raped Juanita Broaddrick, since he supports women's issues — I was honestly furious, and I still am. This was not because of any national political issue, but because I now fully realized how the feminist professionals that I ran into when I was going through my divorce were not making professional judgments at all, but political ones.

I had been baffled by what happened during my divorce, and I had started studying feminists and feminism in order to figure out what had happened. Now I had my answer.

When I heard Susan Estrich carry water for the accused rapist in the White House, what flashed back through my mind were all the feminists online who had been so pervasively offensive and insulting to me, saying that I'm no better than a rapist or a batterer simply because I'm a man; or, more to the point, the feminist professionals that I described in chapter 1, who were even more pervasively offensive and insulting to me by saying that no child of divorce should spend more than an hour with his father, or that a child of divorce would be traumatized by spending the weekend with his father.

I saw Estrich as a proxy for those feminist social workers and pediatricians I ran into as I was going through my divorce. Like Estrich, they didn't care about the truth, they didn't care what's best for the children, they didn't care if children were hurt or someone was raped. They were liars who simply used children and rape as symbols to manipulate men into giving money and political power to feminist political organizations. And if women and children got hurt in the process, they didn't care.

Listening to Estrich, I realized that feminists don't really care about rape or battering, except that they want to use them as political issues. If a woman gets raped or beaten by a pro-abortion politician, who cares? As long as the feminist politicians get something out of it, that's all that's important to these women, or to the feminist professionals I dealt with.

This, in fact, is what feminists mean by "the political is personal." Rape is not a violent crime to feminists. As feminists constantly insist, rape has nothing even to do with sex. It's pure politics – men rape women just to gain political control. Excusing the alleged rape because the perpetrator is a pro-feminist political figure is the ultimate expression of "the political is personal," and makes it clear why women rape victims are so much at risk: If rape is a political crime, according to feminists, then it's not a real crime, and so is not a crime at all.

As for Estrich, I believe she's sold herself, sold her core beliefs out, so thoroughly, that one day before she dies she will apologize to the American people.

When is a crime not political?

I guess you could say that any crime could be interpreted as a political crime. When a man robs a bank, you could say that it wasn't just to get money, but rather an attempt by a member of the proletariat to strike back at an institution that serves as a running dog of capitalism – and if memory serves, there were some "radical" bank robbers in the 70s who made such claims. But in fact, I believe most bank robbers rob banks to get money, and undoubtedly most rapists rape to get sex.

As I pointed out earlier, NOW has discredited itself when they began the 90s by vocally and defiantly screaming harassment at a black man who allegedly told a woman a few dirty jokes, and ended up the decade by defending, condoning and carrying water for a white man who allegedly and credibly is a serial rapist, a man who gropes, flashes, uses and abuses every woman in his life.

NOW is not a bad organization, but they're a political organization. What characterizes most politicians and political organizations, whether on the right or left, is that they're like used car dealers – they're sleazy and lack ethics.

As flawed as our judicial system is, at least the objective of the courts is to find the truth. Maybe they don't always succeed, but at least they try.

By saying that rape is a political crime, rape is moved from the judicial arena into the political arena, where truth is not as important as gaining power and money.

Is it possible for a woman's organization to be non-political? I don't know. I believe that NOW being simply a branch office of the Democratic party has hurt everybody. I believe that a non-political women's organization would help both men and women, but whether it could survive is perhaps unlikely.

How can all these feminist women sell themselves out so completely to a man who allegedly flashes, gropes, uses, abuses and even rapes one woman after another?

The irony of all the feminist campaigns about rape is that it's just possible that men care about rape much more than women do. There's no easier way to turn an ordinary, meek, mild-mannered man into an enraged potential murderer than to tell him that his mother or his wife or his sister or his daughter was raped.

So as far as I'm concerned, it's not men but women who don't take rape seriously. And NOW and feminist claims that most rapes go unreported are probably no more than political statements to gain political power and money. "The personal is political" says it all.

When all is said and done, I never cease to be astounded at how much support Clinton received after being credibly charged with rape. I'd always thought that rape was a serious crime.

And this support was driven by women. There isn't a man in the country who would have supported Clinton unless his wife, sister, mother and daughter also supported Clinton. If women had turned against Clinton because of his abuse and alleged rape of women, then men would have done the same.

So the wrong question to ask is: Why did so many people support Clinton, even though he abused and allegedly raped women?

The right question to ask is: Why did so many *women* support Clinton, even though he abused and allegedly raped women?

The Reverend Billy Graham answered the question this way: "I forgive him ♦ ... because I know the frailty of human nature, and especially a strong vigorous young man like he is. ... He has such a tremendous personality that I think the ladies just go wild over him."

Billy Graham was talking about an extramarital affair, not about rape. Still, the point he makes – that Clinton is very charming and sexy, and women find him irresistible – is the heart of the matter.

It's this willingness of ordinary women to forgive harassment, abuse and even rape by men they find charming and sexy that relates to why some men are so successful as rapists.

Research on rape

I've been studying issues surrounding rape for almost ten years, and during that time I've collected a great deal of research on the issue. The purpose of the following is to present some of this research. In contrast to the hysterical, circus-like atmosphere promoted by feminists talking about rape, I have a belief that women who are real victims of rape are best served if the public has a true picture.

Categorizing Rapists

Roy Hazelwood, a retired FBI agent who studied rapists for years, has categorized rapists in a number of different ways. His work is summarized in the book authored by Stephen G. Michaud with Roy Hazelwood, *The Evil that Men Do, FBI Profiler Roy Hazelwood's Journey into the Minds of Sexual Predators*, St. Martin's Paperbacks, 1998.

He's found that there's a wide range of violence perpetrated by rapists. At the low end, rapists use minimal violence or threats of violence to force a woman to submit, and at the high end a rapist might kill the woman he's raped, even slicing her body into parts.

Feminists portray rapists as any average men conspiring with other men to subdue women, but in fact rapists are far from normal or average. Most rapists range from psychopathic to psychotic,[†] often under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Feminists also claim that rapists are motivated primarily by power and anger, as opposed to sex, and the evidence indicates that they're half right, in the sense that they're motivated by power *and* anger *and* sex. A perpetrator motivated purely by power and anger could use a fist or a knife to prove his point, but a rapist uses his penis. Why we even have to debate the fact that rapists are sexually motivated is extremely bizarre, and a point that I'll come back to.

The MO (method of operation) of rapists is often heavily influenced by their sexual fantasies or desires. For example, one rapist might force his victims "to

remove their own clothing♦ as a way of feeding his fantasy that they are his willing partners," while a more violent rapist "would find such a gambit wimpish, incomprehensible," and would want to "assert his own masculinity, about which he has no doubts." This rapist "will rip his victim's clothes from her body himself, and attack her repeatedly with no concern for her suffering." Incidentally, date and spousal rapists are typically in this last category.

Anger Retaliatory Rapists

For some types of rapists — the extremely dangerous "anger retaliatory rapist"♦ — there is a triggering event. He is angry at women for real or imagined wrongs, and lashes out against them, episodically. Typically, his assault is sparked by something involving a woman. "But the problem is, that episode could be anything from a woman being elected to Congress to a female police officer issuing him a ticket to a fight with his wife," says Hazelwood.

An example reported by author Timothy Beneke is "Chuck,"♦ who'd been regularly beaten by his stepmother and stepbrothers from the age of five. He married at age 18, but his wife slept around with numerous men, including Chuck's own cousin, but refused to have sex with Chuck. "I started hating all women. I started seein' all women the same way, as users." The trigger for Chuck was a porno movie involving rape. "I'd shot up some heroin and done some downers and I ... saw this porn movie. ... It was like somebody lit a fuse from my childhood on up. When that fuse got to the porn movie, I exploded. I just went for it, went out and raped."

Hazelwood's analysis of anger retaliatory rapists provides a response to those people who claim that pornography is a cause of rape. We'll be discussing rape and pornography later in this chapter, but at this point it's worth making clear that anything involving a woman could trigger this type of rapist.

In the case of Chuck, his hatred of women was overwhelming and enormous (and not surprising, given his experience with women), and a lingerie ad or a simple newspaper story about sex and women might have had a similar effect. At any rate, Chuck makes it clear that this stick of dynamite was going to explode, one way or another.

Selecting Rape Victims

Returning to Hazelwood's research, rapists select their victims in a variety of ways. Some jump them in the street or in their cars, as happened to Susan Estrich, and others surprise them in their own homes. However, most sophisticated is what Hazelwood calls "the con," who is very charming, gets to know his victim, cons her into being alone with him, and then rapes her. This is the style which most closely matches the story by Juanita Broadrick.

"The con, just as the name implies, is the friendly, at ease advance,"[♦] says Hazelwood, "something as simple as asking a woman for directions, or if she'd like to dance. Any pretense will do. Impersonating a police officer is a very common con approach."

Many rapists go on for years, committing multiple rapes, and never get caught. How do they succeed with that?

The answer is that in most cases, rapists are remarkably intelligent, and they use their intellects in the study of being successful rapists. They attend rape prevention seminars, to learn what techniques women are being taught to prevent rape. They study detective magazines to learn what the police are doing to catch rapists.

One rapist, named "Michael,"[♦] raped at least 13 women on the on the University of Buffalo college campus. He had a female roommate, Marie Robinson, who lived with him without suspecting anything, and who unwittingly kept him fully informed on the case. He would walk Marie home at night to protect her from the serial rapist. 34 year old Marie says: "He got off on hearing about our fears," she said. "We probably gave him information that helped him not get caught. He learned what we were afraid of."

Jeanine Pirro, District Attorney for Westchester County, N.Y., explains how rapists continue perpetrating crimes for years without being caught. "Rapists often carry around their own 'rape kit'[♦] – condoms, a rope, antibacterial wipes, something to wear on their heads. Rapists are unique criminals – they're very shrewd. They lead a normal life, but they know that their semen can lead police to them, so they take the evidence away with them. They can have a wife and family at home at home who won't suspect anything."

One of the most brutally violent rapists[♦] was Edmund Emil Kemper III, who decapitated and dismembered his victims' bodies after raping them. He made a science out of it:

He would pick up a girl, try a personality on her, and then release her unharmed and unaware of his intentions. He experimented for months with different approaches, perfecting what Hazelwood calls

the killer's "service personality," the image he projects to mask his true intentions.

Highly disciplined and a perfectionist, Kemper learned to be a conversationalist, unthreatening, to project a mild, even attractive, persona with which he would smoothly transact the critical first phase of his assaults, the approach.

Afterward, despite the ghastliness of his postmortem behavior, he never left messy crime scenes or in any way called unnecessary attention to himself. Kemper wasn't caught until he called California police from Colorado, confessed what he'd done by telephone, and then waited in his car to be arrested.

As these examples illustrate, rapists exhibit a wide range of violence. If you believe Juanita Broadrick's story, then Clinton exhibited an intermediate amount of violence. He bit her lip hard enough to tear the lip and make it bleed, and promised not to bite her lip any more if she complied with the rape. This was bad enough of course — if you've ever accidentally bitten your lip, you know how painful it can be even if it isn't bleeding; and then to be forced to have sex with a bleeding, painful lip must have been very unpleasant. But, according to Broadrick's allegations, Clinton did not use any unnecessary violence, such as beating her gratuitously after raping her or, as Kemper did, killing his victim.

False and mistaken accusations of rape

In my opinion, one of the worst things that feminists do to harm real rape victims is to claim that women never lie about rape, since anyone who reads the newspapers or studies history knows that women do indeed lie about rape. The feminists' statement is therefore an obvious lie, and one which hurts real rape victims by destroying their credibility.

In fact, about 4-7% of stranger rape accusations are false,[♦] according to Roy Hazelwood, who refers to these accusers as "pseudovictims." The profile of a female rape pseudovictim is as follows: She is often self-destructive, and has a desperate need for attention, and in past may have feigned illness to gain attention; her report will be either extremely vague or lavishly detailed, but she will be reluctant to attempt to actually identify her attacker. Like Alex Forrest, the woman portrayed by Glenn Close in the movie *Fatal Attraction*, she may exhibit features of borderline personality disorder; she "can be impulsive, moody, histrionic, reckless, and highly unstable in [her] relationships." It is not uncommon for a pseudovictim to attempt a romantic involvement with the detective assigned to her case.

False charges of rape are probably as old as time. In the U.S. South between 1880 and 1930, an estimated four to five thousand black men[♦] were victims of lynchings and murder, many of them incited by white women who falsely claimed that they had been raped by these black men. A white woman falsely charging a black man with rape was enough to instantly incite a vigilante hate crime against the man.

One of the most notorious cases occurred in 1931, when two white women falsely accused nine black boys, later referred to as the Scottsboro Boys, of raping them:

On a March morning, nine black youths were roused from a freight train in northern Alabama[♦] by a hastily assembled posse and accused of rape by two white women. After a narrow escape from lynching, the nine, ranging in age from 13 to 20, were rushed to trial in a Scottsboro courtroom within two weeks of the arrest. Represented by an unprepared out-of-state counsel who had no more than a half-hour consultation with his clients, eight of the defendants were summarily convicted and sentenced to death by all-white juries who deliberated within earshot of large crowds surrounding the courthouse, cheering each guilty verdict. After seven subsequent trials, two reversals by the Supreme Court, and a recantation by one of the two women, five of the men served varying prison terms, the last released only in 1950.

Although these incidents occurred many decades ago, they are still hurting real rape victims today. Here's how:

The history of rape also conjures up incidents involving White women's false accusations against Black men,[♦] accusations that have led to the lynchings of innocent fathers, sons, and brothers. That some White women made such accusations remains difficult for African Americans of both sexes to accept. Although White women as a group were politically powerless to stop either the rape or lynching of slaves, that so few tried is cause for continuing distrust by Black women of their White "sisters." ...

An African American woman who is raped by a member of her own race thus faces a dilemma. If she brings charges against the Black man, especially one as well known as Mike Tyson, she is harshly criticized by others in the community for bringing down a Black man. She also plays a role, however unwittingly, in perpetuating the stereotype that Black men are sexually dangerous. Thus, a Black woman who is raped by a man of her own race must always consider whether it is better to keep quiet about the attack, thereby saving the

reputation of Black men who are innocent, or to speak out and thereby possibly save other women from the same fate. ...

These differences in reactions to rape can fiercely divide women, even those working together to reduce sexual violence in their communities. In 1993, an interracial rape case involving a Black man assaulting a woman of Asian descent was reported on the campus of a well-known Midwestern university. The women's studies faculty members gather to discuss how the school should respond. The White female faculty members were angry that the university was not doing enough to make the campus safe for its female students, staff, and faculty. But the African American faculty were angry over the university's posting throughout the campus a police sketch of the accused. One African American woman present at the meeting argued that the pictures were not helping to solve the crime, but were promoting the stereotype that all Black men were criminally dangerous. In reaction to her position, a White woman responded, "So, are we, as women, to put our lives at risk just to protect the reputation of Black men? No way! This guy needs to be caught and caught now, and if that means blanketing the campus with his picture, then that's what has to be done." The meeting broke up with nothing resolved but with new tension between the White and Black faculty members that took months to dissipate.

It's possible that African American members of this colleges faculty are at least viscerally aware that the ghosts of lynchings past are still around today, in that a Toronto study has found that 30% of all stranger rape allegations are demonstrably false,[♦] and that the falsely accused perpetrator is disproportionately likely to be a black man (see further discussion on page 96).

These race issues show why making false charges of rape are so offensive and potentially explosive. Just as important, false charges of rape get people – including women, as the above example shows – very angry, and that anger can last for decades and interfere with measures taken to combat rape.

Feminists seem to believe that making false accusations of rape will make people more aware of rape, and will lead to less rape. I can't for the life of me imagine what reason they have to hold such far-fetched views. (Actually, I can: It's to stir up fervor and funding to pay for staff members for feminist-run rape counseling centers.) In fact, false accusations of rape are more likely to infuriate both men and women, and reduce the credibility of real rape victims.

Unfortunately, false accusations of rape still occur far too often. At George Washington University[♦] in the early 90s, a sophomore girl named Miriam fabricated a rape by "two muscular young-looking black males." When the fraud

was admitted, the black student community was furious, but the girl making the false accusation was not punished.

Katie Roiphe's book, *The Morning After*, tells how feminists have taken false accusations of rape almost to the level of a circus in "take back the night" rallies. In these rallies, college girls stand up in front of the crowd and tell how they were raped. As a cynical fifty-something year old man reading the descriptions of these rallies, where presumably pretty young girls describe how they were overpowered and ravaged by strong young males, they sound an awful lot to me like a context for young men to get dates with hot chicks. In other words, these "take back the night" rallies appear to me like nothing so much as sexually charged dating bars or meet markets.

According to Roiphe, false accusations fly pretty freely at these carnivals. Usually the supposed perpetrators are kept pretty vague, but in one case a Princeton student named Mindy not only printed her story in the *Daily Princetonian*, provided enough clues to identify her supposed perpetrator. According to her story, a boy followed her and dragged her back to his room and raped her – and during the entire ordeal she kept screaming, but no one paid attention. "Because I see this person every day, my rape remains a constant daily reality for me," she claimed. When the accused boy became identified, he became the object of enormous hostility from other students, until Mindy finally had to admit that her story was completely made up, and she'd never even met the boy. Mindy was never punished for her false charges.

As I was in the middle of preparing this chapter, I read the following newspaper story:

DARTMOUTH – Two female students attending the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth have admitted they made false rape claims earlier this year, but they will not be charged, prosecutors said.

Bristol District Attorney Paul Walsh said he would let the school discipline the women, although he acknowledged that making a false report of a crime is a crime and that he may prosecute if similar cases happen again.

The women's names were not released.

I find this very disconcerting. These college girls committed a crime – falsely charging a felony – and the district attorney, Paul Walsh, not only did not prosecute them, but actually went out of his way to give them special protection by not releasing their names.

A major reason why people don't go around falsely accusing people they don't like of crimes they didn't commit is because it's illegal. If you hate your next-door-neighbor, and you falsely accuse him of robbing a liquor store, then you have a good chance of going to jail yourself.

What district attorney Walsh did was to send a message to everyone in the community that college girls get a free pass if they make false accusations of rape. This makes it more likely that college females in this community will make false charges of rape, and so it reduces the credibility of real rape victims. If a girl claims to have been raped, the police have no way of knowing whether she's telling the truth, or whether she's just claiming her free rape accusation pass under Paul Walsh's decision.

Needless to say, males should stay away from colleges like University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth if they possibly can. In a letter to the editor, one man wrote: "At my own alma mater,♦ Brandeis University, male students accused of rape are presumed guilty once an accusation is made. The Massachusetts Supreme Court case of David Scharer v. Brandeis illustrates the perilous environment males face at the moment a female lodges an accusation, whether truthful or not. At many universities, men accused of rape are branded rapists and expelled long before their women accusers even had a chance to recant their lies. The worst part is that UMass Dartmouth, while condemning the women for their lies, will not press for any legal actions against them. This is a double standard that perpetuates sexual terrorism on campuses."

Compounding the problem of the woman alleging rape is that victims of real rape by strangers have far from a perfect record of identifying the rapist. Particularly problematical are situations where a white woman identifies a black man as a rapist, since all people have difficulty identifying people of races other than their own.

The way that we know that a number of rape victims were falsely identified is because we are in the middle of a revolution of rape prosecution — it's now possible to do DNA analysis of semen and determine with no doubt the identify of the rapist.

Barry Scheck's Innocence Project♦ has found that some 25% of previous rape convictions were wrong. This determination was made by going back into preserved rape kits from old convictions and comparing the DNA from the preserved semen with the DNA of the convicted person. And of the cases where the man was found innocent, over half were cases where the woman was white and the man was black.

The sad fact is that eyewitness identifications in *all* crimes are proving to be wrong♦ in over 25% of the time, according to Scheck. Of the first 18,000 DNA tests conducted by the FBI and other crime laboratories, 5,000 prime suspects were eliminated by the DNA. Without the DNA, almost all would have been convicted.

This unfortunately means that it's likely that one in four suspects in crimes where there's no DNA evidence available are likely to be innocent as well.

This is extremely frightening in the case of rape. As we've learned from the research previously presented, rapists are very good as "con artists," and are very careful not to leave any DNA behind, even going to so far as to bring along their own rape kits.

That means that for stranger rapes, we can usually only depend on eyewitness evidence, which we cannot expect to be accurate more than 75% of the time.

One disturbing story was presented on PBS's Frontline.[♦] In 1985, Ronald Cotton, a black man with a record, was convicted of raping two women, based on an identification by one of the victims, Jennifer Thomson, who was a very convincing and compelling witness during the trial.

In 1985, DNA tests were performed, and Cotton was exonerated and set free. Who was the real rapist? DNA tests showed it was Bobby Poole, someone whom Jennifer had actually watched testify in court, but who was excluded based on her eyewitness testimony.

According to Jennifer, "I remember feeling just an overwhelming sense of just guilt that if, indeed, we had made a mistake and I had contributed to taking away 11 years of this man's life.... I felt so bad. I fell apart."

But amazingly, she still doesn't recognize Poole as the man who actually raped her. She adds, "I have to accept the answer that's been given to me and put faith in our system that the DNA tests, the science, tells me we had the wrong guy. I just wish I had some answers. I still see Ronald Cotton. And I'm not saying that to point a finger. I'm just saying that's who I see. And I would love to erase that face out of my mind. I would do anything to erase that face out of my mind, but I can't. It's just .. it's in my head. Sometimes it's more fuzzy than others because my mind now says, 'Well, it's Bobby Poole.' But it's still the face I see."

It's a terrible crime to be raped, but it's also terrible to be falsely accused of rape, and the new DNA results show that, in the absence of DNA evidence, there is a 25% chance that the wrong person will be named, even with the full and complete sincerity of the victim.

An accusation of rape can destroy a man's life, even if completely untrue, and because the possibility of an untrue accusation appears to be very high – because the victim is either lying or mistaken. For these reasons, we should be doing a lot more to protect the identities of men accused of rape, just as we protect the identities of rape victims, until an actual conviction takes place.

Canadian Analysis of False Rape Charges

An analysis of false rape charges in Ontario and British Columbia has yielded some fairly high numbers:

- Ontario-wide, about 5.7% of all sexual assault allegations are demonstrably false*: that's 2,233 false allegations out of 39,223 in four and one-half years.
- In B.C., 6.7% are demonstrably false: 986 of 14,586 cases.
- The percentages are much higher when rape by a stranger is alleged. In Toronto alone in 2000, over 30% of the stranger rape allegations (69 out of 232) were demonstrably false. When stranger rape is falsely alleged, the falsely accused perpetrator is disproportionately likely to be a black man.

The term "demonstrably false" does not include cases where the police are uncertain as to the validity of the charge, or cases where the charges were false but the victim did not intend to mislead investigators.

These fairly high figures are coming to light as the result of the Violent Criminal Linkage Analysis System, or VICLAS, which has been used by the provinces of Canada since it became available in 1997.

The system was installed to allow police departments to communicate with one another securely about suspects who move from one jurisdiction to another. The unexpected result is that the new system has made false allegations of rape highly visible.

Examples of false allegations include the following: An East Indian girl, promised in marriage by her family, who had sex with her high school boyfriend and then said she was raped to account for the fact that she was no longer a virgin; a "cop groupie" who pursued her hobby by accusing a cop of raping her; and a number of false rape claims used by women to punish former boyfriends or spouses, especially if a custody or support battle is involved.

The biggest problem that a *real* rape victim has is her credibility — is she lying? Is she mistaken about the identity of the rapist?

Feminists attack the credibility of the real rape victim by refusing to recommend prosecution of women who make false rape accusations.

If the police or district attorneys know that a woman claiming to have been raped might be making the accusation for political reasons or to get even with

some man who jilted her, with no legal risk to herself, then they'll be less likely to believe her.

Every policeman knows that some women lie about rape, as Hazelwood's research and the Canadian research indicate. The claim by feminists that women never lie about rape is itself immediately recognized as a lie, leading the policeman to ask himself, "If they'd lie about something that everyone knows is untrue, then maybe this girl, who's claiming to have been raped, is lying too."

On the other hand, real rape victims will be better off if feminists would stop lying about rape, and if women who make false and reckless accusations of rape should face criminal prosecution.

If the police or district attorneys know that a woman claiming to have been raped risks jail if she's making a false and reckless charge, then they'll be more likely to believe what she's saying. In fact, they'll *have* to take her seriously, since to do otherwise would be to imply that *she's* committing a crime.

The DNA revolution is an enormous boon to real rape victims, since it provides a method, at least when the perpetrator leaves semen or blood behind, to determine with 100% certainty who the perpetrator is.

Beyond that, I cannot think of any single act that would make our society take rape more seriously as a crime than to insist on prosecution of women who make false and reckless charges of rape. In my opinion, the fact that feminists do not even consider such prosecution shows how little feminists care about *real* victims of rape.

Until that happens, I advise everyone to hold some healthy doubt towards any female making a rape accusation. Until feminists are willing to support prosecution of women who purposely make false accusations of rape, it's reasonable to explore the possibility that the accusation is being made as a political ploy to gain money or political power.

Rape and Pornography

There is probably no weirder political issue than the campaign against pornography, because it's a wedge issue on the right and left:

- On the left, the ACLU, led by Nadine Strossen, opposes banning pornography because of first amendment issues; and feminists led by Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon support laws against pornography, claiming that it objectifies women.
- On the right, Christians groups, led by Dr. James Dobson, support restrictions on pornography, claiming that it leads to the moral decay of

society; and civil libertarians oppose restrictions because they feel a ban would curtail freedom.

What links the Dobsons on the right with the Dworkins on the left is the claim that pornography causes rape. The evidence for this claim is extremely weak and self-contradictory, in my opinion, but I'll summarize the evidence below, and then conclude by explaining why, in my opinion, the campaign against pornography *per se* is dangerous to women and real rape victims.

Incidentally, if you wish to explore this subject further, just go to an Internet search engine and type things like "pornography," "Dobson," and "Meese Commission," and you'll find plenty of debate.

The Trigger Event Evidence

Anti-pornography feminists tend to point to stories like the one about "Chuck" on page 88, where a rape is triggered by a porno movie, as proof that porn causes rape.

However, Roy Hazelwood points out that for these "anger retaliatory rapists," anything involving a woman could be the trigger, "from a woman being elected to Congress♦ to a female police officer issuing him a ticket to a fight with his wife."

Indeed, I'm reminded of the lines from the song:

*Oh, in these modern days
When ladies show their ankles♦
What's there to keep a poor lad, poor lad,
From going simply mad?*

These lines illustrate that pornography is not an absolute but a relative term. In the days when women wore ankle-length dresses, exposing an ankle could have stirred as much erotic excitement as exposing a breast would today in America. (In parts of Europe, exposed breasts are not uncommon.)

Rapists whose actions are triggered in this way are typically men who harbor a great deal of hatred towards women, often based on previous abuse by women. Whether the triggering event is pornography or something else involving women, the underlying forces are the same.

"The Porn Made Me Do It" Evidence

Every now and then, a rapist confesses not only to his crimes but also to a history of reading pornography, and these tales turn into evidence in the hands of politicians.

Anti-porn Christian Dr. James Dobson has built his career out of an interview he convicted with Ted Bundy, a man who had tortured, raped, sodomized and murdered 30 girls and women. The interview, was conducted in 1968, just hours before Bundy was executed in an electric chair for his crimes.

Bundy said that reading pornography as a teen had fueled his fantasies and "helped mold and shape the kinds of violent behavior" that he perpetrated.

Anti-porn feminist Catharine A. MacKinnon quotes an anonymous perpetrator as follows: "I can remember when I get horny from looking at girly books and watching girly shows that I would want to rape somebody. Every time I would jack off before I come I would be thinking of rape and the women I had raped and remembering how exciting it was."

These stories are similar in that these perpetrators justifying their crimes because of pornography.

When anti-porn crusaders point to such confessions as evidence, they don't point out that many other rapist confessors blame women's clothing as the source of their attitudes.

For example, several years ago in a women's issues forum, a woman who had been raped said that the perpetrator had told her, "You asked for it – you were wearing a tight sweater and a short skirt."

Now if James Dobson and Andrea Dworkin are going to blame pornography in some cases, then they have to blame tight sweaters and short skirts in other cases.

In the end, there's no essential difference between, "The tight sweater made me do it" and "The pornography made me do it." The two excuses are interchangeable, and both appear to excuse the rapist from responsibility.

There's an even greater problem with this kind of evidence: that the definition of pornography becomes very slippery. For example, consider the words of Raymond Pierce, retired NYPD detective, and one of the country's leading experts at criminal profiling.

In my experience, offenders in general have a heavy exposure to pornography....♦ Many times when you've been looking for a person for a while, particularly for a serious crime, whether it be sexual in nature or not, well, when you arrest the person you ask, "Well, where were you for four days?" ... "I went to a sleazy motel, got a prostitute

to come in, or one of these motels that have X-rated videos constantly going on 24 hours a day." And that's how they relieve their tension.

And it was not just once or twice. Over and over again it would be, "I went up to my friend's apartment, I had a girl come up there for a while, and we watched videos." "What did you watch?" "Pornographic videos," or violence-oriented videos — Schwarzenegger movies — *Terminator* seemed to be a favorite one, anything with that violence there.

When Pierce was asked, "What are your definitions of 'pornography,' and related terms like 'soft-core pornography,' 'hard-core pornography,' 'violent pornography?'" he replied:

I have no need to differentiate between "soft core," or "hard core" pornography. I know what the media defines as "soft core" and "hard core." For me it's anything written, spoken, printed, photographed or videotaped to elicit a sexual response from an individual. What the general public may consider soft-core pornography, that's enough stimulation for a criminal. It depends on what goes on in the individual's mind. If there's enough stimulation for a criminal to use to fantasize before a committing a crime; sometimes they use it during a crime and many times they use it afterwards.

If you carefully read this expert opinion, it's easy to see a lot of problems. The interview, conducted by Morality in Media, was intended to elicit responses that indicate that pornography causes sex crimes. Pierce appeared to support that view, but he indicated clearly that by "pornography" he's referring to a whole range of things. For example, daily television soap operas are frequently referred to as "soft porn," and although he doesn't mention soap operas, that sort of thing is presumably one of the problems according to Pierce.

He *does* mention Schwarzenegger movies, and *Terminator* in particular, movies which are by no means considered to be pornographic by the general public.

In the end, "The Porn Made Me Do It" evidence suffers from the same problem as the Triggering Event evidence of the previous section: Anything involving a woman — "anything ... to elicit a sexual response from an individual" in Pierce's words — is considered pornographic.

This reduces the "The Porn Made Me Do It" to a triviality: you want to show that criminals read pornography, and so you point to anything involving a woman.

There is a final point to be made about this kind of evidence, as indicated by Hazelwood:

Ritualistic offenders such a [Harvey] Glatman or [Ted] Bundy shop assiduously for their pornography, which they regard as among

their most prized possessions. The photos or videotapes or narrative passages they select and keep are those that most closely complement their fantasies and deviant sexual practices.

For that reason, a careful study of it can provide investigators with important clues to a suspected deviant offender's ritual, the psychosexually driven "signature" behavior that is consistent no matter how much he may vary his MO.

Violent Pornography and Child Pornography

It's important not to misunderstand Hazelwood's last point. He's not saying reading pornography *causes* violent behavior; he's saying that violent people select and treasure the kind of pornography that most closely matches their existing behaviors.

Thus, a heterosexual reads heterosexual pornography, a gay man reads gay pornography, a lesbian reads lesbian pornography, and a violent slasher reads violent slasher pornography. But reading gay pornography doesn't make you gay, and reading slasher pornography doesn't make you a slasher – it's the other way around.

Still, that's the reason that police investigators look for pornography owned by sex offenders. Someone who owns child pornography might be a child molester, not because the child pornography made him into a child molester, but because a child molester is more likely to want to read child pornography.

By the way, violent or slasher pornography is not illegal. However, child pornography *is* illegal in the United States, since the Supreme Court has made an exception for it to the First Amendment Freedom of the Press clause, for the reason that actual child are used in the creation of visual child pornography. (However, even this reason will disappear in the next 10-20 years: Computer graphics is becoming ever cheaper and ever more realistic, and it will be possible to create movies of any type, including child pornography, with an ordinary home computer, without requiring the use of actual people or children.)

In a discussion of pornography in a women's issues forum a couple of years ago, some of the anti-pornography feminists made the remark that "most pornography is violent." Here's how one woman put it: "Pornography portrays women as welcoming violence, and 'slasher' pornography glorifies violence against women." This same claim also appears in feminist literature.

I found this very puzzling because in my fifty-odd years, I've never once seen violent or slasher pornography. It's true that I've never sought out violent

pornography, but still, if the feminist claims were true, then I should have seen something by accident at some point, but I never have.

I was really wondering what violent pornography must be like, and since I've never seen any, I decided to write some slasher pornography myself. I wrote a single paragraph's worth of the stuff, and here's what I came up with:

Jane felt flush all over when Richard looked at her. And when he pulled her toward him, and ran his hands over her body, she just melted. She couldn't resist him. She could hardly wait for Richard to remove her blouse, her bra, her panties, push her down onto the bed and have his way with her. She heard herself moan helplessly as he made passionate love to her. After it was over, he pulled out a knife, slashed her throat, and sliced up her body.

Now let's face it folks. Nobody's going to be turned on by that last sentence unless he or she is psychotic or near psychotic.

Interestingly, up until the last sentence, the preceding paragraph is very appealing to both men and women. It's the kind of thing you would find in the *Penthouse Forum* or in a sexy woman's romance novel. But of course the last sentence is disgusting and appeals to almost no one.♦

During that online discussion a couple of years ago, I was still very curious to know what those feminists were talking about — what exactly is violent pornography?? I felt that, for my research, I needed to read some violent pornography. (No, I'm not making this up.)

Soooo, I took a trip to Harvard Square in Cambridge, Mass., and visited a store which I knew, from my old days at MIT, was a purveyor of pornography. I walked to the back of the store, and started to look at the covers of all the pornographic magazines. I couldn't look inside any of them, of course, since they were all wrapped in clear plastic, in order to prevent men from getting saliva or other bodily fluids on the pictures.

I was specifically looking for violent pornography, but all I saw was covers promising pictures of naked women, often of various races or nationalities. There was one magazine called *Eighteen*, which claimed to have pictures of young women and only young women, obviously skating on the edge of child pornography, but that was as close as anything got to anything that seemed particularly odd or deviant.

So I approached the man behind the counter, told him I was doing a research project, that I've never seen violent pornography, and I wondered if he would point some out to me. He looked at me as if I were crazy, and then said, "No, we don't have anything like that. That stuff's illegal."

At that point I interrupted him to correct him: "No, that's not true. Child pornography is illegal, but not violent pornography - that's perfectly legal."

He said he didn't have any. I asked if there was a place nearby where I could get some. He said there wasn't. I asked if he knew of anyplace, anywhere, that sold violent pornography. He said not in Cambridge.

So once again, we have a situation where the feminist position is simply totally wrong. No way is it true that most pornography is violent. In fact, to this day, I've never seen violent or child pornography, despite the fact that I went looking for it.

I hope this story is reassuring to anyone who reads this book. Women who are concerned that men are reading violent pornography should know that violent pornography, while not illegal, is more thoroughly banned than if it *were* illegal. The Dobsons and Dworkins who claim that most pornography is violent pornography are totally wrong.

Aggression and Attitudes Evidence

As we consider the evidence that the Dobsons and the Dworkins refer to when they claim that pornography drives men to rape, we have to consider a collection of studies that show how men's attitudes and behaviors change when they're exposed to pornography.♦

Here's an example of one of these studies:

Malamuth (1978) conducted a study using three male experimental conditions.♦ One group would read aggressive pornography (depicting a rape), one nonaggressive pornography (loving interaction between a man and woman), and the third neutral stimuli (*National Geographic* articles). After exposure, all subjects were insulted by a female and were then put in a situation where they could aggress against this woman via the ostensible delivery of electric shocks. Half of the group was told it was permissible to be as aggressive as they wished (disinhibitory communication), while the other half were given a message to make them self conscious about aggression (inhibitory communication).

No results were found in the inhibitory group, but in the disinhibitory group the highest levels of aggression were recorded for those who had been exposed to the aggressive pornography.

Other experiments used other kinds of pornography or violent movies. Some studies used electric shocks, some used tests to evaluate the subjects attitudes towards women.

So what do these experiments have to do with pornography and rape? These electronic shock and attitude experiments tell us absolutely nothing about whether the subjects would rape someone or do anything else that would hurt anyone.

To understand how weak and irrelevant these experiments are, compare them to some of my own findings, previously reported in chapter 1 and in this chapter:

- On page 42, I described the enormous hatred and rage that divorced men feel towards their ex-wives, even to the extent of wishing that their ex-wives would be killed. I related these feelings to the contemptuous and offensive treatment that many men have told me that they receive from social workers, psychologists, pediatricians and other women professionals involved with divorce.

First, although a number of men that I spoke to wished for the death of their ex-wives, not a single one expressed a desire to see their ex-wives raped. This indicates to me that these pornography studies are completely wrong in implying that they have anything to do with rape.

Second, the study described on page 283 confirms that most men hate their ex-wives, but that their attitudes to their new wives is completely normal. This indicates that any negative feelings are channeled not toward women in general but to the specific woman or women that they're angry at.

The word "misogynist," or woman-hater, is used constantly by feminists, but I've never met any men who hate women as a class (though I've met many feminists who appear to hate all men as a class). The only examples I've ever seen of men who hate all women are the "anger retaliatory rapists," described by Hazelwood's research earlier in this chapter.

- On page 72 earlier in this chapter, I described how the Anita Hill scandal has created an atmosphere of enormous hostility between men and women in the workplace, and that men were less willing to hire women, and didn't trust the women they worked with. Once again, we see that negative attitudes towards women have nothing to do with rape.

The quoted research on aggression and attitudes towards men tries to claim that reading pornography makes men more likely to rape women, but in fact they've proven nothing of the sort.

The fact is that there is no research has shown any connection between pornography and rape, and by that I'm referring to valid research, something with valid controls. A valid prospective study, for example, would start by randomly selecting a group of 12 year old boys, interview them every year with regard to their use of pornography, follow them for 10-20 years, and see if reading

pornography correlates to any criminal activities. In fact, such studies have been conducted, and their results have been well-publicized: predictors of increased probability of committing crimes are being abused as a child or coming from a divorced family; pornography is not a predictor.

Why the Campaign Against Pornography is Dangerous to Women

If you've been reading this book, then you know that I've become pretty cynical about everything that politicians do, whether the politician is on the left, right or elsewhere. This anti-pornography campaign, which produces this odd pairing of politicians on the left and right, is political posturing, and worse, it's actually dangerous because of the message it sends that rapists are absolved of responsibility.

To see this, I have to return to the "The Porn Made Me Do It" excuse used by rapists, as described above.

This shows how the anti-pornography crusaders have fallen into a trap. By saying that pornography causes rape, feminists open the door to making pornography an excuse for rape. "The tight sweater made me do it" becomes "The pornography made me do it." The two excuses are interchangeable, and both appear to absolve the rapist from responsibility. Possibly nothing seems to infuriate a feminist more than hearing someone appear to justify the rape of a woman based on the clothing she was wearing, but these same feminists, as well as the Christians, seem all too willing to let the rapist off the hook if he's recently read some pornography.

In fact, men who rape have used all sorts of things as justifications for their crimes. Here are Hazelwood's statistics:

The responses suggested these rapists commit their crimes[♦] largely indiscriminately. Of the forty-one rapists, 15 percent said the victim's attire was a reason for the assault; 39 percent cited race; 95 percent cited gender; and all but one rapist said that victim availability was the reason she was assaulted. A quarter of the survey sample said they had no specific criteria at all for choosing victims.

It's worth pointing out here that 15% of Hazelwood's sample gave the woman's clothing as the justification, but not one gave pornography as a reason. This not only contradicts the feminist position, but also by the logic of the Dworkins and Dobsons against porn, we should be legislating women's clothing, not legislating against pornography.

There are other published examples of rapists using published materials as justifications for their crimes. For example, a Jamaican man of African descent[♦] in

London who raped a white woman said that the televised showing of Alex Haley's *Roots* had "inspired" him to treat her as white men had treated black women. And "Heinrich Pommerenke, who was a rapist[♦], abuser, and mass slayer of women in Germany, was prompted to his series of ghastly deeds by Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments*. During the scene of the Jewish women dancing about the Golden Calf, all the doubts of his life became clear: Women were the source of the world's troubles and it was his mission to both punish them for this and to execute them. Leaving the theater, he slew the first victim in a park nearby."

In the paragraph quoting Hazelwood's research just above, he indicates that 39% of his subjects cited race as a factor in motivating rape. This is illustrated by Eldridge Cleaver who, in *Soul on Ice*, said, "I became a rapist. To refine my technique and *modus operandi*, I started out by practicing on black girls in the ghetto ... and when I considered myself smooth enough, I crossed the tracks and sought out white prey. I did this consciously, deliberately, willfully, methodically ... Rape was an insurrectionary act." Revenge is a motive for many crimes, and rape is no exception, in this case tying in to race.

So there are many reasons and excuses that men give for rape, and none of them should be acceptable, but the Dobsons and Dworkins accept pornography as an excuse.

I would argue that the anti-pornography campaign *per se* is actually dangerous, in that it reinforces any rationalizations by rapists that what they're doing is not their fault. "If Dr. Dobson (or Andrea Dworkin) says I can't help myself, given that all this pornography is around, why should I even try?" Telling troubled, near-psychotic men that it's not their fault because pornography is making them do what they do is surely one of the dumbest things anyone can do.

I'll bet that 99% of all teenage boys are exposed to pornography. By the logic of Dworkin and Dobson, all of us should have become serial rapists, murderers and mutilators by now. I know that I escaped, and I know that a lot of other men did also.

I'm not the only person to have thought of this. In 1992, the Senate Judiciary Committee was considering the Victims of Pornography Compensation Act, which would have allowed victims of rape to sue pornography publishers. The bill was dropped, largely because of vocal opposition from feminists. Here's what Wendy McElroy, of the Feminists for Free Expression said:

The bill would have allowed[♦] crime victims to sue for unlimited money damages the producer, distributor, exhibitor and retailer of any book, magazine, movie or music that victims claim triggered the crime that harmed them.... It is because [we're] so concerned about violence that we protested this red-herring distraction from its causes.

A rapist, under this bill, could leave court a free man while the owner of a local bookstore could not.

To me, the campaign that many feminists and Christians are lodging against pornography is completely incomprehensible, because it sends out the message to marginally psychotic men that if you're exposed to pornography then you have a ticket to go out and rape someone.

If you believe, as I do, that men who commit crimes have to be held responsible for those crimes, then the campaign against pornography sends the wrong message: that it's pornography that's at fault. This is damaging to all women, especially women who are victims of real rape.

Can Pornography be an Obsession?

I don't know if women are aware of this, but pornography is extremely pervasive among teen boys and young men. In the old days, this exposure might be accomplished by passing around clandestine copies of *Playboy* magazine, but today anyone can look at nude or semi-nude women on the Internet. I would guess that 99.9% of all teen boys and young men become exposed to pornography at some time, and so an adult who makes a crusade out of saying that pornography is evil is telling me more about himself than about pornography.

But what about people who become obsessed with pornography – who want to read it literally all the time. Do they want to rape anyone?

None of the crusaders' literature I've read make this claim, and there's no research evidence to support the belief that anyone who becomes obsessed with pornography wants to do anything more than read more pornography.

What happens to people who become obsessed with pornography? Apparently a lot of them become crusaders against pornography, since these crusades expose them to lots of pornography in a supposedly legitimate manner.

This is true of both women and men. It's impossible to read books like *Intercourse* by Andrea Dworkin or *Only Words* by Catharine MacKinnon without feeling that one is reading an obsessive work.

Judge Richard Posner, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, writing a review of *Only Words* for the *New Republic*, wrote:

I do not know what has caused MacKinnon to become ♦, and, more surprisingly, to remain, so obsessed with pornography, and so zealous for censorship. But let us not sacrifice our civil liberties on the altar of her obsession.

What really made me think about this was a paragraph from Michaud's book on Roy Hazelwood that we've previously quoted. In a chapter entitled, "A porno show for cops," he says,

"Some investigators," Hazelwood and Lanning wrote, "are voyeuristic....♦ They get a vicarious thrill out of interviewing victims or viewing the pornography often associated with sexual crimes. They may demand sexual acts from prostitutes, ask a rape victim to describe her assault an unreasonable number of times, or make copies of seized materials for their private use."

I've noticed this in television shows as well. For example, one January, 2000, episode of the TV show *Law and Order Special Victims Unit*, had a long scene where a beautiful woman with long blond hair told in exquisite erotic detail how she was raped.

Another example: About 8 or 9 years ago, a feminist woman posted online a short story she had written, and asked people in a writer's forum to critique it. The story was a (fictional) first person story of a woman describing how she had been raped. The author's intention was to make the rape seem a horrible crime, but she wrote it in such a way that it was almost erotic – how the man undressed her, stroked her, and so forth. I commented on this, and suggested that she should shift the focus away from what the man did onto what the woman felt – the foul smell, his weight making it hard to breath, the searing pain, and so forth. All I got for my trouble was flames with the usual flak that any man gets when he critiques a feminist, even in this case where the critique had been invited. But I still feel that there's a tendency to make first person rape survivor stories more erotic than necessary.

Katie Roiphe notices the same thing about "Take Back the Night" rallies:

As they listen to the stories, people cry and hold hands and put their arms around each other.♦ The few moments before someone steps up to the microphone are thick with tension. As students throw stories of suffering to the waiting crowds, the spiritual cleansing takes on darker undercurrents. The undercurrent is the competitor for whose stories can be more Sadean, more incest-ridden, more violent, more like a paperback you can buy at a train station.

Finally, it's worth noting that women's romance novels are loaded with pornography, including graphic sex and simulated rape scenes, and are freely available by the dozens in any drugstore or supermarket. (Usually the picture on the cover tips you off as to how sexy the novel inside is going to be.)

What these things indicate is that a lot of people like pornography, and find a lot of excuses for reading it or viewing it. That's why, for several years, the only money-making Internet business besides real time financial figures was online

pornography. In fact I've known long-married couples who use pornography as a tool to stimulate and add spice to their sex lives.

In the end, despite the crusades of the Dworkins and the Dobsons, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest reading pornography leads to rape or cheating on one's wife or to anything else except, in some cases, the desire to read more pornography.

Date Rape

It is the feminist view that rape is very common, and that rape is underreported because men stick together to keep rapists from being identified and accused. As I quoted Catharine MacKinnon previously, she claims that over 90 percent of American women have been sexually assaulted or harassed at some point in their lives and that this represents "the effectively unrestrained and systematic sexual aggression of one-half of the population against the other half."

I would like to argue that nothing could be further from the truth.

Katie Roiphe's 1993 book, *The Morning After*, generated a fair amount of controversy among feminists because of the following statement:

According to the widely quoted *Ms.* survey,[♦] one in four college women is the victim of rape or attempted rape. One in four, I remember standing outside the dining hall in college looking at a purple poster with this statistic written in bold letters. It didn't seem right. If sexual assault was really so pervasive, it seemed strange that the intricate gossip networks hadn't picked up more than one or two shadowy instances of rape. If I was really standing in the middle of an epidemic, a crisis, if 25 percent of my female friends were really being raped, wouldn't I know it?

Not surprisingly, there is evidence that feminists have been exaggerating rape figures. Many universities - even large state schools[♦] - report fewer than one rape or attempted rape each year. But when University of Washington researcher Margaret Gordon was conducting a rape study, she told the *Toledo Blade*, "I felt pressure to have rape be as prevalent as possible. I'm a pretty strong feminist, but ... the really avid feminists were trying to get me to say that things were worse than they really are."

Other researchers have found the *Ms.* study findings to be enormously exaggerated as well. Neil Gilver, professor of social welfare at the University of California at Berkeley, summarizes the situation as follows:

Finally, there is a vast disparity between the *Ms.* study findings[♦] and the rates of rape and attempted rape that come to the attention of

various authorities on college campuses. The number of rapes formally reported to the police on major college campuses is remarkably low – on the order of two to five incidents a year in schools with thousands of women (or fewer than 1 per 1,000 female students in moderate-sized colleges). It is generally agreed that many rape victims do not report their ordeals because of the embarrassment and callous treatment frequently experienced at the hands of the police. Over the last decade, however, rape crisis counseling and supportive services have been established on virtually every major campus in the country. Highly sensitive to the social and psychology violations of rape, these services offer a sympathetic environment in which victims may come forward for assistance, without having to make official reports to the police. Although these services usually minister to more victims than are reported to the local police, the numbers remain conspicuously low, compared with the incidence rate of rape and attempted rape on college campuses as Koss [the author of the *Ms.* study] defines the problem.

Applying Koss's finding [in the *Ms* Magazine study] of an annual incidence rate of 166 in 1,000 women (each victimized an average of 1.5 times) to the population of 14,000 female students at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1990, for example, one would expect about 2,000 women to have experienced 3,000 incidents of rape or attempted rape that year. On the Berkeley campus, 2 rapes were reported to the police in 1990, and between 40 and 80 students sought assistance from the campus rape counseling service. Although this represents a serious problem, its dimensions (3-6 cases in 1,000) are a fraction of the number (166 cases in 1,000) claimed by the *Ms.* study.

Roiphe used her own personal experiences to challenge the feminist claim that one in four college girls was getting raped. Feminists were using the high figure to justify funding for rape counseling centers and other social services for women, and Roiphe was saying that if so many women were being raped, she would have heard something about it. Feminists countered Roiphe's claim by saying that she was talking to the wrong people.

I would like to add my own voice to Roiphe's. I am 57 years old. I went to college as both an undergraduate and grad student. I've probably talked to hundreds or even thousands of guys, probably in tens of thousands of conversations, both in college and afterwards, about women, and about the perennially favorite subject, how to get a girl into bed.

In all those tens of thousands of conversations, I have never once heard a man encourage rape, justify rape, or condone rape.

I'm sure such conversations have taken place somewhere in the world, but since I've never heard one, I can only conclude that they're extremely rare, close to nonexistent.

I've searched through my memory for locker room advice that men have given about getting a girl into bed, and the following are the most aggressive of the ideas that people have suggested:

- In college, one guy was explaining to me how to seduce a girl. He was telling me how to kiss her here, touch her there, and so forth. He said, "If she stops you, then you should wait a while, and then start all over again from the beginning." He added that "If she stops you again, then you probably won't get anywhere." He did NOT say, "If she stops you twice, then rip her clothes off and rape her."
- The only remark that was ever even close to being controversial was in the spirit of Ogden Nash's "Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker." In college, one guy explained at length that women need, want and desire to have sex but feel guilty for doing so; so they sometimes drink on purpose because they want to lower their own inhibitions so that they can go to bed with someone and later blame it on the liquor. I've heard variations of this a number of times, and it's something that I personally believe contains some truth, but this is an important subject for another time. At any rate, this guy was not advising any sort of coercion; he was simply saying that college girls will drink under their own motivation, so they can have sex without feeling guilty.
- A few years ago, one divorced man was explaining his experiences with divorced women. He said, "A woman needs to say 'No' once before she goes to bed with you. So if she says 'No' on the second date, she'll go to bed with you on the third date, and if she says 'No' on the first date, then she'll go to bed with you on the second date. So the best thing to do is to try to get her into bed on the first date, since that way you'll succeed in getting her into bed on the second date."
- One man, online, gave the following advice to another man wondering about getting a woman into bed. "If you take her out to dinner and she always insists on splitting the bill, then when she finally lets you pay for the whole bill, that probably means she's ready to go to bed with you."

The point is that the above remarks represent the absolutely most aggressive of what I've heard from men on this subject, and there isn't even a hint of nonconsensual sex in it.

If men supported each other's desires to rape women, then in 57 years I would have heard something much worse than the above remarks. The fact is that men,

except for a tiny number of serial rapists, most of whom are already in jail, are not turned on by violent non-consensual sex. And this means that the feminist position on men's attitudes towards rape is simply wrong.

In fact, I believe I have a very simple proof that no one, even feminists, believes those inflated rape statistics. More women than men go to college these days, and if there really is a one in four chance that a girl going to college would be raped, then there's hardly a mother or father in the country who would be willing to send their daughters to college. The fact that they do so in overwhelming numbers means to me that no one, not even feminists, believe in their hearts that one in four female college students is raped. That whole statistic is political nonsense.

It is my opinion that one of the most harmful and destructive things that feminists do to women is to artificially inflate the rape incidence figures. Doing so attacks the credibility of anyone who is *really* raped.

I'm not the only person who's thought of this. Gillian Greensite, founder of the Rape Prevention Education program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, actually felt it necessary to warn students about this precise problem in the University's *Student Guide*:

[The seriousness of rape] is being undermined[♦] by the growing tendency of some feminists to label all heterosexual miscommunication and insensitivity as acquaintance rape... [This tendency] is already creating a climate of fear on campuses, straining relations between males and females."

By saying that men condone rape, and by saying that a high number of women are raped, feminists make rape a normal activity for men, giving a marginally violent man an excuse to rape. The statement, "Rape is extremely rare and we're going to punish anyone who does it" is a much more powerful message than "Rape is a very common occurrence, everybody does it, and we're going to punish anyone who does it." Anyone hearing the latter statement knows that rape isn't going to be punished any more frequently than driving five miles per hour over the speed limit is going to be punished.

Questions and Answers

1. Q: I'm sick and tired of Clinton-haters rehashing the same old stories. If Clinton had an affair with an intern, it's nobody's business but his own and Hillary's.

A: I'm not criticizing Clinton. My criticisms are for feminist groups who are hurting women by trivializing gender crimes in order to further a political agenda.

2. Q: Organizations like NOW do have this pesky habit of telling women they shouldn't have to put up with crap.

A: As I pointed out, NOW has discredited itself when they began the 90s by vocally and defiantly screaming harassment at a black man who allegedly told a woman a few dirty jokes, and ended up the decade by defending, condoning and carrying water for a white man who allegedly and credibly is a serial rapist, a man who gropes, flashes, uses and abuses every woman in his life.

NOW is not a bad organization, but they're a political organization. What characterizes most politicians and political organizations, whether on the right or left, is that they're like used car dealers – they're sleazy and lack ethics. The brilliance of our constitutional system is that it enables the sleazebags on the left and the sleazebags on the right to cancel each other out. The only pesky habit that NOW has is to do whatever they can to gain money and political power, no matter how many women they hurt. Fortunately for all of us, they've been failing, as measured by the decreasing number of women willing to call themselves feminists.

3. Q: [From a feminist woman] To paraphrase an old campaign slogan, "It's the Religious Right, Stupid". (-Not that I'm calling anyone here "stupid".) I honestly think that NOW's misguided position re Clinton is solely because they don't want to see the "prigots" take over the country: They erroneously believe that if they don't support a Democratic president, a Republican president will take office next year. No matter what happens, Clinton is out next year, anyway. (...and good riddance!)

A: I often like to joke that the feminist left and the religious right ought to party together, since they have such similar views – that women are helpless dupes, and men are irresponsible predators. At any rate, the fact that both groups have such similar views is probably the reason they hate each other so much.

NOW's support for Clinton did not, in my opinion, do anything but hurt the Democrats. If the Democrats had gone along with the impeachment and convicted Clinton, then Gore would have become President, and probably would have been reelected in 2000.

Study and Research

1. I indicated in the chapter that no one I've spoken to, including feminists, is willing to make the case that women are happier and less harassed in the workplace today, as a result of Anita Hill's attack on Clarence Thomas. In fact, no one even seems to claim it. Can you, or someone you know, make such a case?
2. My perception is that women were a lot angrier in the early 90s than they are today, and that if a guy says something dumb today, a woman is more likely to not let it bother her than at that time. Do a survey of women to find out if they have any anecdotes from the early 90s, and whether they believe that their own attitudes have changed.
3. Talk to people who brought a sexual harassment complaint. What happened in the aftermath of that complaint? Were they glad they brought it? If you know any of the other parties or bystanders, see what they think about it.
4. Some surveys have shown that the Clinton sex scandals show that a fallout is that many teens don't believe that oral sex is sex. Do some research to determine if the Clinton scandals changed teen attitudes towards rape.
5. If you have access to a college rape counseling center, check with them and find out how many rape victims you see each year. If you have access to a woman's dormitory, do a confidential survey and find out how many say that they've been forcibly raped or date raped.
6. Check with your local police force, and find out how they handle rape allegations. Do they have special personnel or a special unit for rape victims? Do they have an estimate as to how many rape allegations are false, either intentionally or because of mis-identification of the rapist? Do they prosecute women making false allegations of rape?
7. Feminists claim that men cooperate with one another to rape women and to use rape as a political weapon to subjugate all women. I've said that in my fifty plus years, I've never heard a man condone or excuse rape or non-consensual sex. Have you ever heard a man condone or excuse rape or non-consensual sex? In a related question, is that what Susan Estrich did with regard to rape allegations against Clinton?

8. Crusaders on both the feminist left and Christian right claim that most pornography is violent slasher pornography, but in the text I indicated that I've never seen violent slasher pornography, even when I went to seek it out. Have you ever seen violent slasher pornography? Is there any place in your community where it can be purchased?

Chapter 3 – Family Violence

We have to begin by pointing out feminists do not even recognize the validity of the phrase "family violence," since even the use of that term implies that someone other than the father is responsible for violence. Later in this chapter (p. 139), we'll quote feminist Demie Kurz as saying, "the family violence and feminist approaches to domestic violence are irreconcilable."

As you read this chapter, therefore, you have to understand that even the chapter title is a violation of feminist "theory." The feminist position, evidently widely held by social workers as we have seen, is that all violence and abuse is perpetrated by men, that most or all women are victims, and most or all men are perpetrators, and that therefore the phrase "family violence," which implies that some people besides the father are violent, may not be used.

This chapter has the dual purpose of refuting the feminist position and, at the same time, providing education to readers on the prevalence of family violence, and what can and cannot be done to prevent it. This educational purpose has an analogous motivation as for the material presented on rapists in chapter 2 (p. 87): to allow people to help themselves to reduce family violence, or to look for help where necessary, based on the belief that the best way to combat a wrong is through accurate information.

This chapter provides family violence statistics. With regard to child abuse, we discuss the difference between the rare "pathological" child abuse and the more common "transactional" child abuse, and explore how society might reduce incidence of child abuse (p. 150). With regard to battering, we discuss how couples who have violence in their relationships can get help for themselves – and why feminists are so opposed to such couples doing so.

This chapter may be hard to read not only because of the subject matter (domestic violence and child abuse are never easy going) but also because there's a great deal of reference information mixed in with the narrative. If family violence has touched your life, then this chapter contains a great deal of information you need to know, especially if you're going to be dealing with feminist professionals, but on first reading you may wish to simply skim it for the main ideas.

Why is it so hard to get accurate family violence figures?

There are many reasons which converge to make it very hard to get very accurate figures on family violence, most having to do with the fact that we're all human, and our visceral opinions on family violence are buried deep in our DNA, so that we recognize only the facts that we want to believe. I know this personally, because having studied family violence for over ten years, and always having to go wherever the facts lead me, I've had to accept truths that I didn't always like, or didn't always believe at first.

During the 90s, the most dramatic (in my opinion) example of how our viscera affect our brain is the O.J. Simpson murder trial. The image of a black man being violent with a white woman affects people's emotions at too many levels to count, and polls show that it affects different people quite differently: if you're white, then you almost certainly think that O.J. should have been convicted, and you think that blacks are bigoted for thinking otherwise; and if you're black, then you almost certainly think that O.J. was innocent, and you think that whites are bigoted for thinking otherwise. (See further discussion on page 300. As nearly as I can tell, these strong opinions were not based on facts, since they were formed long before the trial ended.)

My point here is not to argue the correctness or incorrectness of the not guilty verdict, but only to point out that that people generally reached their opinions on O.J. viscerally, not on facts.

We believe what we want to believe. However, as Anthony Burgess said, "The scientific approach to life[♦] is not really appropriate to states of visceral anguish." If we want to get to the truth about sexual matters, we have to learn think with our heads, not our guts.

A few months ago, I watched a panel of journalists on CNN, and one of them said, referring to battering, that "there's violence in over half of American homes," a statement which is complete fiction, but which is typical of what I hear frequently on CNN and other news outlets.

Now this was a panel of theoretically intelligent and well-informed journalists, and yet not one of them even questioned this fiction. If one of these four journalists even thought about this, it would have occurred to them that this statistic meant that we could expect that two of the four journalists on the panel probably lived in homes with battering, and it would have been prudent at that point to inquire whether either of the two women was a battering victim, and whether either of the two men was a batterer.

It seems that sexual issues don't lend themselves much to facts and reasoning. Feelings are buried so deep in our DNA that it doesn't make much difference what

the facts are, especially when the facts involved a little bit of mathematical or statistical reasoning.

One of the most interesting examples of this came in 1994. I was startled to see a news story on CNN, with similar stories to follow on other network newscasts (as I recall, it was NBC and ABC), that a major new "Sex in America" survey has shown that the average man has 6 sexual partners in his lifetime, and the average woman has 2, thereby showing that men are more sexually promiscuous than women are.

The reason I was startled is that the news reports were mathematically impossible. Generally speaking, men and women must have the same number of sexual partners.♦ In fact, the "Sex in America" report that the news reports were quoting♦, written by a group of researchers led by Edward O. Laumann, a University of Chicago sociologist, actually discussed this discrepancy, gave a number of reasons for it, and concluded that the most likely reason is that men and/or women were lying.♦

(The observation that men and women lie a great deal about sex has received support in an amusing and unexpected way: The movie *American Pie II*, which reached movie theaters in 2001, frequently quotes a "rule of three." According to this rule, women hide the number of sexual partners they've had by a factor of three, and men exaggerate the number of sexual partners they've had by a factor of three.)

This all reminds me of how Walter Cronkite used to make errors in percentages in his newscasts during the 70s. I'm not sure what it says about news organizations that the most powerful newscaster in the world had trouble with fourth grade arithmetic.

I don't expect news writers or news producers to be mathematicians, but it would be nice if there were a fact checker around in the newsroom who knew enough high school math to make sure that silly mistakes like this won't be made.

So we have two reasons so far why it's difficult to get accurate family violence figures: People (including journalists and some researchers) tend to believe what they want to believe; and their lack of understanding of even simple math and statistics.

The third reason is politics, as we've explained in detail in previous chapters.

One of the most bizarre examples of the influence of politics is a major 1995 report on child abuse♦ published by U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS), headed by Donna Shalala, who almost certainly coordinated the work with NOW, the pro-Democratic Party feminist organization.

As we discussed previously (see p. 18), discussion of child abuse is anathema to feminists, because most child abuse is perpetrated by mothers. (The exception, child sexual abuse, is only about 10% of the child abuse problem.)

As a result of these political issues, the HHS report used extremely strained language. It begins with a list of 100 specific examples of children who died by child abuse, but the descriptions are all in the passive voice. "Michael A. Lazas Jr., age 2 years, cause of death suffocation" and "David Welch, 3 years, severely beaten" and "Francisco Lopaz, 2-1/2 years, died from 103 body wounds." Many, and probably most, of these examples of abuse were perpetrated by the mother, but the report avoids that. Throughout the report, there were examples, each labeled "A Recent Case." Several identified the father or the mother's boyfriend as the abuser, but others used the same bizarre gender-neutral passive voice. I presume that in those cases, the perpetrator was the mother.

This is the world we have to live in. National politics is a cutthroat game, and no Democratic administration is going to risk the wrath of the feminists, the most powerful PAC in America, and so the report was slanted to score political points.

An example almost as bizarre was the January, 1993, Super Bowl Hoax,[♦] perpetrated by a group of feminists, led by Lenore Walker, author of *The Battered Woman*. Christina Hoff Sommers, in *Who Stole Feminism*, tells this story in detail, to show exactly how these things happen.

The feminists, led by Lenore Walker, a Denver psychologist and author of *The Battered Woman*, announced that 40% more men beat up their wives on Super Bowl day than on other days. The credulous press ate it up; e.g., Michael Collier of the *Oakland Tribune* wrote that the Super Bowl causes "boyfriends, husbands and fathers" to "explode like mad linemen, leaving girlfriends, wives and children beaten." What reporter wouldn't be thrilled to spew out this kind of stuff?

The statistic was supposedly based on surveys and research, but the hoax was revealed when one *Washington Post* staff writer, Ken Ringle, actually had the temerity to check out the feminists' sources, and discovered that some researchers had been misquoted, and some statistics had been made up. In the end, it turns out that the hoax was total, and nothing special happens on Super Bowl Sunday, except that a football game is played. Unfortunately, the statistic is still quoted frequently, even though it's false and extremely offensive to men, and particularly offensive to football fans.

Incidentally, I've done the same thing myself online. Sometimes, someone posts distorted figures online, quoting somebody's research, I do some of my own fact checking. On several occasions I've telephoned the quoted researcher or obtained the published results, and discovered, rarely to my surprise, that the distorted claims had no relationship to reality. For some reason, whenever I post the findings from my fact checking online, it never seems to make me very popular.

And in her book *Who Stole Feminism*, Christina Hoff Sommers published a catalog of distorted domestic violence figures, showing how in some cases simple arithmetic could show them wrong.

Thanks to the convergence of these three factors — political material from feminist organizations given to pro-Democratic Party credulous reporters will little ability in statistics or math to evaluate the material — it's very hard to find accurate figures on family violence.

There's a fourth factor that I haven't previously mentioned, and it's the really big story, in my opinion: The "Sex in America" report discussed above that showed that men have 6 sexual partners while women have just 2 shows that these surveys are simply wrong — *very, very, very* wrong.

The report contained thousands of figures on sexuality — sexual practices, sexual experiences, cohabitation and marriage, homosexuality, and sexual networks. Other surveys on sexual issues probably total millions of figures per year.

How do we know that any of these figures are correct? There's no way to check any of these figures. If 30% of all women say that they participate in some particular sex-related practice, how do we know whether they're telling the truth?

Out of all these millions of statistics, there are just two that can be cross-checked — the number of sexual partners. And those two figures are off *BY A FACTOR OF 3*. If those figures are so far wrong, then what reason do we have to believe that any of the other figures aren't also a factor of three off?

This shouldn't have happened. This was the most comprehensive study of American sexuality ever constructed, involving personal interviews with 3,432 men and women between the ages of 18 and 59, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center. It received an enormous amount of publicity on all media outlets, and was a *Time Magazine* cover story, which labeled it "Now for the Truth about Americans and Sex."[♦]

But why should we think it's the truth, or that any of these surveys are "the truth"? Political correctness is a big factor here. Of course modest women are going to lie and underestimate the number of sexual partners they've had, and of course macho men are going to lie and exaggerate the number of sexual partners they've had. It's also possible that a sampling error contributed to the discrepancy; for example, maybe more prostitutes should have been interviewed. No matter what the reason, the study is wrong by a large factor.

These kinds of surveys are done all the time, and almost all appear to lack credibility. For example, here are some examples of surveys that have appeared in just the last couple of months:

- You may get depressed if you're forced to do without sex[♦], according to a Georgia State University study. Sociologists Denise Donnelly and Elisabeth Burgess queried 82 people who identified themselves as "involuntarily celibate." They concluded that people who desire sexual intimacy but for various reasons do without it can lapse into depression.

Many of the self-described celibates were dissatisfied, frustrated or angry if they hadn't had sex in the past six months. I hope our tax dollars weren't wasted on this one, but I'm afraid they probably were.

- One in five high school girls is sexually or physically abused[♦] by her boyfriend, according to a study by Harvard School of Public Health. This is the sort of politically correct statistic that we see frequently, in the same category as the Super Bowl hoax or the number of partners discrepancy. Even assuming the integrity of the researchers, it's very politically correct these days for girls and women to exaggerate about abuse.
- A back-to-school survey of 600 college students[♦] found that female college students with Internet access are four times as likely to drop out of college as females without Internet access, and males with internet access are 92% more likely to drink alcohol than those without. The study was conducted by Ikea Group, a furniture retailer, who wanted to find out what furniture products college students are most likely to need.
- Even though it's only 2001, CNN and other news organizations are already reporting surveys on favorite candidates in the 2002 and 2004 elections.

There are several new surveys reported every *day*, often by news organizations with few math or statistics skills to interpret them, and almost always conducted by some organization with one political point of view or another. The ones that get reported are the most sensational or the most politically correct. Unfortunately, this mass of survey information probably does more to confuse the public than to educate them.

The National Family Violence Surveys (NFVS)

We've chosen The National Family Violence Surveys (NFVS)[♦], based on research by Murray A. Straus and Richard J. Gelles, as our major source of information on family violence. These surveys obtained data from nationally representative samples of 2,143 married and cohabiting couples in 1975 and 6,002 couples in 1985.

Why should anyone believe that this survey is better than any others? We should, mainly because the results of these surveys have been confirmed by dozens of other research studies, and because the surveys were very carefully controlled and conducted according to the most stringent statistical requirements.

There's an interesting story behind these surveys.

The modern feminist "theory" on family violence was developed by the strongly pro-feminist Murray A. Straus, in a sociological paper he presented in 1973. "These feminist issues [presented in the paper]♦ include institutionalized male power, cultural norms legitimating male violence against women, and economic inequality between men and women that locks women into violent marriages."

Along with his partner, Richard J. Gelles, Straus obtained a grant to do a large national survey of hundreds of randomly picked families. The idea was the following: Everyone knew that it was almost always men who committed violent crimes or who started bar fights or who got involved in almost any other kind of physical violence outside the home, and that women didn't. Some feminist voices at that time were claiming that, although they refused to admit it, men were also violent inside the home, and violent to their wives and girlfriends. So the purpose of the study was to substantiate the feminist position, and show whether or not there was considerable violence by men against women in the privacy of their homes. This study would be used to justify the expenditure of the large sums of money needed for battered women's shelters and support services.

Straus and Gelles published the results of their surveys in a series of papers, and the surveys did indeed demonstrate that "attacks by husbands on wives that were serious enough to warrant the term 'wife beating'♦ (because they involved dangerous forms of assault such as punching, biting, kicking, choking, etc.) were experienced by 34 per 1,000 American wives." Straus' results were "widely cited" by feminists and politicians to justify the desired federal funding.

However, much to everyone's shock and surprise, additional results that started coming in showed that "assaults by women on their male partners occur at about the same rate as assaults by men on their female partners, and women initiate such violence about as often as men," although men usually do more damage because they're physically stronger than women. This was shocking and unexpected, because women are almost never violent outside the home, and a finding that women were as violent as men inside the home seemed to defy common sense.

When Straus published the data on violence by women, feminists suddenly turned on him. "[My] contributions were widely cited♦ until I published 'politically incorrect' data on violence by women and was therefore excommunicated from feminist ranks. However, I remain one of the faithful, and have never accepted the excommunication."

In fact, the work by the strongly pro-feminist Straus became anathema to feminists. Straus found that "the feminist criticism of our research♦ is not simply a reflection of methodological absolutism. It also seems to reflect a belief on the part of some feminists that women can do no wrong and anyone who discloses

wrongdoing by women must be using incorrect methods, be a misogynist, or both."

Even worse, in 1992 a rumor was circulated that Murray Straus had beaten his wife[♦] and sexually harassed his students. Straus fought back and in one instance was able to elicit a written apology from a domestic violence activist. Suzanne K. Steinmetz, a co-investigator in the NFVS, received calls threatening her and her family, and there was a bomb threat at a conference at which she spoke.

This corresponds to my own experiences online with feminists. If someone wrote, "Men abuse and kill children," we would see wild enthusiastic agreement in comments from the women in the forum. But, when I was trying to figure this stuff out, if I wrote, "The research shows that women abuse and kill children more than men do," then what I hear is somewhat different: "Misogynist! Woman-hater! Thinly veiled attack on women!" Many times I was personally attacked and purposely misquoted, in order to attempt to discredit me.

In an article on the subject, Straus commented on the range of attacks that feminists have directed against him, and the numerous factual errors that feminists use in their attacks. "How can so many errors occur and be repeated so often?[♦] [One possibility is] that the errors are deliberate distortions intended to discredit the scientific findings by discrediting the researchers whose studies revealed the equal rates of assault [by wives and husbands]."

According to Straus, many of the feminist attacks on him "state or imply that family violence researchers [like Straus] ignore the fact that male violence results in more injury than does female violence. This is truly incredible, because that very point has been emphasized in every one of my books and papers on this issue since the 1970s."

At any rate, there's no doubt about the underlying facts – that women are just as violent as men in the home, although men cause more injury because they're physically stronger.

Straus concludes:

Perhaps even more serious is the implied excusing of assaults[♦] by women because they result from frustration and anger at being dominated. This is parallel to the excuses men give to justify hitting their wives, such as a woman's being unfaithful. ... In my opinion, [these] critiques are not feminist critiques, but justifications of violence by women in the guise of feminism. This is a betrayal of the feminist ideal of a nonviolent world. In addition, excusing violence by women and denying overwhelming research evidence may have serious side effects. It may undermine the credibility of feminist scholarship and contribute to a backlash that can also undermine progress toward the goal of equality between men and women.

Straus's experiences correspond closely to my own experiences with feminists online.

Data from the National Family Violence Surveys.

Let's now begin to present the actual data from the National Family Violence Surveys.

Table I is a summary of domestic violence figures. These figures show that men and women are quite similar with regard to violence within the home. Later, we'll show that men and women are quite *different* about violence outside the home.

*Table I. Percentage of Family Members who Perpetrate Violence **

Type of Violence	Perpetrate ANY Violence	Perpetrate SEVERE Violence
Husband against Wife	12%	3%
Wife against Husband	12%	5%
Husband against Wife OR Wife against Husband	16%	6%
Husband against Wife AND Wife against Husband	8%	2%

Source: Straus and Gelles

Some people believe that women are not naturally violent, but only become violent to defend themselves. However, the next table shows that men and women are equally likely to strike the first blow in domestic violence.

Straus and Gelles present this information from two points of view – how the husband remembers it, and how the wife remembers it. This is always interesting, because we all suspect that men and women will tell the story differently. As you can see from the table below, there are discrepancies between the men's and women's statements, but the differences aren't all that great.

Table II. Who struck the first blow?♦

Whose Story?	Husband	Wife	Can't Remember
According to Husband	44%	45%	11%
According to Wife	53%	42%	5%

Source: Straus and Gelles

What about injuries from domestic violence? We expect men to cause more injuries than women, since men are physically stronger.

In fact, these differences do indeed begin to show up for even non-severe violence, and show up even more for severe violence. This is true when you measure injuries in any of several different ways – needing to see a doctor♦, taking time off from work, and being bedridden.

The following table shows the different effect of domestic violence on men and women as measured by number that were bedridden. In interpreting this table, be sure to note that women tend to be bedridden more than men even when there's no violence at all. (This fact corresponds to other studies that show that married men are healthier and "happier" than married women, while divorced women are healthier and "happier" than divorced men. This topic is discussed in chapter 4 – see page 186.)

Table III. Percent reporting days in bed due to illness by violence level and gender♦

Level of Violence	Men	Women	% Increase (Women over Men)
No Violence	7.7%	12.5%	11.5%
Minor Violence	12.9%	15.3%	14.3%
Severe Violence	14.5%	12.0%	22.0%

Source: Straus and Gelles

Having looked at research data, now let's look at data from a very different kind of source.

Department of Justice Data on Violence by Intimates

The domestic violence figures from government sources are much lower than those from the Straus and Gelles studies for an obvious reason: The government figures represent arrests for domestic violence.

The NFVS obtained its data by sending interviewers to 8,145 families, to hear their stories and take their data. If one spouse hits another, that information is recorded in the NFVS.

But the figures from the Department of Justice will *not* record that information, unless it resulted in an arrest.

Note that the following table includes not only punching or throwing and such behaviors that you normally associate with domestic violence, but other violent behaviors as well, such as rape and homicide.

In the following data we've included some additional information to emphasize the fact that we're talking about very small numbers here, much smaller than in the NFVS. First, we've included the corresponding percentage for each figure, and we do that to avoid confusion and make it clear that "there are 7.5 victims of violence by intimates per 1,000 women," means 0.75%, not 7.5% or 75%. And second, we've included a "Not Victimized" line, to emphasize that 96.42% of all women and 94.95% of all men are not victimized at all, at least according to DOJ figures, based on arrests.

**Table IV: Rate of violent victimization Per 1,000
Persons, by Gender (1996 figures) ♦**

Victim-Offender Relationship	Women Victims		Men Victims	
	Per 1000 women	%	Per 1000 men	%
Intimates	7.5	.75%	1.4	0.14%
Other relatives	2.8	.28%	1.6	0.16%
Friend/acquaintance	13.7	1.37%	16.7	1.67%
Stranger	11.8	1.18%	30.8	3.08%
Total Victimization	35.8	3.58%	50.5	5.05%
Not Victimized	964.2	96.42%	949.5	94.95%

Note: Intimates include spouses, ex-spouses, common-law spouses, same sex partners, boyfriends, and girlfriends.

Note: Violent victimizations include rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and homicide. Data are for victims age 12 or older.

Sources: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 1992-96, and FBI, Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR), 1992-96.

The above table shows dramatic differences between men and women. Men are less likely to be victims of a criminal assault within the home, but much more likely to be victims of criminal assault outside the home.

HHS Data on Child Abuse

The most accurate source of child abuse figures is the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. The data is collected through the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), which aggregates child abuse data collected by all 50 states. All the figures in this section are derived from the Child Maltreatment 1999 Fact Sheet, that can be found at <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm99/index.htm>.

Notice that this is yet a third method for collecting data. The Straus and Gelles NFVS data is collected by interviewing 8,145 families selected at random; the Department of Justice data is collected from arrest records; and the child abuse data is collected from child abuse reports generated in all 50 states. Arrest records

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

are not usually created for child abuse violations, since the "punishment" for child abuse is usually not arrest but removing the children from the home.

Each state provides Child Protective Services (CPS) agencies that process allegations of child abuse. In 1999, there were 2,974,000 allegations of child maltreatment in the United States.

More than half of child abuse and neglect reports (54.7%) were received from professionals. The remaining 45.3 percent of reports were submitted by nonprofessionals, including family and community members.

40% of the allegations were rejected immediately, and 60% were transferred for further investigation.

Unlike in the case of domestic violence, it's frequently not clear whether the perpetrators are "guilty" or not. If a father touches his daughter's breast once, is that sexual abuse or an accident? if a mother slaps her child, is that physical abuse or reasonable discipline? All of these require subjective judgments, often much more subjective than in domestic violence charges. A major reason, of course, is that the child himself is frequently unable or unwilling to provide reliable testimony.

Of the investigated child maltreatment charges, slightly less than one-third of investigations (29.2%) resulted in a disposition of either substantiated or indicated child maltreatment. More than half (54.7%) resulted in a finding that child maltreatment was not substantiated.

The following table is packed with information, and shows the different types of child maltreatment, and the number of victims of each type, out of an estimated total of 70,000,000 children. Note the following:

- The second column gives the number of victims of each type of maltreatment per 1,000 children. A percentage is given to avoid confusion: 2.5 victims per 1,000 children is 0.25%, not 2.5% or 25%.
- The third column gives the total number of victims in 1999 of each type of maltreatment. Thus, there were a grand total of 175,000 victims of physical abuse in America in 1999.
- The fourth column gives percentages of maltreatment victims (unlike column two, which gives percentages of all children). Thus, of all 826,000 victims of child maltreatment, 21.1% were victims of physical abuse.
- The "Not Victimized" row is provided to put the other rows in perspective, and show that the vast majority of American child are not victims of maltreatment.

Table V. Number of Victims of Child Maltreatment, by Type (1999 figures) ♦

Type of Maltreatment	Per 1000 Children	% all Children	Total # Victims	% of All Victims
Physical Abuse	2.5	0.25%	175,000	21.1%
Neglect	6.5	0.65%	455,000	55.1%
Sexual Abuse	1.3	0.13%	81,000	9.8%
Psychological Maltreatment	0.9	0.09%	63,000	7.6%
Medical Neglect	0.4	0.04%	28,000	3.3%
Other Abuse	4.4	0.44%	308,000	37.3%
All Abuse★	11.8	1.18%	826,000	100.0%
Not Victimized	988.2	98.82%	69,174,000	N/A

★The "All Abuse" row is smaller than the sum of the rows above it because some children suffer more than one kind of maltreatment.

Note: Column totals are subject to roundoff errors.

Source: Department of Health and Human Service, Children's Bureau

From the point of view of gender politics, the relevant row is the "Sexual Abuse" row, which represents only 9.8% of all child maltreatment victims.

Now let's turn to the perpetrators of child maltreatment.

Once again, we've packed a lot of information into a single table, but this information is very difficult to come by, so we want to make it available to those who need it.

This table shows the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim of child abuse:

Table VI. Relationship of Perpetrators of Child Maltreatment to Victims[♦]

Perpetrator Relationship to Victim	Maltreatment Type			
	All	Neglect	Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse
Female Parent Only	44.7%	51.7%	35.6%	3.9%
Female Parent + Other	7.9%	8.2%	7.3%	11.0%
Male Parent Only	15.9%	12.4%	26.6%	20.8%
Male Parent + Other	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%	2.0%
Both Parents	17.7%	18.5%	14.2%	12.3%
Substitute Care Provider(s)	1.5%	1.3%	1.8%	2.8%
Family Relative	3.9%	2.5%	3.9%	18.2%
Unknown	2.8%	1.7%	3.6%	11.3%
Other	4.4%	2.7%	5.8%	17.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Column totals are subject to roundoff errors.

Source: Department of Health and Human Service, Children's Bureau

The above table has a lot in it, but from the point of view of gender politics, the following should be noted:

- If you add together all the rows where the female parent is the perpetrator (Female Parent Only + Female Parent+Other + Both Parents), and similarly for male parents, for "All" types of maltreatment, you get 70.3% for Female Parents and 34.7% for Male Parents.
- For Neglect, the breakdown is 78.4% versus 31.9% (Female Parent versus Male Parent).
- For Physical Abuse, the breakdown is 57.1% versus 35.1%.
- However, for Sexual Abuse (which represents less than 10% of the maltreatment problem, according to Table VI) the ratios are reversed: 27.2% versus 35.1% (Female Parent versus Male Parent).

HHS Data on Child Fatalities

The same document provides information on child fatalities through child abuse.

In 1999, 1.6 children of every 100,000 children in the population died from abuse or neglect. This rate yields a national estimate of 1,100 child deaths from abuse and neglect. Twenty-two fatalities or approximately 2.1 percent, occurred while the children were in foster care.

This table shows the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim of child abuse:

Table VII. Relationship of Perpetrators of Child Fatalities to Victims¹

Perpetrator Relationship to Victim	Percentage
Female Parent Only	31.5%
Female Parent + Other	16.3%
Male Parent Only	10.7%
Male Parent + Other	1.1%
Both Parents	21.3%
Substitute Care Provider(s)	6.1%
Family Relative	4.5%
Unknown	2.7%
Other	5.7%
Total	100%

Note: Column totals are subject to roundoff errors.

Source: Department of Health and Human Service, Children's Bureau

The following table relates child abuse to child fatalities, by showing the type of child abuse that leads to different fatalities:

Table VIII. Type of Child Maltreatment Resulting in Fatalities ♦

Type of Abuse	Percentage
Neglect Only	38.2%
Physical Abuse Only	26.1%
Physical Abuse and Neglect	22.7%
Physical Abuse and Other	5.1%
Neglect and Other	2.7%
Neither Physical Abuse nor Neglect	1.6%
Not Reported	3.5%
Total	100%

Note: Column totals are subject to roundoff errors.

Source: Department of Health and Human Service, Children's Bureau

These tables pretty closely track the previous tables on child abuse.

Why are Women Violent?

Why are women comparatively so violent at home? There's no doubt that some of it occurs because women spend more time with the children than fathers do, but that still doesn't explain why so much violence occurs in the first place. And why would a demure woman who would never so much as raise her voice outside the home seemingly become so different inside the home?

In fact, as any man who's ever been in a relationship with a woman knows, women *do* act very differently inside the home. As we'll discuss in detail in conjunction with our presentation in chapter 4 of research which predicts whether a marriage will end in divorce, evidence shows that although "the social behavior of women in stranger groups is tentative, polite, and subordinate," in the home, a woman is "confronting, demanding, coercive, and highly emotional." (For a fuller discussion of this, see page 213.)

This great variation in aggressiveness of a woman outside the home and the same woman inside the home is generally not found in men – and by this I mean that men seem to have similar behavior inside and outside the home, with much less variation.

This suggests that when the dysfunction of violence is added, men's violence and women's violence are going to be different, and in fact this suggestion is somewhat confirmed by family violence researcher Richard Gelles, who puts it this way: "Women who severely injure or kill children are typically closely related to the victim:♦ A child's mother is more likely to kill or injure him than his stepmother is," says Gelles in his book on child abuse, *The Book of David*. "Male offenders tend to be more distantly related to their victims: A child's stepfather or the boyfriend of his mother is more likely to kill or injure him than his father is."

Even in the case of men, little is known to explain dysfunctional violence. Straus and Gelles found "a strong link between alcohol use and physical abuse of wives,"♦ though that hardly explains everything. Other research indicates that men who are violent in the home tend also to be violent outside the home,♦ frequently assaulting other males. These findings suggest that a man who is dysfunctionally violent in the home is dysfunctionally violent outside the home as well.

However differently violent men and women act, the similarity in percentages suggests that the "violence attribute" or perhaps "violence gene" is independent of gender and other attributes, but once this attribute is within a person, gender dictates how the violence is realized.

Additional research into these kinds of differences between men's and women's violence would be valuable in helping us to understand family violence better.

Fathers vs. Stepfathers

I was not able to find child abuse figures which distinguish abuse by biological fathers versus abuse by stepfathers. Many studies of child abuse use the word "father" to refer to any adult male living in the household, including the stepfathers or the mother's boyfriend.

For example, one paper discussing sexual child abuse contains the following paragraph:

Although the following discussion will refer to the father as the offender, it is equally applicable to cases involving stepfathers and unmarried partners of mothers who are offenders. It is also relevant to some situations involving other intrafamilial offenders.

This simply doesn't make sense. From the point of view of a sexually abused child, the biological father is unique and completely different from any other man in the child's life, including the mother's boyfriend or new husband. In fact, there are so many important differences, that it's very hard to imagine a reason why figures for the groups should be lumped together (except, of course, for political

reasons — so that the biological father will be blamed for the sins of the mother's boyfriend).

Here are some of the most important differences:

- The mother's boyfriend or new husband is often not particularly interested in the children, except insofar as it affects his relationship with the mother; the biological father often considers the children to be the most important people in his life, irrespective of his relationship with the mother.
- If the relationship between the mother and the stepfather ends, the stepfather will generally never see the children again; by contrast, the biological father will do so regularly, even against the mother's will.
- The biological father has some rights to see his children; the stepfather does not.
- The biological father has a financial obligation to his children; the stepfather does not.
- With regard to sexual abuse, sex between a teen girl and her stepfather is *not* incest, while sex with a biological father *is* incest. This fact alone makes it far less likely that a biological father will have sex with his daughter than that a stepfather will have sex with his stepdaughter.

These differences between the father and stepfather are so great that it's hard to make sense why figures for the two groups should be combined except, as we said, for political reasons.

We've previously quoted Gelles as saying: "Male offenders tend to be more distantly related to their victims: A child's stepfather or the boyfriend of his mother is more likely to kill or injure him than his father is."

I've seen statements like this scattered throughout the child abuse literature, but I haven't found any figures that separate biological fathers from other types of "fathers."

The distinction is important in divorce battles, where the mother is trying to prevent the father from having visits with his children. Since the mother is more likely to abuse the children than the biological father is, and the mother's boyfriend is more likely to abuse the children than the father's girlfriend is, a child may well be much safer in the father's home than in the mother's home.

Sidebar: Shaken Baby Syndrome

Since one of the purposes of this book is to provide information and education it's hard to avoid discussing one of the worst forms of child abuse. It's the worst because one single act, based on a moment of anger, can kill a child or cause serious irreparable damage for life.

When a woman kills a child, it's likely to happen passively, through neglect.

But when a man kills a child, it's most likely to occur in a single moment of anger. The child misbehaves and the father picks the child up and shakes him or her violently, so that it's head bangs back and forth till the little spine snaps, partially or fully. Sometimes, the shaking head bangs against a wall or chain, causing brain damage as well.

The result is that the child can be deaf, blind or paralyzed, or can die.

Both men and women shake babies in anger in this way, but generally men do much more damage because of their greater strength. Another large source of shaken baby syndrome comes from baby sitters.

The trigger for this kind of anger can be any sort of "misbehaving": the baby might be crying too much, or might be having trouble with potty training, or might simply not want to eat his dinner. A simple event like that can trigger the child's paralysis or death.

Every parent and caretaker must take a "time out" whenever he or she gets angry with a child. Don't let a moment of anger destroy a precious life.

Why Violence by Women is Important

Feminists claim that violence by women is unimportant, and many people agree. I'd like to argue that violence by women is *very* important.

First, many people believe that violence by women is unimportant because women are weaker than men. This contradicts my personal experience. At one point in my life, I was in a relationship with an extremely abusive, occasionally violent woman, and I've spoken to men who have been victimized by violent women, and what I'm telling anyone reading this is that the fact that women are weaker is completely irrelevant.

What good does it do a man to be stronger than a violent woman? Most men won't hit a woman under any circumstances, even when she's attacking him. So being stronger is completely useless. And if a man does hit a woman in response to her violence, what good does that do him? Then they'll just both be violent, and that move might provoke her to even more violence.

As for non-physical forms of abuse, where a man's superior strength has no value, there's no difference between men and women. Even in "ordinary" marriages, women can and do scream abusively for hours and days, just as men can; women can and do abuse money by spending it lavishly, just as men can; women can and do use the children as weapons, just as men do. And in divorce,

women have numerous legal options, such as restraining orders and a presumption of innocence, that aren't available to men.

The second issue relevant to women's violence is that there is reason to believe that violence by women has an extremely negative impact on children, and may give her children the impression that she likes violence.

Feminists frequently make the point that when a boy sees his father perpetrating violence, the boy is likely to imitate his father. This in fact is true, as Straus and Gelles have shown: If a boy sees his father hit his mother,[♦] then when he grows up, he is 3.2 times as likely to assault his own wife than a boy who did not see his father hit his mother.

However, those same statistics produce a result which is never quoted by feminists or by the media in general — that violence by women has an even *greater* effect on children.

If a boy sees his *mother* hit his *father*, then when he grows up, he is 5.1 times as likely to assault his own wife than a boy who did not see his mother hit his father. This is a much greater impact than the figure for violence by fathers.

These figures refute the feminist contention that violence by women is unimportant. According to these figures, violence by women is one of the causes of the family violence cycle that causes battering. So violence *by* women indirectly causes violence *against* other women — the girlfriends and wives of their children when they grow up.

These statistics appear to indicate that violence by women has a disproportionately greater negative effect on children than does violence by men.

Why would that be? So what's the difference to a boy when his father is abusive versus when his mother is abusive? I've never seen this subject discussed anywhere, but I can make some reasonable guesses. A boy with an abusive father knows that the abuse is clearly wrong, and so the boy has a very strong reaction: he hates his father, and he hates even the harmless things within him that make him in any way like his father. Violence by men will often be in his thoughts, and there's likely to be a strong reaction in him one way or the other: he might become violent himself, or he might react against violence by men by becoming strongly pro-feminist.

But a boy with an abusive mother, it seems to me, will have quite a different reaction. Whereas an abusive father would seem quite clearly wrong to a boy, a boy might have ambiguous feelings about whether a violent, abusive mother is wrong, and a violent or abusive mother might have the effect on the boy of appearing to condone abuse or violence. A boy who sees his mother initiate violence against his father may well get the feeling that women *like* violence, and *enjoy* violence, or that she gets *erotic pleasure* out of violence, it seems to me, whereas he would only get feelings of hatred or revulsion when his father initiates

violence against his mother. The feeling in a boy that family violence is OK would be strengthened if his mother beat him – and more mothers than fathers beat their children – because he is weaker than his mother, and so his mother's violence may lead him to conclude that it's perfectly OK for a family member to beat up a weaker family member.

This all makes sense to me based on my personal experience and common sense – I'll leave it to the Freudians and other experts to relate my speculation to Oedipus complexes and other stuff. At any rate, there seems to be some evidence that violence by women has a more profound negative effect on children than violence by men does. This means that if we really want to stop violence by men against women, we'll never succeed unless we stop violence by women against men at the same time.

There's other data to support the view that violence by women affects children very profoundly.

Roy Hazelwood, the retired FBI agent and expert on rapists[♦] whose work we quoted extensively in chapter 2, conducted a series of detailed interviews with forty-one incarcerated serial rapists. The forty-one people were chosen because each of them had committed at least ten sexual assaults. In all, the 41 men had committed 837 known rapes, plus an additional 400 attempted rapes.

Some of the biggest surprises in the survey had to do with the sexual abuse that these rapists suffered as children. 76% of the surveyed men had been sexually victimized as youngsters. "One rapist said that his first sexual contact occurred at age fifteen with his girlfriend's mother, who began a yearlong affair with him. Although she was a willing bed partner, she forced him to withdraw from her before he spent himself. She then would masturbate the boy to ejaculation. Later, when he started raping, he would also have his victims masturbate him – in handcuffs."

The relevant point of this study is that while sexual abuse by outsiders was almost invariably committed by males, "sexual abuse committed against these men by family members was fairly even divided between male and female relatives."

The results of studying this clinical sample do not imply that women sexually abuse children as often as men do – in fact we know from other studies that most perpetrators of child sexual abuse are men, and that, for example, a child's biological father is three times as likely as the child's mother to be sexually abusive. But the fact that men within Hazelwood's clinical sample were equally affected by child sexual abuse by men and women within the family, even though outside the clinical sample child sexual abuse by women is much rarer, suggests, once again, that such sexual abuse by a woman is more likely to produce a rapist than sexual abuse by a man.

It would be a mistake to conclude too much from this one limited study, but I think it's fair to conclude the following: That child sexual abuse by women, like

violence by women, has a profound effect on children, and we will never eliminate violence, rape and abuse by men unless we also eliminate violence and abuse by women at the same time.

Unfortunately, the media is sometimes totally oblivious to violence by women.

I saw this for myself in some media analysis I performed in 1994 in the coverage of Tonya Harding.

As you'll recall, Tonya Harding was the figure skating champion who arranged for her bodyguard to take a hammer and break the knee of her opponent, Nancy Kerrigan. In the end, Kerrigan recovered and beat Harding in the 1994 Winter Olympics.

I became interested in this story, and I used CompuServe's Executive News Service to collect all the news wire stories containing the word "Tonya", and I collected several hundred stories over a period of several months. In the middle of this, I was surprised when *60 Minutes* re-ran an old segment on Harding in which she accused her mother, LaVona Golden, of physically abusing her. The reason I was surprised was that although I had read a lot about Harding's mother in several stories, not one mentioned anything about abuse, although many stories accused her ex-husband of abusing her.

I went and reviewed all the stories, and not a single one of those hundreds of stories indicated that Tonya was a victim of child abuse by her mother. Dozens of these stories referred to her ex-husband as "abusive," even though there was no evidence of it at the time other than Tonya's word, but the much more well established abuse by her mother was invisible.

Out of all the stories, there was just one exception, a 1/26/94 UPI story, that even mentioned actions of her mother. Entitled "Tonya was pushed to win by 'brutal' mother,"[♦] it began: "The fire that made Tonya Harding determined to become an Olympic-class skater was sparked at an early age by a tough-minded mother who used punishment as motivation.... The Chicago Tribune said Harding's mother pushed her, slapped her and even forced her to urinate on herself rather than interrupt her figure skating lessons as a child. [According to John McBride, an owner of one of the ice rinks where Harding practiced], if Harding failed to jump high enough, skate cleanly or work hard enough her mother, LaVona Golden, would slap her. "It was just brutal. I think she thinks that's the way you need to raise a kid," he said. Other friends recalled how Golden refused to let Tonya go to the bathroom, and how she frequently screamed and slapped Tonya.

The story continued, "But Golden defended her treatment of her daughter, saying she saw skating as Harding's ticket out of trailer park poverty. 'I just wanted her not to have a life like I had,' said Golden, who worked as a waitress to pay for skating lessons and sewed her costume.

Now by any reasonably objective standard, this woman was a child- batterer, and yet the story does not refer to her as "abusive" at all. Harding's mother is presented as a folk hero, almost that the United States owes her a debt of gratitude for giving us this wonderful figure skater by slapping her daughter and forcing her to urinate on herself.

A big question on everyone's mind at the time was how Tonya Harding could possibly have arranged to use a hammer to smash the knee of her opponent, another young woman. This story provides a plausible answer – Harding was reacting to the abuse she suffered at the hands of her mother. And yet the clueless writer of the UPI story never explored that possible connection.

This story shows how feminist policies, which ignore child abuse by women, hurt society in general and women in particular. Female child abuse is exceedingly destructive, as we've previously described, and yet we're totally ignoring it, and everyone, including other women, are suffering.

Once again, the point is made that we have no hope at all of solving the question of violence and abuse by men unless we solve the problem of violence and abuse by women at the same time.

Feminist View of Violence by Women

In her essay in the book *Current Controversies on Family Violence*, feminist researcher Demie Kurz argues against any recognition of violence by women as being socially important. I would like to review the main conclusions she reaches and comment on them.

Kurz contrasts feminists to "family violence researchers" like Straus and Gelles, and indicates that they're in two different worlds:

To conclude, the basic assumptions of the family violence and feminist approaches to domestic violence are irreconcilable. Further, each group has voiced strong disagreements with the other. Family violence researchers argue that the legitimate sociological approach to the issue of violence in the family should be a "multicausal" one; they believe that the feminist approach is based on a single-minded focus on gender.... Further, family violence researchers criticize feminist work as "political," ... and charge that they have been harassed for studying violent women.... They believe that findings about women's violence have been 'suppressed' because they are not "politically correct." ... Such statements posit a conspiracy of feminists to keep the "truth" from being known, rather than an understand that different theories and methods lead to different conclusions.

Although I'm not a family violence researcher, I *am* a family violence *journalist*, and I certainly agree with the first sentence: The family violence and feminist approaches *are* irreconcilable.

I consider Kurz's outrage at being called "political" as deceptive. Feminism is drenched in politics. The entire structure of feminism is political, starting from the catchphrase, "the personal is political," and continuing through the political events of the Bush and Clinton administrations in the 1990s, as described in chapter 2. In that chapter, I quoted leading feminist author Susan Faludi as saying, "Feminism is an ideology;♦ always has been, always will be. That's the whole point. Imagining that a politics-free feminism will advance women's cause is about as realistic as trying to rouse the masses with six-packs of caffeine-free Coke."

In my opinion, feminists can't have it both ways. They can't, on the one hand, claim that feminism must be political and ideological, based on their view of men's political control of women, and suddenly be outraged when somebody claims that their research results are political.

Finally, the claims of harassment against family violence researchers (and journalists) by feminists are very real. Straus has documented them in detail, and we quoted some of his experiences earlier in the chapter (p. 122). Lies and exaggerations by feminists, such as the Super Bowl Hoax, have been well documented. In chapter 2 (p. 109), we quoted University of Washington researcher Margaret Gordon, after conducting a rape study, as telling the *Toledo Blade*, "I felt pressure to have rape be as prevalent as possible. I'm a pretty strong feminist, but ... the really avid feminists were trying to get me to say that things were worse than they really are." And, as I've indicated, I've had some similar experiences myself.

Demie Kurz proves my point for me – the point that I've expressed in previous chapters and will express again: That because of politics, feminists have dramatically damaged their own credibility and hurt themselves. Kurz's outrage at being called "political" is phony outrage: feminists *are* political, by their own repeated admissions and actions. Every statement by a feminist, even by a feminist researcher, has to be interpreted in a political context, because that's the way *feminists* view them.

Kurz gives four reasons why feminists oppose discussion of violence by women. The first is as follows:

Feminists fear that the family violence approach will reinforce existing popular conceptions♦ that women cause their own victimization by provoking their male partners. They fear that such views will lead to policy outcomes that women cause their own victimization by provoking their male partners. They fear that such views will lead to policy outcomes that are harmful to women.

I actually agree with Kurz's argument here. For example, Gelles and Straus in fact do appear to be blaming the victim in this way. Here's what Straus says:

One of the main reasons "minor" assaults by women are such an important problem[♦] is that they put women in danger of much more severe retaliation by men. They also help perpetuate the implicit cultural norms that make the marriage license a hitting license.

Straus and Gelles use the same argument in many places in their books: that violence by women is important because it brings retaliation from men.

I've never used this kind of argument, because I believe it's irrelevant. It's like saying that bank robbery is an important social problem because bank robbers sometimes get hurt during the robbery. Bank robbery would be wrong even if the bank robber never got hurt. Similarly, violence by women who batter their children and husbands would be wrong even if there were no retaliation.

Family violence researchers like Straus and Gelles should abandon this irrelevant argument.

Kurz's second reason why feminists oppose discussion of violence is as follows:

Feminists are concerned that if funders come to believe[♦] that family violence is a "mutual" occurrence between "spouses," or that there is a "battered husband syndrome," there will be decreased support for shelters for battered women. Feminists also fear a diversion of resources to shelters for "battered men." A recent *New York Times* article on a proposed shelter for battered men cited Straus' work as providing evidence that women assault men Men's rights groups cite the "battered husband syndrome" when lobbying for custody and child support issues from a men's rights perspective.

One of the main arguments I make in almost every chapter of this book is that feminist policies are geared towards money and political power, and that when the needs of women conflict with the opportunity to increase money or political power, the latter always win out at the expense of the former. Basically, feminism is a political function, and Kurz is probably correct in fearing that understanding of violence by women would reduce political power and funding of feminist organizations.

Kurz is right in saying that there are some proponents of battered men's shelters.

For example, Jack Barnes, who was hospitalized when his wife attacked him by surprise and gouged his eyes deeply[♦] with her fingernails, discovered that he couldn't get any help. Whereas there's a rich, multi-layered bureaucracy of support and help for women victims of violence, there's almost nothing for men.

"I got out of the hospital and I had nowhere to go," he says. "I called the County Domestic Violence hotline and they told me the only shelter that accepts abused men in all of Los Angeles County is in Lancaster. I work in downtown Los Angeles – 80 miles away. With rush hour traffic, it would take me 2 or 3 hours each way to commute to work. And how would my kids stay in school?"

Stories like this are used in arguments for building shelters for men, but I don't believe it's ever going to happen, mainly because of fundamental differences in the way men and women are.

Women naturally like to get together to share feelings and experiences about children and men, but men getting together to share experiences about how they were beaten up by their wives, even in the context of a battering victims shelter, would be mocked as men just whining about women. I could be wrong but, in my opinion, it'll never happen.

However, some of the money currently being spent according to feminist policies might well be reallocated to programs to programs to help fathers – to help them develop parenting skills, or to help them control their angry impulses in a relationship – or to help couples in an abusive relationship. As we'll see later in this chapter, feminists strongly oppose spending money to help fathers or help couples, and even oppose couples spending their own money to do so (p. 174).

At any rate, Kurz is probably right that wider knowledge of violence by women would reducing funding and political power for feminist organizations, but given the highly politicized nature of those organizations, that's probably a good thing, in my opinion.

Kurz's third reason for not discussing violence by women is as follows:

Feminists also fear that the family violence perspective will reinforce the individualist bias[♦] in the field of counseling – that counselors will focus on clients' individual and personal problems without identifying the inequality between men and women that is the context for battering.... They disagree with those family violence proponents who argue that violence is caused primarily by frustration, poor social skills, or inability to control anger.

Here we have a clear difference of opinion. Women have a great deal of power in relationships, in control of the children, in spending money, in use of emotional weapons and emotional abuse, and even in the sexual aspect. In addition, she has numerous legal options, including presumption of innocence and use of restraining orders, that are not available to men.

In chapter 4, we'll show that two out of three divorces are filed by women, and that marriages that last are marriages in which the man consistently gives in to his wife's desires. Perhaps the feminist power relationship assumptions were true in centuries past, but they're not true today.

(On the CNBC show *Hardball*, host Chris Matthews, referring to his personal situation, asked his feminist guest Germaine Greer, "If one spouse says it's time to cut the grass,* and the other spouse cuts the grass, then which spouse is in control?" Greer evaded the questions.)

However, even if you totally disagree with me, and believe that in a man-woman relationship, the man has all the power, then you still have to be very concerned about violence by women because most physical abuse of children is perpetrated by mothers.

The power and control that mothers have over their children is much greater than the power and control that any husband has over his wife, and if violence between adults is to be judged according to power criteria, then the same power criteria must be applied even more strongly in the parent-child relationship. For example, the way that Andrea Yates was able to drown all five of her children, including four boys, was because she was more powerful than they were, and was able to physically overpower them.

Kurz's fourth reason is:

Finally feminists worry that a belief in "spouse abuse" or a "battered husband syndrome" will encourage police who operate under mandatory arrest statutes to arrest women in "domestic disputes."

Kurz seems to be arguing that women should not be arrested, no matter how violent they are. That, of course, is wrong.

This concern by Kurz is especially interesting, as we'll see later in this chapter, when we discuss mandatory arrest for batterers. Mandatory arrest would certainly reduce the amount of battering, but feminists bitterly oppose it. Why? Kurz provides one answer: We'd see a number of women get arrested for domestic violence. Later we'll see another answer: arresting men for domestic violence means that we need fewer battered women's shelters (p. 166).

At any rate, Kurz's fourth reason is hardly valid; it's like saying that we shouldn't discuss bank robbery because bank robbers might get arrested. If a woman is violent, especially if she batters her children, then perhaps she should be arrested, just as a man should.

In the end, the only one of Kurz's reasons that holds up is that discussion of women's violence will reduce funding for feminist political organizations. If you're a Democrat, then you may think this is a good thing; if you're a Republican or independent, then you probably think this is a bad thing. But in the end, Kurz's argument has nothing to do with the welfare of women; it has to do with politics and money, as all feminist arguments inevitably do.

The fact is that feminists are quite fully aware that women are as violent as men are in intimate relationships – and they know that from their own analysis of battering in lesbian relationships. I've actually seen feminists online who will

describe in enormous detail how terrible battering is in lesbian relationships — and even point out that battering is just as common in lesbian and gay relationships as in heterosexual relationships and that either the weaker or stronger partner might be the batterer — and then completely, utterly deny that battering and violence by women in heterosexual relationships is of any consequence. It is truly bizarre.

Nancy Hammond is a clinical psychologist* who "has seen battered lesbians at nearly every clinical setting in which I have worked with lesbian clients," she says in a paper entitled "Lesbian Victims of Relationship Violence." Her description of lesbian battering is remarkably similar to the descriptions we read of heterosexual battering.

According to Hammond:

Many people believe that women are not capable* of doing serious physical harm to others. When this fallacy is applied to the case of battered lesbians, a profound misunderstanding and minimization of the impact of the battering and other abuse occurs. We have no reason to believe that the range of violence experienced by battered lesbians is any less severe than that of women battered by men. Lesbian batterers do kill their partners. They also choke, break bones, cause internal tissue damage, inflict bruises and welts, threaten their partners with guns, knives, and clubs. Even in cases of extreme violence, however, the battered lesbian may report that the emotional abuse and consequent diminishment of her sense of self is ultimately more damaging than her physical injuries. Abuse and battering experiences in lesbian relationships are often sufficiently severe to cause symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in the victims. In this respect, battered lesbians are no different than other battered women or sexual abuse and sexual assault victims.

Note in particular the statement, "We have no reason to believe that the range of violence experienced by battered lesbians is any less severe than that of women battered by men." The implication is clear: if a woman can batter a woman as well as any man can, then a woman can batter a man as well as any man can batter a woman. And feminists are very well aware of this.

One woman online describing the problem of lesbian battering indicated that there was a special problem: like a heterosexual battering victim, a lesbian battering victim might wish to take her kids and hide in a battered women's shelter, but the problem is that while a male batterer is unlikely to know where the women's shelters are, a lesbian battered probably knows where they all are, and can track down the victim!

Hammond acknowledges this point when she writes that "Often, both heterosexual and lesbian workers* within the battered women's movement view the

lesbian victim herself as a threat to the existing services [shelters, etc.] they have struggled so long to create. Many analyses of battering dynamics are built on the idea that battering is the direct result of sex role inequality in heterosexual relationships. ... When shelter workers or advocates meet a situation that appears to defy their own understand and analysis, the battered lesbian herself is seen as the problem."

This lays out the issue precisely: feminists recognize violence and abuse only when it provides funds for feminist organizations; in this case it's shelters, and other cases it's for political power.

As we look at feminist policy in one area after another, there's only one common thread: funding and political power for feminist organizations, feminists who want to line their own pockets and the pockets of their friends. Feminists care about victims of lesbian domestic violence because it brings them money; feminists don't care about male victims of heterosexual domestic violence because it gives money to others. Feminists want money for battered women's shelters because it brings them money; as we'll see in chapter 6, feminists money even for "Fathers Count" programs to help fathers become better parents, because that takes money away from feminist organizations. At the national level, feminists care about harassment of women by Republicans, but ignore or condone (by inaction) abuse and even alleged rape of women by Democrats.

How do we find the sociopathic or pathological child abusers?

A man rapes his 8 year old niece repeatedly; a mother punishes her misbehaving 4 year old son by immersing his hands in boiling water; and, in an act of family togetherness, a mother, together with her husband and her brother, torture her daughter, shocking her with an electrical device, burning her with an iron, and dousing her with bleach.

These are actual examples of sociopathic child abuse taken from news stories. We call these examples "sociopathic" or "pathological" because they seem almost beyond the realm of human activity. An ordinary parent might hit or spank a child, or might yell at a child occasionally – and we call this "transactional child abuse" later in this chapter – but no ordinary human things could inflict on a child the pain described in the preceding paragraph.

Some people abuse children so viciously that it's hard to believe they're human. Whenever a story about one of these sociopathic child abusers breaks in the news, a horrified public demands that something be done to keep anything like it from happening again.

How do we catch these people before they commit these evil acts? Unfortunately, mathematics shows that it's pretty much impossible to do so. Since this is little understood by the public, we're going to consider this question informally, and we're going to show that the methods that most people talk about simply won't work.

Whenever one of these horrendous stories comes out, the press always does a fairly silly post-mortem. "Two months ago I called the police when I heard little Charlie crying for an hours," said neighbor Mabel Busybody. "Why didn't they do something? If they had, little Charlie might be alive today."

The problem with stories like these is that they drive public opinion to demand that all available public resources be spent on finding the perpetrators of these sociopathic crimes *before* the crimes happen. Unfortunately, this is impossible in most cases, as we shall see, and the result is that we waste a lot of public money that could be spent doing real good in other areas (see "Transactional Child Abuse" below).

Let's start by considering why it's impossible, in most cases, to identify these sociopathic child abusers before they commit their crimes.

The primary method society provides for finding child abusers is reports of suspected abuse — reports by neighbors, schoolteachers, pediatricians, child care workers, and so forth. In the case of many professionals, reporting cases of suspected child abuse is mandatory.

As we discussed earlier in this chapter, in conjunction with Table V (p. 129), each year there are some 3 million such reports made in the United States, usually to local authorities. These reports are checked out by interviewing the suspected parents, as well as all their neighbors and friends, schoolteachers, ministers, and so forth. When investigations are completed, and all was said and done, in 1999, about 28% of them (826,000) were either substantiated or indicated as cases of abuse. The other 72% are filed way as unfounded.

This illustrates the problem: That child abuse is both underreported and overreported. It's underreported because not all people, even professionals required to do so, always report cases of suspected child abuse, for fear that the suspicions might be unfounded, and that to accuse possibly innocent parents of child abuse would cause enormous disruption to their lives.

And child abuse is overreported because most reports — 72% — are not substantiated.

Statisticians and other researchers have studied these problems, and have proven that with almost mathematical certainty any method you use to identify child abusers will find only a small number of abusers, and will identify as suspected abusers many people who are not abusers. Furthermore, these mathematicians have shown that the more trouble you go to to find *all* abusers,

the more falsely accused non-abusers you're going to get. In the extreme case, you could catch *all* abusers by simply declaring *everyone* to be a suspect, but this shows how having too much information is just as useless as having too little.

One reason that child abusers are seldom discovered through reporting is that the abusers become extremely clever at hiding their crimes. "Abusers in general, and serious abusers in particular, are known to have few friends, ♦ limited contact with neighbors, few close relatives they live near and/or are in contact with, and few memberships or affiliations in community groups," says Richard J. Gelles. "In the vast majority of cases of fatal abuse, when neighbors are questioned they have little to report."

On the other hand, there's no doubt that being falsely accused of child abuse can be devastating. I am personally aware of two such incidents, both of which occurred in the late 1980s.

The first incident occurred when a mother, a neighbor of my own mother, introduced two young people to each other, and they started dating. The relationship went bad, and the young woman, furious with the young man, retaliated against the mother that introduced them by reporting to the DSS (Division of Social Services) that her child cried all the time and was being abused. This incident turned out OK - the DSS interviewed the mother and decided that there was no abuse.

The second incident occurred to a friend and co-worker of mine. Several years earlier, he and his wife had adopted a Cambodian girl who was now 15 years old. The girl apparently got angry at her parents, as teenagers sometimes do, and retaliated against them by accusing them to a teacher of shouting at her and hitting her. The social worker arrived to take the child out of the home, with both parents under suspicion of physical and emotional abuse. During the social worker's visit, my friend packed a suitcase with his daughter's clothes to take with her. In her written report, the social worker listed as "suspicious behavior" the fact that my friend had packed his daughter's underclothes in a suitcase! (Here we have another example of the feminist social worker mind, assuming automatically that a father must be a sexual abuser!)

This case turned out much worse. The daughter was kept in a foster home for six months, and was only returned to her parents after a court hearing where the DSS didn't even bother to put up a case, since there was no evidence – except for the one statement by the daughter and the fact that the father had packed his daughter's suitcase – that either my friend or his wife had abused the girl. The girl had made her statement out of teenage petulance, resulting in enormous pain (not to mention enormous legal fees) for everyone.

Some people believe that suspect child abuse is overreported, some believe it's underreported. Which of these camps you're in probably depends on your personal experience. If you've recently become aware of a sociopathic case of child

abuse, you may think it's underreported. But if you've had the humiliating experience of having a social worker falsely accuse you and your spouse of child abuse, and then talk to all your neighbors and friends about it, you may think that there's too much loose reporting going on.

There's another method that could be used to locate child abusers. There is a simple questionnaire test, known as the Child Abuse Checklist, which is very effective in predicting abusive parents. (See sidebar.)

Presumably, we could simply give this test to all parents – say, by including it in the national Census questionnaire which we take every ten years in the US, or else by sending out social workers to ask the questions of everyone – and then take some further action with parents who score poorly.

Of course, this would be politically impossible, and for good reason. Not too many people would tolerate this kind of intrusive questioning. (Would you?)

Even if it were politically possible to administer the test to all parents, it still has only a 35% accuracy rate (as indicated in the sidebar), a rate which is even lower than reporting.

However, I provided this example to illustrate in a different way that it's simply not possible to catch sociopathic child abusers in advance of their crimes.

The problem with this nonsense is that it implies that if social service agencies would only just follow up on every such police call, then sociopathic child abuse could be avoided. And what then? The social worker could interview the parents, decide whether the child is in danger and, if so, take the child out of the home and put him into the safety of foster care.

I'll close this section by leaving a question for you, the reader, to mull on. I don't know what the answer to this question should be, even though it's being raised in real cases in various jurisdictions today.

Suppose a mother is found to have abused her children, and the local social services agency takes the children away from the mother and puts them into a foster home elsewhere. OK, so far so good.

Now suppose this mother gets pregnant again. What should society do now? Do we automatically assume that since she abused in the past, she'll abuse again in the future, or do we hope that she'll stop abusing? Do we have a social worker go to the hospital with the mother and take the baby away from her the moment it's born? Or do we let the mother take the baby home, hoping that the abuse of the first child won't be repeated with the next child?

What would you, the reader, do if you had to decide?

Sidebar: Child Abuse Checklist♦

To take this test, determine which of these factors apply to each of the parents. (For example, if a husband is verbally aggressive to his wife, then "Husband verbally aggressive to wife" is a factor that applies to both the husband and the wife.) The first ten factors apply to both parents, and the last four apply only to the wife.

Here are the factors:

A. Factors for both parents:

1. Was verbally aggressive to the child (insulted, swore at, etc.)
2. Husband verbally aggressive to wife
3. Wife verbally aggressive to husband
4. Husband physically aggressive to wife
5. Wife physically aggressive to husband
6. Marriage high in conflict
7. More than one child in family
8. Parent was physically punished as adolescent by father
9. Parent was physically punished as adolescent by mother
10. Mother hit father in parent's childhood family

B. Factors for mother only:

11. Father hit mother in parent's childhood family
12. Husband is a blue collar worker
13. Married less than 10 years
14. Live in neighborhood five years or less

Scoring:

A father can get a score of 0 to 10, and a mother can get a score of 0 to 14. Based on analysis of thousands of families, the above checklist can be scored as follows:

- Parents with a score of 0 (none of the factors are present) are almost entirely free of child abuse.
- Parents with scores 1-4 have relatively low rates of child abuse, ranging from 4-7%.
- Higher scores increase the likelihood of child abuse being present.
- Fathers with scores of 7 or more (out of 10) and mothers with scores of 11 or more (out of 14) have a 35% rate of child abuse.

Transactional Child Abuse

"My anger is ignited by men who beat children to death♦ with extension cords and women who plunge babies into scalding water so they'll stop crying; my anger is ignited by fathers who rape their daughters, pregnant women who take crack

and drink alcohol without a thought for the tiny souls they are damning to a lifetime in pain; babies in dumpsters, drug overdoses, burns, cuts, gunshot wounds, wasted minds and ruined lives." Those are the words of Maxine, the character played by Tyne Daly, on the TV show *Judging Amy*.

If you're one of those people who always go around saying, "We ought to do something about child abuse," how serious are you about that? Is your only concern the sociopathic cases that make the front page of the newspaper, or would you like to find a way to help the great mass of abused children? After all, nationally there are probably no more than a few hundred sociopathic cases each year, but there are hundreds of thousands and perhaps millions of lesser child victims. If we can't wipe sociopathic child abuse from our society, can we at least use a different approach to help these millions of lesser child victims?

"I'm very distressed that [public reports] always focus so much attention only on the most pathological cases of child abuse," says Nancy Hoit, former acting director of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC), and later an advisor to vice president Al Gore on family policy. "The bigger story is that any parent, given enough stress, can abuse their child, physically or emotionally. We need to stress prevention and support, especially for new parents."

In fact, there's now a large body of research supporting this conclusion, according to Richard Weissbourd, child development researcher at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, "There's a popular conception that most abuse comes from depravity," says Weissbourd. "But it's usually depression, not depravity – it's usually chronic stresses that cause parents to be at the end of their rope, leading to child abuse."

Transactional vs. Sociopathic Child Abuse

Accurate figures are hard to come by, according to Weissbourd, "but the number of people who are really deprived or sociopathic is very low. But about 12% of new parents are depressed, and 50% of all new parents have some depressed symptoms."

Weissbourd, who authored the book, *The Vulnerable Child, what really hurts America's children and what we should do about it* (Addison Wesley, 1996), distinguishes between sociopathic child abuse, and what he calls "transactional abuse." Transactional abuse occurs in seemingly ordinary interactions between the parent and child, and is caused by parental depression and a number of other factors. These factors include poor coping strategies of the parents, the amount of

social support the parent is getting, and the amount of information and knowledge a parent has about effective parenting.

Even the attributes of the child can cause increased abuse. "Research shows that children who are less physically attractive, more provocative or more hyperactive are more likely to be abused," says Weissbourd.

Hoit argues that the public emphasis on extremely pathological cases is harmful to society and to children suffering transactional abuse. "It can lead to a witch hunt, with a lot of focus on how the system has failed, which is sometimes deserved, and sometimes not," says Hoit. Even worse, "it tends to cause people to separate themselves from the problem of child abuse because they think that the problem is only of an extreme nature, something that they personally could never be involved in, and not something that society as a whole can be involved in. We need to look at the whole context of a family's life, and if we simply demonize child abusers, and focus only on the worst cases, then we lose that opportunity."

Weissbourd agrees with Hoit that we shouldn't let the extreme pathological cases of child abuse determine how we deal with child abuse. "The emphasis on depravity is a disservice to our society," argues Weissbourd, "because it's really hard to prevent sociopathy and depravity." He feels that the public is discouraged about ever reducing the amount of child abuse, but would be far more optimistic if people were educated about the causes of the vast majority of abuse cases, the transactional cases. "We should be thinking about the kinds of stresses in parents that lead to abuse. Most abusing parents are very aware that they're abusive, and they're very receptive to getting help. Resources should be spent on community policing, health care and school programs which provide help lines and information on depression, and connect up depressed parents with other parents who can provide support."

Part of the problem in coming to grips with which kinds of child abuse we should be trying to fight is that there are no firm definitions. When does punishing a child cross over into abuse? For example, some ethnic groups consider spanking an acceptable punishment, others do not.

In recent years, most social services organizations have classified child abuse into four categories: physical abuse, physical neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. However, within these four categories, definitions can vary widely among different experts. "Cholera may be cholera in Bombay or San Diego,"[♦] wrote researcher J. M. Giovannoni, "but child abuse may not be child abuse in San Diego and Los Angeles Counties." Narrow definitions may recognize only physical damage requiring medical care as child abuse, while the broadest definitions may include as child abuse any practice which restricts a child's ability to achieve his or her full human potential. Such a wide range of potential definitions means that there's a lot of confusion in the minds of even the experts as to exactly what child abuse is.

Child Abuse and Domestic Violence

Complicating the issue is that domestic violence is very closely related to child abuse. Some research has identified a "cycle of violence": children who are abused, or who are witnesses to abuse, grow up to be abusers and abuse victims themselves. Whether abuse is caused by depression or sociopathy, abusive people choose weaker family members to abuse.

In my personal attempt to try to get a grip on the different types of abuse and violence, I prepared the following table of examples:

Type	Transactional	Sociopathic / Pathological
Sexual abuse	22 year old man has consensual sex with 15 year old girl	Man rapes 8 year old daughter.
Physical abuse	Parent slaps child's behind as punishment	Parent shakes baby violently, or puts child's hands into boiling water as punishment.
Physical neglect	Parent forgets to change baby's diaper for several hours	Mother chains daughter to toilet for a week.
Emotional abuse	One family member calls another an idiot.	One family member constantly rages at, humiliates and belittles another for hours or days at a time. (Borderline personality disorder)
Domestic violence	Family member pushes another family member without doing or intending harm	Man batters wife on a regular basis

In discussing this table with Weissbourd, I posed the following hypothesis: The transactional forms of child abuse are seemingly just part of the normal process of growing up. Just as we can't protect children from being hit by other school students or being insulted by teachers or having nightmares after a movie, we are better off spending resources on the pathological cases of abuse, the ones

that cause real damage and cause children to grow up to become sociopathic themselves.

He pointed out that all forms of abuse harm a child's sense of self-esteem, and make him or her a less functional adult, and some forms of transactional abuse are extremely harmful. "For example, suppose there's a premature birth, the baby is unresponsive to the mother, the mother loses interest in the baby, the baby becomes more withdrawn, and then the mother becomes more withdrawn. There's no basic emotional connection between the mother and child, and that can be more harmful and more subtle than chaining the kid to the toilet." This kind of emotional abuse can be prevented in many cases with outreach programs.

Hoit agrees. "Even occasional rages can do serious damage to a child. We need to develop programs which help everyone see parenting as a serious challenge."

Of course, a lot of this kind of transactional abuse is caused by poverty, adds Weissbourd. "A lot of chronically poor women have been depressed for a long time, and we're not going to be able to cure the depression without curing the poverty," he says. "Even worse, a lot of fathers are absent both emotionally and physically in many families. We have to develop programs that deal with all those problems."

So there are many choices for our social services dollars to prevent child abuse – outreach programs for new parents, programs to identify pathological or sociopathic child abuse and domestic violence perpetrators, programs to help cure poverty for single mothers, and programs get fathers more involved, physically and emotionally, in the lives of their children. All of these programs have the potential for reducing child abuse, but no one knows for sure which programs will be most effective. As the baby boomer population ages and we have increasingly fewer resources to spend on social services, we can expect journalists, politicians and women's organizations to increasingly use the pathological horror stories to motivate the public, whether or not the resulting policies are the best choices for our society as a whole.

So how do we prevent child abuse?

We've been looking a couple of different ways that we might go in to try to prevent child abuse. Let's compare them.

Let's start with the feminist approach to preventing child abuse. Well, that's a bit hard, because there is no feminist approach to preventing child abuse. Feminists usually ignore child abuse, and when they discuss it it's not to prevent it, but to provide punishment after it's already occurred - and feminist

punishment is always for the man. So feminism provides no help at all for preventing child abuse.

Now let's turn to the three methods we've examined in this chapter for preventing child abuse before it occurs.

The first method – responding to reports of suspected abuse by neighbors, teachers, and so forth – is the method most commonly used. This method produces a high number of false positives – some 62% of these reports are finally rejected as unfounded.

The second method we discussed is more pro-active: ask every parent to answer a series of questions which would indicate whether the parent is a child abuser. I think we can all agree that this method is politically impossible, but we showed that even if it were, it would also generate too many false positives.

Of all the methods we discussed, the third one we discussed, outreach programs to new parents, is the only one that promises to reduce child abuse. Unlike the questionnaire program, the outreach program is politically possible, since new parents actually welcome the help they receive.

Now let's turn our attention away from child abuse towards domestic violence.

Jenny Jones

In previous chapters, I've shown how feminists have lost credibility in areas like sexual harassment or rape, because they've treated them as political issues, where lying and "spinning" is the norm, instead of as crimes like mugging or assault, where society at least makes an attempt at finding the truth.

Unfortunately, the same thing is true for domestic violence and child abuse, with the exaggerations and complete misstatements that feminists have put forth for fund-raising efforts, as described earlier in this chapter.

These misstatements are buttressed by the tendency of normal people to become almost hysterical when the subject of domestic violence comes up. I can sympathize with this hysteria since I feel something of the same thing myself at the thought of a man beating up a woman. We all have an almost core primitive instinct to protect a woman in such a situation, and we can't stand even think about anything else.

Unfortunately, this hysteria does women very little good, and can make the situation worse for women, as I learned several years ago when I watched a Jenny Jones talk show entitled, "Women who stay with their abusive husbands."[♦]

I don't usually watch *Jenny Jones*, but I'd seen teasers for the subject matter, and since I often wrote online about domestic violence, I thought this particular

show would present some useful information. And frankly, I was very curious myself: Exactly why *do* women stay with their abusive husbands?

Unfortunately, I never found out. Jenny Jones and her principally female audience kept screaming at the guests, and would hardly let them get a word in edgewise.

The principal guest – I think her name was Susan – began by telling the audience that her husband had severely abused her about once a month for a couple of years. She told this story with her husband in a back room, unable to hear what she was saying. Finally, he was brought out, and he basically agreed that he had abused his wife.

That's when the screaming started. "Why are you staying with him?" "Move out!" "Call a local women's shelter!" "Your kids are being harmed by seeing that violence!"

Now, it may be that everything that Jenny Jones and her audience screamed was justified, but that's not the point. The point was that I and probably a lot of other people tuned into this program because we wanted to know why some women stay with their abusive husbands. I know that I certainly didn't tune in just to have to listen to a bunch of women screaming at Susan at the top of their lungs.

Susan wasn't too happy about this either. After all, she had put herself out on the line by coming onto a national TV show to talk about some very personal and embarrassing matters, and with all the screaming, the audience never even let her tell what she wanted to tell.

Finally, totally disgusted, Susan said "You never let me finish a sentence!" And then she started holding her husband's hand in a show of unanimity and support against their mutual opponents, the screaming host and audience. Well, if the women in the audience were screaming before, they screamed twice as loud after she started holding her husband's hand.

Only one person on the show exhibited any sign of reason. This woman, a psychologist who was an expert on domestic violence, said that Susan's husband abuses her in order to control her. That woman then chastised Jenny and the rest of the audience for doing the same thing that Susan's husband did: trying to tell her what to do instead of letting her make her own decisions.

One of the few sentences that Susan got to finish was when she shouted angrily at the audience: "There are only two kinds of women in this audience – those who have been abused and those who will be abused. If you haven't been abused, then sooner or later you're going to be abused, either physically or verbally."

For reasons I'll explain, I think that perhaps this moment was the crux of the program. This is the kind of ridiculous statement that feminists make all time, although it's completely untrue. However, it never even occurred to Jenny to

correct Susan's wildly exaggerated statement, and the audience just continued to shout back at her that she should take the kids and get out.

Unfortunately, this kind of misstatement is very common. Christina Hoff Sommers' book, *Who Stole Feminism*, traces how many of the exaggerated stories about domestic violence come about. For example, one survey, sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund, of women counted a woman as "abused" if her husband had sworn at or insulted her. That particular survey of 2,500 women found not one single woman who had experienced severe violence, and only a tiny handful that experienced things like pushing or shouting. The Commonwealth Fund puffed up their published figures by considering a woman having an argument with her husband was to be considered a victim of domestic violence, and concluded that 20.7 women are abused by their partners. These wildly exaggerated figures are simply a fraud.

But so what? everyone always asks. Even if some people exaggerate the amount of domestic violence, that can only serve to emphasize the seriousness of the problem, doesn't it?

Unfortunately not. Returning now to the television show, Jenny and all the women in her audience were so busy screaming at Susan that they all missed the irrefutable logic in Susan's statement of why she is staying with her husband despite the abuse. If she had been given the chance to explain further, she might have said the following: "If (almost) every man is an abuser, then how come you women in the audience haven't left your husbands? If (almost) every man is an abuser, then what's the point of leaving my husband anyway - the next man will also be an abuser, and I prefer the devil I know."

This is a perfect example, if I needed another one, of how exaggerated statements by feminists do real harm to real women. And it's a good example of the general proposition that when people are forced to make decisions based on invalid data, the decisions may be the wrong ones.

Like Susan, a woman hearing feminists' exaggerated domestic violence statistics would, if she believed the feminists, conclude that there's no point in leaving an abusive marriage, because her next relationship or marriage is likely to be just as abusive.

The feminists' exaggerations could cause other people to reach invalid conclusions as well. For example, feminists claim that society condones violence against women. Nothing could be further from the truth, but an abusing husband might listen to the feminists' statements and think, "If, as some people say, society condones abuse of women, then why should I stop abusing? And if (almost) every man is an abuser, then I can't stop anyway."

And the people in the general public, who sense intuitively that what feminists are saying are wild exaggerations, think simply, "The people on television talking about domestic violence are fruit loops."

So the claim that exaggerating the domestic violence problem only serves to emphasize the importance of the problem is simply not true. In fact, it's harmful to women.

Unfortunately, the public discussion of domestic violence is about as irrational and bizarre as anything you could imagine. Shortly after the Jenny Jones show, a CNN report began by saying that men battering women is causing "an epidemic of murder and mayhem." The fact that such a ridiculous statement could be stated as news on CNN indicates that the some of CNN's writers and producers may themselves be something of fruit loops, but it also indicates just how far the public is from wanting to know the real truth about domestic violence.

My personal view is that if you want to fight a problem, the best way is with the truth. If you exaggerate domestic violence, then you make it the norm, and it's impossible to change the norm. But if you stick to the fact that domestic violence is quite rare, then you actually have a chance of *fighting* domestic violence, and *reducing* it.

Getting Help

So why *did* Susan continue to stay with her husband? She never really got to say because of all the women screaming at her, but presumably she's in love with her husband and wants to stay with him despite occasional violence directed against her. In fact, there may very well be many women who would like to find some way to get help to save their marriages despite occasional violence. What options are open to these women?

The problem is that because of the hysteria that I've just described, directed against men and women in abusive situations, it's practically impossible for men – or women – in these situations to get professional help. Screaming people tell the woman, "The only help you want is getting rid of him!" And feminists are opposed to couples therapy in these situations on the ground that if a woman criticizes her husband during a couples therapy session, he'll become angered and violent later in the evening.

Now some of you reading this may be thinking, "Who cares? Violent men don't deserve any help."

People who say such things are being incredibly shortsighted, in my opinion. After all, these men are going to be around for the rest of their lives, possibly

having multiple relationships with women. Unless you're going to keep these men in jail (and as we'll see, most feminists oppose jailing batterers), it's hard to see how it pays to simply isolate these men without help. This seems like a "Duh!" to me, and yet the public hostility, led by feminists, towards helping men or couples in abusive relationships is enormous. And there's no help available for women either — except to help isolate them from men in women's shelters. However, as some experts have found, "it appears that not all battered women who remain in violent relationships do so out of fear or economic necessity. A surprising number stay because they are deeply attached to the men and see a positive, loving side to the relationship, according to observations of clinicians who work with violent relationships."

If you ask feminists where abusive men here in Massachusetts can get help, they'll respond: Emerge. Emerge, like similar programs in a few other states, provides six months of sessions for abusive men who have been ordered to attend by a court convicting them of battering.

Emerge teaches men all the different ways that men batter women, and that men are completely responsible for all domestic violence. Each week, the men are taught the different ways that they batter women — psychologically and economically one week, verbally the next week.

I had heard of Emerge over the years, mainly from fathers who had been forced to attend by courts, all of whom spoke of Emerge very contemptuously. Nonetheless, I certainly have nothing against anyone convicted of a violent crime being sent to jail or to Emerge or anywhere else. My objection to the feminist view is not that batterers get punished — that's fine with me; my objection to feminists is that they consider all men to be batterers.

I asked a mutual friend to introduce me to Lundy Bancroft, a co-founder of Emerge and a top level consultant to social services organizations in Massachusetts, for the purpose of interviewing him. This interview came several years ago, at a time when I was still forming my views about feminists and domestic violence, and I was very much looking forward to the phone interview, because I hoped that talking to a real expert would clear up many of the ambiguities I had seen in the attitudes of the social workers I'd run into either during my divorce or online in feminist forums.

Unfortunately, this 90 minute interview did not go well, and I ended up depressed and frightened by what I heard.

In response to my question, Mr. Bancroft explained the teaching philosophy of Emerge as follows:

"We see [battering] as a cultural problem that has to do with cultural messages about what intimate relations mean and what family means, especially the heavy messages that family members belong to the head of the household," he said. "The

primary messages from radio, television, friends and relatives most of the time are very supportive of battering, of using some physical violence from time to time – and they're supportive that the head of the household is the owner of the family."

According to Bancroft, battering ties in closely with child abuse. "Batterers, because they have these possessive and controlling attitudes, are much more likely to be child abusers. That's common sense, but it's also been confirmed by research. Batterers who aren't child abusers, are typically involved in manipulation and child abuse as ways of controlling partners, and they get much worse after the relationship breaks up, since then the children become the only way to punish the woman... Even batterers who are fairly decent to their children before the relationships breaks up – even those, once they split up start to really use their children to punish or control or intimidate their partners, and that's something that family courts don't understand at all, since they haven't abused their children in the past."

When I pointed out to Bancroft that what research shows is that actually many more mothers than fathers abuse their children, he replied that mothers do that to head off the father from abusing the children worse. "A woman might be doing the right thing to hit her children, since if they've already been spanked then the man will leave them alone, and otherwise he'll hit them harder than she would," says Bancroft. "So she starts to be faced with a very complex state of affairs, especially since if they split up, since the abuser will probably be given custody."

Lundy Bancroft was the man that I quoted in chapter 1 as saying, "You're worse than a batterer. The more points of view you get, the more insidiously your views will support batterers," at the end of the interview, when I mentioned to him that I was seeking different points of view for my book.

I've quoted at length from my interview with Mr. Bancroft for several reasons. I appreciate that he's a leading expert on domestic violence in Massachusetts, and I appreciate his taking the time to speak to me on the phone for over an hour. And I want to be certain to provide the full context of everything he told me.

Mr. Bancroft confirmed all my worst fears about the feminist professionals I met during my own divorce. According to these feminists, men encourage and support each other in battering women, men only want to see their children in order to batter them in order to harass the mother, and even when the mother batters the children, it's the right thing to do because she's protecting the children from a worse battering by the father.

Everything now clicked into place. The feminist pediatrician who told me that it was her policy that no child of divorce should spend more than two hours at a time with his father said so because she must have believed that all fathers batter their children, and this policy would limit the time that fathers batter their children to just two hours; the social worker who said that she always sides with

the mother against the father must have done so because she believes that fathers' only interest is to harass their ex-wives; and the social worker who said that if Jason spent the weekend with me he would be traumatized must have said so because she believes that every father always spends the weekend beating the shit out of his kids, and of course that would traumatize them.

These militant feminist beliefs have spilled over into another policy area. As a result of these beliefs, there's a huge amount of fraud in the handling of restraining orders.

At first glance, the numbers seem right. Massachusetts has about 6 million people, about 4.5 million adults. If 12% of all men and women are violent (see Table I on family violence on page 124), then there are 540,000 violent people — 270,000 violent men and 270,000 violent women.

Each year Massachusetts courts issue 70,000 restraining orders, overwhelmingly against men. That means that 200,000 violent men and 270,000 violent women don't receive restraining orders, or more men if there are duplicates (which there are).

But it gets worse. Various estimates are that 30-60% of these restraining orders are fraudulent. These are obtained by women making false accusations of violence in a divorce situation. Because of the militant feminist view that we've described, judges automatically issue these restraining orders.

"In many cases, allegations of abuse are now used for tactical advantage,"[♦] says Elaine Epstein, then president of the Massachusetts Bar Association when I spoke to her. Epstein said that "a large number" of accusations of violence are false, but she didn't estimate a percentage.

"It is a convenient way to have someone immediately ordered out of the home," she added, "and attempt to restrict access to the home or to the children, limit overnight or unsupervised visitation or acquire a financial advantage. Allegations of violence have a particular strategic advantage at the outset of any domestic relations case and can continue to color the entire case, as they are waved about like a hand grenade about to go off."

The use of fraudulent restraining orders is freely available to any woman in most states simply by going to the courthouse and filling out a form. In a typical scenario, this simple form is all that's needed; a man may be the gentlest soul in the world, but once a woman fills out one of these forms, the police come to his home, and force him to leave, often with nothing but the clothes on his back. It may take him days to even get his clothes, let alone see his kids again. It gives an enormous legal advantage to one party in a legal proceeding.

Massachusetts isn't unique — the same thing happens in other states, with the same results. "Even if the judge dissolves the restraining order, the man has been out on the street, out of his home and away from his kids, for ten days, two weeks

or more," says Howard L. Gum, chairman of the family law specialty committee, in North Carolina. "It's the most abused law, the worst law."

Looking once again at the numbers in Massachusetts, of the 70,000 or restraining orders, all directed against men, roughly 35,000 are valid and 35,000 are fraudulent.

Many people would say that all this fraud is worth it if prevents just one woman from being harmed by domestic violence. Unfortunately, it doesn't appear that the restraining order policy helps women, and there's even some evidence that it hurts women.

"Statistical tests showed no significant differences[♦] in the three most serious types of abuse – severe violence, other forms of physical violence, and threats or property damage – between the 212 women who had a permanent restraining order and the 143 women who did not have a permanent order," say researchers Adele Harrell and Barbara E. Smith, based on interviews with 355 women who had alleged abuse by male partners.

Nor have they had very good results at a very strongly pro-feminist program conducted here in Massachusetts, at the Quincy District Court. When this program first began, I used to watch the feminist talking heads on television saying how we were finally beginning to crack down on violence against women. The Quincy District court was going to take domestic violence seriously – issue restraining orders aggressively to women who request them, and jail and punish any men who violated them, blah, blah, blah.

Andrew R. Klein, chief probation officer for the Quincy District Court since 1985, studied the results of the Quincy experiment by following up with 663 cases. The following paragraph, from Klein's published paper, summarizes the radically pro-feminist nature of the program:

All the women came to court[♦] to obtain the initial temporary order, valid for 5 days. The overwhelming majority (75%) returned for the contested hearing, at which time the abuser may also testify before the court. All the women who requested were given a longer-term order, valid up to 1 year. The vast majority let the orders lapse after that year, with only 27 returning after a year to request an extension.

Klein assumes that every man is an "abuser," where, if he were being precise, he would say "alleged abuser"; none of these men were being convicted of abuse. Since "all the women who requested were given a longer-term order," the judge simply assumes that every man before him must be an abuser, irrespective of the facts. This judge obviously cares more about feminism than he does about the law or the facts. (I would hate to guess what kind of relationship this judge had with his own father, and how that relationship is affecting his judgment.)

And yet, only 27 out of the 633 women (4%) bothered to renew the restraining order after the year was up. In fact, "almost half of the women returned to court to drop their ROs [restraining orders] prior to the 1-year termination date," either because the two got back together or because the man "effectively coerce[s]" the woman into doing so.

According to Klein, one reason why women drop the ROs is because men don't take them seriously,[♦] and a reason for that "is that the criminal justice system does not appear to take them seriously either. Although the study was conducted in a jurisdiction nationally recognized for its programs to stop domestic violence, most re-abusers arrested for violating their ROs were not placed on probation, much less sentenced to jail." Klein adds that other jurisdictions are even more lax than Quincy.

At any rate, ROs "are clearly not sufficient to protect women and children from continued abuse," according to Klein.[♦] This is consistent with the previously discussed findings by Harrell and Smith that having permanent restraining orders does not have any effect on rates of re-abuse.

Indeed, this makes sense to me. Hitting a woman is a crime, and I've never understood why anyone thought that if someone is going to commit a crime anyway by hitting a woman he might be stopped by a restraining order. And if a woman wants to have sex again with her alleged abuser, then it's hard to see how a restraining order is going to keep them apart. Indeed, no piece of paper is going to do much good for a woman who doesn't want to help herself.

What is the solution? How do you protect women from violent men?

The Mandatory Arrest Solution

Klein has a solution:

- "Arrest for domestic violence should be mandatory....[♦] Prosecutors should institute a 'no-drop' policy and prosecute as many incidents of domestic violence as legally permissible. If convicted, male batterers should be sentenced accordingly."
- When a woman requests restraining order, "the state must investigate the incident for possible prosecution. If the judge ... hears probable cause that a crime has been committed, the judge should issue a criminal complaint" for arrest.

- The prosecutor must work with the victim to get her "to testify or otherwise assist the prosecution of the case. Often ... the prosecution can proceed without the victim's direct testimony."

The result, according to Klein, is that the court maintains control over the batterer. Even if he's released, he's still on probation, and the court still supervises him, even if he talks the woman into withdrawing the RO or they get back together.

Other feminists support mandatory arrest of batterers just because it feels right. For example, Evan Stark, a professor at Rutgers University and founder of one of the nation's first battered women's shelters, expresses it as follows: "There is little question in my view that the mandatory arrest of batterers represents a progressive redistribution of justice on behalf of women."

However, both Stark and Klein point out that feminists consider this proposal to be "disempowering" to women, since once a complaint is made, arrest and prosecution is mandatory.

So there's a difference of opinion among feminists as to whether arrest should be mandatory for domestic violence. Why is that? Exploring that question exposes yet one more incredibly bizarre aspect of feminist policy, as if we hadn't found enough bizarre things already.

On the one hand, it seems that all feminists should strongly favor mandatory arrest for male batterers. One of the criticisms that feminists make of the police, and society and general, is that battering is not taken as seriously as other violent crimes. Indeed, we quoted Bancroft earlier as saying, "The primary messages from radio, television, friends and relatives most of the time are very supportive of battering, of using some physical violence from time to time – and they're supportive that the head of the household is the owner of the family."

Furthermore, feminists hardly shrink from the harshest punishment for men in any other area, so why not the harshest punishment for men in this area as well, as Klein recommends?

Well, let's listen to feminist researchers Eve S. Buzawa and Carl G. Buzawa, both Professors of Criminal Justice at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, have to say in opposition to mandatory arrest. They point out that "Studies have shown that many victims of domestic violence do not want arrest," and that in fact only one in four or one in five battering victims desire arrest. They continue:

In contrast, the desires of victimized women may be complex. Some desire only cessation of the violence – any other action is unwanted interference. Others desire that the police, as agents of the state, recognize their victimization. This does not necessarily equate to desire for arrest, but may mean only that they expect officers to demonstrate disapproval – perhaps by speaking sternly, making clear the victim's option to arrest, ensuring her safety, and threatening

arrest upon reoccurrence. Still others desire that the police assist change in the balance of power in a relationship away from a crude measure of physical strength and violence to an emphasis on acceptable societal norms of conflict resolution. For that purpose, a warning may be sufficient. Finally, other victims may, despite violence, desire that the police act merely as mediators. For many of these scenarios, the victim may believe that arrest is inappropriate.

Treating all victimized women as a common group denigrates the real distinctions in this diverse group as well as commits the conceptual error of assuming that all batterers respond similarly to a given approach. This prevents the victim from using the criminal justice process to ensure her safety. In sort, automatically assuming arrest as the preferred option forecloses an opportunity to empower victims by giving them control over the outcome of the police intervention.

We live in a world where feminists keep telling us that women abused by men, whether by harassment, rape, abuse or violence, are scared of their abusers, and even high-powered executive Anita Hill was too scared to tell Clarence Thomas that she didn't like his occasional off-color joke, and that society's problem is that we don't take violence against women seriously enough.

But here are the feminists telling us that all we really need to do is ask the battered woman what she wants, and if all she wants is to have the police "demonstrate disapproval" or "speak sternly" or "act merely as mediators," and all will be OK. It seems that these hard-core feminists have suddenly gone all warm and fuzzy. What do you suppose could possibly be reason for that? And, once again, why hasn't Klein, that other pro-feminist man, also gone similarly warm and fuzzy?

As we'll see, the answer is the usual one: Money.

First, we need a little bit of history.

In 1981, the Minneapolis Police Department conducted an experiment[♦] on how police should respond to incidents of misdemeanor domestic violence. The police would respond in one of three different ways, chosen at random: arresting the offender; ordering the offender from the premises for 24 hours; and trying to restore order (only). The experiment showed that arresting the offender was the most effective.

These experiments have hurt feminists, according to the Buzawas, and we quote their reasoning at length:

There has been a clear and profound increase in the use of arrest[♦] by police as a response to domestic violence. Official policies, which in the past denigrated the role of arrest, in many jurisdictions now

promote arrest as the preferred method of handling assaultive behavior. In fact, one recent report stated that by 1989, mandatory or preferred arrest policies were in place (if not fully enforced) by 84% of urban police agencies. Fifteen states and the District of Columbia had policies that "mandated" arrest in cases where there was probable cause to believe that domestic violence had occurred.... To some extent, this is a natural, perhaps even inevitable, reaction to practices of the past, when police and the entire criminal justice establishment inappropriately denigrated the criminality and harm of "domestic violence." It is also the by-product of an unusual confluence of political pressure and argument made by some social scientists who view arrest a "magic bullet," an inexpensive way to solve (or at least contain) the epidemic of interpersonal violence. ...

In any event, we are disturbed that the overemphasis upon deterrence[♦] as the justification for arrest may cause results unintended and unwanted, even by its proponents. Prior to the Minneapolis study, funding for "crisis intervention" efforts in police departments and shelters for victims of domestic violence had grown rapidly. Victims of domestic violence were often provided with services from state and local agencies. The funding for crisis intervention efforts had already crested prior to the Minneapolis study in response to political pressure, and funding for shelters began a substantial decrease thereafter. [The unintended result was] to starve domestic violence shelters to encourage arrests.

[P]olice administrators, in an atmosphere of scarce municipal and state funds, clearly justify their role in domestic violence (and implicitly divert money that might otherwise go to shelters) largely on the basis of the "fact" that arrests deter the violence prior to the need for shelter. [This is a bureaucratic game where] any sudden influx of funds leads to political competition among agencies. The Minneapolis study, the news and entertainment media, and the federal government's campaign for deterrence merely gave the police the weaponry to fight such "turf wars" with social service agencies that might otherwise have been the natural recipients of the funds. In fact, Gelles (1993) suggests that there was a sudden shift in the steady increase of shelter funding following the release of reports on the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment in 1984. Since that time, there has been a continual decrease in shelter support. This certainly is suggestive of the possibility that once arrest was seen as an "answer" to the problem of domestic violence, support of others options became expendable.

Finally, we believe that, legally and morally, it is not the role of police to inflict punishment. Although here it might be for a "politically correct" cause – deterrence – this use of police sets a very dangerous precedent that may later be used to justify other "informal" police punishments – such as beating people stopped for traffic offenses who have verbally accosted an officer.

Beating people stopped for traffic offenses????????? Like I said, this is bizarre. OK, so if the Buzawas don't want mandatory arrest, then what *do* they want?

As noted earlier, the methodological conceit of deterrence researchers[♦] may have indirectly promoted the tragic diversion of funds from rehabilitation programs and shelters that otherwise might have dealt more effectively with the causes and effects of violence for many types of offenders. ...

Second, we should try to follow the European approach of focusing on services for victims and offenders rather than giving primary attention to mechanistic enforcement of victims' "rights".... A growing trend in Europe is the "institutionalization of victim support" ..., whereby funding for volunteer services comes from the central government.

Well, there it is. They don't want mandatory arrest, because that would take money away from battered women's shelters.

They *do* want a lot more funding for battered women's shelters, to replace volunteers with paid workers.

Isn't that incredible? If you believe what they say, they'd rather have the batterers out on the street, so that the batterers will beat up more women, and so more battered women's shelters will be needed.

Actually, that may be what they're saying, but if you put all this together, you realize what the real reason is. When Klein says that only 4% of women even bother to renew the restraining orders, and when the Buzawas say that all many women need from the police is to "demonstrate disapproval" or "speak sternly" or "act merely as mediators," what they're telling us it is that these men aren't batterers at all, and the restraining orders are phony.

This suggests that the real reason that feminists don't want mandatory arrest is much simpler. As we showed on page 47, there is a whole collection of feminist organizations – social service organizations, court clinics, battered women's shelters, visitation centers, feminist legal services agencies – that collude with each other and with women judges, following the feminist policy of always siding with the mother against the father, in order to collect lucrative fees and grants. The most lucrative fees come from false charges of domestic violence, because a falsely

charged man is more likely to fight the charges in court, and more likely to fight to see of his kids, all of which generate more fees and grants for women's activists.

If arrest were mandatory, then the collusion among all these women would be far more problematical, because a man accused of a criminal offense can successfully demand a court trial at which evidence must be brought. A man accused of a crime has Constitutional rights which cannot be denied, and could demand that actual evidence be presented, and that would curtail the number of false restraining orders. But by ordering false restraining orders without making a criminal charge, the courts maximize funding to themselves and to the whole range of feminist organizations and, in the end, a man has no chance of winning because he has no rights at all, and the courts have a policy of always siding with the mother against the father, irrespective of the evidence.

Returning now to the reasons the Buzawas give for not wanting mandatory arrest, they say they would like to get increased funding for battered women's shelters, and also get funding for rehabilitation services for batterers – that is, more programs like Emerge.

And the *real* goal, the holy grail of goals for feminists, is to get funding for an entire new bureaucracy of feminist social workers – women who will get paid to administer battered women's shelters.

There are other reasons as well why feminists oppose mandatory arrest for batterers. As indicated earlier in this chapter (p. 143), Demie Kurz fears that violent women will be arrested as well.

A final reason why feminists oppose mandatory arrest for batterers can be surmised: As we showed in chapter 1, false charges of abuse are worth perhaps tens of millions to billions of dollars nationwide to feminist organizations (see p. 47). Arresting a batterer requires the presentation of real evidence, not just some woman claiming some vague fear. This would dramatically reduce the number of false charges of battering, and would thus cut out a major source of income for feminist organizations.

So, in the end, we have to keep listening to feminist talking heads on television talking about how the police don't take domestic violence seriously, and yet it's feminists who don't want it taken seriously, because to do so would cost feminist organizations money!

I know that many readers, even those who are sympathetic to the major contentions of this book, might have been skeptical of my claim that feminism is so politicized that funding and political power are the only objectives.

But I've been studying feminist policies for many years now, and I haven't found a single one where funding and political power are not the major motivating factor.

Just within this one chapter, we've seen that feminists emphasize domestic violence by men because it brings them funding, but they ignore violence by

women because that would not bring them funding; however, they *do* talk about violence by women in lesbian relationships, because they want funding for lesbian battered women's shelters. They don't talk about child abuse, because most child abusers are mothers; but they do talk about child sexual abuse, a small part of the child abuse problem, because it angers the public and generates funding for feminist organizations. They support organizations like Emerge which are driven by feminist policy, but as we'll soon see, they decry use of private therapists who bring in no money to feminist organizations.

It might not make any difference if these feminist policies actually helped women, but we're talking about one policy area after another where studies have shown either that women either not helped (Emerge, mandatory arrest, massive numbers of restraining orders), or where women are hurt (ignoring child abuse, ignoring violence by women, wildly exaggerating statistics).

As for mandatory arrest, research continues on determining the best police response to domestic violence. Whether mandatory arrest is used should depend on what research shows to be most effective, not on some internecine struggle within feminist organizations.

A final word on mandatory arrest: Earlier in this chapter, we quoted feminist researcher Demie Kurz as opposing even a discussion of violence by women, one reason being that mandatory arrest statutes may cause the police to arrest violent women. Police are understandably reluctant to arrest even the most violent women, even though a child viewing violence initiated by his mother may start to believe that women enjoy violence, especially if there appears to be an erotic element. Once again research should be the guide here, not the funding demands of a feminist organization.

Abuse of the System

Basically speaking, fathers don't stand a chance in this feminist-driven system. Abuse of the system by women is rampant, especially by women who are violent themselves. When I interviewed men, I heard one story after another about how women were able to abuse to system to hurt men, usually to gain vengeance in a divorce proceeding. Sometimes kids were innocent victims.

That's what happened to "Mark Dayton."

Dayton is a recovering alcoholic whose parents were alcoholic. He met his wife when they were both attending Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) meetings, "at a time when we were both getting sober." She had been physically abused by her parents, and her mother was also alcoholic.

Many marriages start to get into trouble after the first child is born, and that's what happened to this one, shortly after his daughter was born in May, 1983. His wife dropped out of AA, and she started becoming increasingly abusive and violent.

Did Dayton ever abuse his wife or kids? Dayton says that "I once pushed my wife when she came at me like a spitting cat – I pushed her but didn't hit her. And I once slapped my daughter on the diaper, but felt so guilty I never did anything like that again. That's all that's ever happened. I've never slapped or hit my wife." But as is frequently the case, the violent party in this marriage was Dayton's wife.

His wife's abusiveness got worse and worse, but Dayton's troubles really began when his own mother died, just before Christmas, 1985. "I was having a really bad time, and I had an argument with my daughter and I yelled at her and she yelled at me. The next thing I knew, the DSS [Massachusetts Division of Social Services] was coming to the door, and I was being accused of physically abusing my daughter."

Somehow this marriage continued, and they had another child, a boy, in 1988. The fights continued, and they split up in August, 1991.

"She threatened to kill me with my rifle, so I got my rifle away from the house." He filed for divorce, and his wife returned the favor by filing criminal charges against him for beating her.

The judge threw the case out for lack of evidence, but the district attorney, a woman who fought militantly against men accused of wife beating, got the case heard by another judge, a woman. This is what we discussed in chapter 1. Feminist professionals, whether social workers or pediatricians or district attorneys, always side with the woman against the man as a matter of policy, irrespective of the facts, because feminist "theory" directs them to do so.

"My lawyer was outgunned," says Dayton. "The judge wouldn't let him get any of his points in. He told me that I was going to be convicted. He told me to 'admit sufficient facts,' which would mean I wouldn't go to jail, but I would be on probation and would have to get counseling for being a wife batterer."

From that point on, Dayton has been in a downward spiral from which he couldn't escape. His wife accused him of having thrown her down the stairs five times, "but she's never been to an emergency room, and has no evidence to back it up. No one's called her on any of her lies. And if I show that she lied, they say that the reason she lied is because she has battered woman's syndrome. Of course she does – her parents battered her, I didn't."

Dayton's wife also accused him of child abuse, and the court followed standard procedure by appointing a guardian *ad litem*, in this case a woman social worker, to investigate. Dayton says that the guardian *ad litem* has a reputation of always siding with the mother, and automatically assumed he was guilty because he

was on probation for wife battering. "She believed everything that my wife's parents told her," and threw out everything his family told her, according to Dayton.

Dayton's is one of the worst stories I heard from men. He ran into one feminist professional after another, who always sided against him as a matter of policy.

As a result, Dayton was kept from seeing his daughter. He was permitted to see his son, but only in a court-supervised visitation center. After six months, however, Dayton says his wife brought yet another phony charge against him, and the guardian *ad litem* recommended terminating all contact with his son. When I spoke to him, he hadn't seen his son in a year, and his daughter in a year and half.

Meanwhile, Dayton is on probation, and is required by the court to attend Emerge. "Emerge is the worst witch hunt I've ever seen. All they want to hear is what your abuse was, and when I say that I didn't abuse her, they say I'm in denial. No matter what happened, it's always that you're a batterer and it's all your fault. I once said to them, 'The fact that I'm sucking oxygen is abusive to you guys.' They didn't like that." I can just imagine.

Dayton is most bitter that he can't see his children. "I've never had unconditional love from anybody, not from my parents, not with any woman - but I've had that with my children, and she's taken that away from me. I practically raised those kids - I did everything with them - and it's an awful loss. Now, my daughter is a shoo-in for promiscuity and alcoholism, and my son is a shoo-in for drug abuse."

There was a time, a few years ago, when I would have considered Mark Dayton's story so incredible as to be completely unbelievable, here in the United States. Today, after hearing stories from so many divorced fathers, from having spoken to various feminist professionals in the Massachusetts divorce system, and after coming to understand that feminists side against men as a matter of policy, there's no doubt in my mind that there are many "Mark Dayton's" around, men who have been victimized by violent, abusive wives who escape retribution for their violence and abuse by simply lying about their husbands to a feminist bureaucracy which sides with them as a matter of policy.

I asked Dayton why he didn't just take off - go somewhere else, out of the state, out of the country, and try to start all over.

"I could never leave my kids," he said. "I believe strongly that there's a power beyond us, a God who knows what I'm going through, and I just keep praying that someone will believe me and help me."

He says that no one believed him at all until recently, when he came across a group of several other fathers who have been discriminated against by the same woman judge and woman guardian *ad litem*. He has no money left, but hopes that

he can find a lawyer who will take the whole group of cases against the guardian *ad litem* on a contingency basis.

He said that talking to me has given him additional hope. "I believe in God, and I don't think it's an accident that I came across your phone number. It came from someone who knows what I'm going through."

If I were to ask any feminist to comment on this story, she would probably say something to the effect that Dayton was lying, and that he was really violent and his wife wasn't.

But in fact the statistics bear out the fact there are many Mark Daytons out there.

Dayton's story show how dangerous the feminist policies are to children, and hence to women and families when the children grow up. Dayton's children are being left in the hands of a violent, abusive, alcoholic mother. As is typical of an abuser, she controls the children rigidly, in this case by keeping them from seeing their father. As Dayton points out, these children are very likely to become violent themselves. And perhaps worst of all is to see how feminism actually encourages women to abuse their children.

On top of this, the techniques used by Emerge and similar programs for batterers is totally incomprehensible, at least to me. When Dayton said, "The fact that I'm sucking oxygen is abusive to you guys" to the Emerge instructors, he was expressing a frustration that I heard from more than one man who went through Emerge: that the instructors want you to lie about the facts in order to fit their mold.

It's one thing that feminist professionals always side with the mother against the father irrespective of the facts, but it makes no sense to me to try to "help" people by forcing them to lie. But that is, in effect, what Emerge is about for many men.

One man, "Jack Torres," had been married to a violent woman for 42 years. One day, during one of her physical attacks, he fended her off and accidentally knocked her false teeth out of her mouth. His wife charged him with battering, and as usual the feminist court officials assumed that since he was a man he was guilty. He was forced to attend Emerge.

"They don't want to hear anything else except that everything's my fault," he says. "I have to make sure that I'm always saying that I'm the one who's wrong."

He has some observations about the men in the Emerge program, and he believes many of them are there because of manipulation of the legal system by their ex-wives.

"I sit there listening to these young men, and I feel like their grandfather," says the 66 year old Torres. "About 25% of the men are total losers, and about 75% shouldn't be handled that way." He says that the 75% tell stories with a common

theme: "She whacked him first, he whacked her back, she called the cops, he went to jail. It just doesn't seem that it should be handled that way."

He says that some of the men have found that their ex-wives purposely expose the men to violating their restraining orders in order to get them sent back to jail. He quoted one man as saying, "I was playing ball with my son when my wife showed up, and I got into trouble because I'm not supposed to be around her." He adds, "These women are very devious."

The domestic violence system that feminists have set up is made to order for fraud by women. "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" is an age-old saying, and the court system gives women the perfect tool for satisfying their fury.

How can you have a help program, like Emerge, where you don't let the clients tell their story in their own way, but force them, as soon as they open their mouths, to tell the story only the way that the instructors want them to tell it? I've heard of programs for drug abuse, alcoholism, AIDS, depression, anorexia, and other problems, and I always understood that the purpose of these programs was to provide for a long process of self-examination which leads eventually to self-understanding and correcting behavior. But you can't, it seems to me, change men's behavior by forcing them to lie about facts and by inculcating an extremely offensive feminist political view on day one.

Does Emerge work? According to Bancroft, the recidivism rate is probably around 80-90%, and this figure is consistent with other studies and other programs. "No matter how you structure a program like Emerge, you'll see a high level of recidivism, because the primary messages from radio, television, friends and relatives are very supportive of battering, and of using violence from time to time," he says. So he says that the fault is not with Emerge and programs like it, but with society itself: "Recidivism is high because there's a high level of cultural support for battering."

Is Bancroft right, or is this just an excuse to justify the failure of Emerge? Is there a high level of cultural support for battering? As we've shown in this chapter, there is no societal support for battering by men, though there's plenty for violence by women.

Couples Seeking Help

This brings us back to the question we asked earlier: Why did Susan want to stay with her occasionally abusive husband?

Following the feminist prescription doesn't appear to provide any protection for women, and if she still loves her husband and wants to be with him, then what's the point of getting a restraining order? To repeat what we quoted earlier,

"A surprising number [of battered women] stay because they are deeply attached to the men and see a positive, loving side to the relationship."

For other reasons why a woman may stay with her husband in a violent relationship, let's look at some additional reasons given by Eve and Carl Buzawa opposing mandatory arrest policies:

The premise [of mandatory arrest] is that we, a highly educated, politically liberal / radical elite, can best assess the interests of disempowered victims unable to judge their own needs accurately. Conceptually, this position is as offensive as the old "patriarchy," where legal rights were all given to the male who, by virtue of his superior intellect and logic, knew what was best for "his" women. ...

Furthermore, a victim may have many other collateral reasons for not desiring arrest. An arrest may affect her family financially by leading to loss of family income or by triggering parole or probation revocation. Such a policy may also discourage women from middle or upper social classes from seeking police assistance because of the social stigma of arrest. Many small communities publish arrest reports in the local newspapers, perhaps harming victims and their children more than the batterers.

In any event, there can also be little dispute that arrest does not, on balance, strengthen the relationship if the couple involved. We find it troubling that many victim's advocates presume to state categorically that this is unimportant because such a relationship is "obviously pathological." Many other societal programs are, after all, designed to salvage such relationships, by minimizing the pathology and rehabilitating the offending parties.

As these arguments show with respect to mandatory arrest, women need more choices than the ones offered by pure feminist orthodoxy.

Solutions like mandatory arrest (which keeps the husband locked in jail) or battered women's shelters (which keep the wife locked in a shelter) might work for a few days or weeks, but cannot be long run solutions except in the most pathological of situations. In these situations, say where a husband repeatedly and frequently batters his wife, it's likely that mandatory arrest is the only long-term solutions.

Earlier in this chapter, I distinguished between pathological or sociopathic child abuse, and more ordinary "transactional abuse" that might happen in any family as a result of depression.

Just as alternate solutions must be found for "ordinary" cases of child abuse, both men and women need a range of solutions for attempting to keep a marriage together when either the man or the woman exhibits some violence. No one is arguing that anyone who doesn't want to should stay in a violent or abusive

relationship, but whether to do so or not is the choice of the people involved, not something to be dictated by feminist "theory," or by "a highly educated, politically liberal / radical elite," to use the words of Eve and Carl Buzawa.

In short, we need ways to give families the resources to help themselves. This is inevitably going to mean programs or therapies for individuals or couples which are outside the monolithic feminist realm, and that will mean programs whose adoption do not mean funding or political power for feminist organizations.

Unfortunately, feminists bitterly oppose any such program. At the national level, the National Organization for Women vociferously opposes funding of "Fathers Count Too" programs to help young fathers with parenting skills, as we explained in chapter 1; NOW goes so far as to make moronic statements like "Promoting marriage, for many poor women, is a dangerous policy."

At the local level, feminists oppose any therapy for men or for couples where violence has occurred. According to the Emerge instructor's manual: "Having men participate in individual therapy while they are in a batterer's program is problematic, so we do not encourage men to be in therapy.... Therapy, however competently performed, tends to support a batterer's excuses for his abusiveness and allows him to stay focused on his feelings and grievances. Batterers often develop new excuses from being in therapy.... We find that these excuses may blame women in one way or another, particularly by focusing on the man's mother, while allowing him to evade responsibility."

Once again, this is a single-minded point of view, that may apply to some pathological cases of violence, but there's no reason to believe that it applies to all situations, especially the feminist prescriptions haven't been particularly successful in helping to prevent battering anyway.

However, there are alternatives.

Private Therapy for Relationships with Violence

Although all public programs follow the formula that absolutely no therapy should be permitted in a relationship where there's violence, I have spoken to a couple of therapists in private practice who deal with this issue. Both expressed a great deal of caution, since one thing that no one wants, least of all the therapists involved since they could, after all, be charged with malpractice, is to see the violence continue, or worse, to see additional violence be *caused* by the therapy.

"If there is violence in a couples relationship, then I'll meet with them individually, but I won't work with them as a couple," says Joseph Lillyman, a clinical social worker, in private practice at Joseph Lillyman & Assoc. in Natick, Mass. "If a guy came into my office saying he's been violent, I'd welcome him and

try as best as possible to work with him. Same with incest. But I'd need some sort of guarantee that the behavior would stop." He adds that if such a guarantee were violated, or in other circumstances required by law, he wouldn't hesitate to call the police.

Like other therapists in this field, Lillyman believes that it's very hard for a man who may have been violent or who feels a tendency to become violent to find a safe way to get help, both because of the public hostility that's automatically directed at him, because as soon as he discusses violence he might immediately be reported to the police and jailed, even if his partner doesn't desire that.

Dr. Ray Mount, Ph.D., at Mount Family Therapies, in Wakefield, Mass., agrees that it's very hard for men to get help. "The reason that these men don't seek treatment until it's too late is that they see the system as punitive and abusive," he says. "The system sees them as morally defective, and as scum. They're not worth treatment - and that attitude comes through in some ways."

Mount points out that if the system is abusive to men who seek help, it's also somewhat abusive to therapists who try to provide help. "In my circles of colleagues, they're so paranoid on this issue," he says. "If we provide treatment to violent perpetrators, it's seen as bogus, and we're told that these people are too slippery to be treated. I constantly get cautioned that when you treat a perpetrator, you're colluding with him, making look like he's changing, and he's probably not. They put it in a moral tone, probably the way that alcohol was seen years ago."

But he contrasts this to treatment for other problems. "We work with resistance to treatment all the time," he says. "The sensitive therapist is aware of this."

In fact, unlike Lillyman, Mount offers therapy to couples where violence has occurred, and has developed a methodology (see sidebar) for preventing further violence.

It's easy to share the concern that a perpetrator might collude with a therapist until you recall that that's exactly what appears to happen in Emerge. The men I spoke to made it clear that they just say what the Emerge instructors want them to say in order to get through the court-ordered course, and that is in fact colluding with the instructor, and may be one of the reasons for Emerge's high recidivism rate.

But the argument I'm making is not that Emerge should be eliminated; what I'm arguing against is the insistence by feminists that Emerge be the *only* program. If we can provide therapy for alcoholics, for drug abusers, and for people threatening to commit suicide, then surely we can provide therapy for batterers. A man in Emerge has already been sentenced by a court, and his life is already in ruins. A man who seeks out therapy, or couples therapy with his wife, is aware that if his life is not yet in ruins, then this is his last chance to avoid personal disaster, and so his motivation to find a solution could be very high. He and his wife

should have that opportunity, if they desire it, and not be forced into a single path solution that doesn't seem to work anyway.

Sidebar: Therapy for Domestic Violence Couples

One thing that no one wants, least of all the therapist who could, after all, be charged with malpractice, is to see the violence continue, or worse, to see additional violence be *caused* by the therapy.

According to Dr. Ray Mount, Ph.D., at Mount Family Therapies, in Wakefield, Mass., if a therapist does treat such a man, there's a balancing act. If the therapist comes through as sympathetic to the victim and hostile to the perpetrator (the Emerge model), then the therapy won't be effective. Effective therapy requires that the therapist be most sympathetic to the client, not to the client's victim. But being less sympathetic to a domestic violence victim is not politically correct.

He said that he does in fact do couples therapy in domestic violence situations, and he has done so quite successfully. I asked him specifically how he gets around the problem previously mentioned — the man getting even with something the woman says. He outlined the following procedure:

- The couple is asked to objectively describe the process leading up to violence. "For example, she would present how they got into an argument, say,

over money, and the different stages of the escalation."

- Next, the therapist makes a contract with the couple, made up of triggers that occur during this process. "The contract covers the situation very early in the escalation. For example, the contract might be, the first time he clenches his fists, then both of them have to declare a time out."
- In order to get both parties to talk without the man wanting to get even later, you "don't get her to express herself in a way that's damaging to him. Every perpetrator has to handle the shame of being a perpetrator, and they do it by objectifying — for example, he'll justify that she deserved it or that he did hit her once but he's not a batterer. It's very important to find out how he defends his ego against the shame of battering, and not let her disrupt that. If you're a klutz, like some treatment people, then you'll hurt him and you'll have a dangerous situation brewing."

Summary of Findings

After studying feminist issues for over a decade, I have not found a single feminist policy that make sense except in the context of making money or getting political power. Many of these policies hurt women, and other policies which might help women are discarded. Here is a summary:

- A false charge of abuse can be worth thousands, tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of money to feminist organizations and employees, depending on how hard the accused man fights back (page 47). This money goes to social workers, social services organizations, battered women's shelters, visitation centers, child psychologists, and feminist legal services associations, which collude with one another to sustain the false charges. These organizations are all related to the probate courts, so the courts participate as well. The money comes from fees and from various state and federal government grants.
- A false charge of domestic violence is considerably more lucrative to these feminist organizations, for two reasons: A falsely charged man is more likely to want to fight the charges, and is more likely to fight to see his kids. A man who simply walks away provides no funding for feminist organizations, but a man who fights is very valuable, since the feminist organizations can collect lucrative fees and grants in support against the man who fights back (page 47).
- There are tens of thousands of such false charges each year in Massachusetts alone (page 160). These false charges probably generate millions or perhaps tens of millions of dollars per year to Massachusetts feminist organizations, and perhaps close to a billion dollars per year nationwide.
- The domestic violence figures reported almost daily in the media are wild exaggerations, and often simply fraudulent, as illustrated by Lenore Walker's Super Bowl Hoax (p. 119). These exaggerations hurt women because they portray violence as the norm, thus perversely encouraging violence ("It's ok - everyone does it.") and discouraging women from leaving violent relationships ("My next relationship will be the same.")
- On the other hand, no one is claiming that restraining orders protect anyone. There is no difference in the level of abuse experienced by women who have obtained restraining orders, versus those who have not (p. 161). Courts issue millions of restraining orders per year, mostly to

women who need only make a vague claim of fear of violence (pp. 48 and 160). Judges issue these restraining orders irrespective of any testimony or facts, and yet, according to one study, only 4% of women bother to renew them after they expire. According to one researcher, neither men nor the courts take restraining orders seriously (p. 162).

- Perhaps the worst feminist policy of all is to excuse and condone child abuse and child murder by mothers (p. 18), because to do so would reduce public support for battered women's shelters, even though most child abuse and murder perpetrators are mothers (p. 127). This increases domestic violence because it "trains the next generation of batterers." To me, the most horrible and egregious example of this is the massive outpouring of feminist support for Andrea Yates, after her cold-blooded murder of all five of her children (p. 18).
- Feminists purposely ignore the seriousness of violence by women (p. 135), for fear that recognizing it will divert funding away from feminist organizations (p. 139). On the other hand, feminists claim that "We have no reason to believe that the range of violence experienced by battered lesbians is any less severe than that of women battered by men.... In this respect, battered lesbians are no different than other battered women or sexual abuse and sexual assault victims." The reason? Because feminists want more money, this time to fund lesbian battered women's shelters (p. 144).
- Even worse, sons of violent mothers are more likely to be violent themselves (p. 136). This is never discussed in the media, but it makes sense – a child who sees his mother perpetrate violence, especially when there seems to be an erotic element, may believe that his mother enjoys violence. This even provides a plausible explanation of why Tonya Harding violently attacked figure skating competitor Nancy Kerrigan (p. 139).
- Child abuse researchers typically define "father" to include a stepfather or the mother's boyfriend. Thus, a lot of child abuse by "fathers" is actually perpetrated by the stepfather or mother's boyfriend (p. 133). Since the biological father is less likely to abuse a child than the mother, and the father's girlfriend is less likely to abuse than the mother's boyfriend, there's reason to believe that a child of divorce is safer in the father's home than in the mother's home.
- According to some researchers, one solution that *would* reduce domestic violence is mandatory arrest for domestic violence (p. 162). However, feminists oppose mandatory arrest for domestic violence, because that

would (a) cause violent women to be arrested (p. 143); (b) reduce funding for battered women's shelters (p. 166); and (c) reduce the number of phony battering charges, which are a major source of income for feminist organizations (p. 166).

So it turns out that when feminist talking heads claim that the police don't take domestic violence seriously, it's actually feminists that don't want the police to do so, since that would reduce funding to feminist organizations. Feminists would rather have the batterers out on the street, so that the batterers will beat up more women, and so more battered women's shelters will be needed.

- Nobody is claiming that pro-feminist programs like Emerge (p. 158), which attempt use feminist "theory" to teach men not to batter, do much good, and have a very high recidivism rate (p. 172), and yet feminists use public pressure to prevent people or couples in relationships where violence has occurred from going to private therapists (p. 174), even though private therapy often works in other areas, such as drug abuse, alcoholism, depression, anorexia, and other problems.
- In the national arena, no one is claiming that feminist policies have made women better off, happier or less harassed in the workplace (p. 76), but we've shown anecdotally that these policies have cost women millions of good jobs (p. 72), and have made women in the workplace appear to be untrustworthy or even "crazy."
- By providing loud, vocal support for President Clinton when he was credibly charged as a serial rapist, after they'd provided loud, vocal protests against Clarence Thomas, when he'd been charged with nothing less trivial than telling a few dirty jokes, feminists sent a message that rape is not a serious crime, but is only important as a political tool (p. 85). These actions appear to condone and excuse rape, and put women at risk for additional rape.

What is remarkable is that no one, not even feminists, claims that any of these programs work, except in one regard: battered women's shelters provide a place where women can be safe from batterers, and the more battered women's shelters you have, the more women you can warehouse in them.

But warehousing women does absolutely nothing to reduce battering, child abuse, harassment, rape, or other gender problems, and in some cases actually makes the situation of women worse.

Questions and Answers

1. Q: I am very worried about my sister. She is engaged to the father of her 1-year-old daughter. They live together. My future brother in law is a sweetheart 90 percent of the time. He is charming, intelligent, witty and loves my sister deeply. The other 10 percent of the time he is jealous and controlling and has an explosive temper. He has never hit her, but when he gets angry he smashes whatever is nearby.

A: Your sister is engaged to someone who's very controlling, and she may not appreciate advice from you, which she might interpret as another person in her life trying to control her. Your sister is evaluating the situation just as you are, and in the end she's the only one who can decide what to do.

Still, you want to keep a watchful eye, and evaluate the situation. There's been no physical violence yet, and it's quite possible that there never will be, but it's also possible there will be. If drinking or drugs are involved, the probability of physical violence is much higher.

Study and Research

1. Have you experienced domestic violence in your life, either in your own family or in the family of friends? Who was the perpetrator – father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, kids? Why did or did not the victim(s) leave?
2. In the text, I speculated that a reason why violence by the mother has a disproportionately greater negative effect on the children than violence by the father is that violence by the father will seem clearly wrong to the child, while violence by the mother might appear much more ambiguous, and the child might even conclude that the mother likes violence. How does this fit into psychoanalytic theory?
3. Feminist "theory" says that domestic violence by the mother, if it occurs at all, is trivial and inconsequential. How do you feel about violence by a woman? Should a man who is being battered by a woman who is physically weaker than himself, be bothered by that?
4. If you've ever seen two kittens playing, you know that they can do quite a bit of roughhousing without ever hurting each other. What's the difference between "roughhousing" and "violence"?

5. When I was in college in the sixties, a joke went around that "for every sadist there a masochist who loves him," implying that some people are turned on by violence. Indeed, in early news reports about the relationship between O.J. Simpson and Nicole Brown Simpson, Nicole was physically very aggressive with O.J., slapping or taunting him to enrage him, after which would follow a night of passionate love (see p. 300). Given this kind of situation, how would you refine your definition in the previous paragraph, where you were asked to distinguish between "roughhousing" and "violence," to include a further category of "rough erotic play"?
6. Check with some of the therapists in your local area to find an answer to this question: If a woman and a man wanted to obtain counseling and there has been a little violence in their relationship, is there anyone in private practice who would even be willing to take them? And if so, what "contract" would they have to make with the therapist? (See the sidebar on "Therapy for Domestic Violence Couples," page 176, for an example of such a contract.)
7. I've spoken to men who complain very bitterly that they went to jail because a very violent wife got hurt attacking the husband. Check with your local police force to find out what their policies are regarding violence by women, and also find out whether they've ever actually arrested a woman for domestic violence.
8. Feminists call it "verbal battering." Men call it "incessant nagging." Is there any difference between men and women when it comes to emotional abuse?
9. How do men and women use weapons against each other differently? For example, a man might use money as a weapon by refusing to let his wife have any; a woman might use money as a weapon by spending as much as she can. How do men and women typically differ in their use the children as weapons? In their use of sex as a weapon?
10. Suppose you made policy. Would you jail all batterers, even though feminists oppose it? As we've discussed, feminists policies have been good for fund raising, but they haven't protected women from battering. If it were your choice, what policies would you institute in order to actually reduce violence against women?
11. One way to start an argument at almost any party is by raising the question of whether it's ok to spank a child. Some parents believe that an occasional spanking is ok, while others believe that a parent should never hit a child. (I'm in the latter category, and whenever I see a parent hit a child for any reason it makes me literally sick to my stomach.) What's your view of whether spanking is ok? And if you believe that occasional

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spanking is ok, then do you also believe that one spouse hitting another is also ok?

12. I once read an internal memo of a social services organization directing the social workers to be sensitive to the fact that spanking a child is sometimes an ethnic issue. Without specifying which ethnic groups were which, the memo implied that spanking was accepted and even encouraged within some ethnic groups more than in others. Is it true that attitudes toward spanking differ within different ethnic groups in the US?

Chapter 4 – Liberation Day and the Dance of Renewal

*Lemon tree, very pretty and the lemon flower is sweet,
But the fruit of the poor lemon is impossible to eat.*
– Will Holt

"The reason that so many women are getting divorced* is that they haven't been able to have an emotional connection with their husbands." This statement, from a woman psychologist, indicates the sort of reasons that women are giving for divorcing their husbands.

If you have the feeling that this is a pretty trivial reason for getting a divorce then I'd have to agree. In fact, this statement is confirmed by statistics: two out of three divorces are initiated by women, apparently often for extremely trivial reasons like the one just given.

Getting a divorce may be simply regrettable when there are no children, or when the children have left the nest, and may be justifiable when the other partner is abusive or unfaithful. But when a young mother takes the children from their father and divorces her husband for a reason as trivial as a supposed lack of an "emotional connection," then there's a serious problem.

For this book, I really wanted to try to understand this situation better. Why is that so many married women seem to be abandoning their wedding vows so easily?

I was able to reach some conclusions in an interesting and unexpected way. It turns out that there are books on the market that measure attitudes of married women based on interviews with them. These books have different goals and purposes, but they all paint the following picture, which is confirmed by research: that although single women frequently strive to find a husband and get married, once they actually get married an overwhelming number of women are very unhappy with their marriages, much unhappier than their husbands are, even when they're married to good husbands and loving fathers, and they become much happier when they get divorced, even as their former husbands become extremely depressed and stay that way for many years.

In talking about this subject with friends, I've discovered that many women are aware of this trend, but that most men, single, married or divorced, don't have a clue about any of this. For men, this is a complete "Huh?"

Some people have complained to me that this chapter is a little too speculative, based a little too much on limited anecdotal evidence.

But whether you agree with that complaint or not, it doesn't mean you should ignore this chapter.

If you're a man planning to get married, then this chapter discusses issues that should vitally concern you. Even if you disagree with the conclusions that this chapter reaches, or even if you agree with them but believe they don't apply to your particular situation, you still need to address the issues that are raised.

And whether you agree or disagree with the conclusions of this chapter, there's one thing not in doubt: Your marriage will have roughly a 50-50 chance of ending in divorce. No matter how certain you are of yourself and your bride to be, you're not so special or brilliant or prescient or sexy that you can be certain that you'll be one of the lucky ones.

If you're getting married, then your marriage might be the best thing that's ever happened to you or the worst. Your wife-to-be might raise your life to the transcendental heights, or she might totally, utterly destroy you.

This chapter can't and won't tell you which it's going to be, but the issues raised will help you evaluate your chances, help you make an intelligent decision as to whether to go ahead with the wedding or run for your life.

What are the issues? Overwhelmingly, it seems, that feminists have been successful in convincing women that it's OK to abandon their marriages for "personal fulfillment" or any reason whatsoever, taking advantage of very substantial child support payments that have been enacted into law in recent decades. In some cases, divorce is simply a temporary inconvenience for a wife; she'll keep the kids, her home, and a substantial portion of her husband's salary, but life will go on as before, except that she won't have to spend time caring for her husband. It even appears that some women get married with the express purpose of getting pregnant, getting divorced, and collecting child support.

This is a statistical argument, of course. Many women — and men — seek divorce for very good reasons, such as abusive relationships or unfaithful partners. No one is expected to remain in an abusive relationship.

But this chapter is not about examining abusive relationships. It's examining what may be a much larger group of divorces — divorces where the wife leaves the marriage for really trivial reasons.

This chapter also makes public policy recommendations to reduce this category of divorces.

A final word of caution: Don't expect to be able to use the information from this chapter to enable you to judge your friend's marriage, your sister's marriage, your brother's marriage, or anybody else's marriage. Only a person actually within a marriage knows the moments of wonder or horror or disgust or pleasure, and how well he or she can continue to withstand them.

This chapter also contains a fairly lengthy description of recent research on predicting whether or not a relationship is going to end in divorce (see p. 209). This information is presented so that you can evaluate your relationship and, if it's on the road to divorce, either fix it or terminate it, hopefully prior to the time your wife becomes pregnant, which is the point where she can demand that you pay her child support payments.

Flying Solo

In 1994, I had lunch with three friends, all divorced women, and they were all absolutely bubbling with excitement about a new book, called *Flying Solo*.♦ "The authors interviewed a lot of single and divorced women," I was told. "The women were miserable when they were married, but now they're perfectly happy living by themselves or just with their kids. And if a woman wants to have sex, she can have a date or spend the weekend with her boyfriend. But for the rest of the week, she's much happier being on her own."

My three women friends obviously approved very highly of this attitude, and expressed what I've come to see over and over again as an increasing contempt among women for marriage and for married women – and for men.

"The habit of viewing marriage as a raw deal for women♦ is now so entrenched, even among women who don't call themselves feminists," says Danielle Crittenden in *What Our Mothers Didn't Tell Us*, "that I've seen brides who otherwise appear completely happy apologize to their wedding guests for their surrender to convention, as if a part of them still feels there is something embarrassing and weak about an intelligent and ambitious woman consenting to marry."

Crittenden provides a number of anecdotes to support this observation. One of the most amusing occurred when she and her husband were attending a tennis clinic,♦ and she ran to the other end of the court to fetch her and her husband's tennis rackets. "Oh darn," said a young woman also in the group. "I was going to congratulate you for *not* bringing it." When Crittenden looked puzzled, the young woman explained, "Your husband's racket – I was hoping you were going to make him get it himself."

I see this attitude expressed online all the time.

One woman online indicated that marriage is nothing more than "serving the needs of a man" or "[spending] your life pleasing some man." Another woman, in reference to men who are going overseas to find wives, said that a foreign woman would marry an American man only if she's "desperate" and "easily dominated." These remarks are offensive to married men and women. Then there are the women who compared marriage to the experience of American slaves, which I suppose is offensive not only to married men and women but also to all blacks.

In the book *Flying Solo*, one of the interviewed women says, "I remember sitting in a sidewalk cafe[♦] in a small town on the Amalfi coast in the south of Italy with a friend of mine. I was bemoaning the fact that there were no more 'good men' out there; they were either married or gay, too passive or too domineering. My friend asked, 'What would you be willing to give up to be married? What would you give up to be in a full-time, permanently committed relationship?' I can remember looking at him, utterly startled by his question. *Give up?* It never entered my mind that I would have to give up anything."

Effects of Divorce on Women and Men

We'll come back to *Flying Solo* in a moment, but first let's summarize some of the research data which supplements some of the anecdotes that we've quoted – or rather, let's let ultra-feminist Susan Faludi summarize it for us: "Married women in these studies[♦] report about 20 percent more depression than single women and three times the rate of severe neurosis. Married women have more nervous breakdowns, nervousness, heart palpitations, and inertia. Still other afflictions disproportionately plague married women: insomnia, trembling hands, dizzy spells, nightmares, hypochondria, passivity, agoraphobia and other phobias, unhappiness with their physical appearance, and overwhelming feelings of guilt and shame. A twenty-five-year longitudinal study of college-educated women found that wives had the lowest self-esteem, felt the least attractive, reported the most loneliness, and considered themselves the least competent at almost every task – even child care. A 1980 study found single women were more assertive, independent, and proud of their accomplishments. The Mills Longitudinal Study, which tracked women for more than three decades, reported in 1990 that 'traditional' married women ran a higher risk of developing mental and physical ailments in their lifetime than single women – from depression to migraines, from high blood pressure to colitis."

These studies appear to indicate that women are, on the average, much better off when they get divorced than they were when they were married, and imply that

this is undoubtedly one of the major reasons why research has shown that women are the ones fleeing the marriage in two-thirds to three-fourths of all divorces.♦

Reasons Women Give for Seeking Divorce

Feminists like to depict all men as violent and abusive, and to blame the high divorce rate on men for that reason, but divorcing women themselves give very different reasons for seeking divorce. In the largest federally funded study ever conducted on issues confronting divorced fathers, lasting eight years and led by psychology professor Sanford L. Braver at Arizona State University, divorced men and women were interviewed on a variety of issues, including the reasons for seeking the divorce. For mothers, the top five reasons given for seeking divorce♦ are as follows, with the parenthesized numbers indicate how many mothers felt this reason was "very important":

1. Gradual growing apart, losing a sense of closeness (57%)
2. Serious differences in lifestyle and/or values (54%)
3. Not feeling loved or appreciated by spouse (45%)
4. Spouse not able or willing to meet major needs (41%)
5. Emotional problems of spouse (38%)

Beyond that, a "husband's extramarital affair (38%)" appears sixth on the list, and "violence between you and spouse (20%)" doesn't appear until position 16.

So the studies show that mothers overwhelmingly are the ones that seek divorce, and mostly for reasons far softer than the abuse and violence that feminists are forever talking about.

But what happens to the men who are left behind in these divorces? Studies show that they fare, on the average, much worse than their ex-wives do. As we indicated in chapter 1 (see page 39), research shows that divorced men experience depression, hospital admissions and work problems twice as frequently as divorced women, and their suicide rates are significantly higher. And these effects are not short-lived – men experience them typically for ten or more years.

Winners and Losers

Probably the best known study of the effects of divorce on women, men and children was the one conducted by Judith S. Wallerstein.♦ Starting in 1971, her team interviewed over 100 divorcing couples with children, and following up with them over a period of decades.

One thing I've discovered in discussing divorce and related subjects online for many years is that every now and then someone will criticize me for appearing to say that someone has to win and someone has to lose in a divorce. "My husband [or wife] and I got divorced, and we're still good friends," I'm told. "There's no winner and no loser." When someone says this, I can usually resolve the situation by asking one question: "Do you have kids?" The answer is almost always "No." What these people don't seem to understand is that it's not divorce *per se* that causes the problem, but divorce with children.

This observation is confirmed by Wallerstein's study. "In families with children, divorce is rarely a mutual decision. One person wants out, while the other goes along reluctantly or opposes it moderately or vigorously," says Wallerstein. In her study, 65% of the women actively sought to end the marriage,♦ a move which was opposed by their husbands; the opposite was true in 35% of the cases. Only one couple divorced by mutual agreement.

The title of Wallerstein's book, *Second Chances*, is purposely an ironic one. Many people go into divorce looking for a second chance at life. What she found is that, overwhelmingly, divorces involving children have winners and losers. "I did not expect to discover that there are winners and losers in the years after divorce,"♦ she says, "and I certainly did not expect to find gross discrepancies within each couple." In each divorce, there's usually a winner who "[enjoys] a better-quality life than that which existed in their failing marriages, ... [who is] relatively free from anxiety and depression and other symptoms of emotional distress"; and there's usually a loser who "[feels] unhappy much of the time, often [suffers] from loneliness, anxiety, or depression, and may be preoccupied with financial concerns as a regular part of daily life." She adds, "Looking closely, we find that by and large the person who wanted the divorce is the one doing well, while the one who opposed it is doing less well. His or her forebodings have been realized."

In fact, Braver's long-term study showed even stronger results.♦ Three years after their divorces, the couples in his study were asked, "If you could relive the last several years of your life, would you want a divorce from your ex-spouse today?" Mothers were about 20 percent more likely to say "definitely yes." Even among wives initially left by their husbands, two-thirds were now glad about the breakup, whereas only about half of the men who had initiated the divorce felt as

strongly. "In another analysis," says Braver, "we found that about one in five men who initiated the breakup now felt they had made a bad choice; only 1 percent of the women initiators now thought that way."

In other words, the long term studies conducted by Wallerstein and Braver agree: The winner is usually the mother, and the loser is usually the father.

Marriage Shock

Because of the lopsidedness of the trends described in this chapter, I wanted to get a much better feel for what was going on - in particular, why mothers are so often dissatisfied with marriage, and why divorce is so often a benefit to them.

Feminist Dalma Heyn interviewed numerous married women to try to get to the bottom of the question: Why are married women so depressed?

"Clearly, I don't wish to suggest that marriage, *per se*, is tantamount to a clinical depression,"[♦] says Heyn in her book, *Marriage Shock*. And yet, Heyn does a lot to convince the reader that she means exactly that.

"I just think the truth is[♦] that if you put men and women together in a marriage, something happens to women that doesn't happen to men," says Gayle, an interviewee. "They get smaller. Like that old play in which a woman 'dwindles' into a wife."

One woman after another told her how dramatically her life had changed – for the worse – immediately, as soon as she got married.

- Tami's been married 18 years.[♦] She used to write in her journal every day – of her passion, idealism and dreams – until the day she got married. Then she stopped, even though her husband urged her to continue. She doesn't know why she stopped, except that she felt that when she married she "had a different identity." Her husbands "wants me back the way I was," complete with passion, idealism, and the daily journal. but she can't get that woman back.
- Tracy was 26 when she married,[♦] and immediately began thinking of things that she "should" do or "ought" to be doing. She should be thinner. She should be sexier. She should want sex more. She should want sex *less*. She should be making more money. She should stay home. She should be thinking about having a child. She should be focusing on her career. She should be focusing on her husband's career. She should entertain her husband's friends more. She should see her own friends more. Or less. Or on weekdays only, when they won't "interfere" with her marriage. She should be happier. Kinder. neater. More productive. More cheerful.

More grateful. More frugal. In a better mood. Nicer to her mother. Nicer to *his* mother. She should be giving more to *charity*.

- Elaine and Jack had a fight the night ♦ after they were married, and "I suddenly understood that I had better fix the fight, that it was my responsibility, and that I was sort of better at doing that, moving us toward not fighting. I understood that I was the relationship pro. That it was 'our' marriage but my emotional responsibility. I was the one who would end the fight, manage the emotional stuff, keep the marriage on an even keel." She told herself that she can't be angry, since he wouldn't listen if she were. The author asks if he'd listened to her before when she was angry. Yes, but "at the time, I would have said that I was trying to be more mature, like I thought married people were supposed to be..."

Heyn makes clear that just being a wife — and this change seems to occur overnight — causes a woman suddenly to feel a great deal of pressure to act in a kind of proper wifely way. Who's pressuring her to act that way? "It's not her husband who presented this odd wish list to her, ♦ nor is it her mother or father, yet she didn't dream it up. Who is this perfect woman this new wife thinks she should become? What story is being told to her? Who is whispering instructions about 'earning' love in her ear, becoming *better*, and why does she feel so helpless to resist them."

Heyn invents an imaginary character called "the Witness" ♦ (named after W. H. Auden's *The Witness*) who views the marriage from the outside and passes judgment on everything the wife says and does. For each married woman, the Witness does not exist, except purely in the mind of the woman. "Yet the voice of what I call the Witness is so compelling, so sure in its knowledge, so clear about how to have a relationship, about what you do and how it's supposed to happen and what such a union looks like from the outside, that soon she comes to doubt what she knew and felt and to edit and even ignore her own voice. Once alerted to the Witness's vision of how things should be, she starts viewing her relationship and marriage accordingly, assessing it from this external vantage point, rather than from her own. Appearances suddenly mean more than they did. As she begins to revise her voice to jibe with what the Witness tells her she should be saying, doing, thinking, even wanting, she begins to hand over to it her sense of how to *be* in marriage, as if she knows nothing about relationships at all. She waits further instructions."

So the Witness, who is imaginary but all too real in any married woman's mind according to Heyn, provides an external view of the marriage which causes a woman to submerge her personal view in favor of this external view.

How does all this cause depression in women? Heyn provides an analysis. ♦ Unlike a man, "a woman's sense of self is deeply connected to others, that it is within and through relationships that we develop, thrive, and find our own voice

and strength." Heyn goes through a long, convoluted multi-page description involving sexuality, but to me her argument boils down to the following; The marital relationship, combined with the self-imposed behavioral changes imposed by "the Witness," affects her relationships and her connections with other people, and "all the evidence suggests that it is when women feel threatened with the loss of connection that they are most likely to become depressed." In the past, argues Heyn, a woman in such circumstances might have gone literally crazy. "Today women have another option, one they resort to in ever-increasing numbers: They leave."

Sidebar – The End of a Marriage

The following TV dialog rings true. On the show *Murder One*, Ted was a high-powered defense lawyer who was devoted to his wife and family, as well as to his job, where he is currently defending a well-known Hollywood star against a charge of murder. As a result, Ted is putting in lots of hours, and is becoming pretty well-known himself.

Ted is having a conference with some other lawyers, and is informed that his wife Annie is waiting for him in his office. He goes immediately to his office, where the following dialogue ensues:

Ted: Where's Lizzie?

Annie: With a sitter.

Ted: She ok?

Annie: She's fine. Ted.

Ted: Annie?

Annie: This is awful timing, I know.

Ted: What?

Annie: I keep putting this conversation off and putting it off and I can't anymore.

Ted: What conversation? Talk to me.

Annie: I can't keep living the way we've been living. I've got to [pause] normalize.

Ted: The trial has been exhausting, I know, but it'll be over soon, 3 months tops.

Annie: And then there'll be another trial, and you'll be more famous, pursued for even bigger cases. It doesn't go the other way, Ted. It expands. I think we need to separate for a while.

Ted: Separate?

Annie: I'm losing myself Ted. If I don't get some distance to sort things out ...

Ted: Annie, Annie, don't do this. I've seen people separate. They don't work it out. They get further apart.

Annie: I don't know any other way. Don't make this harder than it is. It's taken all that I have to do this.

Ted: Annie, I love you.

Annie: And I love you. That's not what this is about.

Ted: The what's it about?

Annie: It's about not having a life. We live in a fish bowl, and maybe you

can deal with it, but I can't, and neither can Lizzie.

Ted: [stunned, confused, in tears] I'll, umm, I'll have Loomis drop by tomorrow, after Lizzie's at school, to pick up my things.

Annie: I didn't come here to push you out the door. I'm not talking to a lawyer. I just need to find my center while I still have one.

Ted: OK. Then you do. [Ted forces a smile]

Annie: I do. Yes. I'm sorry. [And then she walks out.]

The Dance of Renewal

The difference between *Marriage Shock* and *Flying Solo* is that the women in the former are still married for the most part, and are struggling to solve their problems with depression and "the Witness" within the bounds of the marriage.

In *Flying Solo*, Carol M. Anderson and Susan Stewart describe interviews they conducted with ninety women who are committed to being unmarried. Some never marry, some are divorced, some are widowed. Some have children the usual way, some through artificial insemination. You name it, the women in this book have done it.

It's interesting that the women in this book say the same sorts of things that the women in the other book say. For example, the following sounds very much like "the Witness" we've heard about in Heyn's book: "Once married, Terry tried to be a dutiful wife[♦] in the traditional ways she had seen her mother practice. She matched the towels, had dinner on the table at six o'clock, kept a nice garden, and greeted her three sons with milk and cookies after school. But the more she tried to fit into the mold of what she thought was the perfect housewife, the more she began to feel 'incredibly crazy.'"

However, even though Terry and her husband were the parents of three boys, Terry decided marriage wasn't for her. "I don't think it was ever so much about marriage per se[♦] as it was about marriage not fitting *me*, personally." So, she told her husband she was dumping him. According to the authors, it was tough for poor Terry for a while, since she had to raise those three boys as a single parent on her own, but in the end everything worked out great: "Midlife had extended its invitation to a dance of renewal, and dance she did. ... The changes she made have brought her the incredible gifts of selfhood and joy."

It also ended up being a Dance of Renewal for Julia. "Staying home with two young children was not the life Julia had imagined, but she tried to make it work.

... She constantly felt like a failure and a fraud because she did not feel comfortable in her role as traditional wife and mother. She recalls, 'I didn't know what it meant to be a wife. I didn't know what it meant to be a partner to anybody. ... I figured I just wasn't doing it right, that there was something lacking in me.'" Relations between Julia and her husband became increasingly tense, and "Julia increasingly realized that she could not develop into a real person within the structure of her marriage," so she dumped her husband, and took away their two daughters, then eight and five.

Oh, "life on her own with two children was frightening and overwhelming" for poor Julia. "At the time I left my marriage...", she says, "I was very much a struggling embryo of a person. But I knew I had to develop in a different direction if I was going to become the person I wanted to be."

So, as a single parent, she went back to college,[♦] and eventually got a job as an executive at a department store. "In her spare time, she loves to write and paint. ... She also enjoys a relationship with a man whom she has known for the past nine years; it is an alliance that meets her needs for intimacy and sex without infringing on her independence."

These women are obviously the "winners" that Wallerstein and Braver talk about, but the problem is that everyone else is a loser. Reading these stories in Anderson and Stewart's book reminds me of one of those war movies where you see the good guys win, but somehow you never see the body parts, the blood, the gore, dead and mutilated bodies, since they're always dead or dying off-screen.

Without a thought about anyone's needs but their own, Terry and Julia destroyed their husbands' lives, and tore their children away from their fathers. In doing so, they increased the statistical likelihood, that their children would become abused and abusive, a teenage parent, and in the criminal justice system. The authors never even hint at these problems while gushing about the dance of renewal.

Basically, *Flying Solo* is a book written by self-centered, self-absorbed women about self-centered, self-absorbed women who destroy other people's lives without even having a thought about it.

Funding the Dance of Renewal

What's the difference between the women whose stories are in *Marriage Shock*, versus those in *Flying Solo*?

Before we get to that, let's focus a little more on the similarities. Both indicate that women suffer a kind of malaise in marriage, which Heyn encapsulates with

the phrase, "The Witness," a phrase that we'll stick with in our discussion for convenience.

As I read about The Witness in these two books, one thing becomes clear: There is nothing in either book to indicate that this malaise is a new thing. In other words, if women are subjected to the torment of the Witness in the 1990s, then wasn't the Witness also around in the 1950s?

In fact, reading all of this stuff has reminded me of a joke that I read in *Reader's Digest* back in the fifties. Someone asks a woman how come she spends so much time cleaning her house every day, and she replies, "I just keep telling myself that today might be the day that my mother-in-law decides to drop in for a visit." Although that joke always stuck in my mind, I never really understood until I read all this stuff.

In fact, I would have to assume that the Witness has existed for centuries, or at least there's no reason that I can find to assume that it hasn't. Perhaps there's even an evolutionary purpose for the Witness — maybe the malaise that it represents is a mechanism to improve marriages and to make humans a better species. Maybe the Witness is a psychological mechanism that has existed in female's minds for millions of years to force humans to improve themselves continually. Maybe the Witness is an evolutionary mechanism to force equality in marriage by giving women a psychological advantage in marriage to balance men's historical control of money and resources.

Whatever the explanation, things are much different today than they've been in previous centuries. Thanks to things like microwave ovens and washing machines, women are no longer tied to the home, and they can earn money on their own and control their own resources. And thanks to laws that give women both the children and substantial child support payments, when she leaves the marriage for any reason whatsoever, a woman can get most of the benefits of marriage without having to actually be married.

The evolutionary deal between men and women is that women provide love and caring for men in exchange for love and money and resources. Today, men still need women as much as they ever did, but women no longer need men — at least not in the same way.

Today, women have another path open to them that they've never had before: A woman can get married, have a child, leave the marriage with the children, and collect child support to fund the "dance of renewal." (And incidentally, although many of the women in *Flying Solo* are obviously collecting child support, the phrase "child support" never appears in the book, as far as I can see. The authors appear to be too embarrassed to mention it.)

If you're a man and you don't believe that any woman would ever just get married with the intention to have a child, get divorced and collect child support,

then suppose someone offered you this deal: You would have to live with a reasonably attractive woman for a few years, after which you would have a free home, a child and you would receive \$5,000 to \$50,000 tax-free for twenty years. Would you take that deal? And if you wouldn't take that deal, wouldn't you agree that there are many men around who *would* take that deal?

Well men, of course, do not have that deal available to them. But women do, all the time. And I believe that the statistics – women terminate marriages twice as often as men, and often give only trivial reasons – and the stories in books like *Flying Solo* show that women are taking that deal in droves. In previous centuries, a woman might have been forced to deal with the Witness within the confines of her marriage, as the women in *Marriage Shock* do; but today, there is no such restriction.

And this brings us back to the question of the differences between the women in the two books we're discussing. Reading the two sets of accounts, it appears to me that the complaints of both sets of women are quite similar. The differences are that in *Marriage Shock* the women stayed in their marriage – even though they aren't *forced* to stay as they would have been in previous centuries, while in *Flying Solo* they're "cashing out" of their marriage, irrespective of the damage they do to their husbands and children. For these women, the "dance of renewal" is being financed by free income of several hundred dollars a week, tax free, from their ex-husbands.

Teen Pregnancy and Liberation Day

In some ways, women seeking to be single mothers are quite different from divorced mothers, but the results are the same in the sense that a child is growing up without a father, and the father has been mostly shut out of his children's life, except to pay child support. Single mothers appear to be motivated by welfare payments, as well as child support.

In *Flying Solo*, the "dance of renewal" applies to women becoming single mothers as well as to mothers getting divorces. However, in the case of single mothers, there is an additional source of income: welfare payments.

The first time, a number of years ago, that I saw the statistic that over 72% of black babies are born out of wedlock, I thought that it must be a misprint. (I recall thinking that 72% doesn't make sense – "it must be 12%," I thought.)

But no, the 72% figure is correct. The figure that 33% of all American children are born out of wedlock is bad enough, but the 72% figure for black children is so high as to be almost beyond belief. And this figure represents enormous discrimination against black fathers by black mothers – black fathers

are being deprived of a normal family life with their children in massive numbers; black men are being discriminated against for being men as much as they're discriminated against for being black.

The huge 72% figure explains all sorts of things. Why are 1/3 of all the young black men in America in jail or on probation or otherwise within the criminal justice system? Political leaders talk about poverty, but there are and have been desperately poor people for all time, but being poor has never before meant that children become drug addicts or murder their neighbors for drug money. The reason that so many young black men are in jail is because they don't have fathers.

Even less dramatic things are explained by this figure. For example, I read a few years ago that young black students were disadvantaged because substantially fewer black families have computers than white families, even when income is the same. This can be explained because computers are a "guy" thing, and fathers are more likely than mothers to want to have a computer around. (Today, as computer prices have come down, this problem has been reduced, as more mothers are willing to purchase computers.)

How did this mess occur? Black leaders tend to blame it on the history of slavery, where black men had reduced authority in their own families, since their families were owned by the slave owner. However, slavery doesn't explain why the number of illegitimate teen births has tripled since the 1960s.

So who's to blame — the girls who have promiscuous sex and have children, or the boys who have promiscuous sex and then desert their children? Politically, the feminist left tends most often to blame the boys, and the Christian right most often tends to blame the girls, although sometimes both tend to blame both.

I don't blame either of those groups. I blame the politicians themselves, and in particular the moronic welfare policies that have been adopted since the 1970s.

I've informally followed welfare issues since the early 1970s, when many states started outreach programs to sign people up for food stamps and other welfare.

Here in Massachusetts, I recall reading how vans were being sent into poor (read: black) neighborhoods for a period of many months. Any woman simply had to walk out of her home and walk into the van in front of her home to sign up for welfare on the spot, provided that she said that her children weren't being supported by their father. So the government was paying mothers to disavow their children's fathers. That's bad enough, but it got worse, much worse.

Through the 70s and 80s, the policy evolved as follows:

- At first, little or no checking was done to verify that women were telling the truth that the children weren't being supported by the father. Later, this policy was changed to police mothers to make sure that the fathers were not actually living with the mother. However, this still permitted fathers to remain in contact with their families and to informally support

their families "under the table," and still allow the mothers to collect welfare.

- Then there was a crackdown on fathers who still were around their families. I recall stories of mothers losing welfare because dad was still in the neighborhood. The message was clear: get rid of dad completely. This still allowed some under the table payments, but they were getting harder.
- Next, the authorities completely closed the noose around fathers. The government has implemented large data processing system to track down fathers, mostly black fathers, who could be found. The message to women was clear: Have sex with several men, so that the father can't be identified, if you want to continue received welfare payments; make sure you don't hang around with the father(s) of your children or, better yet, make sure you don't even know who the father is.
- Finally, with the help of sophisticated DNA testing, it was possible to identify the father of each child, so that welfare payments to the mother could be stopped; and if the father was unemployed or couldn't pay child support, he was sent to jail.

So the government came full circle: mothers, fathers and children living together in the 1960s, supported by the father, were torn apart by offers of free money if the mother gets rid of the father in the 1970s; then after the fathers were driven away from their children, they were jailed for not supporting their children, which is what they were doing in the first place! The difference was that the relationships of these fathers with their families was destroyed in the meantime.

However in traversing that circle, the government did an enormous amount of damage, ripping apart millions of families. The women who first went on welfare in the early 70s now see their daughters and granddaughters on welfare, with no fathers in sight in many cases.

Finally, in the 1990s, the Clinton administration reversed the trend by working with the Republican Congress to end the welfare entitlement that had been instituted when the Nixon administration worked with a Democratic Congress to start it. Around 1993, my view was that the tenor of public opinion was becoming increasingly critical of the welfare culture, and indeed, in 1996, welfare reform passed.

The results have been dramatic. After many years of increase in teen pregnancy and welfare, the 1990s saw significant decreases. By 1999, the teen pregnancy rate had dropped* to the lowest level since 1973. And by 2000, welfare rolls had dropped to their lowest levels since 1966.

So the government was no longer sending the message "Find any man, get pregnant, get rid of the man, and collect welfare" to young girls. No, that message was over.

Now, as we see in books like *Flying Solo* or pronouncements by NOW that promoting marriage is "dangerous" for young women that the message has changed to the following: "Find any man, get pregnant, get rid of the man, and collect child support from him."

However, before addressing that point, let's look at how welfare destroyed black families.

The economic Law of Supply and Demand is very general, and if the government pays women to have children and get rid of the father, then women will have children and get rid of the father. I don't blame the mothers or the fathers – they're simply doing what the government was paying them (actually, paying the mothers) to do.

The 1996 welfare reform law has been controversial, because opponents claimed that depriving women of welfare would cause starvation among single mothers. To say the least, this hasn't happened.

"In 1996, many on the left charged that the government was abandoning the needy,"♦ says Jodie Allen, who served in the Carter administration, and is now a senior writer for *US News & World Report*. "Welfare reform has been a constant disappointment – not to its supporters, mind you, but to its critics. Ever since the 1996 law mandated work for most adult recipients, the program has failed to produce the hordes of homeless, starving families that many predicted. Instead, rolls have falling sharply, and the fraction of the US population getting cash aid hasn't been so small since 1966. Meanwhile crime has plummeted, and some long-blighted neighborhoods even report revivals."

Now that welfare reform has become so successful, the arguments by reform opponents have become more nuanced. Feminist Ellen Goodman argues that these women have simply gone from welfare to poverty, based on a study of welfare reform in Massachusetts. "These mothers are mostly working ... and mostly struggling,"♦ she says, pointing out that their average wage is \$6.60 an hour. "More than a quarter of them are working nights. Two-thirds have jobs without health insurance. Over half are struggling with child care, and many are having trouble paying for food and rent. In short, the good/bad news in the survey ... is that you can't see much difference between low-income women who were once on welfare and those who always worked. They have the same jobs and the same woes."

However, Goodman's argument misses the point: These women are going to obtain job skills and get promotions, so that in a few years they'll be far better off.

Goodman and a lot of feminists have a picture in their minds that these teenage girls have been getting pregnant because their boyfriends wanted them pregnant.

In the discussions of teen motherhood that I had with feminists in online forums one woman wrote to me the following remark, typical of the feminist view: "[Men] aren't after making babies; what they want is to get their rocks off. When the girl gets pregnant, typically they abandon her and go on to the next. The Kleenex Generation of young women gets another crumpled victim added to the waste can."

The view of the feminists that I conversed with was that teenage girls were uneducated and didn't know what they were doing when they got pregnant, and they were taken advantage of by more sophisticated males.

I never bought this view. I agreed that the girls were uneducated, and therefore they might not know what caused World War I or perhaps even where to find France on a map of the world, but I never once believed that teenage girls of any age don't know that having sex makes them pregnant. That is, as Ethyl Merman used to sing, "Doing what comes naturally."[♦]

In fact, I've never agreed with either the view held by the feminist left, or the view held by the Christian right. The latter view is that teen pregnancy is part of the breakdown of the moral fabric of the entire country, a harbinger of our national deliverance to Satan. I didn't buy that either. To me, it was never more complicated than teenage girls following the money. When the government paid them to get pregnant and go on welfare, they did; when the government stopped paying them, but instead paid them to get pregnant and collect child support, they did that.

Back in the 1980s, when it was apparent that teenage pregnancy rates were soaring, welfare advocates denied that welfare was the cause of the increasing rates. For example, Leon Dash, whom we quote later in this chapter, claims that qualifying for welfare has nothing to do with pregnancy because, "Monthly public-assistance checks never meet the needs of one child[♦] – much less those of the adolescent mother of the child or the other children who all too often follow the first."

However, this argument misses the point in several ways. First, even if money isn't the *primary* justification for one particular teenage pregnancy, money is an *enabler* at the very least. Second, no matter what the amount of public assistance, it's more money than they had before, which was nothing. And the dramatic reversal in the teen pregnancy rates after welfare reform shows that the money provided by public assistance was indeed the reason that these teen girls became pregnant.

In his 1986 book, *Men and Marriage*,[♦] George Gilder shows, step by step, using interviews with men, how welfare brings about the destruction of families:

- Even if a man wants to stay with the mother of his children, there are powerful forces preventing him from doing so: she may not want him

there, since that might jeopardize her welfare payments; and he may feel humiliated because she gets more in welfare payments than he can make on the job.

- Thus, over the years, these men end up staying with a succession of women. "When one woman tired of him — or he tired of the woman — he would try to maneuver into another welfare apartment with another welfare mother," says Gilder. "If she already had a man, dangerous tensions would arise. In fact, much of the violence in the ghetto erupts during the periods of transition in this game of musical beds, when a man who has lost his place with one woman seeks to find another bed, often that very night. Not only are the men dependent on welfare, but many of the scars from ghetto crime stem directly from that dependency."
- All the teenage girls in the ghetto are very aware of a special day in their lives, "liberation day," the day they turn 16, according to Gilder. "If you are a fifteen-year-old girl in the ghetto, doing poorly at school, fighting with your mother, afraid of the men in the house, you will also want to escape, and you will know that it will be possible on liberation day."
- "On your sixteenth birthday, the government will offer you a chance for independence, in an apartment of your own: free housing, medicine, legal assistance, and a combination of welfare payments and food stamps worth several hundred dollars a month. It may not seem much to a sociologist, but it is a package hugely beyond the pittance allowed you by your mother and far beyond the earnings capacity of any of your male acquaintances. It is all offered on one crucial condition. You must bear an illegitimate child."
- "The one safe, sure, and simple way for the girl to win liberation in an apartment of her own is to bear an illegitimate child. It is not surprising that, in the face of such an overwhelming inducement from the state, millions of young women have indeed launched such children into the welfare culture. As this behavior becomes accepted in welfare communities, it is adopted by many girls, black and white, on or off welfare, without calculation or deceit, as a simple reflection of a way of life."

Gilder allows himself to hint at a feeling of contempt for the state of denial exhibited by sociologists who believe that welfare payments have had absolutely nothing to do with the explosion in teen pregnancy. This state of denial seems to be rampant among those opposing welfare reform.

A deeper picture of how this state of denial is engendered is painted by Leon Dash, an African-American Washington Post reporter who moved into an

apartment in Washington Highlands, the poorest ghetto in Washington D.C. For years, Dash was an award-winning reporter covering the ongoing wars in Chad, Libya and Kenya, and other areas of Africa. In 1983, he decided to stay in Washington to be near his daughter, and soon after he took on the assignment of reporting on welfare from his own ghetto apartment. The results can be found in his book, *When Children Want Children, An Inside Look at the Crisis of Teenage Parenthood*.

Dash went into the project with the usual assumptions. "I began my research into adolescent childbearing burdened with adult presumptions," says Dash. "I assumed that the high incidence of teenage pregnancy among poor, black urban youths nationwide grew out of youthful ignorance both about birth-control methods and adolescent reproductive capabilities. I also thought the girls were falling victim to cynical manipulation by the boys, although the numbers of babies born to adolescent girls appeared to be awfully high for this to be the dominant pattern."

Dash began asking knowledgeable colleagues and friends what they thought, and the answers came back the same: The cause was irresponsible, macho boys who "are taking advantage of ignorant, emotionally needy girls." According to Dash, some people added that the boys are "following familiar patterns of behavior set by the men they know and put the burden of contraceptives on the girls. Others claimed the girls are largely uninformed about the consequences of sexual activity without birth control."

Dash began interviewing the teenage girls in his neighborhood, and indeed their stories confirmed his assumptions. However, one day, several months after starting the project, something startling happened. Dash was questioning an 18 year old girl, Tauscha, about the extent of her knowledge of contraceptives, and the conversation had gone on for several hours. Finally, Tauscha let the veil slip away. "Mr. Dash, will you please stop asking me about birth control? Girls out here know all about birth control. There's too many birth-control pills out here. All of them know about it. Even when they twelve, they know what [birth control] is. Girls out here get pregnant because they *want* to have babies! You need to learn what's going on inside people's homes these days!"

Dash was startled by this revelation because of all the dozens of people he'd spoken to, this was the first time he learned that these girls put on a front. And once Tauscha let down her hair, all the other girls in the neighborhood suddenly were a lot more open and frank.

"*None* of this childbearing is an accident!" said Tauscha. "When girls get pregnant, it's either because they want something to hold on to that they can call their own or because of the circumstances at home. Because their mother doesn't pamper them the way they want to be pampered or they really don't have anyone to go to or talk to or call their own. Some of them do it because they resent their

parents." Tauscha didn't use Gilder's phrase, "Liberation Day," but the thrust of the argument was the same.

In the end, according to Dash, "The concept that smart, macho boys were manipulating dumb, emotionally needy girls also turned out to be a myth. None of the girls I met were easily manipulated by anyone, especially a boyfriend, although they were quite willing and able, when they perceived it to be to their advantage, to play the *role* of a used, abused female victim. The girls I came to know well were cynical about their relationships with *everyone* and very savvy about what their boyfriends were capable of. One thing was clear. The boyfriends could not convince their girlfriends to have children unless the girls *wanted* them."

George Gilder's analyses and Leon Dash's experiences reveal how much welfare has destroyed families in the black communities, but one topic neither author mentions is how aggressive child support enforcement has targeted black men.

A 1993 NPR news story[♦] indicated that throughout the United States, law enforcement officials have been actively pursuing black men — "deadbeat dads" — for not making child support payments. In an interview one dad said he was in jail for six months out of the previous year for not making all his child support payments, and the reason he couldn't make the payments is that he was unemployed during the recession at that time.

Let's make it clear what happened here: Since the 1960s, the government has been paying women (through welfare) to dump their husbands, so much so that 72% of all black children are born out of wedlock. Then, to save money, the government has pursued and jailed men to force them to make child support payments that they would never have had to deal with if the government hadn't originally paid the mothers to dump the fathers.

Child support enforcement has a very large racial component. Welfare and child support enforcement, taken together, has been a disaster for men in general, but because of the focus on blacks, it is not unfair to say that society is discriminating against black men as much because they're men as because they're black.

Even though we want to focus on divorce in this chapter, we've taken this detour through welfare motherhood for a couple of reasons.

One reason, of course, is as a warning to men: In case you think the young women you date are naïve in any way about sex, you may be in for an unpleasant surprise. Certainly if some young woman decided to use you as a source of sperm in order to become a single mother, she would be encouraged to do so not only by the teen culture that we've described, as well as books like *Flying Solo*. And your life would be just as much a mess as if she'd married you, gotten pregnant, and divorced you.

The second reason is to illustrate what is really a remarkable similarity in attitudes between divorcing women and single teen mothers: namely the "liberation day" concept. When you read through the malaise of the women interviewed in *The Marriage Shock*, and you see how women dump the fathers of their children in *Flying Solo*, you realize that these women are seeking liberation in the same way that teenage girls are seeking liberation from their mothers. And in both cases, the enabler is money, from a man or from the government.

If you tell teenage girls that they can get an apartment of their own and regular welfare payments just by getting pregnant, a lot of them will do it, and have done it; and if you tell older women that they can get a nice home of their own and regular child support payments just by getting married, getting pregnant, and getting divorced, then a lot of them will do it, and have done it.

Hormones are Still King

Writing this chapter, I'm struck by how much men are still men and women are still women. If it's true, as many women point out, that men only think with their penises, then it's equally true that women only think with their uteruses.

Women are still scrambling to have babies, and taking care of them, getting money and resources wherever they can; and men are still scrambling to have sex with as many women as they can. Sure, maybe men these days spend an extra hour or two, on the average, doing housework, but beyond minor changes like that, decades of modern feminism have not changed men and women in any significant way, as far as I can see. Even Heyn's "Witness," the imaginary figure that forces married women to look at their marriages from an external viewpoint, may well be something that's been around in one form or another since evolutionary times.

Over millions of years of evolution, men and women have made a deal: women provide the children and men provide the support. More and more, thanks to increasingly generous welfare and child support payments, women could give birth and raise children without making any commitment to any man.

Unlike other authors, I do not criticize women (or men) who make individual choices based on their own needs. If the government offered free money to all Greeks, I would strongly disapprove of that as a government policy, and yet, I would not feel I was being inconsistent if I took the money. After all, I have to pay taxes for government programs I disapprove of, so why shouldn't I take handouts from government programs I disapprove of?

So if the government is adopting policies which pay women to have children and dump the fathers of those children, either through single motherhood or divorce, then I don't criticize the women who take advantage of those policies, but

I do criticize the policies themselves. These government policies are supporting the philosophy provided of *Flying Solo*, which encourages women to have children and collect money, without worrying about the relationship between the children and their fathers.

"Going Hunting"

There's one more piece to this jigsaw puzzle to be filled in: Who's funding the lifestyles of the millions of women who are still having children out of wedlock?

The statistics indicate that something new is happening. Consider this:

- The number of births to teens has decreased by 24%♦ from 1990 to 1998.
- But the number of households headed by single parents has increased by 13% from 1990 to 1998.

There's more than one way to explain this discrepancy, but these figures certainly suggest that while the number of single mothers funded by welfare has been going down, the number of single mothers funded by child support is going up.

We have a suggested answer from Rick Brita, the man we met in chapter 1 (see page 46) and who did research to try to figure out how his estranged girlfriend could get away with making totally false abuse charges and prevent him from seeing his children except in those hateful visitation centers for years.

In his search for information, he spoke to a number of single women who were like his estranged girlfriend. He heard the following from one, and similar statements from a number of others:

"You men think that you're hunting us, but we're hunting you."

These women go to bars and nightclubs to find men who make a good salary, according to Brita. They have no interest in having a relationship with these men, only to get pregnant and collect child support. Some of these young women collect two or child support checks each week. They add:

"We own you. You're a slave. You're going to pay us every single week for the next 20 years. We can have an outside agency [the Massachusetts Department of Revenue] collect the money for us and send it to us, and if you don't pay us, we can have you put into jail. And you'll do anything we say, because otherwise we won't let you see your child."

Brita says that he hears this a lot from girls from second and third generation welfare families. These girls come from a family history of getting pregnant and

having the government pay for all their expenses. These girls want to continue this kind of lifestyle, and to do so they "go hunting" to find men to collect money from.

It's impossible to conclude from this little bit of anecdotal evidence that this is a major trend, but Brita claims, based on the women he's spoken to, that this may well be "the next big thing."

However, this attitude isn't surprising at all.

This is exactly what Carol M. Anderson and Susan Stewart, the authors of *Flying Solo*, are telling women to do.

Anderson and Stewart tell women to take their children and leave their husbands in order to enjoy the "dance of liberation." Those authors never mention child support or separating the children from their fathers, but it's obvious that the women in their stories are destroying the lives of their husbands and boyfriends, and are funding their new "dance of liberation" lifestyle with child support money.

And we've seen that NOW and other feminist organizations claim that marriage is "dangerous" for many women.

The message is clear: The women "go hunting" for men with good incomes in order to get pregnant and collect child support are just doing what NOW and Anderson and Stewart are telling them to do.

And judging from the statistics that indicate that the number of single parent households is growing, there may well be millions or even tens of millions of women following that strategy.

On Condoms and DNA Tests

Note the following:

- I know of two or three divorced men who believe that their wives married them with no intention except to have a child and collect child support;
- In my personal experience, I once knew a single mother who told me that she had purposely gotten pregnant by a man she didn't intend to marry, in order to collect child support;
- I read a newspaper story of a woman who, in the 80s, got unexpectedly pregnant by her boyfriend, whom she didn't want to marry, so she had a one-night affair with an older man who'd been hitting on her. She named him as the father, and he paid her child support for almost ten years, before he insisted on getting a DNA test, and proved that he wasn't the father. She then was able to name her old boyfriend, now married with a

good job, as the father, and force him to pay child support. This woman purposely destroyed two families' lives.

- A number of state courts are now ruling that a man who doesn't demand a DNA test right at a child's birth or shortly thereafter forfeits his right to do so. A woman may force you to pay child support to her, but if you discover five years later that your girlfriend lied to you, then the court will force you to continue paying child support even though it's not your child. The courts are willing to use any excuse they can to stick innocent men with a bill they don't owe.

NOW likes to claim the marriage is "dangerous" for some women, but these statistics show that NOW has it backward: Not only marriage, but mere dating is very dangerous for males.

If you're dating young women, the rules are pretty clear:

- Make sure you wear a condom, even if she claims to be using a diaphragm, since you have no way to verify that. You'll have to judge for yourself when it's safe for you to trust her, but it seems to me that until you've met her parents and verified that she has a good relationship with her father, you should be very, very cautious.
- If your girlfriend names you as the father of her baby, get a DNA test, just to be sure. If you don't do so quickly, then you'll lose your legal right to do so.

If you're dating a young woman and any of a number of sticky situations arise, you might mention to her in passing that you believe that any non-custodial father should be extremely aggressive in fighting for custody and visitation. If she's just out "hunting," then that remark might scare her off.

Is Marriage Really Bad for Women?

A lot of what I described in this chapter is based on perception, especially women's perceptions. As I pointed out, many men aren't even aware that there's a problem when their wives file for divorce.

But I don't want to leave this chapter with the implication that marriage is undeniably great for men, and bad for women.

In *The Case for Marriage: Why married people are happier, healthier, and better off financially*, researchers Linda J. Waite and Maggie Gallagher showed that married women are actually much better off than single women. As the title of the book indicates, women are better off in practically every way — even to the fact that

married women are much less likely to victims of domestic violence than single and divorced women are.

Indeed, the feminist dictum that "Marriage is dangerous for most women," the opposite is true – being single or divorced is more dangerous for most women.

But what about happiness? Should a woman really remain in an unhappy marriage, even for the sake of the children?

For the book mentioned above, Linda Waite looked at the National Survey of Families and Households, and did an analysis on women who were *unhappily* married in 1987-88, and still married to the same people in 1992-94. The results were dramatic and startling:♦ the women who stuck it out found that their marriages improved; in fact, 86% find that their marriages are happier five years later. Of the one's who initially rated their marriages as "very unhappy" and stayed married, 77% said that their marriages were either "quite happy" or "very happy" five years later.

Unfortunately, the above study doesn't necessarily tell us everything we want to know, since it's based on a sort of "reverse clinical" sample – just women who stayed married. For example, it may be that the ones who stayed married were the ones that just happened to be in a bad mood on the day that they first answered the question, and their unhappiness wasn't really pervasive.

Still, it provides us, as a society, with motivation to find ways to encourage women to stay married to the fathers of their children. We don't want to force women by law to stay in an unhappy or abusive relationship, but we do want to encourage women not to leave a marriage for trivial reasons, such as the ones we've seen earlier in this chapter.

Proposal: Increase Father Custody

One proposal to encourage women not to leave marriage for trivial reasons is to increase father custody in case of divorce.

This proposal contains the following elements:

- Judges will be provided with an additional custody option which is not currently available: the father gets custody, but the mother does not pay child support.
- The courts will adopt a set of policies to give this option equal weight to the previously standard option (mother gets custody, father pays child support). Other options will still be possible, at the discretion of the judge, but selected less infrequently.

- In the long run, the federal government should mandate the states to use the new custody option at least 25% of the time.

This may seem like a strange proposal, but as we'll explain, it has the potential to reduce divorce, poverty, child abuse and domestic violence.

Divorce rate. Just as ending the welfare entitlement substantially reduced the rate of single teen motherhood, there's good reason to hope that this proposal will reduce the rate of divorce. Women seek divorce twice as often as men, and it seems likely that women will get far fewer divorces if they can't be certain, as they are today, that they'll get custody and child support.

Child Abuse. As is the case today, a judge will not give custody to an abusive parent. However, as we discussed in chapter 3, children are statistically safer in their fathers' homes: they're less likely to be abused by their biological fathers than by their mothers, and are less likely to be abused by their fathers' girlfriends than by their mothers' boyfriends. The result is a statistical net reduction in child abuse.

Poverty. Custodial fathers are more likely to work, or continue working, than custodial mothers. Therefore, a child with a custodial mother is more likely to have only one parent with a paycheck, while a child with a custodial father is more likely to have two parents with paychecks. Since a child living with his father will be likely supported by parents with two paychecks instead of one, the number of children in poverty will be reduced.

Domestic Violence. The reduction in divorce, child abuse and poverty will lead to a reduction in domestic violence.

Having two parents. I haven't seen any figures on this, but I believe it's likely that a non-custodial mother is going to be more likely to have regular visitation with his mother than a non-custodial father. This means that a child of a custodial father is more likely to have two active parents in his life.

All of these factors will mean that a children of divorce will be statistically better off than they are now, and it will also mean that there will be fewer children of divorce.

Advice for Men: In Praise of Peter Pan

Women psychologists refer to the "Peter Pan Syndrome" for men who find it very difficult to commit to a relationship and marriage. According to these

psychologists, the Peter Pan Syndrome is a bad thing. This chapter implies that it may be a good thing.

If you're a man planning marriage, you should be aware that there's a 50-50 chance that your marriage will end in divorce, and that your wife is more than twice as likely to seek a divorce as you are, often for the most trivial of reasons. Why? The answers aren't 100% certain, but it seems to be caused by a kind of malaise that affects women much more than men, as we've been discussing.

And there doesn't seem to be anything to do about it. Women seem to reach these conclusions no matter what you do, within limits.

If you are planning on getting married, there are some things you can do to evaluate your relationship in order to reach a decision as to whether you should go ahead with the wedding or run for your life.

What we're talking about here is common sense steps that everyone should take. Even if you don't entirely agree with the conclusions of this chapter, you should still take these steps.

This advice is derived from years of research by University of Washington psychology professor John Gottman into the communications styles, behaviors, and processes of married couples, correlating those behaviors to find a model for determining whether a marriage will succeed or fail.

For two decades, Gottman has studied hundreds of couples of a long period time to see what factors, measured at the first meeting, correlated to divorce or separation after a number of years.

From 1981 to 1991, Gottman studied 79 couples, to determine which factors, measured in 1981 correlated to separation or divorce by 1991.

We're presenting this information to allow you to evaluate your relationship, so that you can decide whether to terminate the relationship before you get married, or at least before your wife becomes pregnant.

"Whatever you say, dear!"

*Alone from night to night you'll find me
Too weak to break the chains that bind me
I need no shackles to remind me
I'm just a prisoner of love*

*For one command I stand and wait now
From one who's master of my fate now*

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

I can't escape for it's too late now

I'm just a prisoner of love

– *Prisoner of Love* by Clarence Gaskill and Leo Rubin,
sung by Perry Como

It's the stuff that love songs are made of: "Be mine, and I'll do anything you want."

In fact, that's exactly what men must do if they want their marriages to last, according to Gottman.

[Men] should forget all that psychobabble about active listening and validation. If you want your marriage to last for a long time ... just do what your wife says. Go ahead, give in to her.... The marriages that did work all had one thing in common – the husband was willing to give in to the wife. We found that only those newlywed men who are accepting of influence from their wives are ending up in happy, stable marriages."

Gottman says that he's amused[♦] in the way that this observation has been portrayed by the media, in newspaper cartoons and even a *Saturday Night Live* parody. However, he insists that it simply means that the husband has figured out how to convey honor and respect.[♦] For example, one man in a successful marriage is a Mormon, a religion that "holds that the husband should make all the decisions for the family," according to Gottman. He quotes this man as saying, "I wouldn't think about making a decision she disagreed with. That would be very disrespectful. We talk and talk about it till we both agree, and *then* I make the decision."

In fact, his research indicates the following:

In our long-term study of 130 newlywed couples,[♦] now in its eighth year, we have found that, even in the first few months of marriage, men who allow their wives to influence them have happier marriages and are less likely to divorce than men who resist their wives' influence. Statistically speaking, when a man is not willing to share power with his partner, there is an 81 percent chance that his marriage will self-destruct.

If you're a man planning to get married, Gottman's observation provides with some concrete steps you can take to make a reality check on your upcoming marriage.

First, you should begin by making a list of all the issues that are important in any marriage: what kind of home (apartment, house, etc.), what city, how many

kids, how the household chores are split up, who makes decisions about spending money, and so forth.

Next, you need to determine your fiancée's attitudes and desires in each of these areas. You can do this simply by interviewing her, but when you do so, be careful to make sure you listen to her views. When two people are looking forward to getting married, very often they're both on "good behavior," and each subordinates his or her views to the other. You have to make sure that your wife-to-be is not doing that, because that will change as soon as you're married.

If these first two steps are too difficult, then enlist the help of a third party whom you both trust, who can act as a counselor. This kind of counseling is fairly common these days for young people planning to get married.

The third step is not very common these days, and it's the one you must perform. For each of the issues on which you disagree, you have to think about whether you can live with her solutions. If you want to live in the city and she wants to live in the country, how will you feel about living in the country? If you want to raise the kids in your religion, and she wants to raise them in hers, how will you feel about raising them in hers?

Gottman provides a list of the most "typical solvable problems," disagreements that can be resolved, usually by the husband going along with the wife:

- *Stress.* Especially when both husband and wife work, coming home can be a time of tension for both. They need to agree on a time to unwind when they both get home to decompress.
- *Relations with In-Laws.* "At the core of the tension is a turf battle between the two women for the husband's love. The wife is watching to see whether her husband backs her or his mother. She is wondering, 'Which family are you really in?' Often the mother is asking the same question. The man, for his part, just wishes the two women could get along better. ... After all, he has loyalties to each, and he must honor and respect both. Unfortunately, this attitude often throws him into the role of peacemaker or mediator, which invariably makes the situation worse." The solution is clear. "The only way out of this dilemma is for the husband to side with the wife against his mother."
- *Money.* Frequently, husband and wife wish to spend money on different things, and this is the heart of many disagreements. Strict budgeting and planning is necessary, along with many compromises. Gottman doesn't single this issue out, but it's presumably one where it's most important for the husband to go along with the desires of the wife.
- *Sex.* Couples need to have frank discussions about sex in order to meet each other's needs.

- *Housework.* "When a husband doesn't do his agreed-upon share of the housework, the wife usually feels disrespected and unsupported. Inevitably this leads to resentment and a less satisfying marriage. ... [The] key to resolving this issue should be clear: Men have to do more housework!"
- *Becoming Parents.* "In the year after the first baby arrives, 70 percent of wives experience a precipitous plummet in their marital satisfaction. ... What separates the blissful mothers from the rest has nothing to do with whether their baby is colicky or a good sleeper, whether they are nursing or bottle-feeding, working or staying home. Rather, it has everything to do with whether the husband experiences the transformation to parenthood along with his wife or gets left behind."

The final category, "Becoming Parents," is especially problematical. You can resolve problems in the other issues early in marriage, or even prior to marriage, but I can think of no way to resolve problems in this area prior to an actual birth.

And yet, this is most critical time of the marriage. Gottman doesn't note this, but we know that this is the point where the wife first becomes entitled to receive child support payments if the marriage dissolves, and, coincidentally, it's also the time when most divorces occur.

Whether you agree or disagree with the contention made throughout this chapter that availability of large child support payments is a major motivating factor for women seeking divorce, the advice to perform this evaluation is still just common sense. Make sure that you can agree on all the other issues, because if you can't agree on those, then you probably won't see eye to eye when the baby comes.

Stable Marriages

The fact that you and your fiancée or wife argue does not mean that your marriage is headed for divorce. In fact, arguments occur in almost all marriages.

According to Gottman, "It seems then that Tolstoy was wrong.* He said (in *Anna Karenina*) that happy marriages are all alike but that each unhappy marriage is unhappy in its own way. In fact, all unhappy marriages appear to be quite alike, whereas there are three ways of having a stable adaptation to marriage."

Below, we'll discuss the ways in which unhappy marriages are alike, but here we'll describe his three categories of stable marriages:

- **Conflict-avoiding couples** (or **conflict-minimizing couples**): They are fairly flat emotionally and somewhat distant from one another.

- **Volatile couples:** These are just the opposite. They have a great deal of intimacy and also a great deal of autonomy in their marriage. They seem to thrive on combat, and they try to influence one another about most everything. This type of couple is quite passionate and emotionally expressive. They fight a lot, but they also laugh a lot. They have a wide range of emotional expression.
- **Validating couples:** This group is in the middle. They use influence attempts sparingly, and only after they have heard, without much disagreement, one another's feelings about the issues under discussion. They are emotionally close, and a sense of "we-ness" seems to be critical to them, but their level of emotional expression is also fairly low and generally more neutral than the passionately volatile couples.

Although these three kinds of stable marriages are very different, there's one very interesting thing that they have in common, a kind of "universal constant" that holds for them, but not for unstable marriages.

It turns out that it makes sense to count the number of times each partner says something positive and supporting to the other partner, and the number of times one says something negative and hostile to the other.

Surprisingly, in a stable marriage, the ratio of positive remarks to negative remarks is almost 5 positive remarks for each negative remark, for each partner. In unstable marriages, however, ratio for remarks by the husband is 1.06 positive per negative, and 0.67 positive per negative for the husband.

Now let's look more closely at unstable relationships, and we'll see that the point is not *whether* you argue, but, as we're about to see, *how* you argue.

The Four Horsemen

Men and women do not argue the same. Women complain that men "ignore" them, and men complain that women "nag" them.[♦] and Gottman's research shows that these interactions do in fact occur, and in fact may be due in part to physiological differences between men and women: Arguing with a spouse aggravates men more than women,[♦] as measured by such things as blood pressure and heart rate, and the state of aggravation lasts much longer for men than for women. Furthermore, "males have more trouble regulating their own negative emotions than females,"[♦] with the result that many men find it much easier and more comfortable simply to avoid arguing.

This leads to the really not surprising observation that a woman's behavior is quite different with her family that she is with strangers:

There is evidence that the social behavior of women in stranger groups is tentative, polite, and subordinate♦.... [However,] women's *public* tentativeness and deference, the acceptance of a subordinate role and politeness in women in stranger groups does not hold in marriages. In the research literature ... women's marital interaction, in fact, has been consistently described as more confronting, demanding, coercive, and highly emotional (both positive and negative emotions) than the interaction of their husbands.... Men, on the other hand, have been described as conflict-avoiding, withdrawing, placating, logical, and avoidant of emotions.

These are the basic physiological and behavioral facts which lead to the patterns which Gottman can recognize as indicating whether or not a marriage is in distress. When the "nagging" becomes contempt and the "ignoring" turns into stonewalling, then a marriage is in trouble.

Gottman boasts a 91% record of being able to predict whether a couple will stay together or divorce.♦ He can make his prediction about a particular couple after watching the two interact for less than 15 minutes.

He does it as follows: He asks the couple to come to his "Love Lab," where he can watch them interact and videotape them, as well as measure their bodily reactions using EKG monitors, pulse monitors, and other instruments. He asks them to come prepared with issues that they frequently argue about, and he asks them to argue about them in the lab. He rates the quality of their argument, based on several indicators that we'll outline, and from that he predicts, with high accuracy, whether they'll stay together.

Based on longitudinal studies of hundreds couples in three studies over a 20-year period, he's been able to isolate precisely four attitudes and behaviors, which he calls "The Four Horsemen" (named for the Biblical Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse which, according to the book of Revelations, will signal the end of the world).

The Four Horsemen are these four disastrous ways of interacting:

criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling♦

When these appear in a marriage, the marriage is heading for divorce, according to Gottman's research.

In greater detail, here are the steps that a marriage in distress typically goes through, ending in dissolution:

- **Criticism.** "You didn't pick up your coat last night"♦ is a complaint; "I had to pick up your coat for you - you just don't care" is criticism. A

complaint presents a problem that can be fixed; a criticism is harsher and more general. Complaints and criticisms tend to come from the wife, at least initially, as we've explained, because men prefer to avoid these kinds of arguments.

- **Defensiveness.** If the husband responds positively to his wife's complaints, for example by admitting he's wrong and promising to do better, then the problem might be resolved. However, defensiveness is a way of saying, "The problem isn't *me*, it's *you*," for example by saying, "I'm tired when I come home from work, and you want me to do a million things."

Both husbands and wives typically engage in defensive interactions. These interactions form the basis of what are called "everything but the kitchen sink" arguments in marital advice books. Both partners hurl accusations back and forth, with neither partner really listening to the other.

Typical cues for defensiveness are: "Yes-but," a statement appears to agree, but turns it into a disagreement; cross-complaining, where each partner launches new complaints without responding to the partner's complaints; counterattack, where a partner attempts to shift the blame to the other partner; and negative mindreading, a statement like "You never clean up - just don't care if house is clean or not," usually beginning with "you always" or "you never."

- **Bad Memories.** This is not one of the Horsemen, but it's a sign that things are going wrong. "In a happy marriage couples tend to look back on their early days fondly... But when a marriage is not going well, history gets rewritten – for the worse." When talking about how they met, or their wedding, couples in distress tend to exaggerate the negative.
- **Flooding.** This is an internal process which occurs in both men and women, though typically in different ways, but which means "I'm fed up; I can't cope; I can't handle it any more." When a wife can no longer handle her husband ignoring her, or when a husband can no longer handle his wife's complaining, or when either partner can't handle the other partner's defensiveness, then something inside of them snaps, or "flips." It's at this point that criticism turns to contempt and disgust, and defensiveness either gets much worse or turns to stonewalling.

Gottman indicates that this "flip" is a fairly catastrophic event in a relationship, and it occurs rather suddenly, as soon as some threshold of the partner's cumulative negative behavior has been reached, and that once this flip has occurred, it is likely to be permanent. In addition, there

are some events that can precipitate a catastrophic flip right away: an extramarital affair or a violent act.

- **Stonewalling.** This is typically male behavior, and it occurs when the husband feels flooded and simply shuts his wife out. When a husband gets met with a barrage of criticism from his wife, he might hide behind a newspaper, or get up and leave the room. He avoids a fight, but also avoids his marriage. Although both husbands and wives can be stonewallers, this behavior is far more common among men.

The result can be a vicious cycle, according to Gottman: The more wives complain and criticize, the more husbands withdraw and stonewall; the more husbands withdraw and stonewall, the more wives complain and criticize.

- **Contempt or disgust.** Signs of contempt are sarcasm, cynicism, name-calling, eye-rolling, sneering, mockery, and hostile humor.* It typically occurs when the wife becomes flooded with the husband's stonewalling, although either partner can express contempt. When one partner becomes disgusted and contemptuous of the other, the marriage is in dire trouble.

Gottman issues the following caution:

Just because your marriage follows this pattern, it's not a given that a divorce is in the offing. In fact, you'll find examples of all four horsemen and even occasional flooding in stable marriages. But when the four horsemen take up *permanent* residence, when either partner begins to feel flooded routinely, the relationship is in serious trouble. Frequently feeling flooded leads almost inevitably to distancing yourself from your spouse. That in turn leads you to feel lonely. Without help, the couple will end up divorced or living in a dead marriage, in which they maintain separate, parallel lives in the same home. They may go through the motions of togetherness – attending their children's plays, hosting dinner parties, taking family vacations. But emotionally they no longer feel connected to each other. They have given up.

It is my impression (and that of marital therapists)* that defensiveness, contempt, and disgust are particularly dysfunctional behaviors in a marital conflict resolution, probably indicative of a higher level of rejection of the relationship.... In the area of negativity, both contempt, particularly the wife's, and the defensiveness of both partners were predictors of divorce. It appears that ... the wife's contempt has its effect on divorce through the defensiveness of both partners.

Taken together, these results suggest a dynamic of dissolution in which wives ... already have, to some degree, emotionally rejected the marriage. This emotional rejection is manifested in the following dynamic: Wives in marriages that are dissolving do not provide specific positive behaviors in presenting a problem and responding to their husband's views; instead, they complain and criticize in presenting a problem, and the contempt they feel combines with their own and husband's defensiveness to amplify emotional distance and rejection.

We've provided this information to help you decide whether you're in a dead end relationship. If you're a man planning to get married, and you see Gottman's four horsemen becoming prevalent in your relationship: try to salvage the relationship or run for your life.

It's important that you reach resolution before you get married, or if you're married, it's absolutely imperative that you reach resolution before your wife becomes pregnant. Once she's pregnant, and guaranteed of receiving child support payments, it will be much easier for her to become contemptuous of you (Gottman's third horseman).

This is particularly true if either defensiveness or contempt has turned into something with an element of violence. As you know from chapter 3, it makes no difference whether you're violent or she's violent – you will be blamed either way, and your life is on a downward spiral.

If you decide to try to save the relationship, then you can get Gottman and Silver's book, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, and try some of the exercises you'll find there.

But it seems to me that Gottman's research makes it pretty clear what you have to do: "If you want your marriage to last for a long time ... just do what your wife says. Go ahead, give in to her.... The marriages that did work all had one thing in common – the husband was willing to give in to the wife."

Try giving in to your wife on everything, and see what happens. For many men, just doing this turns their marriages from misery into magic. If this doesn't work, then Gottman's research indicates that your marriage is unlikely to survive anyway. But if you can do it, and giving in to your wife makes Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse disappear, then you should be able to save your marriage.

Can This Marriage be Saved?

There is still one big, nagging question left over: Why should women ever get married (except to pursue a marry / baby / divorce / child support strategy), given

the evidence summarized by Susan Faludi earlier in this chapter (p. 186) that married women are "unhappier" (more depressed, with more illness and mortality) than unmarried or divorced women?

In a section entitled "Is There a Contradiction Here?", Gottman points out that those findings contradict other findings that women are, in fact, "happier" and healthier within marriage. He believes that the research quoted by Faludi is actually contains systematic statistical errors, and that in fact women are benefited by marriage and harmed by divorce.

The argument that married women are happier is summarized as follows:

- The finding that married women are "unhappier" than unmarried women is based on surveys that include women in both stable and distressed marriages.
- However, Gottman's research on the four horsemen, described in the previous section, shows that women in distressed marriages are frequently involved in a lot of argument with a great deal of defensiveness.
- Other research finds that women in these situations are "unhappier" (suffer from depression and other health problems).
- If you separate out the women in stable marriages from those in distressed marriages, you find that the happiest women are in stable marriages, and the unhappiest women are in distressed marriages.
- Men also benefit from marriage, but the reason we don't see the same splitting when we separate men in stable marriages from those in distressed marriages is that men handle the distress by stonewalling rather than arguing, so that they don't suffer the same "unhappiness" that women do in distressed marriages.

When these observations are combined with the findings of Linda Waite (see p. 207) that when women unhappy in marriage stick it out, they overwhelmingly find their marriages to be happy after a few years, we get a very, very different picture than the one painted by *Flying Solo* and by many feminists.

In this chapter I've argued that public policies, especially large child support payments, that encourage women to terminate their marriages or writers who encourage women to leave their marriages for "liberation" may help women, but they devastate the husbands who are left behind and the children are now without a father.

But now I can argue that these things don't even help women. There is apparently a growing body of evidence to indicate that although unhappily married women may improve some areas of their lives by divorcing, they can find

the greatest happiness in life by sticking with their marriages and finding a way to make it work.

Questions and Answers

1. Q: Your advice is ridiculous. My fiancée loves me and can't keep her hands off of me. She's not going to divorce me.

A: Well, that's great that you have the body of Adonis today, but what about ten years from now, when you have a paunch, hemorrhoids, and possibly even prostate problems. Your wife will be busy with the kids, and she might not be interested in you at all anymore. What happens then?

Study and Research

1. Analyze a few of your friends' divorces, if possible by interviewing both parties, and try to determine what caused the divorce. If there was a single event that precipitated the divorce, such as an act of infidelity, then try to go beyond that and determine the underlying malaise that affected the marriage. Could this marriage have been saved?
2. Do a survey of some of your happily married women friends, and see if they identify with Heyn's "Witness." Do your women friends feel pressure from imaginary characters who pass judgment on everything they say and do?
3. There's a friendly rivalry going on between marriage researchers John Gottman, whose research we described in the chapter, and Howard Markman, co-director of the Center for Marital and Family Studies at the University of Denver. Gottman's book, with Nan Silver, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, was mentioned in the chapter. Markman also has a book, along with Scott Stanley and Susan L. Blumberg, called *Fighting for Your Marriage: Positive Steps for Preventing Divorce and Preserving a Lasting Love*, which is quite similar in style in format to Gottman's, but with different kinds of questionnaires and exercises to reflect his own research. Get copies of both books (each costs \$15 or less on Amazon.com) and compare them for how they apply to your own marriage and your friends' marriages.

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

4. If you're a student or a scholar, then compare the two researchers' approaches and techniques, and see if you can come up with an integrated theory.

Chapter 5 – Lawyers

Based on formal and informal interviews with hundreds of divorced men and women, it appears that a significant number of divorce lawyers are simply out and out abusive, scamming their clients, and many others are at least partially abusive. This is not something I can prove, but is based on impressions from the men and women I spoke to.

Many people are suspicious that divorce lawyers are abusive, without realizing how they do it. The purpose of this chapter is to shed some light on how it works.

Basically, here's the idea of how a divorce lawyer works: When a woman walks into his office looking for a divorce, he asks her questions to ascertain how much money they have, as well as what other assets they have – home, stocks, etc. Then he simply comes up with a plan to split those assets with the husband's lawyer. For example, if the two people have \$500,000 in total assets, then he'll come up with a plan to get \$250,000 of those assets, with the husband's lawyer getting the other \$250,000.

The techniques used by these lawyers are to take advantage of a woman's natural desire for vengeance against a man, as well as the fact that women who are not primary breadwinners don't understand money and responsibilities around money, and raise issues that generate billings through depositions and trials.

Generating Paperwork

I first became aware of this years before I was divorced, when I spoke to a co-worker named Marilyn. She was a professional woman who had gone through her divorce a couple of years earlier when I spoke to her. She and her husband both had good salaries and had several hundred thousand dollars in assets. When she was going through her divorce, her divorce lawyer was billing her for \$20,000 to 25,000 per month, and the divorce never seemed to be coming to an end. How was he doing that? By generating paperwork.

If a divorce lawyer raises an issue – whether it's about money or about the children or about anything else – he can then start producing filings and motions, take depositions, and eventually bring the issues to trial.

All of these steps cost money. Your lawyer will charge you anywhere from \$150-500 per hour. Doing research and preparing paperwork for just one single issue can cost you \$1,000-3,000 of his time. If he has an assistant that's he's paying \$30,000 salary per year (\$15 per hour), then he'll charge you \$70-100 per hour for the assistant's time. Each phone call costs a minimum of \$30-100, and more if it runs on.

For a lawyer, the key to generating money is to generate issues. It's reasonable to estimate that each issue that gets raised costs the client \$10,000 or so, with the research, paperwork, phone calls, meetings, and other expenses. If the lawyer can generate 20 issues – and that shouldn't be hard in any divorce – then that's \$200,000 in income.

That's what was happening to Marilyn. The lawyers were generating issues, generating paperwork, making phone calls, and charging \$20,000-25,000 per month.

Whenever Marilyn she asked her lawyer why the costs were so high, her lawyer always blamed it on her ex-husband's lawyer. Finally, although she hadn't been speaking to her ex-husband for several months, she decided to call him and get his side of the story, and what she heard was quite different. Confused, she spoke to her priest and asked him what to do. His advice to her: "Fire your lawyer."

She did fire her lawyer and got herself another one. The divorce was settled quickly. Her lawyer had been raising one issue after another and dragging the divorce out in order to pad the bill.

Many will object that not all lawyers are like that, and that's true. I'm claiming that only a substantial minority of divorce lawyers are like that.

Hell Hath No Fury

I spoke to one man who was not divorced, and in fact had been married for over forty years, but at one point, some ten years earlier, his wife had been considering a divorce and went to a divorce lawyer. He told me what his wife had told him about her visit to the divorce lawyer: "He worked her up to the point where she was furious about everything," he said. "She was ready to accuse me of everything under the sun – fraud, robbery, wife-beating, child-beating and everything else – even though not a word of it was true." This is the issue-raising technique that lawyers use with angry women – and, once again, each of these issues is worth \$10,000, \$20,000 or more.

Feeding into the fury of women is a simple technique that these lawyers use on purpose. If you're a man who's had a relationship with a woman, you know that a woman can get angry even if you've done nothing wrong, and let's face it, if

your wife is getting a divorce, then she's going to be angry, even if she's the one at fault. And at that point, the old saying, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" has special relevance.

The divorce lawyer gets your wife worked up by making her more suspicious of and angry at you than ever. He'll ask her, "Has he ever raised his voice to you?" And when she answers yes, he'll say, "Then your husband is abusive, and we can accuse him of that." And he'll ask her, "Do you know where all your husband's assets are – his bank accounts, his stocks, etc." If she answers, "I'm not sure," then he'll tell her that you must be hiding assets somewhere. These lawyers have an especially lucrative technique of generating subpoenas and other paperwork for bankers, coworkers, business partners, and so forth. For example, it's worth several tens of thousands of dollars to the lawyer just to depose a business partner, even if absolutely nothing is accomplished.

In other words, you could be the most honest, most gentle person in the world, and he'll take advantage of her anger and her naïveté about money to convince her that you're the biggest, most violent crook in the world.

Once he's done that, he's ready to start collecting money, by generating paperwork, and charging \$200-500 per hour. Each subject that he discussed with your wife can be turned into anywhere from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. That's because he takes time to prepare paperwork, file the paperwork, take depositions, and perhaps even go to trial. The opposing lawyer (your lawyer) has similar expenses. Between the two of them, it's not long before they eat up all your assets and, as we said, everything gets settled as soon as there's no more money.

The result is that all the family assets get dissipated. Ordinarily, the wife would expect to receive half of the family assets in a divorce, but in the end she gets none, and the lawyers get it all. The woman is left broke by the lawyer who's supposed to be "protecting" her, but instead is lining their own pockets.

Abusive Women Lawyers and Feminist Lawyers

Although most abusive lawyers are men (as are most lawyers), there are plenty of abusive women lawyers as well. Abusive women lawyers have a powerful weapon to use: Even if they're only out for themselves and couldn't care less about their clients, which is true of many of them, they can claim to be tough feminist lawyers wanting to protect their female clients.

I've been told a couple of times that women lawyers with women clients never compromise. Why should these women compromise? First off, it's feminist "theory" that they should never compromise with a man under any circumstances,

since, as we explained in chapter 1 (see page 9), to compromise with a man is exactly the same as compromising with someone who abuses women. And, as luck would have it, not compromising with men also makes the lawyers a lot more money, since they keep things going, and keep charging. Of course, this means the feminist lawyer gets the money, not the women client she's supposed to be "protecting." This is yet another example of "the personal is political," which, as we've shown feminists use to generate money and political power for themselves. The feminist lawyer is just another example, but they're no better or worse than male lawyers who do example the same things, often with the same claims, "protecting" the woman.

The cross-country custody battle of Len Umina, whom we met in chapter 1 (page 22), illustrated just about every lawyer abuse there is. And it's very hard to see how Umina's ex-wife benefited in any way from her abusive lawyers.

"Her feminist woman attorney filed over 100 motions in one week," says Umina. "It was almost funny - the sheriff would deliver these things in bundles. She was accusing me of being a petty thief, a child molester, etc. — anything she could think of." Each of these useless motions would end up required several extra hours of billing for the feminist lawyer, who was simply lining her own bank account. That's what feminism means in this case.

Umina added, "My lawyer and her lawyer duked this thing out for months until I had no assets left for them to collect, and then they settled in 30 minutes. Both of us were left flat broke, and the attorneys got everything." This is the story I've heard more than once.

What can you do about it?

Unfortunately, nothing.

No matter how abusive lawyers become, nothing will ever be done about it, since the only people who might do something about are legislators who, in both parties, are almost all also lawyers. There is no way that lawyer legislators are going to do anything about abuse by lawyers, no matter how bad it gets.

Even if some legislator somewhere tried to do something about lawyer abuse, he would be shouted down with "the lawyer has to be able to do as much as possible to protect the wife," even though wives may be the biggest victims of lawyer abuse, and even though the result of lawyer abuse is not to protect the wife, but to leave her impoverished.

Divorce is a bread and butter part of many lawyers' jobs, and a relatively easy way to make a very great deal of money. The objective of a divorce lawyer is to collect half of the couple's total assets, allowing the opposing lawyer to collect the

other app. The techniques are relatively straightforward as outlined above – provoke both parties, especially the wife, to raise as many acrimonious issues as possible, and then cash in on each issue through paperwork, research, depositions, and trials.

I've tried in this book to present proposals for each problem I've identified, but I have no proposals for this. I don't believe there is any solution to this problem.

Questions and Answers

1. Q: I thought that the section on lawyers who run up clients' bills made some valid points, but it was a tad harsh on the law profession. In the final analysis, lawyers don't file any motions about anything without the consent of their clients.

A: The problem with every profession is that most people in that profession are fair, honest and ethical, but there are always a few bad apples. It's the job of government regulators to make sure that everything is done properly, all potential conflicts are disclosed, and that when somebody crosses the line he gets punished.

The problem with the law profession (and here I'm actually focusing only on divorce lawyers) is that there are no such constraints, practically speaking. If a wife's lawyer wants to egg on his client to file additional motions in order to pad his bill, there is absolutely no regulatory constraint on such actions. In fact, the only restraints are bar association ethics guidelines, and these are not effective.

2. Q: *(From a woman going through a divorce):* My attorneys are a little less favorable toward mediation, and in my case I think their caveats have a certain amount of validity. They state the object of mediation is to reach agreement. Yeah, but to do that each party barter with the other to reach this agreement, and therefore it works best when both parties have equal knowledge of family income and assets, similar strengths in their bargaining skills, and full knowledge of their rights in divorce issues.

A: However, I am not aware of any independent research that supports the lawyers' arguments. All the research I've seen supports the contention that the outcome of mediation is, on the average, the same as for litigation – except that you don't have big lawyers' bills to pay.

The other point I would make about the lawyers' argument is the following: As far as I know, lawyers always oppose anything that reduces

litigation. This is particularly obvious in the case of no-fault automobile accident laws, but it seems to apply in every other area as well. Lawyers always make the argument that any sort of no-fault or mediation laws force one party or the other to give up their legal rights in court, and therefore it's bad for the individual. But remember that lawyers have a very big vested interest — there are lots of starving divorce lawyers out there for whom divorce cases are their source of livelihood, and there will be even more if a significant number of formerly litigated cases are now handled in mediation.

3. Q: Part of the problem may be that women in general tend not to have the economic assets and therefore lack bargaining 'chips.' That's certainly true in my case, I don't have many 'A's to offer in return for 'B's.

A: Part of the mediators' job is to make sure that both sides feel that the resulting agreement is fair, and as I said, the research indicates that, on the average, both sides perceive mediated agreements to be fairer.

How would you be more powerful in the negotiation if you had a lot of economic assets? What bargaining chips would this give you?

4. Q: My lawyers also point out that litigation does offer formal discovery to force disclosure of assets, that is a factor in higher income groups probably, again not a general factor.

Do you suspect that your husband is lying about his assets? You'll have to check with your lawyer on this point, but I believe that the mediator should require full written disclosure of all assets and income of your husband, which you can verify by such things as income tax statements.

5. Q: The one thing they bring up that is really, really, relevant is that in cases where the families have experienced physical or emotional abuse, psychological disorders, or a power imbalance are often not appropriate for mediation.

As a general rule, mediation is not recommended in cases where criminal abuse is alleged. I understand that you're using mediation to keep the amount of rancor down, but even if your husband emotionally abused you, how would he be able to use that in your mediation to keep from paying you more money?

Study and Research

1. Do a survey of some divorced friends – both male and female – and find out what kinds of interactions they had with their lawyers.
2. Interview some divorce lawyers and try to find out their attitudes. If possible, visit some divorce lawyers pretending to be considering divorce, and find out how they act. Also, if you have access to probate judges, ask their opinions as well.
3. This chapter makes an important gender-based observation, based on stories that a couple of people told me as well as on feminist "theory": That women lawyers with women clients refuse to compromise on even the smallest issue. Can you find evidence to either support or refute that observation?

Chapter 6 – A Plea for Nonpartisan Male Activism

As I described in chapter 1, if you want to know how much feminists hate fathers, just go to the www.now.org, the web site for NOW, the National Organization for Women, and do a search on the word "father" (as I did on 7/27/00). You get dozens of hits, all very hostile to fathers and fathers' groups, filled with moronic statements like, "Promoting marriage, for many poor women, is a dangerous policy."

But what about women who are opponents of feminists? Do they have a positive view of men and fathers? Author Danielle Crittenden is a conservative feminist critic. Let's look in her book, *What Our Mothers Didn't Tell Us: Why happiness eludes the modern woman*.

Crittenden advises women to get married in their 20s, and warns women that if they delay to age 30 they're going to have a much tougher time. Why? Because when a single woman reaches her 30s, the only men they'll find to date are "misfits and crazy men – like a New York City subway car after hours:♦ immature, elusive Peter Pans who won't commit themselves to a second cup of coffee, let alone a second date; neurotic bachelors with strange habits; sexual predators who hit on every woman they meet; newly divorced men taking pleasure wherever they can; embittered, scorned men who still feel vengeful toward their last girlfriend; men who are too preoccupied with their careers to think about anyone else from one week to the next; men who are simply too weak, or odd, to have attracted any other women's interest. The sensible, decent, not-bad-looking men a woman rejected at twenty-four because she wasn't ready to settle down all seem to have gotten off at other stations." So, not only does Crittenden's book contain this ridiculous statement, but more important, you can read her book from cover to cover and not find a single male telling his feelings about his own marriage or divorce. In the end, there's rarely much difference between the books by women feminists and women conservatives.

The point is that no one should assume that since feminists don't like men and fathers it follows that conservatives do like men and fathers. Offensive statements like Crittenden's above are typical of the attitudes that women in general have toward men, and that's exactly my point: it seems that whenever someone with breasts says something moronic or offensive like this about men, men just keep quiet.

And when the subject turns to something like rape or sexual harassment, men usually run like scared rabbits, leaving women to say whatever they want, even when it's harmful to women, as is often the case, as I described in chapter 2.

I'm not arguing that we shouldn't listen to women. What I'm arguing is that men should become more active in stating a male point of view.

For example, although almost all men are strongly opposed to permitting women to be harassed in any real way, and do not tolerate such harassment when they see it, in private conversations men often ridicule women for silly, trivial complaints about men, and are horrified to see how men are humiliated and angered by these trivial or false sexual harassment complaints, which are often triggered by trivial or unintentional offenses. This male point of view should be expressed more – not only for the good of men but also for the good of women who need to understand that their cause is being hindered, not helped, by these trivial and false complaints.

Another area where more expressions of the male point of view are greatly needed is in the involvement of single non-custodial fathers and their children. As I described in chapter 1 (page 54), there is evidence that the fathers who loved and cared for their children most before the divorce – played with them, fed them, changed their diapers, and so forth – are the fathers least likely to maintain contact with their children after the divorce. After being so close to their children on a daily basis, these men evidently can't stand the pain of only seeing their children three or four times a month.

This is the kind of issue that women are simply not motivated to discuss intelligently. It's a very important issue, and yet it's never discussed, buried under the morass of women's issues that we always hear about.

One thing that's kept me going working on this book for 15 years is exactly this tendency of men to act like scared rabbits. I became more and more determined to present a rational male point of view on gender issues. I'm not saying that all men agree with me - far from it, as I well know, having received flame messages from men online. However, the views expressed are male analyses of gender issues which probably could not be done by a woman, or at least no woman would be motivated to express them.

One conservative woman writer who occasionally writes about woman-only viewpoint of much gender writing is syndicated columnist Cathy Young. In a column on abortion, she notes amusingly that "[pro-choice women activists] seemed to defend the right to abortion on the grounds that women are morally superior enough to be entrusted with this right; [pro-life women activists] seemed to oppose it on the grounds that women are too morally superior to need it."

Young goes further to note that both pro-choice and pro-life activists join together as presenting women as helpless dupes. Pro-lifers claim that "irresponsible males ... take advantage of young women" and then pressure a woman into ending

her pregnancy, so "women who have abortions are not wicked baby-killers but sad victims of evil men." Pro-choice feminists "[depict] male-female relationships as rife with abuse and oppression of women and [treat] politically incorrect female choices - from full-time motherhood to working in the pornography business - as coerced. Campus anti-rape programs preach that a woman who has a drunken sexual encounter can disclaim responsibility and call herself a rape victim."

I've occasionally joked online that left-wing feminists and right-wing Christian conservatives should really start partying together, since they have such similar views – women are helpless dupes, and men are irresponsible predators.

My point in mentioning all of this is that I'd like to encourage men to be more active in expressing a male point of view. A male point of view is not a second class point of view, which many women of the right and left both seem to believe. The male point of view on harassment, rape, divorce, custody, violence, and so forth, is just as important and valuable as the female point of view, and it's time to start hearing it expressed more.

But it also has to be a *non-partisan* male point of view.

A good example of wanton behavior of politicians on both sides occurred early in 2000 with regard to the Elian Gonzalez, the Cuban boy who was kidnapped by his mother and her boyfriend in a planned escape from Cuba which failed in a scene where Elian was saved but saw his mother and her boyfriend drown.

Democrats who normally bash fathers as a daily way of life suddenly became very concerned about fathers' rights, as they proclaimed that Elian deserved to be with his father again. It was nice to see the Democrats suddenly supporting fatherhood, even though it had nothing to with anything but the then current political crisis.

Republicans, who sometimes support fathers when doing so is the most expedient method to oppose feminists and Democrats, suddenly went into full father-bashing mode.

The highlight came when federal agents retrieved Elian by force from the relatives holding him hostage for political reasons, and a thrilled Elian showed such enormous joy and pleasure at being reunited with his father, whom he hadn't seen in months. This confounded the Republican party line that after the trauma of seeing his mother die, Elian would be traumatized again if he were now reunited with his father.

On the *Wall Street Journal's* pro-Republican editorial page on April 24, 2000, a picture of a very happy Elian being held in the arms of his equally happy father was captioned, "On something? Castro psychiatrists have a long record of using drugs for state control."

The accompanying editorial recounted a story of a Cuban dissident who had been drugged, and then said, "Castro's kind of doctors would have no trouble finding the right drugs to control a six-year-old child. A psychiatrist of our acquaintance suggests the anti-panic drug Xanax, which would relieve anxiety and make the kid look calm without any obvious evidence of being drugged." The editorial continued by demanding an investigation of whether such drugs were given to Elian just before he'd been returned to his father.

It's hard to express in words how offensive this is to fathers in general. I know that my son Jason was very happy to see me when I'd been away for a while, and that was completely without benefit of Xanax or any other psychotropic drugs.

I can only conclude that Robert L. Bartley, who was in charge of the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, as well as Paul Gigot and WSJ's other editorial page writers, must be very poor fathers indeed if their children have to be drugged in order to be happy to see them; and if some of them are not fathers, they should definitely not become fathers if they expect to have to drug their children whenever they want to spend time with their children.

Of course, that isn't what this is about. What this is about is the Republicans selling themselves and their children out completely, in the same way that Susan Estrich sold out her life's work as an anti-rape activist to support a credibly charged serial rapist (p. 82).

What we're seeing here is a good example of the old maxim that it's easy to tell when a politician is lying - just watch to see whether his mouth is moving.

This example, like many others, shows that we need to hear a new point of view – a male point of view, the point of view of fathers.

Fathers' Rights Organizations

If you've never been exposed to feminists and gender politics, then you may be unaware of the enormous hatred that feminists in general have for fathers' rights organizations. I've seen this over and over and over again – in feminist literature, talking to feminists online, talking to feminists in person.

I've discussed fathers' rights organizations both online and in person with a number of feminists, and I've discovered that these women have an extremely distorted and hostile view of the organizations. The purpose of this section is to describe my own experiences with fathers' rights organizations, and contrast those experiences with the feminist view.

Several years ago I had a short dating relationship with Elaine, a health care professional working with battered women. This was definitely not a match made

in heaven. My experiences with battered women's advocates online did not lead me to believe that Elaine and I would ever get along for long, but we both gave a try.

When we first met (after she had responded to a personal ad I had placed), we met and spent several enjoyable hours together, but later she became quite shocked when I spoke to her on the phone and mentioned that I had recently been present with a group of men conducting a demonstration in front of a state office in Boston, lobbying to give fathers more visitation rights with their children. She assumed that anyone interested in fathers' rights must be a murderer, batterer, molester or something else unsavory, and she was surprised to meet someone who contradicted her stereotype.

By the time our relationship ended after three or four weeks, she was completely willing to concede that I was a nice guy who would never raise a hand to anyone, and even told me she would unhesitatingly provide a positive "reference" to another woman, should I so request in the future, and perhaps I may yet take her up on her offer some day, if she's still willing. But she always seemed to feel that I was irredeemably tainted and compromised by my association with fathers' rights organizations.

Her view of fathers' rights advocates was that they were almost all batterers who wanted to spend time with their children only so that they could abuse the children or batter the mothers. I told Elaine that this was ideological misinformation which comes from political enemies, and that it was completely untrue. I told her that the men I met at these meetings were being really screwed by their ex-wives and by social workers, and all they wanted was to spend more time with their children. She replied that they're all batterers, that they condone battering and abuse, that they don't care about their children, and that they're very "wily," and that I was being fooled by them.

I just rolled my eyes at all this, but of course Elaine is not unique among feminists in believing such things.

This visceral hatred of fathers' rights organizations is so consistent among feminists I've talked to that it's extremely hard to explain, except that perhaps it might be related to the visceral fear that many women, even happily married women, seem to have of male bonding, or even of men just getting together in a bar to talk. I don't know if that's the explanation or not, but this hatred appears to me to be more than would be justified by just the political issues. And this hatred translates into a series of extreme accusations which, in my experience, not only are untrue but are often bizarre. I'll get to the feminist accusations in a moment, but first I'd like to discuss what fathers' rights meetings are really like.

During the last 15 years, I've attended a number of meetings of various fathers' rights organizations here in Massachusetts, and if I had to use a single

word to describe the men and the tenor at these meetings, that word would be "desperation."

These are men who have really been screwed, and in many cases seem to have lost all hope. A man is willing to work 16 hours a day to support his wife and children, but these men have largely been dumped by their wives and had their children ripped away from them. These men feel that they have nothing to live for, and in desperation they're looking for some answers by coming to a fathers' rights meeting.

Ironically, one thing I've noticed over the years is that more and more women are attending father's rights meetings. Several years ago there were no women, but at recent meetings and rallies, attendance has been as high as 1/3 women.

Some of these women are gawkers who come to a fathers' rights meeting for the same reason they might visit a zoo, but most of the women who come are there to support father's rights. I've interviewed a number of these women, and they seem to fall into three categories:

1. Children (daughters) of divorce who lost their fathers during their parents' divorce and (fairly or unfairly) blame their mothers.
2. Women who support their boyfriends' or husbands' desire to see their children or to have more input into their children's lives. I've spoken to a couple of women who are extremely bitter because they developed close relationships with their husbands' children, and those relationships were cut off by the husbands' ex-wives.
3. Grandparents, especially the father's parents, who have no rights at all with respect to their grandchildren in most states.

It's ironic, but in the last several years it seems that more and more women are supporting fathers' rights, just as in the 70s more and more men began to support women's rights in the workplace.

For a better picture of what fathers' rights meetings are all about, see the two sidebars where I report on two of the meetings.

Feminists' Objections to Fathers' Rights organizations

As I've previously indicated, based on my conversations with feminists, feminists feel enormous visceral hatred of fathers' rights organizations, and this hatred makes itself felt through various accusations, some of which are extremely wild. Since these accusations seem so pervasive among feminists and feminist literature, I want to take the time to respond to these accusations in detail, based on my experience with these organizations.

The most common accusation that feminists make is that fathers' rights organizations condone and excuse violence by men. The only thing like this that I've seen is support for fathers who say they made mistakes in the past with regard to violence, but still wish to have a relationship with their children.

However, I've never seen any men excuse violence by men in the way that feminists excuse violence by women who batter or kill their children (p. 18). Probably the reason that feminists are so ready to accuse men of excusing violence is that feminists themselves do it all the time, and they think that if they do it, men must do it also. Well, I certainly haven't seen it.

Feminists are well aware of this, of course, but this is a "the personal is political" kind of attack, where the end is politics, not substance. Sometimes the feminists' accusations against fathers' rights organizations get fairly wild.

For example, in her book *Patriarchy*, feminist Phyllis Chesler says that "the organized fathers' rights movement" does the following things: it "counsels men to kidnap children, either legally or illegally,[♦] and to default on alimony, health, and child-support payments." I've never heard anything like this. Actually, it's just the opposite, by far. Men are cautioned to be very careful to make all payments and not to break the law since we know that feminist professionals and judges will use any excuse to punish us severely. As for kidnapping children, I've never heard it mentioned, except that some men have complained that their ex-wives have kidnapped their children, and that mothers never seem to be punished for kidnapping.

Chesler says that it "lobbies against state-initiated actions against 'deadbeat dads' and for programs that replace women's rights to a lawyer and a court hearing with mandatory mediation favoring joint legal custody." Yes, it's true that fathers' rights groups lobby for laws to help fathers see their children. Feminists really hate that. This is getting to what really bothers Chesler — that fathers might actually get to spend more time with their children.

Chesler says it "campaigns against abortion rights, and sometimes against female birth control." In fact, some fathers' rights activists are pro-life, some are pro-choice, but abortion is rarely discussed at these meetings, because abortion is not our issue. Similarly, I've never heard birth control discussed. Our issue is

having more involvement in our children's lives, and getting involved in abortion would only diffuse the focus.

Chesler says it "lobbies the media and state legislatures to dismiss allegations that fathers commit incest (as lies fabricated by vindictive wives and manipulated children), manipulates anecdotes and social science data (e.g., about "battered husbands"), and demands – and commands – 'equal time' in public and media discussions." No one manipulates anecdotes or data more skillfully than Chesler, but fathers do demand that women's accusations not be accepted without any proof. As for demands of "equal time," I refer you back to previous comments of feminists quoted in this book who says that, in effect, anyone who disagrees with a feminist is the equivalent of a batterer. There is no way that the men's point of view gets more than a tiny fraction of equal time with feminists' views on television.

Chesler says "it fails to lobby for health, education, and welfare – a family allowance appropriate to human needs and dignity." Here, Chesler is blaming men for not lobbying to fund women's organizations. When all is said and done, the feminist hatred of fathers' rights group is simply about politics and money.

Another feminist writer, Marilyn French, who appears to see dangers to women from the misogynist male patriarchy whenever a man so much as sneezes, indicates in her book, *The War Against Women*, that she thinks that fathers' rights groups are part of a big government conspiracy to control women:

Wars of Control: Legal System. Men are using their economic advantage over women to take their children away from them. In several countries, judicial systems and governments are colluding in an alarming new development called "fathers' rights." Presenting themselves in a new role, as caring fathers, an image built not on men's actual behavior but by media presentations of ideal fathers, men increasingly seek custody of children after divorce or children they fathered outside marriage. Fathers' rights groups are being supported by legislatures and judiciaries in the United States, the Netherlands, France, Norway, Canada, Australia, Ireland, and Great Britain. If fathers wanted closeness with their children, one would sympathize, but few men seeking custody are prepared to care for their children themselves, and legislators and judges who support male custody explicitly justify it as bolstering men's control and status vis-à-vis women.

Well, this is the something that feminists always say – that fathers don't care for their children. It's true that some fathers leave their children, but when a father cares for his children, in many ways, he cares for his children better than mothers do. This is certainly true in the United States, and I assume that fathers

in all those other countries are equally as capable. We'll discuss the capabilities of fathers later in this chapter.

Another well-known feminist writer, bell hooks, objected to the women-only aspect of some fathers' rights meetings:

My most immediate experience of the "men's movement" occurred when I attended one of the major conferences focusing on men who are concerned with confronting sexism and challenging patriarchy and heterosexism. I must confess with all honesty that I did not feel "safe" at this conference. Many males articulated their desire that women not be present and some that even those of us who were invited speakers not be allowed to speak. Some explained their resentment of female presence by saying that this was their "special" time away from women. I kept thinking if this celebration of homosocial male bonding could only take place as a reaction against the female and if the men present were supposedly more conscious than most men of sexism in our society, then there was not a lot of hope that men would ever participate fully in feminist movement. Many of the men present seemed not to understand that the contempt and disdain that they were expressing for female presence was akin to that expressed by misogynist and/or sexist men, and their denial of the link between the two seemed dangerous. In some ways this conference mirrored early radical feminist meetings where male presence was not tolerated or desired but with one difference. Homosocial bonding (men strengthening their bonds with one another), albeit on different terms, is promoted and affirmed constantly in this society. Should a men's movement exist that is primarily concerned with intensifying male interest and pleasure in homosocial bonding?

In the first place, I don't really care much whether bell hooks "felt safe" or not — in my experience, whether or not certain women "feel safe" depends on what political point they're trying to make.

However, she's describing a completely different kind of men's group — not a fathers' rights group, but a group geared toward fathers in intact families.

There have been two major nationally known examples of such groups in the 1990s, and both of were based on religious groups. One was the Million Man March, started by Louis Farrakhan, based on Nation of Islam, and the other was the Promise Keepers, which is an evangelical Christian organization.

Despite their religious orientations, I personally found both of these developments to be quite exciting because I felt that finally somebody somewhere was going to be focusing on some of the issues that men have to deal with.

Unfortunately, neither organization has really gone anywhere, so my excitement has turned to disappointment.

Still, there's a need for this kind of organization. Men in relationships with women are so constrained as to what they're allowed to say and do, that they're having difficulty navigating.

Nonetheless, feminists are extremely hostile to even these groups. Here's what one woman wrote online: "The problem with the Promise Keepers is that they aren't just a men's support group and they don't just espouse family commitment. Their purpose of being is to help men take back *control* of their families from women. The organization feels that women have too much control and must be put back in their place. ... One of the most terrifying things that I've read about them is this: women and men must be virgins upon marrying because god wants a man and woman to enter into a blood covenant on their wedding night and blood must be shed. After all the work we've all done to prove that women don't have to bleed and no one's first time ever has to be a harrowing experience. sex becomes the dreaded job once again. Remember these men would dismantle feminism in a heart beat if they had the chance. they are no friends or allies of ours."

Well, I've never been to a Promise Keepers meeting, but I suspect that we can all feel safe in the belief that they aren't encouraging the shedding of blood. As with fathers' rights groups, the visceral fear that these women feel appears to be enormous.

On the other hand, I've seen a number of women post stories online about how their marriages were saved by Promise Keepers. For example: "Most of the men in my family have gone, and the conference has done wonders. I really can't understand the fear of PK. Basically, my husband came back with a greater understanding of his responsibility to me, his wife and to our son, and with an acceptance of the unplanned pregnancy we were dealing with at the time. That pregnancy resulted in a miscarriage the week after his return from the conference. Had he not had his eyes opened a bit the week before, I don't know how I could have endured that loss. I listen each year to several Promise Keepers broadcasts. They are broadcasted in their entirety on Christian radio stations in my area. I have absolutely no qualms with their message. They ask men to stand up and be adults in their roles as fathers and husbands. Take responsibility. Be there. Do your share. Be strong parental examples to your children. Love your family as much as you can."

As I said, I'm disappointed that Promise Keepers hasn't done better, but in retrospect I think that was inevitable given PK's strong Christian religious orientation. There's nothing wrong with a Christian religious orientation, of course, but in this case the problems are that first it inevitably means that PK is not going to be much help to non-Christians, and second it makes PK appear to

be a Christian right pro-Republican organization, much as their critics are mostly feminist left pro-Democratic organizations.

Let's repeat how the woman above described Promise Keepers: "They ask men to stand up and be adults in their roles as fathers and husbands. Take responsibility. Be there. Do your share. Be strong parental examples to your children. Love your family as much as you can." This message has nothing to do with politics and nothing to do with any particular religion.

However, it is the kind of message we rarely hear on television, at least as compared to listening to women complain that men aren't letting women be CEO's of enough Fortune 500 companies.

The fact is that, in my opinion, men do not get any help dealing with ordinary problems of life – how to deal with kids, wives, families and so forth – except through the prism of feminism which is extremely hostile to men and fathers. (Once again, if you doubt this, check out now.org.)

Just as I believe that we'd all be better off if women's organizations were not affiliated with any political party (the Democrats), I would also love to see men's organizations that are not affiliated with any political party or any particular religion.

Sidebar — Father's Day, 1994

Two-year-old Michele sits on Frank Mansion's lap, working on a jigsaw puzzle, saying "Daddy, do this! Daddy, do that!" to her delighted father, who obviously savors being called "Daddy." Frank has never been married, but he's become a father nonetheless after his girlfriend became pregnant.

"I had to fight to be recognized as Michele's father," says Mansion. "I was with her mother in the hospital when Michele was born, and then she disappeared because she didn't want me to be able to see Michele at all. It took me a year to finally track down where they were, and then I slapped a paternity suit on her." He won his paternity suit,

and he now sees Michele on a regular schedule of court-ordered visitation.

I met Mansion and Michele at a Father's Day breakfast on Father's Day, 1994. The whole concept of a Father's Day breakfast is full of irony, since intact families usually celebrate the day by letting Dad sleep late and watch TV. Wife and children don't disturb him except to tell him when dinner's ready.

But for single and divorced non-custodial fathers Father's Day is perhaps the most important celebration of the year, because of its symbolic value. On almost every other day of the year, the noncustodial father is treated like an outcast, a distant relation, with little part in their children's lives. But Father's

Day is their day, a day they can share exclusively with their kids, and make it clear that they, and not their ex-wives' boyfriends, are the kids' fathers.

Mansion says his ex-girlfriend is so insecure that she wants to be with Michele 24 hours a day, and even takes her along whenever she goes to the bathroom, and she shouts at Michele a lot. He says she emotionally abuses Michele, and that's why he's taking her to court to try to get physical custody of his daughter.

He doesn't expect to get custody right away, but he wants to go through the process now, so that all the psychological studies will be on the record and on file, so that he can use them if problems develop later on. He says his custody battle may take years, but he expects to win it eventually.

"It would really be better for Michele if I had custody, but I don't know if this is the best way to do it. Should I be very aggressive from the beginning, which is what I'm doing? Or should I be quiet, work slowly, and build up visitation time with Michele?"

He says that he's chosen the aggressive way, but wonders if it's right for Michele.

The man he's talking to, Hans Totter, a divorced father, says that his ex-wife is like that – she doesn't want to be away from the kids, ages 6 and 12, for even a minute either. "They've never even been over to another kid's house to do homework together," says Totter. "She'll only let the kids see their friends in her backyard."

He agrees with Mansion that it's very hard to get custody when emotional abuse is involved. "They ask you, 'Where are the bruises? Where are the

scars?' You can't show them physical abuse, so they won't do anything."

He's had to fight hard just to see his kids at all for visits, "and the more visitation time I get with them, the more things she accuses me of." A while back, his ex-wife accused him of raping his daughter which, he says, is a total lie. As a result of that, he decided to fight for custody, and indeed false charges of sexual abuse do constitute grounds for winning custody away from the mother.

However, a few weeks before he was laid off from his job with a large computer company, and as a result he's had to give up his custody fight, since he simply doesn't have the money to pursue it.

"The one good thing about being unemployed is that it gives me the time to do the research to start the custody fight all over again when I'm making some money again."

Unfortunately, some men I met at the Father's Day breakfast didn't get to spend Father's Day with their kids, and this was true of Joe Morton, whom I spoke to next. He had a court-ordered visit with them scheduled for this entire weekend, but when he went to pick them up on Friday (two days before), his ex-wife stood him up.

He had contacted the guardian *ad litem* who was handling the case, and she reached his ex-wife and told her that if she didn't produce the kids for him, she would take her to court and get her held in contempt. His ex-wife said, "Just try it. He's not going to get the kids."

This is unfortunately not a rare sort of occurrence. Divorced women who hassle their ex-husbands over visits with the children in general, often do so particularly on Father's Day, once again because of the day's special symbolic

importance. I and most divorced men are well aware of this from personal experience. There are probably more fathers stood up on Father's Day than on any other day of the year.

Joe said that his ex-wife had done this sort of thing many times. He was stood up on Father's Day last year, also. He took his ex-wife to court, charging her with contempt of court, but she just told Judge Ginsberg, a judge who is extremely well-known as being biased against men, that she had simply forgotten that this was the weekend they were supposed to be with him (as if she could have forgotten it was Father's Day). Judge Ginsberg turned to him and said, "Well, that sounds plausible, doesn't it

Mr. Morton?" and that was the end of the contempt hearing.

He says that the judges couldn't care less if his ex-wife violates her agreement, and that the worst they'll do is slap her on the wrist and tell her not to do it again.

He's considered trying to get custody, but he knows he has no chance of winning, and indeed a judge who won't even enforce visitation agreements will hardly be willing to give him custody. All he can do is hope that maybe, if he's very lucky, he'll be able to spend next Father's Day with his children.

Sidebar — Father's Day, 1995

On Saturday, June 17, the day before Father's Day, I attended a fathers' rights rally. The rally formed on the historic steps of the Massachusetts State House in Boston, continued with a march around the Boston Common and Boston Garden, and came back to the State House for speeches and interviews with the media.

It's gratifying to see the growth of these rallies. I attended one a few years ago where only four lone men showed up, and no women. This one had about 40 people. About 15 of them were women who marched with us.

The march through the Common and Garden was the most fun. Since I tend to be somewhat extroverted, I really got into it, and ended up leading some of the chants. There were two major ones. The first was:

Equal rights for fathers!
When will we see the day?
Children need their dads!
Please don't throw us away!

and the second was:

Kick us out! Make us
pay! Have a happy Father's
Day!

A number of marchers carried pickets:

- "Support our children - give them their fathers"
- "A father's love is a terrible thing to waste."
- "It hurts me when you call my dad a deadbeat." (Carried by a boy)
- "Father-bashing is a hate crime!"

- "Mommy says she's going to throw daddy away like the garbage – a quote from a Mass child"
- "Divorced dads are parents, not criminals"
- "Children need a dad, not a visitor!"
- "When a dad is taken away, so are grandparents, aunts, uncles, playmates half a world!"
- "Stop Crime! Give kids two parents!"

The rally was sponsored by the Coalition for the Preservation of Fatherhood, a Massachusetts fathers' rights organization.

The people in the Boston Common were given a handout which I thought was pretty effective. It was a play against the "top 10 deadbeat dads" posters which have been used by politicians to gain support from women's groups. The handouts looked like posters, and had pictures of ten men on them, with their stories in capsule form beneath the pictures. The title of the handout was "Needed by their Children! 10 more Examples of Throwaway Dads." Here are the stories that appeared on the ballet:

- Jan: False allegation of abuse; cleared of all charges 1 1/2 years ago. Still not allowed to see his children. Court takes no action to deal with mother's intentional alienation of children from father.
- Ted: Had daily contact with daughter until mother was granted a change in order. One month later, mother moved out of state without filing a motion. Attempts to have daughter

return were denied by the courts.

- Jose: Last saw daughter 3 1/2 years ago. Mother left Virginia without permission. Father has been awarded physical custody in Va., but Massachusetts courts fail to recognize that order. Could a father get away with this?
- Jim: Has not seen his son in 4 1/2 years due to false allegations of abuse and the mother's intentional alienation of son from father. The court encourages false allegations by rewarding mothers who make them.
- Victor: Custodial father lost all contact with son because of false allegation. Mother made allegation when DSS was investigating mother's household because of an injury to the child during the mother's visitation.
- Ken: Mother kidnapped child at birth. Father filed paternity suit and moved to Mass. to be an active father. Mother not held accountable for kidnapping, or for continuing to make false allegations of abuse.
- Mark: At separation, mother was allowed to move across state, therefore reducing father's contact with sons. After trial, father lost even more time and was not even awarded joint legal custody.
- Robert: In trial, father asked for greater role in child's life; guardian *ad litem* also

recommended increase in son's time with father. However, judge reduced time. Lesson: Don't ask to be an active father ... or else.

- Michael: After five years of legal battles, case went to trial. Father sought joint legal custody, but court ended up taking away midweek visits instead. Lesson: Seeking involvement in child-rearing decisions may cost you.
- John: Mother made false allegation. DSS and polygraph both showed father's innocence. Unjustifiably, third evaluation was allowed; father reduced to supervised visitation. Lesson: Courts believe fathers are dangerous.

I've spoken to some of these men, and the actions of their ex-wives have generated bitterness and hatred that will last not just decades, but their entire lives. To say that these are bitter divorced men misses the point — the men's families suffer almost as much. But the ones who are most hurt are the children themselves, who are suffering from enormous pain, as has been well documented in several books.

These situations are out and out tragedies, but the one good thing is that as more and more women have their lives personally touched by these tragedies, more and more women are beginning to support father's rights.

Men and Girls

In my opinion, feminists have done nothing more damaging to girls in general than the successful campaign they've conducted for the last two decades or so alleging that all girls are in constant danger of being abused or raped by older men, especially their fathers, and that such abuse occurs regularly.

Sometimes it appears that this campaign has been almost hysterical, with the result has been that young girls have become more and more isolated from men, and have been deprived of male guidance and role models. Men have lost out because of this isolation, but in my opinion girls have been the greatest losers because of this situation.

I use the word "hysterical" because that's the word that seems to me the most appropriate. In the past twenty years or so, it seems to me (and a lot of other people) that we've developed almost a national hysteria over little girls, and sometimes it seems that any contact by a male or even a look by a male is considered child abuse or at least sexual harassment.

Go into any nursery or elementary school and the chances are that you won't see any male teachers at all. One woman told me that her school district had no male teachers and tried to find some, but failed because several who were qualified

said that they were unwilling to risk the suspicions that many people always have about any man who works with kids, especially little girls.

This attitude was confirmed by nationally syndicated feminist/liberal columnist Ellen Goodman in a column entitled "The Backlash of Sexual Assault: No Baritones Need Apply," where she wrote:

The nagging suspicion of men spread like a thin sheet of ice♦ over the world of children. A friend talks of the day he went to school to pick up his niece and got the fish-eye. "He did everything but fingerprint me," he says. A coach writes that he no longer hugs the girls on his winning basketball team. A mother tells me that a baby sitter asked that she, not her husband, drive her home. The girl had been told to trust no one. Or, to be precise, no man.

In a Maryland county where a high school teacher admitted having sex with these students, the word went out. "No hugging, no placing an arm around a shoulder," said one male teacher. "No touching." Another teacher put the end to his ritual have-a-good-day hug.

All men have good reason to be cautious about being anywhere near little girls these days.

Goodman's 1994 column was confirmed with a vengeance in 1995 when a six-year-old Lexington, N.C., boy, Johnathan Prevette was suspended from school because he kissed a six-year-old female classmate on the cheek. One woman commentator, evidently a feminist, that I saw on TV was highly supportive of the suspension, saying that "It's just a kiss now, but it could be rape when he gets a little older. We have to send these boys a message as early as possible." If a six-year-old boy can receive such moronic feminist treatment around a little girl, imagine how much chance an adult man has.

A friend of mine discovered how dangerous it is to be around a little girl when a social worker is present. He and his wife had adopted a Cambodian girl, and the social worker found out that he had packed his daughter's suitcase, including her underclothes, for a trip. The social worker wrote in her case report that the father (my friend) had exhibited "suspicious behavior" by packing his daughter's suitcase!

A Massachusetts schoolteacher who needed a year to clear his name after a girl student falsely accused him of molestation said on television, "If a girl falls down the stairs and falls at your feet and you want to help her, you'd better not touch any part of her body except her hair, because if you do, you're liable to be charged with something."

A news story reveals that calling the police can be dangerous.♦ Warren and Debbie Blair called the police when a stranger entered their Los Angeles County home through a second-story window and exposed himself to their 7-year-old

daughter, one of five children. The police could not find the intruder, decided that the parents' story was false, and charged the parents with child abuse. Child Protective Services entered the home and abducted the five children, and hid them so that the parents had no idea where they were, and indicated they were willing to return the children to the mother, provided that the father was removed from the home!!

The father would have been arrested and charged with child sexual abuse, but he was saved when the intruder returned and was captured by Blair! Even so, it took more weeks before the authorities were willing to return the children while the father was in the house.

As Debbie Blair put it: "They came in, took our children and stripped us of all our rights. We were completely helpless."

All of this suspicion directed at fathers makes it very hard for divorced or single fathers of girls to have good relationships with their daughters.

A woman commenting on this problem online was very sympathetic with the problems that fathers have with little girls:

My mother died when I was a baby, and, although I lived with my grandmother, I did spend some time with my father, and the things you say were then true, and I expect they still are. As the single parent of three sons, no one looked askance at me if I brought them into the ladies' room with me. A father who takes his daughter into the men's room is a different matter. What the poor father usually must do is look for a kindly woman who will escort his small daughter into the ladies room for him. I know, because I have often performed that service.

Mothers are expected to know about boys' clothes - I can remember that my son made me buy him a jock strap when it was required for gym, because he was embarrassed to do so. Woe to the father attempting to help his daughter buy a bra! This is, indeed, a sad state of affairs. One way to help solve it is to involve fathers in child care as a matter of course from the very beginning. My son diapered my granddaughter as well as my grandson, and oversaw her toilet training. Fathers have to do this. One reason that it is assumed that the mother is the more competent parent is that so few fathers do the heavy parenting - until divorce.

The concerns that men have are quite real. One man I interviewed had his nine-year-old daughter at his home on a visit. While they were together, he tickled her. She mentioned this to her mother who, based on that fact, charged him with sexual abuse. The charge was dropped, but not before humiliating both him and his daughter very much.

One divorced man told me that he used to like playing (innocently) with little girls, but he's heard and read of so many false charges of sexual abuse that he considers himself almost paranoid when a little girl is around. "I say hello, and I try to be friendly, but I'm afraid of being entrapped," he told me. "I keep as much distance from her as I can, and I try to leave as soon as possible."

With all the stories I've heard doing research for this book, I feel almost the same level of paranoia. This came through one time a few years ago, when I was swimming in a swimming pool with my son Jason, who was 7 years old at the time, and as usual he wanted to ride around on my back as we swam. Next thing I knew, a little girl with whom he had been playing wanted to join him riding around on my back!

I was petrified. All I could think of was, what if I accidentally touch her, or what if someone thinks I accidentally touched her, and somebody says something to someone, and what if it gets back to my ex-wife, and what if I ended up getting some fake charges made against me? I normally don't like to be paranoid, but I was really afraid of that. What should I do?

I ended up letting both kids ride on my back, but I stayed at the shallow end of the pool, and I kept my hands in front of me and way up in the air, so that no one could think I was touching anyone. And I got the girl away from me as quickly as I possibly could without making a scene.

I've told this story online in several different forums, and I've gotten some varying reactions. One woman wrote:

Your story about taking Jason to the swimming pool almost made me cry. You handled the situation correctly, given the current climate, but what a loss for everybody. Little girls need to learn to relate to men in a physical way that is not sexual. Men don't dare work in nursery schools anymore; they don't dare baby-sit for a friend's kid. It is surreal and very scary.

This is exactly the point that I've tried to make. But when I posted the same story in a much more feminist women's forum, I got different kinds of replies, including the following:

Since this is a reality, stay out of the pool with little girls. Woman can't always lead normal lives because of false accusations, neither can men. Both have to protect themselves.

This woman was making the point that false accusations hurt everyone in divorce situations, and although I was in the pool first, of course she's right. False accusations of child abuse are extremely common by both men and women in divorce situations.

A second woman posted a message expressing suspicion, and wrote:

It sure does suck that you weren't allowed to play with that little girl in the pool, but welcome to the world babe....we teach our children to be wary of strangers for a reason.

I was quite indignant about this one, and I wrote back: "You're missing the point. I didn't want to play with that little girl in the pool. She was annoying me, not vice versa. And the problem is that her parents evidently didn't take your advice — they should have taught her not to annoy men in the pool." This woman didn't bother to respond to my remarks.

But this just illustrates my point — even telling this story is enough to make feminists suspicious!! That's why it's so dangerous for men to be around little girls!!

One man reading my story wrote the following:

I was coaching my daughter's soccer team. She's 9, and the girls on the team are 8-9 year olds. I made rosters in advance, and in one game I had a girl sitting out, as has to happen each game. This girl was arguably the best player on the team, it was a close game, and she was very upset about not being able to play. She was crying, she needed a hug. What to do? I've never been able to watch someone cry, man, woman or child. I gave her her hug, explained about fair play and the like, and worried for days about possible repercussions.

This man did what he knew was right, but suffered the consequences by living in fear over what he'd done.

As we've previously pointed out, false child abuse charges can cause decades of hatred. "Stan Nadleson" was shocked when his wife dumped him after 20 years of marriage, and was even more shocked when he learned that his teenage daughter, with the encouragement of his ex-wife, wrote a letter accusing him of child abuse for having smacked her on the bum a couple of times. The charges were dismissed, but Stan has seen his daughter only a couple of times in the ten years since the incident occurred, and swears that he will never forgive her.

What this ex-wife did was, in my opinion, among the stupidest things I've heard. I first spoke to Stan shortly after the incident occurred, and now, almost 15 years later, he still has no relationship with his daughter, who is now a young adult. He's still furious with her, and she undoubtedly feels enormous guilt for what she did. They may never reconcile, thanks to what she did.

All we ever hear from women, especially feminists, on issues like this is that girls and women should bring sexual abuse charges for any action that makes her uncomfortable, even something trivial. This is why we need men to be speaking out more: Men are more likely to make the point that when charges are brought for such trivial matters, there are hatreds generated that destroy people's lives for decades.

Do Girls Need Physical Contact With Their Fathers?

How much physical contact a father should have with his daughter is always a difficult question, not only because of the conflicting emotions it evokes in him, but also because of the hostility and suspicion with which those around him view it.

Here's what one daughter of divorce said to me about her father:

Seeing him was always special. I visited him once when I was 15, and I kept wanting to sit on his lap. Most 15 year old girls don't want to have anything to do with sitting on their fathers' laps, but I thought, "Gee, that's really neat!"

I mentioned to her that in today's climate where divorced fathers are automatically always considered sexual abusers if they even touch their daughters, that a 15 year old girl sitting on her father's lap would be considered very suspicious by some people. She answered very vehemently, as if this was a subject she had thought about a lot and had very strong feelings about.

The vast majority of fathers are not abusive – only a very tiny minority are. It's really a shame that fathers are always looked on suspiciously like that, because daughters end up missing out on a lot of contact with their fathers, if everything he does is looked on with suspicion.

Richard Warshaw, whose book *The Custody Revolution* discusses the minefields when a father has custody of his daughter, gives the following advice:

Unfortunately, to minimize the possibility of being accused of sexual abuse, some custodial fathers inhibit their expressions of affection to their daughters. They may become stiff and physically remote, which can be experienced by their children as a withdrawal of love. This may be another factor contributing to the difficulties of some father-custody girls. Most fathers need not worry about being affectionate with their daughters; the majority of men are able to show their love to their children in an appropriate and healthy manner. When a father sexually abuses his daughter, it is an expression not of affection but of a deep-rooted personality problem.

Each father must decide this question on his own. Daughters need and want physical contact with their fathers, up to the point where such contact becomes sexual. Each father must decide for himself how much he can handle and draw the line at that point, even if his daughter wants more.

But fathers should not shy away from physical contact with their daughters just because society is so suspicious. To do so is to harm the daughter more than

anyone. The problem is that, thanks to a lot of hysterical remarks by feminists, things are a lot more difficult.

In this chapter, I've been trying to show how feminists' political campaigns against men have been hurting women much more than they've been hurting men. Now let's turn to a subject area where the damage to women has been enormous.

Sidebar: A daughter with a defiant father

One of the most interesting stories I heard from the fathers I interviewed was from a divorced father who spent several months a year with his daughter. This story gave me a real chuckle.

"Elias Dennison" and his wife split up when their daughter was 2. "Even though we took separate paths, we connected enough so that our daughter grew up very positively between the two of us. It's always best if both parents put the interests of the child first."

Because Elias and his ex-wife lived in different states, his daughter stayed with him for many months at a time, and they took trips together. "Whenever we went to a motel together, there was always a pause, almost as if something was wrong."

Motels weren't the only embarrassing places. "One time we went into a department store to buy her a dress, and she wanted me to go into the dressing room with her to change. The sales clerk tried to stop me, as if it were improper. I overreacted a bit and yelled at her, but my point is that she automatically made the assumption that something must be wrong."

Elias is a college teacher and remembers well what happened when he went to teach at a new school with his daughter, who was in third grade at that

time. "We were going to be living there for a year together, and when we moved in, I was greeted by the one of the faculty wives. It seemed that she and the other faculty wives had worked out a schedule for the whole year how they would take turns helping me out with my daughter!

"They thought of everything. They were going to help me prepare meals for my daughter. They were going to help with buying her clothes, setting up activities for her, everything down to making her bed. They were making the assumption that I couldn't take care of her myself. They never forgave me when I said to them, thanks but no thanks."

Elias resents this sort of attitude. "They were operating from stereotypes. They were very intrusive, and I had the feeling that they wouldn't have been so intrusive if I had had a son rather than a daughter."

Elias has given some thought to why it is that many divorced fathers lose touch with their daughters. "It's very often that the fathers are just left out. Fathers have to work very hard to stay in contact with their children."

He makes the point that men have to fight, and fight hard, to make sure that they see their children as much as possible. "There are two problems. First, as a single male parent, you're constantly

in the position of having to prove that you can take care of a child, and that everything will be all right. Second, men as a rule don't know how to express how they feel, and so don't realize how important it is to see their kids. The result is that at the moments when they might be more assertive, they end up just compromising, and settling for less than they might have in terms of arrangements for seeing their kids."

Elias' advice to divorced fathers, after fighting to get as much access to their kids, is to have fun. "Men have to realize how important the time is that they spend with their kids, especially daughters. It's not that the father and

daughter have to be together every second. The important thing is that the time they spend together be good, quality time."

What makes this story so interesting is that it's a story by a man who refuses to be cowed by the hysterical view of feminists and other women that a man who raises a daughter by himself must be abusive in some way. More men like Elias should speak out, to help counter the unending stream of nonsense that we hear from women on the subject of fathers and daughters.

Can fathers be single parents?

Feminist literature, as well as feminists I've spoken to online and in person, appear to believe very strongly that men do not care for children. Occasionally I've heard a feminist compliment some father because he teaches feminism to his children, and in my experience that appears to be the only important measure of good fatherhood that feminists have.

The remarks that I hear most commonly from feminists are the ones I've quoted repeated in this book – that men don't care for children, that the only reason a father, especially a divorced man, would want to be with his children is so that he can abuse them, or so that he'll have access to the mother and can abuse her. More prosaically, women often accuse single fathers of leaving the care of their children to their mothers and girlfriends.

The single father Elias, whose story we told previously in a sidebar, seems to defy these stereotypes, but that's only one case. It's worthwhile to review a study by Professor Barbara Risman,[♦] assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, North Carolina State University. In a paper entitled, "Can Men 'Mother'? Life as a Single Father," she reported the results of a study of 141 single fathers about their experiences as homemakers, and the nature of their relationships with their children.

In comparing her own findings with those of other studies, she finds:

The descriptive findings about American single fathers appear remarkably consistent. Few single fathers ... recruit either female kin

or paid help to perform the "female" tasks of housekeeping. Homemaking does not appear to be a particular problem for single fathers.

However, the relationships these fathers found with their children go far beyond cooking and cleaning:

In general, these men believe their children share almost all of their emotions. ... In addition to reporting a great deal of self-disclosure from child to parent, these fathers report considerable physical contact with their children. When asked how often they were physically affectionate with their children, including cuddling and body wrestling, the mean response was at least once every day.

These men love being parents, and they intend for it to stay that way, according to the study:

Although most respondents do hope to remarry eventually (90%), they do not claim to seek a woman to relieve them as primary parent. While a large minority (38.1%) intend to retain primary responsibility, the rest hope to share child-care equally. Not one respondent wants a new wife to take the major responsibility for childrearing. ... The desire to continue intense involvement with their children, even after remarriage, is very strong evidence that these men feel comfortable with the role of primary parent.

Should We Listen to Women?

Yes, of course we should.

The problem is not that we listen to women. The problem is that we don't listen to men.

The problem is that whenever a gender issue comes up, men run like scared rabbits. If they say anything at all, it's only a formulaic political response, either from the right or left. And political responses always represent a female point of view because they're the largest and most powerful voting bloc (see chapter 2).

It's time for men to start enunciating a non-political male position on gender issues. I've tried to do that in this book. If you're a man and you agree with something I've said, then support me. If you disagree, then develop your own point of view, but don't just go along with some politician because that's the politically correct thing to do.

Study and Research

1. This chapter implies that media presentations of gender issues are largely female points of view and that men's views are expressed only in private, if at all. This entire book expresses the male point of view in many areas based not only on my own views, but also on the views of the hundreds of men that I've interviewed formally and informally. Identify some areas in your own life where the male point of view is uniquely different from the female point of view.
2. On the other hand, it's possible that the male point of view isn't heard much because men simply don't care about gender issues. In chapter 2, I suggested that the only reason that men could support Clinton after he'd been credibly charged with rape is because his wife, sister, mother, daughter and girlfriend supported Clinton. When it comes to gender issues, are men simply followers?

Chapter 7 – Due Process

Feminists claim that Anita Hill educated men about what sexual harassment is, but it's hard to see how the Anita Hill testimony did anything but cause confusion. And now, more than ten years later, no one that I know of, including any feminists, is claiming that women are less harassed than they were prior to Anita Hill's testimony.

In chapter 2, I outlined and gave examples of some of the problems that Anita Hill has caused women: encouraging them to make frivolous complaints that make all women look "crazy," resulting in the loss of millions of jobs for women.

In my opinion, the Anita Hill testimony simply caused no education except a lot of confusion – confusion that only hurt women. Anita Hill's testimony was, in my opinion, one of the worst possible examples to hold up of a valid sexual harassment claim, for several reasons: The charges were purely political (NOW brought Hill forward to defeat Clarence Thomas because he didn't testify that he favored abortion rights), sending the message that sexual harassment is a political offense rather than a real offense; and the charges were really trivial, in the opinion of many men.

The fallout of the Anita Hill testimony was a great amount of hostility between men and women.

History of the Model Harassment Policy

Late in 1994 I was carrying on sexual harassment discussions in three different women's issues forums, and the discussion was occasionally acrimonious.

The feminist argument is that only a woman knows whether she's being harassed, and that therefore she's the only one who can judge whether a man's behavior is or is not harassment, and therefore it's impossible to define what sexual harassment is, or whether it's occurring. My argument in response to these feminists was that this was simply man-bashing, since men were being accused of being harassers simply because they were men. You get the idea of why the argument became acrimonious.

One of the participants in the CompuServe women's forum was a woman, Cheryl Kondratow, president of a New Jersey based group. Women Against Sexual Harassment (WASH), who had actually been involved in bringing sexual harassment charges against men. Since the discussion that she and I had was relatively civil, I suggested that to her that instead of just arguing, she and I actually try to accomplish something and work together to see if it would be possible to formulate a more precise definition of what sexual harassment really is. Other women in forum occasionally participated in the discussion that followed, but the model law that came out of this was developed mainly by Cheryl and myself.

The Model Harassment Policy that we developed was and is an important achievement. I've shown this model policy to many men and women, and no one has found any "holes" in it. No one has been able to tell me a single example of sexual harassment which the policy does not cover.

On the other hand, men who are sometimes apoplectic at what Anita Hill did – come forward and try to destroy him because of some jokes he had told ten years earlier without objection – are quite comfortable with this policy.

Despite the feminist claim that men conspire to harass women, the fact is that most men do not want to harass women, or to see women harassed. But they can't do that when the only criterion of what is harassment is some woman's political judgment of a man's present and long past behavior.

The Model Harassment Policy provides a road map to men who want to avoid harassment.

It also provides a road map to women who feel harassed. If a woman accuses a man of sexual harassment, instead of having to say, "I just felt harassed," she can say, "I followed the rules, and he didn't."

For these reasons, I believe that adoption of this Model Harassment Policy in the business world is almost certain to reduce sexual harassment. This is in contrast to the feminist policies we've been following since the Anita Hill incident which, by apparently everyone's agreement, have not reduced sexual harassment at all.

Finally – and this is important too – this is a Model Harassment Policy, not a Model Sexual Harassment Policy. That means that it covers all kinds of harassment, including racial, ethnic, religious and other kinds of harassment.

Overview of the Model Harassment Policy

In the feminist model, a woman who feels harassed has only two choices: ignore it, or bring a formal sexual harassment complaint.

Ignoring harassment is obviously a bad choice, but bringing a sexual harassment complaint is often worse, because the aftermath of any such complaint often brings a lot of hostility directed toward the woman who brought the complaint, even by other women in the same workplace. When a formal complaint is made, the workplace is often polarized, not along man versus woman line, but by those who like the guy versus those who don't like the guy. Whatever "hostile workplace" the woman felt she was in previously, she might now feel surrounded by much more hostility than ever. That's why I sometimes refer to making a formal sexual harassment charge a "train wreck strategy" for most women: it destroys not only the participants, but also all the entire workplace along with them.

What the Model Harassment Policy does is augment these two extreme choices with a series of choices. The big step of making a formal sexual harassment charge is still available, but a series of smaller steps are available as well.

Avoiding the Train Wreck Strategy

I'm guided by two experiences that happened to me personally.

The first experience occurred thirty years ago, when I was starting out as a computer programmer. I said something to the group secretary — I can't remember what — that offended her. A few days later, my boss, who was also a friend, called me into his office and told me that she had been in his office crying because of what I said. I was very embarrassed, and after that, I steered clear of her.

Today, that kind of solution would be almost impossible. By today's rules, that situation would automatically generate a formal complaint, causing the kind of problems I've already described.

In my opinion, we have to get back to a world where such informal solutions are still possible. The Model Harassment Policy promotes this.

The second experience occurred a few years ago, and it's one that I described briefly in chapter 2 (p. 73). I was at the workplace, sitting in my office listening to a woman friend complain that one of her male coworkers was saying things to her just to piss her off, and she was indeed getting very pissed off and considering filing a complaint against him. At just that moment, this guy walked by and,

grinning broadly, he extended his arm into my office, and touched her shoulder with his index finger for about half a second, and then walked away.

Now, there are two ways you can look at this incident. One way is that he's a member of the patriarchy exercising political and gender power by harassing and physically abusing a woman in the workplace. The other way was that he was a little boy (in fact, he was in his early 20s) doing something dumb the way a 10 year old boy might throw a snowball at a girl he likes. I choose the latter interpretation.

Anyway, I could see the woman was furious, but all I could think was, "I don't want to get involved in this." So, as I've previously explained, she filed a sexual harassment complaint to the HR rep, a woman. The HR rep called the man into her office and accused him of harassment. And, knowing as I do how these women usually act, I think we can assume that her tone of voice was very hostile and contemptuous.

At any rate, he got pissed off, said angrily, "You just automatically think I'm guilty," and quit, and got another job immediately elsewhere, at higher pay.

So what happened? People took sides, but there was no split along gender lines, as feminist "theory" might have predicted. Some people I spoke to sided with the woman who had brought the complaint, but most of them were pretty angry at her. Perhaps angriest of all at her was the woman who was managing the project that the ex-employee had been working on. Since he had left abruptly, the project's completion would now be substantially delayed.

It's pretty safe to say that everyone was pretty unhappy, and this was all because this young man had acted extremely dumb around a young woman he presumably found attractive.

I've personally felt guilty about that episode ever since it happened. I personally knew both the people, but I didn't want to get involved because who wants to get involved, even peripherally, in a sexual harassment complaint?

If I'd only told the woman, "Hey look, before you do anything, let me go talk to him," and if I'd then gone and talked to him and told him he was risking a lot of grief, then I might have been able to get the whole thing resolved informally. Nothing really serious had happened yet, and if I'd only gone to a little bit of trouble I might have saved a number of people a lot of pain. But since I was too frightened to do any such thing, a lot of people suffered unnecessarily.

So those are two of the personal anecdotes that are guiding me. If we can only find ways to encourage *informal* solutions to these harassment issues, then it will be better for everyone.

What is Harassment?

The Model Policy explicitly defines what harassment is. This means that a man (or a woman) knows how to avoid harassing anyone, and a woman (or a man) who feels harassed can point to specific rules that have been violated, rather than referring to some touchy-feely "hostile workplace" definition.

Some behaviors are automatically considered to be harassment. For example if a boss tells his secretary, "Sleep with me or you're fired," that's harassment with no further qualification.

But other actions are much more ambiguous. One example I've seen frequently described in the press occurs when a man calls a woman "Honey." This is partially a regional thing. In some places, "Honey" is perfectly acceptable, and some women like it; in other places, a woman might call it offensive.

When Cheryl and I discussed this problem, she suggested the concept of "drawing a line." The concept is that if someone feels harassed, he or she can "draw a line" by saying that some behavior is offensive.

In the example we're giving, if a man called a woman "Honey," she could tell him that she considers this offensive, thus "drawing the line." Calling her "Honey" was not considered harassment until she says something, but would be considered harassment after she "draws the line."

This example directly addresses the visceral acrimony between men and women following the Anita Hill testimony: Everyone agrees that she never "drew the line"; she never told Clarence Thomas that she didn't like his telling her dirty jokes — until ten years later, and then only in public testimony. If she had complained to him contemporaneously, then things would have been quite different.

Third Party Behaviors

Suppose you overhear two people in the next room telling ethnic jokes that you find offensive.

This doesn't fit any of the categories we've already given, because nobody is talking directly to you. In fact, the two people telling the jokes may be completely unaware that you can hear them.

This is an example of "third party behaviors," and the rules are the same. If you find the behavior of others to be offensive, then you can "draw the line." In this example, you would tell the people involved that you considered their behavior offensive.

Escalations

Most people will stop offensive behaviors once they're told that someone considers the behavior to be offensive, but not everyone will.

If the offensive behavior continues, and a person feeling harassed will be able to talk to her manager or HR representative, without triggering a formal complaint. However, notifying one's manager or HR representative does carry more weight, legally, since the company will be on notice that there's a problem which has to be resolved.

Resolution

Here's an example: Suppose a man has a very attractive wife, and he has a picture of her in a short skirt on his desk. Suppose a woman working nearby complains that he's harassing her by having this picture of his sexy wife on his desk. (And, yes, this has actually happened.) What's the solution to this problem? She insists that a picture of a sexy woman harasses her, and he insists that this is his favorite picture of his wife, and it's his right to have it on his desk.

How would this be resolved in actual practice? There are several scenarios. Perhaps she'd agree to look the other way when she comes near his desk. Perhaps he'd agree to move the picture so that it would be less visible to her. Perhaps they'd agree to put a big potted plant between their desks so she couldn't see the picture. Perhaps she'd launch a formal sexual harassment complaint against him – once again, the train wreck strategy.

This is an example of where the feminist solution fails completely. A woman who, in this situation, immediately brought a formal sexual harassment complaint against a man because he had a picture of his wife on his desk would subject herself to an enormous amount of ridicule.

Imagine the woman making a formal sexual harassment complaint against the man with the picture of his wife on his desk. This situation is typical of many sexual harassment complaints, and it would be an absolute train wreck for everyone. The woman who made the complaint would be ridiculed by men and women, who'd be saying, "This guy just had a picture of his wife on his desk, and this woman just freaked out." These kinds of complaints are how women and feminists hurt themselves.

Even if the man were ordered by his management to remove the picture of his wife from his desk, this would hardly be an unalloyed victory for the woman. She would be ridiculed by many people around the office for what she did, and her

managers would be very leery of giving her any promotion or job change which would put her in contact with men.

The informal solutions present much less risk for a woman in this and many other situations.

The Timid Woman Problem

In a recent online discussion of the Model Harassment Policy, a woman raised this question: What if the woman feeling harassed does not feel comfortable saying anything at all?

We can take this example through several levels. If the person who feels harassed is a "timid woman" who never says anything to anyone, then it's hard to see how it's ever possible to resolve the situation. She'll just sit there, feeling harassed, becoming more and more angry and bitter until something happens that makes her strike back in some way.

The Model Harassment Policy makes things easier for the "timid woman," in two different ways.

First, the mere existence of the Policy will reduce the acrimony surrounding sexual harassment issues, and make things easier.

Second, since the Policy provides some intermediate steps that should be easier for her to take, short of making a formal sexual harassment complaint.

However, there are choices for the timid woman: asking for help from a co-worker.

Promoting informal solutions

Feminist policy has been amazingly successful in reforming sexual harassment law. It's a shame that no one is making the case that that women are happier or less harassed as a result.

One of the successful reforms is to make it practically illegal for any sexual harassment problems to be resolved informally, or through standard management conflict resolution techniques. In fact, EEOC regulations make it illegal to resolve such problems informally, on the theory that an informal solution can only be a plot by the patriarchy to prevent a woman from being heard. (This is familiar to the feminist policy, described in chapter 1, never to agree to compromise in any way with a husband during a divorce – see page 9.)

As I've previously indicated, the person who has been hurt the most by this, in my opinion, is the ordinary woman who feels harassed, and who has only two extreme measures to take: either suffer in silence, or launch a formal complaint.

In order to *really* reduce sexual harassment in the workplace, in my opinion, we're going to abandon the militant feminist "all men are abusers and harassers and all women are victims" approach.

The new approach will provide educate for employees in the following areas:

- How to recognize harassment, based on specific criteria as described in the Model Harassment Policy or something similar;
- How to ask for help from co-workers or your manager if you feel you're being harassed;
- How to *give* help if some co-worker asks it of you;
- How to make a formal harassment complaint, if all else fails.

The feminist approach I'm suggesting has failed. This informal approach is, in my opinion, the only way to actually *reduce* sexual harassment.

Model Harassment Policy

(The following is the text of the Model Harassment Policy, as written by Cheryl Kondratow and myself.)

Although we all value our freedom to do as we please, we live in an increasingly crowded world where what we do is increasingly likely to be offensive or harmful to others. If someone's behavior is offensive or harmful to you, then that person may be harassing you. This policy defines specific rules for what harassment is, and how to handle it.

This policy covers, but is not limited to, potentially offensive behaviors in the following areas: (1) age, (2) race, (3) color, (4) national origin, (5) religion, (6) sex, (7) sexual orientation, (8) disability status and (9) veteran's status.

Behavior Categories

Potentially offensive behaviors are divided into three categories:

Category I: Behaviors that are almost always considered harassing, unless prior permission has been granted:

- Hitting, grabbing, pulling, pushing.

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

- Physical threats ("`have sex with me or you'll die")
- Touching or kissing sensitive parts of the body, including face, genitals, breasts, bum.
- Job-related threats ("Contribute to this political party, or you'll lose your job.")

Category II: Behaviors which may or may not be considered offensive, depending on personal and regional preferences.

- Use of swear words or use of epithets for any of the nine areas listed above.
- Telling jokes with content in any of the nine areas listed above.
- Inappropriate use of words of affection, such as: honey, sonny, boy, sweetie, girl, or babe.
- Touching a hand or arm, or putting one's arm around another's shoulders.

Category III: Third party behaviors which may offend someone in the same location. The offended person may request some modification in working conditions to resolve the problem.

- Posting or openly reading material in any of the nine areas listed above.
- Other people gossiping and talking to each other about you in a malicious and personal way.
- Verbally abusive behavior between two other people.
- Open and inappropriate displays of physical affection.
- Any category II behavior which might be overheard by an uninvolved third party. (Example: Two people discussing sexual, religious, political or racial matters, overheard by a third party.)

Procedures for Handling Offensive Behavior

If someone's behavior is offensive to you, then you have a right, in many circumstances, to have the behavior stopped or modified so that it is not offensive to you.

Experience has shown that many people engaging in offensive behaviors, especially those in Categories II and III, are often not even aware that others

consider their behavior offensive. If you are offended by someone's behavior, you are encouraged to "draw the line" with the person by telling him or her how you feel; very often that's all that will be needed to stop the offensive conduct. In the case of Category III, the solution might be as simple as separating you from the person(s) whose behavior is offending you.

However, there are some situations where you are justified in bringing an actual charge of harassment against the offender. This is the case, for example, for the extremely offensive behaviors in Category I. But this is also true for the less offensive behaviors in Categories II and III if you have "drawn the line" with a person who continues to "cross the line" by continuing the offensive behaviors.

Example: (1) Your boss tells you that won't get a promotion unless you attend a political event with him or her. This behavior is harassment even without a "draw the line" warning. (2) A co-worker calls you "honey," and continues to do so even after you "draw the line" by telling the co-worker that you find that term offensive. The behavior was not harassment before you "drew the line," but became harassment afterwards.

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Questions and Answers

1. Q: First I want to say that sexual harassment is, in my view, about power.
A: I hear this a lot, but I don't know what it means. Yes, sexual harassment is about power, but so is everything else. When a man gets into a fistfight, it's about power. When a man robs a liquor store it's about power. When a woman wears seductive clothes, it's about power. When a woman brings a sexual harassment complaint, it's about power. So, to say that sexual harassment is about power doesn't distinguish sexual harassment from almost any other human activity. Every person, man or woman, tries to gain power.
2. Q: women feel more confident in all places of work they will be better able to just tell a guy off when he does something inappropriate.

A: This will never happen because it's against human nature. When a woman tells a guy off, most people will stay out of it. When a woman brings an S.H. complaint, many people will take sides. And the sides will not split along gender lines, just as they didn't in the case of Anita Hill: it isn't that women admire Anita Hill and men revile her; generally speaking it's Democratic men and women who admire Anita Hill, and Republican men and women who revile her. I make this point in response to many places in your posting where you appear to imply that S.H. is a man vs. woman thing. In fact, men and women have pretty similar views about sexual harassment.

Study and Research

1. If you're in a position to do so within some company, present the Model Harassment Policy to the company's employees, along with appropriate training, and get some reactions.
2. The Model Harassment Policy was written prior to the Clinton sex scandals. Have we learned anything in those scandals that would suggest changes to the policy?

Chapter 8 – Miscellaneous Essays on Gender Issues

For several years, I posted a weekly column online, under the two names "Fraternizing with the Enemy" and "Men and Women Together." These columns covered a wide variety of gender issues.

This chapter contains several of these columns, the ones on topics that I consider to be the most interesting. In some cases, I've brought the columns up to date, while in others, I've left it essentially unchanged.

Some of these essays contain advice, some contain information, and others are just for fun. I hope you enjoy them.

In Praise of "Girls"

(This was first posted online on March 20, 1995)

Back in the 1970s, the women's lib movement banished the word "girl" from our vocabularies, and I've mourned that loss ever since. "Girl" is a wonderful word, a pretty word, even when referring to an adult. Many a man wants to date a girl, not because he thinks she couldn't be President of the United States, but because he wants to date someone who's a friend, perhaps a little innocent. "I met a great woman last night" connotes more sexuality than "I met a great girl last night," and sometimes you don't want to connote all that sexuality.

It's certainly true that everyone should be able to choose how they're called. For example, I once knew someone named Susan who did not like to be called Sue, and that was her right, but of course she has nothing to say about whether other women named Susan should ever be called Sue. Similarly, if some particular woman does not ever want anyone to refer to her to a "girl" under any circumstances, that's certainly her right, but we shouldn't allow her or a bunch of vocal feminists dictate what words all of use to refer to women other than themselves.

In fact, I've heard feminists online argue that *no* other word besides "woman" should be permitted. They argue that even "lady" and "gal" should be banned from our language.

I would argue that this attempt is misguided, for a number of reasons. The matter of handling words like woman, girl, lady and gal is more complicated than you might think.

Some years ago, I was watching the Miss USA beauty pageant on TV. I watched it for a while, and found it soooooo booooooooooring. The female person I was watching it with, however, found it fascinating, and couldn't take her eyes off it. Also, the commercials were clearly directed toward women. That was the evening that I realized for the first time that the Miss USA and Miss America pageants are directed at women, not men, this despite the fact that everyone in the world seems to imply that beauty contests have no other purpose than to satisfy men who might want to stare at women in bathing suits.

The interesting thing was that the female moderators always referred to the contestants as "girls," never women. In fact, I felt that the word "woman" would have been completely inappropriate for these females, since, as I said previously, this would have implied too little innocence. But this wasn't just my opinion. The female moderators and the female audience obviously preferred the word "girl" to "woman," even though the contestants were adult women.

I have a story that's a bit of an aside to this. Several years ago I was dating an English girl (she referred to herself and other adult women as girls) named Elsa. Her background was in teaching English as a foreign language, so she was excruciatingly familiar with differences between British and American English, and loved to tease me about Americanisms in general and American pronunciation in particular. Now the Brits don't really pronounce the letter "r" much, so they pronounce the word "girl" as something like "goel", where the "oe" is close to the sound in the German word schoen or the French word feu. So when she wanted to make fun of the American "r", and at the same time make fun of American political correctness, she usually did so by pronouncing the word "girl" as "grrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrl," making it sound like the whirring of a motor.

In fact, feminists themselves in the online world have made a very interesting adaptation of the word "girl," so that they can use it. The adaptation is to spell the word in the same way that Elsa pronounced it – as "grrl" or "grrrl." This spelling carries the connotation that yes, it's a girl, but it's a *ferocious* girl, because she's saying "grrrrrrr."

Thus, for example, I saw postings from feminists containing such phrases as "The Sacramento Webgrrls," "How about grrrls?" and "that grrl is really The Rainbow Fairy." What I conclude from these examples is that even feminist women sometimes need to use the word "girl" when referring to an adult woman, which is exactly the point I want to make, but have had to change the spelling to make it OK according to feminist rules.

In fact, there are much more fundamental reasons why we should all be permitted to use words like "girl."

Each of the words that I mentioned – woman, girl, gal, lady – has a meaning that's evolved over centuries, perhaps millennia, and it really doesn't make sense to try to change the meanings of such ancient words without providing for alternatives. And, in fact, all of these words are still needed, and there are really no viable alternatives available.

In my opinion, the word "girl" is one which, even when referring to an adult woman, can be very complimentary, and should not be rejected just because it can *sometimes* be abused. Any word, including the word "woman" could be abused just as easily as "girl" can, but that's no reason to ban a word completely. In fact, as women have shown with the "grrrl" adaptation, they need the word "girl" as much as the rest of us do.

The word "gal" is another indispensable word in certain circumstances. It's an informal word, and often achieves feminist objectives more than woman does. For example, "That gal did a great job" connotes to me more professionalism than "That woman did a great job," which to me has a slight hint of lasciviousness to it.

The term "lady" is even more interesting. One woman online complained that it "connotes various attributes to different people and in different parts of the country. Many girls are told how to sit, stand, walk, talk, act, dress and behave like a lady to meet someone else's perceived notion of how women and girls were meant to fit into 'society.'" She said that the word means "to be refined, to have gentle manners, and even to be superior. Made it real tough to climb, holler, run, speak up, speak out, march, demand, lobby, protest, go braless, go naked, wear pants, throw away gloves, and a bunch of other stuff."

I must say that I've always been completely perplexed by this argument. In times past, when someone has said something like, "John is a real gentleman," I've always taken it as a very high compliment; it would never have occurred to me think of it as somehow restricting me from climbing or hollering at appropriate times. Similarly, when I use the word "lady," it's always a compliment, and is never meant to restrict anyone.

Indeed, the word lady is *absolutely indispensable* in certain circumstances.

For example, suppose a man is having lunch in a restaurant with a female business acquaintance. She wants some more coffee, but the service is poor. As is the appropriate role of a gentleman, he should be the one to catch the attention of the waiter, so that she won't have to embarrass herself by having to signal the waiter herself. When the waiter arrives and says, "Yes, sir?" what should he say? Should he point wordlessly at the empty coffee cup? Tacky. Should he say, "Miss Jones wants some more coffee?" Ponderous, and provides information that is none of the waiter's business. Should he say "The woman wants some more coffee?" Suggestive and even condescending.

There's only one really acceptable statement he can make to the waiter: "The lady would like some more coffee." As the old joke goes, a gentleman always refers to a woman as a lady, whether he thinks it's true or not. But whether you like that joke or not, the word "lady" is an essential, wonderful part of our language.

For the record, I don't mind being referred to as a guy, a fellow, a gentleman, or a man, in the appropriate context. The word "boy" is unacceptable because of its offensive racial overtones, but the word "kid" is fine for a male in the right circumstances. (Being in my 50s, I haven't been called a kid in a long time, but I remember being called a kid years ago and not being offended by it if used in the right way.)

The point for me is that all the words under discussion — woman, lady, girl, gal — are lovely words with fine, subtle, centuries-old meanings that are indispensable for me and, I think, probably for all of us, men and women.

Who's In Control?

(This was first posted online on 8/15/94)

"I have an assignment for you, Adriane," I said. "I want you to think of three ways that women control men. You have until the play ends, and I'm going to grade your answers."

During our drive to the play, Adriane had been complaining that men have all the power in a relationship. It's something that women say often when talking about their husbands or boyfriends, and it's something that so-called feminist writings often talk about. I find it pretty annoying when I hear it, since I don't feel I have any power at all over women.

"You don't have any right to grade me," objected Adriane, but she was a good sport, and she went along with it.

Adriane enumerated three major reasons why men have control over women:

1. Men have greater physical strength than women.
2. Men have economic control, since they make more money than women.
3. Men have more freedom, since their bodies aren't tied down by pregnancy and hormonal cycles.

As I prodded her to think about women controlling men, it struck me how foreign that whole concept was to her. To listen to her, you would think that men made all the decisions, and women just said "Yes, master." I'd noticed this before listening to other women: some women just don't have any idea about how much power they have.

After hours of discussion, that evening and later on the phone, we came up with several major areas where women have control over men:

- Women can grant or withhold sex. Men often complain that women run the whole show when it comes to sex.
- Men depend on their wives for emotional support much more than women depend on their husbands. Generally speaking, women have girlfriends they can talk to, while a man's entire support system depends on his wife or girlfriend. This means that if the couple have a fight that lasts a couple of days or more, it's much harder for the man than for the woman.
- Men have a responsibility to support their wives and children, which limits their freedom substantially. Women much more than men have the option to stay at home and take care of the kids, or to take lower-paying jobs that they enjoy more than high-paying, high-stress jobs.
- Since women get pregnant, they have control over whether they get pregnant, and whether they have an abortion. "It's his kid too" really doesn't mean very much.
- Women are far more protected by society than men are. This gives women an advantage over men in a number of areas, especially divorce and domestic violence.

"But women don't really have those powers," said Adriane. "Women don't want to withhold sex from men, so in fact they don't have any power at all."

"Yes that's true," I replied, "but men don't want to use physical force against women either. The truth is that men and women in general have little power over each other, and what little power they have balances out."

Adriane is a long-time friend, and is very concerned for me because I haven't been in a relationship for a long time, and don't seem to want to be in one.

"Do you think you have any power to interest a woman in a relationship with you?" she asked. I said that I didn't, that I felt I had absolutely no power whatsoever over any women about anything.

She proceeded to enumerate some powers that I have over women. What was interesting about this list is that it provides positive forms of power, as opposed to the negative forms of power we'd been discussing up till now. Her list is specific to me, but I'm providing it here because some of the items may apply to other men as well.

"You've got to get rid of your 'in your face' attitude, John. Whenever any gender issue comes up, you always seem to want to set it up as an argument."

Those of you who know me online may not be surprised to learn that I act the same in person.

"You have the power to flirt with women and to seduce them, to get them interested in you." This is an area I feel very insecure about. Basically, if a woman is interested in me then fine, but if she's not, then I don't feel I have any ability whatsoever to influence her to change her mind.

"You have the power to let women know that you're economically independent, and that you can help them economically. Women want men who can take care of them."

"You can clean up your home," said Adriane. I just grunted. "Women need to know they'll have a nice place to live."

"You have power on a relational level," she said. "Women want guys who can talk to them and share their feelings with them. Not every guy has that strength, and you do. Let them know that, instead of making every conversation into an argument."

"You can be responsive to women's needs. Men who can do that have a big advantage."

"You're strong - you have the power to move things, fix windows, things like that. Women like that, and it's another bargaining chip that you have."

Well, Adriane gave me a lot to think about, and I promised I would.

And what grade did I give Adriane? I gave her an "incomplete." See, I'm concerned about Adriane too because she isn't in a relationship either, and she really needs to give a lot more thought about the ways in which she can influence a man.

Business Etiquette

(This was first posted online on July 4, 1994.)

I get into a lot of online discussions, and when one online discussion of a seemingly simple gender question in almost started a flame war between the participants, naturally I began to get interested.

The question was: If a salesman and saleswoman are seated when a client arrives, and the man stands to shake the client's hand, should the woman stand or remain seated?

It's a simple question, but the discussion began to get very heated.

To do a little research, I posed this question to a young woman programmer who works for one of my clients, and asked her what she does in such situations, and whether what she does is different from what men do. She said, very

insistently, that men and women do *exactly* the same thing. I said, "So when a man comes in, you would stand for him?" She hesitated and said, "You mean at a formal sit-down dinner or something?" "I guess so." "Well, I never go to formal dinners like that," and with that she turned back to her computer, making it clear that the subject was terminated.

Hmmmm. Well, this was getting more and more puzzling. As a writer on gender issues, I often ask people questions on really intimate subjects, like sex, dating, marriage, and divorce. I figured something like this would be a piece of cake, but apparently I was wrong.

As it turns out, I'm sometimes in the position of being able to observe this sit/stand behavior. As a computer industry journalist, I meet with vendors who want me to write about their companies' products. Since they want me to do something for them, they usually treat me as something of a VIP. At such a meeting, there are usually one or two men who are officers of the vendor corporation, and usually a woman who is the public relations or communications director.

Now the fact is, if I arrive at such a meeting when the people are seated, the men always stand for me, and the women sometimes stand, and sometimes remain seated. I've seen with my own eyes that men and women act differently.

At one such meeting, I decided that it would be an opportunity to do more research. Unfortunately I arrived first, and so could not observe their behavior, but I explained to everyone that I write an online column on gender issues, and I wanted to ask them how they handle this problem when they meet with journalists. I said, "I assume the men always stand." One of the men immediately agreed. Then I asked the woman, with whom I've been acquainted for several years, whether she sits or stands. She started reciting a complicated rule about standing only for people who are sufficiently more important, or something like that. I asked her if the rule is different for men and women. "No!" she said vehemently, "it's exactly the same for both men and women." As she was saying this, one of the men said to her, "You don't always stand at some of these meetings." I couldn't tell whether he was chastising her, whether he was simply stating this as a fact, or whether he was just trying to pull her chain. At any rate, once again it was clear I'd better drop the subject if I didn't want to embarrass someone.

Well, this was certainly very peculiar. Three discussions of this topic, and three very strange results. What's going on here? Here's my working hypothesis:

Question 1: Why do women insist that the business rules are the same for men and women, when it's obvious that they aren't?

Answer: Because it's politically correct. It is not a mandatory rule that men and women act exactly the same, but it is a mandatory that men and women *say* that they act the same, even though they don't.

Question 2: Why are women reluctant to talk about this issue?

Answer: Because to do so truthfully would violate the mandatory rule just stated.

Question 3: Why don't women just follow the same rule for sitting and standing that men follow?

Answer: Because they're trying to protect us and themselves. Women know that men walk around in a testosterone-bound fog, and a woman is afraid that if she stands for a man, then he may think she's interested in him, he may make a pass at her, this might sour the business deal, and he might even blame it on her for flirting with him.

I passed this theory by a female friend. She said that it was too complicated, and that the real reason that women don't stand is that women are afraid of men. I said that any number of women who don't stand for me aren't the least bit afraid of me. We discussed it further without reaching any conclusion.

Question 4: Do men care whether women sit or stand for them?

Answer: As nearly as I can make out, they couldn't care less. Generally speaking, women worry much more about these things than men do.

Question 5: Why are men reluctant to talk about this issue?

Answer: Because most men have a little common sense, and they know that talking (or writing) about stuff like this will only get women mad at them, and will bring them nothing but grief. Unfortunately, not all men (such as myself) have that much common sense.

Selecting a Dating Service

(This was posted on 6/3/96. The specifics, including names and prices, are out of date today, but the general descriptions of the dating services are still of interest, and all phone numbers shown are valid as of September, 2001. Note, in particular, that online dating services like Match.com are very much mainstream these days.)

Thinking of sprucing up your social life by joining a dating service? Dating services don't work for all people, but they can be a big help to some people, especially people who are "matchable," but are having difficulty meeting people because they're busy or shy. The conclusions presented in this column were gathered from Boston-area dating services, but except for differences in lifestyles in different parts of the country, most of the conclusions should be independent of geography.

"The hardest to match are smokers," says Judi Ehrlich, director and matchmaker for New Possibilities, a Jewish personal introduction service founded

in 1984. "Boston is so anti-smoking, that someone who smokes is substantially handicapped."

Certain physical characteristics can also affect how hard it is to match you. Everyone I spoke to agreed that almost as hard to match as smokers are overweight women, and third hardest are short men. Interestingly, this corresponds to a news item I heard on CNN a couple of years ago that teenage girls who are overweight and teenage boys who are short are more likely, on the average, to earn less money than others when they become adults. (A friend tells me that she has a very short woman friend who told her, "I'd never marry a short man; I want to have kids, and they'd be pipsqueaks." Dating can be very, very cruel.)

"Fourth hardest to match are uneducated men," says Steve Penner, president of LunchDates (<http://www.lunchdates.com>), which has had 15,000 clients since it was founded in 1982. "I've been criticized for saying this, but it's true for most people: women want to date up in every way – they want men with a better education, a better job, more money, older, taller, and so forth – while men are willing to date down."

Trish McDermott, spokesperson for the dating service trade group International Society of Introduction Services (ISIS) agrees that "women date up and men date down. A man wants a woman who's thinner, and a woman wants a man that's powerful," she says. "That doesn't mean that if you're a short man or overweight woman you're without opportunity, but you have to be realistic about your expectations and about the kind of person you want to meet."

Most people I spoke to emphasized the need to be realistic, and sometimes the need to compromise. "We have one short, overweight woman in the dating service," says Penner, "and I can get her as many dates as she wants, because she's willing to date short men." The message is that everyone needs to be realistic about the kind of person he or she wants to date, though never "settling" in any important way.

This dating up/down difference between women and men also explains why age is important in the use of dating services, according to the people I spoke to. Since the woman in a dating relationship is usually younger than the man, generally speaking, dating services have more men than women in their 20s, about an equal split for age 30-35, more women than men above age 35, and substantially more women above age 40. Overall, some dating services indicate that they have three times as many women as men.

Together and its competitors

The giant of the dating service industry is the Together Development Corp. (<http://www.togetherdating.com/introductions>). Founded in 1974, the Together

dating service now has 175 offices throughout the country, and even has expanded internationally to Canada and several countries in Europe. Like many dating services, it's had its share of troubles – lawsuits, complaints, bankrupt franchises, and so forth – but overall it's been very successful, adding 50,000 new members each year, half a million members since its founding.

Together's success comes from its personal introduction formula – assigning each member a single counselor who serves as a point of contact, answers questions, and provides matches, based on information supplied by members in several questionnaires. Together's success has made it the standard by which other personal introduction dating services are measured.

There are many smaller dating services in most cities. They succeed by giving personal service in their own special ways. LunchDates, for example, has had the same three people doing all its matching since its founding in 1982. Judi Ehrlich does all the matching for New Possibilities, and knows every member personally, along with his or her wants and desires. It's this kind of personal, almost intimate service that makes a personal introduction service work.

Personal introduction dating services usually set prices based on the number of introductions or referrals you're promised. Together's Boston area service charges \$995 for 6 referrals (*1996 prices*), though prices are as low as \$500 in some parts of the country, according to the firm. The charge is \$2,000-3,500 for a 36 referral contract. Because it's the biggest service, and has the advantage of the most members from which to draw matches, its smaller competitors generally charge less than Together. LunchDates charges \$925 for a basic membership guaranteeing 20 or more referrals. And New Possibilities, which is a non-profit service sponsored by the Jewish Community Centers of Boston, charges \$590 for 12 introductions.

However, some services balk at guaranteeing referrals. The Suburban Dating Service (*no longer in business*) charges a \$395 initiation fee, plus \$50 for each referral after the first. Marilyn (for reasons of privacy, she declined to provide her last name) started the service in 1984, and personally meets, evaluates and matches all her clients, and she claims that she won't match two people unless she's convinced "that they walk the same path." She adds that you can't match people like you run an assembly line: "I don't see how anyone can guarantee 36 matches. It's like promising to bake 3 dozen muffins."

Although personal introduction services claim to service anyone from 18 to 80, most of them target a narrow range of clientele: professionals, women aged 25-40 and men aged 30-55, who are too busy to meet people. Many dating services offer specials or discounts to people in the most matchable categories, especially women in their 20s and men in their 40s and 50s. If you're outside the targeted age ranges, don't give up hope, however: some dating services specialize in older or younger clients. It's worth calling around to find out.

One particular category of people can really be helped by a personal introduction service: shy people. "If you're a shy man, it's very hard to meet women," says Ehrlich. Introduction services help shy people by arranging meetings so that there's no fear of rejection. "Shyness is something that I can really help people with," she says.

Incidentally, another category of dating service has fallen into disfavor. Computer dating services, where a computer program matches men with women based on their profiles, were popular during the 1970s. Since that time, they've become so unpopular that they hardly exist anymore.

Video and Self-Selection Dating Services

Self-selection dating services work differently from personal introduction services. These services provide each member profiles of other members, usually along with photos. One person can request a meeting with a person of the opposite sex, based on the profile information. The selected member can accept or reject this invitation, based on the requester's member profile.

The most popular self-selection services are video dating services, where the clients record a two or three minute video of themselves.

And most amazing: video dating services typically have more men than women.

However, video dating and other self-selection services can be brutally depressing for people in hard to match categories we've been describing. One video dating service customer found this out the hard way. "Don't expect video dating to be any different than every day life," he says. "You might not even meet any people at all. Out of 150 selections I made, I met only ten. If you're ugly, don't waste your money."

However, don't conclude from this that you should avoid all video dating or other self-selection services. Quite the contrary, since they often have more men than women, they may be the best choice for women who are serious about meeting men

The country's largest video dating service is Great Expectations, with 51 centers around the country (Boston area number: 617-332-7755). The price of the basic service for one year is \$2,000 (*1996 prices*), which includes a professional photo and videotaping session. The service has 175,000 members, of which 55% are male and 45% are female, according to spokesman Michael Olguin. Clients can examine photo books and watch videos to select prospective partners. In most offices, the company scans photos and snippets of video into digital form, so that customers can quickly scan them all sitting on a computer in the office.

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

In the Boston area, The Post Club (617-332-2582) uses video dating as just one component of a variety of self-selection services, with the result that it's become one of the most popular dating services in the Boston area. "Women enjoy activities, and men enjoy looking at the videos, so we provide both of those," says events manager Gib Murphy. The activities include everything from game nights to museum trips, and there are travel activities. By providing both videos and activities, they've managed to attract both men and women to a private social club atmosphere with a reasonably balanced male/female ratio. Price for a basic membership is \$1,000 to \$1,200 up front, plus \$26 per month (*1996 prices*).

Many self selection services charge quite low prices, since you do most of the work yourself.

An unusual service is The Right Stuff (national number: 800-988-5288), a national dating service for grads and faculty of the Ivies, Seven Sisters, MIT, Duke, Stanford, U. of Chicago, Amherst, Williams, Wesleyan, Swarthmore, Northwestern, Johns Hopkins, UC Berkeley. It has 1,800 members, mostly in New England, Chicago and California, but with a scattering of members throughout the country, with membership growing in high-tech areas like the northwest, Texas, and the Carolinas. Members are provided with short profiles of other members, and can request full profiles. "People who join feel open with each other because they already have a shared academic experience," says co-president Dawn Hutchings. "It's for people who know themselves pretty well, and are willing to pick up the phone and call someone or write to them." The price is \$60 for six months, plus \$3 for each requested full profile.

Creative Allies (617-236-6996) and Common Interests (*out of business*) are services which help you to meet people of either sex to share activities that you both enjoy. Each provides a monthly newsletter of scheduled activities, such as philosophy, dancing, movies, dining out, practicing French, rollerblading, and travel. They're not a dating services, but since the membership is overwhelmingly singles, they provide opportunities for meeting people of the opposite sex if desired. Cost for each is \$60 for a one-year membership.

The self-selection services are not for everyone, since they require more time and work on the part of the client, and shy people may not be as comfortable with them. On the other hand, many members of self-selection services often report that since they have more control over whom they select, they have fewer wasted meetings, and so may actually save time.

Premium Services

What if you're in one of those hard to match categories, but you still want the help of a professional dating service? Boy, have we got a deal for you!

If you're willing to spend some money, there are dating services that will conduct a search for you for the kind of mate you want. Their service is similar to how a company might search for a special kind of high level executive. The search will be performed by running advertisements, by holding parties, or by using direct marketing and telemarketing techniques sometimes using mailing list information.

In the Boston area, the most respected premium service is GentlePeople (617-492-1200). "The people who most appreciate GentlePeople are those who need plenty of support through the whole process of finding a mate," says Zelda Fischer, who founded the service in 1982. The service begins with a 12-hour all day interview with Fischer, which starts in her office, but continues in various nearby hotels and restaurants in downtown Boston. "It takes that long to get to know the real person," says Fischer. After that, Fischer is on the phone with the client almost daily, providing guidance, advice and, of course, referrals to appropriate people of the opposite sex and invitations to parties to meet more people. "Most of my clients are intelligent and highly educated, and have been bored by people they've met in the past," says Fischer. "Now they want to meet someone more like themselves." The fee is \$5,000 to \$10,000 (\$25,000 if a national or international search is required).

Some reputable dating services offer premium services to members who are willing to pay more for them. Usually these additional services are to be first to be matched with persons of the opposite sex fitting the member's profile.

The Post Club offers a premium service called VIP membership for \$2,800. "You're given the red carpet treatment," says events manager Gib Murphy. "We have someone there to hold your hand, like a Yenta, who knows the membership backwards and forwards, who'll call you and pump you up and suggest who you should try to meet. It's like a matchmaker service."

Great Expectations also offers an extra-charge Personal Shopper service, where a coach suggests photos and videos you should look at. "It's not a matchmaker service," says Olguin, "but it saves time. We tell you that of the thousands of people in the service, here are the 25 you ought to look at."

Some smaller services are willing to conduct searches for some clients as part of their regular service. "One of my clients was a high level executive who wanted to meet someone extremely elegant and beautiful," says Suburban Dating's Marilyn. She decided to conduct a search by approaching the most exclusive shopping area in downtown Boston. "I sent a personal letter to every hairdresser

on Newbury Street, describing my client and asking them if they knew anyone who'd like to meet my client," she says. It took a few months, but finally the search succeeded. "He's thrilled," says Marilyn.

Premium services can take a variety of forms. One West coast premium service is rumored to charge wealthy older foreign men tens of thousands of dollars to give parties to introduce the men to young American girls, in the hope that one will be interested in marrying an older foreign man for his money. "It's nothing but an expensive pimp service," harrumphs one competitor. Another competitor, GentlePeople's Fischer, refuses to take on clients wanting too large an age difference. "Why would a 30 year old woman want a 60 year old man, no matter how rich he is?" she asks. "Even if I found someone for him, he'd be making a deal with the devil — she'd have an affair with the gardener, and he'd lose both her and his money."

Being Realistic

The bane of all dating services is the unrealistic client, and unrealistic clients become unsatisfied clients who might bring lawsuits or make complaints to the state's Attorney General. "It happens," admits Together spokesperson Rachel Radding. "It's a service oriented industry, and not everyone is going to be happy. Some people won't be satisfied with anyone less than a goddess."

In fact, those with unrealistic expectations should probably avoid dating services completely. One man who's belonged to a couple of dating services says that he's never had a relationship with any woman he's met through a dating service. "I want to meet a slim, attractive woman 10 to 12 years younger than myself," he says. "But attractive women don't join dating services to meet someone 10-12 years older. I'm the kind of guy they join dating services to get away from." He's had nice relationships with women he's met through personal ads and singles dances, and considers those methods better for him.

The Post Club's Gib Murphy agrees. "We have a policy of saying that we're not a quick fix, and we're not a guarantee that you're going to get married," she says. "It's almost like a weight loss program — how well you do depends on what you choose to do for yourself."

The comparison with a weight loss service is an interesting one, since statistics show that some 90-95% of the clients of weight loss programs regain all their lost weight within two years.

What about dating services? What's their success rate? "You have to ask what each dating service means by success," says ISIS's McDermott. "One dating service

may claim 80% success, but they may mean having a nice first date; another may claim 20% success, but they may mean finding a husband or wife."

None of the services I spoke to were willing to estimate the percentage of their clients that have long term relationships with people they met through the service, but I would be surprised if the figure exceeds 20-30%, and is probably lower. That's not to say that all the rest of their clients were dissatisfied customers – some of them just wanted to date casually, and some of them met their partners in other ways while they were members of the dating service, which is fair enough – but it does emphasize the fact that dating services are no panacea.

Unfortunately, unrealistic expectations are not always just the fault of the clients. Although most dating services are fair and honest, a few are notorious for using high pressure sales tactics that prey on people's depression, especially just after ending a relationship. Unscrupulous sales people always tell you that they turn away unqualified singles (even when the truth is that paying the fee is the only qualification they care about), and they always tell you that they have hundreds of singles eager to meet you (even when there isn't a single person who wants to meet someone with your profile). They'll cheerfully tell you that it's well worth spending \$2,000, \$3,000 or more to find happiness with a special person, but what happens when you spend \$3,000 and then they can't match you with a single suitable person? It happens more often than you might think.

My advice to anyone thinking of joining a dating service is this: Do not let anyone talk you into making a quick decision with any nonsense like, "We're offering you a membership at this rate for today only." Believe me, they'll take your money tomorrow, and if they won't, someone else will.

If you do wake up one morning regretting having paid \$3,000 to a dating service the night before, then call your state's Attorney General immediately. Some states have laws giving you a three-day grace period to back out of any consumer contract, but you have to move very quickly.

Also, although chemistry with the dating service is very important, don't be overly swayed by the chemistry you have with the person selling you the service, and don't spend a lot of money on a dating service unless you're absolutely certain they have people they can match you with. The only way that you can determine that for sure is a trial membership. Even a referral by a satisfied friend may not be enough, since a few inches or a few pounds can make a big difference in your matchability. Offer to spend a few hundred dollars for a short term membership so that you can judge the quality of the people they match you with. If they're unwilling to do that, then shop around for another dating service. You'll find that there are plenty of them out there.

Top Ten Worst Dates from Hell

(Originally posted online on 4/1/97)

Since I've been unmarried most of my adult life, I've had probably hundreds of dates, especially if you consider a brief phone conversation or a dance at a singles dance to be a "date." With Valentine's Day past, I decided to write a column on the top ten worst dates I've had.

Please, nobody take offense from this. The overwhelming majority of the women I've dated have been very nice, and some have been wonderful. And anyway, as hard as this might be to believe, there might even be some women out there who have me on *their* top lists of worst dates. Indeed, I've never had much luck with women, and I seem to be totally lacking in what skills it takes to have a successful long term relationship with a woman. So, this is just me taking "my turn" to complain.

This list may even have a small educational value. Of all my experiences, I've tried to select ones which correspond to complaints that I've heard from other men. So someone trying to figure out how men's minds work might glean some useful insight from this list.

So here's my list of Top Ten Worst Dates From Hell. Only the names have been changed, to protect the guilty.

10. I met Annie through a dating service, and took her to dinner and a movie. She was recently separated, and all evening she complained about her husband and his mistress. As we were leaving the movie theatre, there was a long silence, and then she turned to me and said, "You know, I don't know why I'm complaining - I got rid of him and got all his money."

9. I met Linda online, and then we met for real and went dancing. In the car afterwards, she started getting very responsive, and I suggested we drive somewhere private. We did, and had 20 minutes of wild passion. When it was over, she indicated that she had been using me for some sort of experiment, to see if she could still enjoy sex now that she was entering menopause, and didn't think she wanted to see me again. I was quite annoyed by all this, but just shrugged and drove her to her home. When I got back to my home, there was a message on my answering machine telling me she had lost an expensive silver earring in my car. I found the earring and called her and offered to mail it to her, but no, she considered losing the earring to be some sort of spiritual omen, and said she wanted to see me again. So I took her to lunch and gave her her earring and, sure enough, she told me again she was dumping me. So I got to get dumped twice by the same woman within one week.

8. Janet told me she was very pretty in the letter she sent me in response to my ad. We made a date and when I went to pick her up, a very pretty female answered the door – however, she seemed much too young. Sure enough, she led me into the living room and introduced me to her mom, my real date. Mom weighed 350 pounds if she weighed an ounce. Always the gentleman, I still took her out to dinner, but got her home as fast as I could.

7. I answered Sharon's personals ad by sending her a letter with my phone number to her box. She called, and after a lengthy phone conversation I suggested we meet. She said we should just exchange addresses. I gave her my full name and address, and she gave me her first name and another post office box. I said, "We've been talking on the phone for two hours and you know my name, address, phone number, and everything about me, and you can't give me anything but a post office box?" She said, "The reason I spent so much time on the phone with you is because I'm interested in you, but I don't know you well enough, and you might be a rapist or something." I paused as I tried to think of an appropriate reply to this very offensive statement, and while I was thinking, she said, "I guess now you're going to go to the post office and watch for me." That was the last straw. "What!!!?? Sharon, I'm a very busy person, and I certainly have better things to do with my time than stand around the post office waiting for you to come to your box, and believe it or not I have absolutely no interest in raping you." She indicated that she'd like me to write to her, and I said that if I ever had the urge to write to another post office box, I'd write to hers. I never got the urge.

6. Five days after Linda and I met, we decided she would move in with me. She stayed with me for a couple of weeks, and after that I hardly ever saw her. There was always some reason or some emergency why she had to spend the night at her old place or at her parents' house. I suggested we break up, but she didn't want to do that either. So I wasn't really seeing her, and I couldn't date anyone else because I was supposedly living with her and my apartment was filled with her clothes and stuff all over the place. It took me five months to finally get rid of her stuff.

5. When I was an MIT sophomore, I went to a dorm mixer at Radcliffe, Harvard University's women's college. I asked one Cliffie to dance and asked her something about herself. She answered briefly, and then asked me where I went to college. I said MIT, and she said, "Well, you dance like someone from MIT," and with that she walked away.

4. Sara was gorgeous. We met through an ad, and we immediately hit it off – she said I was the only guy in a long time she had ever kissed on the first date. She always asked me to take her to very expensive restaurants. After a couple of months of this, I asked her if we could go to more reasonable places, and save the expensive restaurants for special occasions. She said OK, but then called me the next evening to say that if I really cared about her, I would WANT to take her to

very expensive restaurants every week, so I could show her off, and with that she dumped me.

3. I met Judy online, but she never wanted to tell me her full name because she was convinced that if she ever did I would find some way to hack her computer over the internet. (No, I'm not making this stuff up.) Finally we met for a drink, but she always acted suspicious when I asked her anything about herself, so I pretty much stuck to talking about myself. We went our separate ways, though I sent her e-mail thanking her for the date. In reply, I got an e-mail message saying that I was very boorish because I had only talked about myself, and that if I tried to hack her computer or even send her another e-mail message she would take some legal action against me. I sent her an e-mail message dissing her anyway, for the hell of it.

2. On our third date, Tara and I were at a play in Boston, and during the intermission she started a really nasty argument. She got me so angry that I was wagging my finger at her as I spoke. She then declared that wagging my finger was "invading her space" and that I must be abusive and a batterer, and with that she walked out of the theatre. Since the only way she had to get home was a \$50 taxi ride, I still felt some sort of moral obligation to her, even in the face of this moronic power/control stunt, so I left the theatre myself and drove her home. Besides the sheer offensiveness of this fruitcake, what really infuriated me about her is that I had to miss the last half of the play.

1. And now, ladies and gentleman [*drum roll*], here's the Number One Worst Date from Hell that I've ever had in my life: Two words: My ex.

Asking for Permission

(This was originally posted on 2/14/94)

It's Valentine's Day, and as Karen Carpenter, who was beautiful of voice, body and soul, used to sing, "There's a kind of hush all over the world tonight. All over the world, you can hear the sound of lovers in love. You know what I mean."

Well, if Karen Carpenter were alive in 1994, I'm not sure even she would recognize the sound of lovers in love. Today, that sound is a husky voice asking questions. "Is it OK to put my arm around you?" "Is it OK to move closer?" "Is it OK to kiss you?" "Is it OK to rub your body?" "Is it OK to fondle your breast?" "Is it OK to put my finger inside you?" Well, by now you get the idea.

If you think that this is just an unbelievably tasteless joke, then you're not being politically or sexually correct. The rules at Antioch College in Ohio say that students must get "verbal consent" for sex, and even for "each new level" of contact leading up to it, and other colleges from Smith to Berkeley are going along. The

questions listed above are the sort given by the Antioch women's center as specific examples of proper behavior, according to the 10/25/93 issue of *Newsweek*.

And incidentally don't get her drunk; in fact, don't let her have more than a glass of wine, because after a couple of drinks her consent will be worthless.

The justification given for these rules is the prevalence of rape, which feminists claim is very real.

But what do these new rules have to do with preventing rape? It's already against the law to rape someone. If colleges really wanted to cut down on some rapes, they'd reinstate and enforce the curfew and parietal rules that were in effect when I was in college - you had to get the girl ["girl" is the word we used to use] out of your dorm room by a certain time, and you had to get the girl back to her dorm by a certain time. If you missed the deadline, you'd be in trouble.

That's why policy makers and spokespeople for various advocacy groups have so little credibility when they talk on gender issues. The crimes they discuss are real enough, but everything else is symbols. They impose silly rules to prevent rape, and call for more silly rules when the first ones don't reduce the incidence of rape.

It's even worse when two symbols conflict. At Swarthmore College, a WASP female student charged a Latino male student with stalking and harassing her. He says it's a misunderstanding based on cultural, ethnic and economic differences. Swarthmore's solution: To ask him to leave Swarthmore, but to pay his tuition at another school. How many rapes will that decision prevent?

People like me come under a lot of criticism because we complain that many of these silly rules smell of bias against and hostility toward men – i.e., man-bashing. But criticism against us is misplaced. We're just the messengers telling society the bad news: As the years go by, the number of silly rules is going up, and the number of rapes is the same. Whatever our policy makers think they're doing, it's not working.

But, hey, this stuff is too heavy. It's Valentine's Day! Let's keep it light!

If you're a guy, then have fun, but play it safe: don't give her a drink, and ask for her permission every step of the way.

And if you're a woman, remember what a romantic day it is, and softly whisper those three little words that he'll love to hear: PLEASE SHUT UP!

Finding the Man of Your Dreams

(This was originally posted on 12/27/95)

When men sit around talking about women they've dated, one subject that often comes up is some of the ways we've been brushed off or dumped. Female

declarations like "I don't date nerds," or "You don't satisfy me any more" reverberate in our minds for years, and that becomes clear when we compare notes.

I was reminded of these conversations a couple of months ago when a woman named Stephanie dumped me after our second date with "You need to work out the remaining issues from your own divorce." I've heard this line before, and if I were to take a guess, I would say that this is probably the dump line that divorced men hear the most. We're being told that if only we could just have gotten past "hating" our former wives, we would have been the men of these women's dreams.

I was so provoked by Stephanie's declaration that I decided to write a column surveying the landscape of men, so that at least my women readers will understand us better as they search for the men of their own dreams.

Who To Avoid

It's true that the men in televised situation comedies often do seem to have "worked out the remaining issues" from their divorces. Tony in *Hudson Street* says he's "happily divorced" from his wife Lucy, as they banter with one another over the kids with nary a trace of bitterness. *Cybill* has no trouble juggling two ex-husbands, both of whom still love her, but from a distance, and never get in her way. Well, almost never. And in *Friends*, Ross has a wonderful relationship with his baby, his ex-wife — and her new lesbian lover!

Is this some sort of joke? Do these happily divorced people really exist anywhere in real life? When this subject comes up I often think back to first date I had with someone after my separation. She complained about her husband, and then said, "I don't know what I'm complaining about — I got rid of him and I got all his money." That statement still rings in my ears, and even though that date occurred almost ten years ago, and although I have no idea what happened to that woman or her ex-husband, somehow I just don't think, even after all these years, that her ex-husband has ever worked out the remaining issues in his divorce.

Another memory is occurred in 1986, when my ex-wife and I were waiting our turn in divorce court. The couple before us had already been divorced for 12 years. He was a real estate developer, and made income from apartment rentals. She was taking him back to court — for about the hundredth time, as nearly as I could gather — because he had made extensive repairs to the roofs of his apartment buildings. She was complaining to the judge that he was purposely spending too much money on capital improvements to his apartment buildings so that his net income would be lower, so that his support payments would be lower, and she was asking the judge to order an increase in support payments as if he

hadn't repaired the roofs. I doubt that he too ever worked out the remaining issues in his divorce.

In fact, after interviewing hundreds of divorced men who pay child support, my advice to Stephanie and to my women readers is clear: Avoid them like the plague, because they all overwhelmingly hate their ex-wives.

This is all anecdotal evidence, of course, but it's supported by a study by researchers David Shuldberg and Shan Guisinger[♦] which evaluated remarried men's attitudes toward their ex-wives. The study surveyed 61 divorced fathers who had recently remarried, and asked them to describe their former wives. The men were asked to fill out a standard psychological form called the Adjective Check List (ACL), which contains hundreds of adjectives that anyone might use to describe another person, words like happy, sad, attractive, angry, and so forth. In addition, to provide comparisons, the fathers were also asked to fill out the ACL for themselves and for their new wives.

These men described themselves in generally normal ways, and also described their new wives in generally normal ways. But they described their ex-wives in highly negative and deviant terms as compared with normal responses.

Devaluing Former Wives

"There was a marked contrast between husbands' ACL descriptions of present and former wives on traits concerning interpersonal power, expressiveness, and control of aggression," according to the authors.

The authors summarize their results as follows:

While these composite descriptions do include some positive adjectives, overall scores on the ACL scales are extremely negative. ... The mean profile for the former wives is strikingly deviant on a large number of scales. These negative evaluations are extremely unusual in research using the ACL. ...

These data show extreme devaluation of former wives in a normal and highly-functioning population of recently remarried men. These husbands' descriptions of their former wives are strikingly and surprisingly negative. ... There is no evidence for unrealistic overvaluation or idealization in their perceptions of either themselves or their present wives. Thus, as a group, these husbands are not splitting in the psychoanalytic sense of seeing the self or present wife as all good and the former wife as all bad; rather, they simply devalue the former wife. ...

So, based on these results, it seems that divorced men almost never "work the remaining problems out" from their divorces, and if that's important to you, then you should avoid divorced men.

If divorced men aren't good candidates, then perhaps never-married men would be a good choice? Well, that's OK if they're young, but keep in mind that a man who reaches age 40 without being married may have difficulty making a commitment. Furthermore, women should avoid widowers, since they're notorious for comparing their new wives unfavorably to their former wives.

Well, is there no hope at all? What about some of the other categories? One category is divorced men who have no children. They should be pretty good. The other category is divorced men who have custody of their children — but watch out for the ex-wives in this case, because if you think that a man paying child support is bitter, some women who pay child support are even more bitter, and you can never be too sure what they'll do — I've spoken to two women who were falsely charged with child abuse by their husbands' ex-wives.

Well, this looks pretty discouraging, doesn't it? It's very hard to find a man who's a good bet, as every single woman knows.

So Who's Left?

Maybe I should change my advice to my female readers: Take another look at those divorced guys you dumped. Yeah, maybe they hate their ex-wives, but so what? The positive side of the study by Shuldberg and Guisinger is that it shows that hating their ex-wives doesn't at all mean they'll hate you. A man loved by a woman will have no trouble putting the past aside and loving and caring for her completely.

And the next time I get together with some divorced guys to compare notes, it'll be nice to hear that even though they still have some issues with their ex-wives, some of them will finally have met the women of their dreams, and their new partners feel exactly the same way.

My Father

(This column was posted on 1/28/96)

I was quite shocked in 1994 when my mother gave me a box of my father's work that she had saved, and it included a collection of essays on gender issues and related subjects, written from the 1930s to the 1950s! I've been writing essays

on gender issues for years, but had no conscious memory of my father having done the same. I guess the apple certainly didn't fall far from the tree in my case!

I was named after my father – he was James John and I'm John James, since he didn't want to stick me with a "junior." Born in 1890, he was much older than my mother, and though their decades-long marriage was successful by any reasonable standard, there's a lot I don't know about his early life. That's why I've been fascinated by the contents of a box of old materials that my mother gave me.

There's a collection of job referral letters, the earliest being one signed by F. G. O'Hagan, superintendent at the Siemens Brothers Dynamo Works Limited of Glasgow, Scotland, certifying that "Mr. James J. Xenakis was employed by us in electrical installations for six months [ending] March 1915, and left our work to take up his duties at the University. We always found him reliable." And there's his embossed parchment diploma for a B. Sc. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Glasgow dated November 10, 1917. And there are slide rules and other tools of his trade, including a boxed set of compasses for drawing circles.

In *Autobiographical Notes*, an essay written in the 1950s, he says that he was the born and raised the seventh of ten children in Sulina, a Danube River port city in Romania, a multicultural community, and that "relations between the individuals representing thirty or so nationalities, sects and ethnic groups ... were most cordial and congenial. The region ... was repeatedly colonized, invaded, subjugated, annexed and deannexed by the Greeks, Romans, Goths, Huns, Tartars, Russians, Romanians, and now [after WW II] again by the Russians." Although in his childhood it was under Romanian rule, "Sulina had only a handful of Romanians.... The dominant language and culture was Greek and ... mostly everybody learned to speak Greek." He contrasts the social climate of Sulina to the wars between the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland when he writes, "Ethnic or racial discriminations were unthinkable; offending nicknames and discriminatory epithets were non-existent, probably because we did not have enough Irishmen in Sulina." However, I wonder what my father would have thought of the genocidal ethnic and religious wars these last few years in Bosnia, right across the Danube River from Sulina.

Coming to America

I've wondered for years how he made it from Romania to Scotland, and then to America, and unfortunately his essays shed only a little bit of light. The closest hint I can find is: "One day, a Captain of a Scotch freighter, a friend of ours, decreed that I should become an engineer because he saw me taking apart a new phonograph, but he did not know that I had to return the parts later to the factory for reassembly."

He says he scraped together enough money to get to Glasgow, attended University, worked for several engineering concerns and, "armed with a dozen or so inventions, I made up my mind to go to America, to challenge [Thomas] Edison and revolutionize the American Industry." However, there's a trace of bitterness when he details how lack of money kept him from getting his inventions patented, and later several of them were made and marketed by others. "Thus, my ambition to universal fame sank beneath the Manhattan sewers, and my projects abandoned. The tense atmosphere of the industrial world in America was greatly relieved with my failure. A gust of wind which brushed my face indicated Edison's deep sigh of relief. I managed to settle with a modest engineering job and live in an atmosphere of high luxury: two alarm clocks, a multimillion dollar system of subways, a Monte Carlo life in Coney Island, and countless of girls in Taxi Dancing establishments."

The Fragility of Women

As I read through the twenty or so of his surviving essays, written from the 1930s through the 1950s, one thing that I find striking is how his views of women became increasingly more liberal.

In a 1939 essay entitled *Limit of Learning in Women*, he discusses the "great social experiment" of over a century of providing average American women with "a most progressive liberal education." He says that the experiment has long since come to an end, and that "definite conclusions may now be drawn."

He starts by contrasting the two sides of the argument, and mocking the opponents of educating women. "The more optimistic [people] thought that woman would now combine her erudite activities with those of man, thereby conducting a development of artistic and literary achievements unsurpassed either by that of the Golden Age or the Renaissance. They even went so far as to hope that women would soon conduct business so well that men would at last replace them in the household. ... The opposing pessimistic group derided this idea of the liberal education of woman as futile and dangerous to society. Surely this novel

mode of thinking might inflict irreparable injuries upon the delicate tissues of the women's brain, which is lighter by sixty five grams than that of man, resulting in the conversion of all Colleges and Universities for women into asylums. Women refuted this statement saying that elephants and whales having more brains in weight than man, are on the road to extinction, whereas the ant and the cockroach conquered the earth and acquired highly civilized tastes by being the first to occupy the most up to date apartments."

However, while he ridiculed the pessimistic view, he disagreed with the optimistic view as well. He draws on figures published by the U.S. Department of Labor in 1937 to show that, statistically speaking, employed women are doing the same things that women have always done, and he quotes the Secretary of Labor as saying, "In spite of the great variety of employments open to both sexes, the largest population of gainfully occupied women still are in domestic and personal service.... In most of the major professions, there has been a slowing up, and in some even a decline."

My father's 1939 essay had a was fairly negative in evaluating women's accomplishments. It argued that "amid the opulence of colleges and universities, museums, and libraries, ... we fail to hear of a single great [female] composer, author, lawyer, painter, music conductor or orator." It enumerates several women's organizations – women's bridge clubs, Women's Temperance Clubs, Women's Literary Clubs, and so forth – which he feels are the real results of liberal education of women, and reaches the following unfortunate conclusion: "We may safely draw the conclusion that women's mentality remains basically the same. All acquired knowledge does not seem to go beyond the ornamental stage. At bottom, they are still as fragile as ever." Sigh.

Matrimony and Fatherhood

While my father was sitting in a New York City apartment in 1939 writing that essay, there was a very gutsy Greek woman named Roxie living in Chicago who was working to help support her family after her father's business had gone bankrupt and her mother had gotten ill. My mother is and always has been a very independent woman and never took any crap from anyone. They got married in 1942, had me in 1944, and had some rocky times. A high-paying job attracted them to move from Chicago to the New Jersey shore in 1947, but my father was laid off in 1950 and couldn't find work for a long time. Once again, my mother pitched in and went to work.

They separated some time in the early 50s, when my mother took me to live elsewhere. My memories of that terrible period are of great confusion – not knowing where I was, where I was supposed to go, where I was supposed to be.

Once, with the encouragement of another boy, I hid behind a billboard till the school bus went by, and stayed out of school that day. One of my sharpest, starkest memories was when I tried (fortunately not very hard) to stab a little girl in the eye with a pair of scissors. This behavior was totally out of character for me, who, throughout the rest of my childhood, was always a withdrawn, unsociable, overweight nerd who wouldn't hurt a flea. This incident represents to me a graphic illustration of how quickly a boy can act out and become uncharacteristically ill-behaved and even violent, when deprived of his father, an important lesson today when violence is increasing along with divorce and unwed motherhood.

My behavior must have been extremely disturbing to my mother. Fortunately, the separation lasted only a few weeks. My mother has told me that my father "looked so miserable, and he begged and pleaded with me to take him back, so I did." I assume that working was one of the issues they resolved, for my mother had quite a successful business career during the 1950s, and in fact was the equivalent of the CFO of a midsize manufacturing firm.

Life has a way of changing attitudes and opinions, so that my father's 1958 essay *Is Intelligence Stagnant?* shows considerable evolution in thoughts about women and working.

The major point of his essay is to draw on anthropological and sociological findings to argue that the basic intelligence of human beings has remained the same for thousands of years, basing his conclusions on diverse factors: that, for example, the Mayans displayed considerable intelligence "in substituting hunting with agriculture"; and that race has nothing to do with intelligence since "even today, many boys displaying deep ritual scars from the African jungle become as proficient as any other boy if transferred to an American or European University."

My father always pointed with great pride to his Greek heritage, and no less so in his essay: "The most spectacular outburst of the slumbering intelligence of mankind flashed about four thousand years ago in Babylon, Egypt, Crete and partly in China, culminating with the culture of Greece and establishing once and for all the foundations of the democratic western civilization of today. Why such a culture in philosophy, astronomy, architecture, mathematics and other arts flashed in such a short time three or four thousand years ago is difficult to imagine. It is certain, however, that some of their ancestors were just as equally intellectual, as is proven by the prehistoric cave paintings at Lascaux, France, painted about 16,000 years ago. These paintings give evidence that man was already an accomplished artist with the high perception and sensitivity. The perfection and grandeur of these paintings cannot be isolated from other philosophical and scientific arts, as for example in the preparation of the paints, crayons or brushes and above all in the production of light for the illumination of the caves."

When my father turns to the difference in intelligence between men and women, he begins by saying that whenever there's an argument whether man or woman has more intelligence, "none of the arguing parties has any intelligence." The negativity appearing in his 1939 essay is completely missing from his essay 20 years later. (This change of heart was consistent with the views of Americans as a whole. A 1936 Gallup survey found* that only 18 percent of Americans approved, and 72 percent disapproved, "of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her." By 1969, the situation had reversed: 55 percent approved, and only 40 percent disapproved.)

He says that the main difference between men and women is that "Since the purpose of her life is selection, matrimony and security, woman applies her intelligence in accordance with the wishful thinking of the male. As teenagers, [women] become very alert and ambitious in improving their education. In high school and college, they become very proficient in their studies and very often show signs of superiority as compared to the immature boys. ... [But] at the age of 19 or 20, they feel uneasy and at times alarmed with the inconstancy and confusing ramifications in selecting a husband." This was written in a world a number of years before Betty Friedan's groundbreaking book *The Feminine Mystique* was published, and the major televised situation comedies were *Leave it to Beaver*, *Ozzie and Harriet*, and *I Love Lucy*. My father would have been a little too proud to be comfortable admitting that many wives, like his own, went to work because they had to, but his liberalism shows when he hints at the economic realities of marriage: "Sitting in the midst of deep freezers, infrared cooking, two or three bathrooms, she feels more or less happy and secure despite the fact that she may have a drawer full of mortgages and other installment plans, but she never loses sight of the possibility that she may have to go back to work in the future after the children have grown."

That's how he talked the talk, but how did he walk the walk? My mother has answered that question many times. Whenever she talks about the 50s, she always says, "Jim was wonderful. He let me do whatever I wanted. I had a wild time, and no matter what happened, he never said a word of criticism."

My father developed Parkinson's Disease in the early 60s, which caused serious depression and a failed suicide attempt and forced him to stop working in 1962 at age 72, though not before finally achieving his dream of getting several of his inventions patented. My mother kept working, and they sold their house to keep putting me through college. When I graduated in 1965, they finally had time to spend together again. They went to Europe together, bought a car, and toured the entire Continent, staying with my mother's relatives in Athens as a home base for over a year. Several of my father's brothers came from Romania to Athens to see him, and they talked for several days, according to my mother. "They laughed and laughed," she said. "That was one of the happiest times of his life." After their

trip, my parents moved back to Chicago and lived there until his death on Valentine's Day, 1972.

Love

There's one thing missing from all my father's essays – emotion. How did he feel about his childhood in Romania? About America? About my mother? About me? He doesn't say. One can only make inferences from oblique statements like, "[A woman's] superior intelligence is also demonstrated when she graciously allows her husband to enter into her own domain of activities so that after a few months of cohabitation, he becomes an expert dishwasher, diaper scraper, and baby perambulator" that he felt a great deal of affection for both his wife and child.

So for this I really have to fall back on my memories, and I have plenty of those. My father never raised his hand to me, and indeed I can scarcely recall his ever raising his voice. I do remember his spending hours with me, holding up index cards with words printed on them to teach me to read before it was covered in school. I remember waking up in his arms after being hit by a car. I remember many times we went swimming, and the time we played a game on the beach where I blocked the way so he couldn't get by, and he sang the song, "Don't Fence Me In" to my hysterical laughter. My father had many flaws, like every man, but mostly everything I remember about him is filled with love and support.

My father died on Valentine's Day, 1972. It is astounding to me to realize that, even though over a quarter century has gone by since then, I still miss him terribly. Finding some of his papers makes me feel that at least a part of him is still with me.

Rest in Peace
James John Xenakis
March 31, 1890, to February 14,
1972

Roxie

(This column was posted on Christmas Day, 12/25/96.)

In late January, 1996, I told my mother how much I loved her, and then left the hospital. I was as emotionally prepared as possible for the possibility that she might die from the hip operation she was having the next day, but I was totally, completely unprepared for what actually did happen, and indeed I probably never will get over it.

Everybody, including me, calls my mother Roxie. It was about a month earlier, on Christmas eve, 1995, that Roxie phoned me from her apartment and said, "Something's wrong with my stomach. You'd better come and get me."

It was very unusual for Roxie, then aged 82, to ask for help with anything. She was fiercely independent, did all her own shopping, paid her own bills, balanced her own checkbook.

She was suffering enormous pain, and I took her to the hospital emergency room, where she received a Christmas morning operation to remove a perforated ulcer. She appeared three weeks later to be well on the road to a full recovery when, while still in the hospital, but still fiercely independent, she disobeyed her doctor's orders and got out of bed by herself to go to the bathroom. She fell and fractured her hip, and a hip replacement operation had to be scheduled.

On that late January day previously described, the day before the operation, Roxie was playing gin rummy with my son Jason while she made plans for the future, and at the same time complained that I hadn't brought her her TV guide so she could select her television viewing.

Two days after the operation, which the doctor had deemed a "complete success," she was confusing me with her long deceased brother, and she couldn't remember how to play gin rummy, let alone what she wanted to see on TV. The future was meaningless to her.

One nurse I spoke to said that the spinal anesthetic she had received for the operation had given her instantaneous Alzheimer's Disease.

A Good Life

Roxie's parents had immigrated from Athens, Greece, near the turn of the century, and her father had become quite wealthy running a large candy store in Chicago. When he lost everything during the Great Depression of the 1930s, Roxie bluffed her way into various office jobs which earned her family some \$8 a week. She married my father in 1942 and stopped working for my birth in 1944, but started working again in the early 1950s when my father lost his job.

Roxie worked throughout my childhood in the 50s at a time when women weren't supposed to work. Her job title was officially "full charge bookkeeper," but she ended up running the entire bookkeeping department, and by the late 50s she was effectively the Chief Financial Officer of a midsize electronics firm. Roxie had such a successful career that in the late 60s, when I first heard from my "women's lib" friends that women weren't allowed to have good jobs, I honestly had no idea at that time what they were talking about!

After she and my father put me through M.I.T., they went to Greece and stayed for a year and a half, during which time they bought a car and toured all of Europe, and then returned to Chicago where she cared for my father, by then incapacitated from Parkinson's Disease, until his death in 1972.

After that she became a world traveler. She traveled extensively to Europe, to Lebanon, Israel and other middle eastern countries, to the Soviet Union, to Japan, and she and her sister were among the first Americans to go when travel to communist China began to open up around 1980.

The times in her life she was most proud of occurred when she was helping someone, and she often viewed her life as a good one in service to others. She raised me, she cared for my father when he was sick, and she ended her work career by working for several years as director of a recreation center run by the City of Chicago. She loved this job because she was able to help so many people, such as the times she found places to live for homeless families that occasionally showed up there.

I've always been so proud of my mother, both for her accomplishments and for her goodness to other people, there's no doubt that she's been an overwhelming influence in my attitudes toward both men and women.

Many things amaze me about my mother, and one of the major things was her frugality. During the depression she had learned how easy it was to lose everything and be left with nothing, and to regret not having saved anything when times were good. I had realized, of course, that she never spent money unnecessarily, rarely spent money on clothes or other items for herself, but I never understood how far she carried that. As I reluctantly started going through her finances after her hospitalization, I discovered that her only personal expenses

were her rent, her car (which she barely ever drove more than a mile or two), her *TV Guide* subscription, her local phone service, her electricity, a little spending money for food – and that was it. She lived an incredibly austere lifestyle because she felt most comfortable that way, and because she wanted to make sure she would never run out of money and be a burden to anyone (me), never have to depend on anyone.

A New Life

The woman who spent her whole life helping others is now completely helpless herself, living in Saint Patrick's Manor, a Catholic nursing home close to my home in Massachusetts. I chose it because she's deeply religious, and although Roxie always likes to joke that being Greek Orthodox is better than being Catholic, she attended Catholic school in her youth and feels very comfortable around Catholic nuns.

Jason and I visit Roxie three or four times a week. Even though she's losing touch with pretty much the whole world, she still recognizes us, and waves to us from the other end of the hall when she sees us coming.

A nursing home is an incredibly depressing place. The halls are lined with residents in wheelchairs, most with some loss of mental function, mostly unable to walk. There are nurses there 24 hours a day to help them get out of bed, wash, dress, eat, go to the bathroom, undress and go back to bed. There are plenty of scheduled social events, and a solarium where they can watch television together. Still, they're trapped in their wheelchairs for the rest of their lives, and some will frequently cry and beg Jason and me to "please help me" as we walk by. Sometimes several of them reach out at once to touch us, begging for help, and I sometimes feel like we're the characters in one of those old biblical movies where the lepers reach out hoping to touch Jesus Christ in order to be cured of their afflictions. I sometimes talk with friends about how "we're all going to end up that way eventually," but the problem is that nursing homes are mostly funded by Medicaid, and the funding is going to be a lot sparser in the years to come as the large numbers of baby boomers age, and have to be supported by the small number of Generation X-ers.

Almost all the nursing home residents are women, reflecting the fact that men are more likely to be cared for by their wives, and because women on the average live six years longer than men. I'm always startled these days when women's activists lobby to redirect health resources away from men towards women, something which would presumably only increase the number of years that women live longer than men, which is hard for me to see is to their advantage,

since I've come to the personal view that for me life in a nursing home is worse than death.

At any rate, Roxie is comfortable in her new lifestyle. She sometimes gets angry at the fact that she's lost her car and her apartment and now lives in just a room, but mostly she forgets that and she just sits in her room and watches whatever happens to be on television, on whatever channel it happens to be tuned to.

Earlier in the year she would occasionally have moments where she was a little more lucid than at other times, so we could talk, but those moments don't seem to occur anymore. As tragic as all this is, there is a sense where ending up the way she did was better for me than if she had simply died, since it's given me all this extra time to say goodbye to her, rather than just the brief moment we had that January night before her last operation, when I was afraid I would never see her alive again.

*Rest in Peace
Roxanne Xenakis
October 24, 1914, to January 9,
2000*

Jackie O: A Retrospective

(This column was posted on 5/23/94, four days after Jackie's death.)

I was too young and too politically unaware to have any significant memories of Jackie when she was First Lady in the early years of the sixties, but there is one thing that sticks out very strongly in my mind. It was a remark that my mother made to my father in 1968: "Everyone is furious because a Greek man got her instead of an American."

Indeed, the extended media coverage of Jackie this past weekend treated her marriage to billionaire Greek shipping magnate Aristotle Socrates Onassis as an embarrassment. One commentator said, "she did it as a rebellion to show her independence from the Kennedys"; another said, "she wanted his money for her children." If I tried, a Greek like me might actually find this attitude offensive.

Another peculiarity of the media coverage is its implication that Jackie is an anachronism — a woman of an earlier time who was out of place in the nineties. I disagree with this: Jackie indeed was an anachronism in the seventies and eighties,

but in the nineties I think the image that Jackie portrayed is more and more what today's young women yearn to emulate.

Jackie transformed our country with her classic beauty, glamour and regal elegance. She understood, as many women don't, that men's and women's lives more complement each other than compete with each other, and that a woman's life goes through phases in a way that a man's life doesn't. She started with a career in publishing; she put it aside to be a wife and mother; as First Lady, she devoted herself to beautifying the White House and imbuing it with historical significance and artistic sophistication; and following JFK's death, she unabashedly made her own decisions about the men in her life, and returned to her career when it was appropriate. The proudest accomplishment of her life was raising two wonderful children. She went through these phases with dignity and grace, with no need to defend herself to anyone.

What is most telling about the media's coverage of Jackie was the things that it didn't mention. Some of these things were very striking.

It's a shame that no one covered the story of Mr. Onassis this weekend, because it's a fascinating one. He started out as a poor telephone operator, but began an import business which eventually grew into a worldwide shipping organization.

Incidentally, not only were the American people angry when he married Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, but so were the Greek people. He had had a long running affair with beautiful, world-famous Greek opera star Maria Callas, and when he dumped her to marry the American, the Greeks blamed him for ruining Callas' life.

Only one commentator I saw on television this weekend mentioned a positive reason that Jackie married Onassis. Letitia Baldrige, who was a lifelong friend of Jackie starting in their childhood, said: "He was a very charming man, and although the marriage went sour, when Jackie married him she was very much in love with him."

The media gushed about JFK and Camelot, but completely missing from the media coverage was any mention whatsoever of JFK's numerous affairs. The only remark that even came close was that anyone could see why Jackie would be attracted to such "a dashing ladies' man." Once again, it's a shame this story was not discussed. How does a woman like Jackie, who is so in the limelight and so devoted to her children and her husband, cope with her husband's affairs? I for one would like to know.

Other omissions from the media coverage were just as predictable. During the 1992 election campaign, Democrats frequently compared Clinton to JFK, but no one did that this weekend; Whitewater and Paula Corbin Jones have put an end to that.

Even more telling is that I haven't heard one single comparison this weekend between Jackie and Hillary Rodham Clinton, and no wonder: Hillary's ostentatious feminist stridency contrasts poorly to Jackie's quiet, dignified feminine elegance.

Jackie was a brilliant feminist in the true, classical sense of the word, for she made the most of her life and successfully achieved the goals that were most important to her. She knew what she wanted, and she did as she pleased. Her image is not an anachronism, but a role model for all women. I hope that we'll see a lot more women like her in the new millennium.

P.S.: After writing this column, I learned that the funeral service which took place on Monday morning went by without a single one of the speakers, mostly Kennedys, ever uttering the word "Onassis."

Rest in Peace
Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy
Onassis
July 28, 1929, to May 19, 1994

Paula Corbin Jones

(Note: This column was posted on 5/9/94.)

Despite criticism by political conservatives that the Paula Corbin Jones sexual harassment story has been largely covered up by the press, my personal belief is that the press has treated Jones's allegations very responsibly. On the one hand, conservative opinion magazines, especially *The American Spectator*, have led the story and done an excellent job of reporting the allegations in detail, as is appropriate for those publications; and on the other hand, the mainstream press has held back by giving very low profile coverage until this week, when Clinton hired lawyer Robert S. Bennett to defend him, and Jones actually filed a federal lawsuit.

Feminist and women's groups have been acting responsibly as well. Instead of immediately siding very vocally and publicly with a woman who makes sexual misconduct accusations against a public figure, as they did with the accusers of Clarence Thomas and Bob Packwood, they've taken a very cautious view. For example, Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women (NOW), initially made a snide remark about Jones's shopping for a dress, but then

said in a statement: "Sexual harassment is a serious allegation, and we think both Paula Jones and President Clinton deserve their day in court."

This is all quite a change. The *Washington Post* has regularly reported unsubstantiated accusations against Bob Packwood on page one. I understand that an Oregon newspaper has set up a hotline, inviting anyone with an accusation against Packwood to call, so that the newspaper can publish it.

Women's activists were formerly not as responsible either. Patricia Ireland, for example, captured the public awareness by saying "We're going to bork him!" and saw Anita Hill as a useful tool in the borking of Clarence Thomas. And the country's leading feminist, Hillary Clinton, said during her husband's campaign, "As women and as lawyers, we must never again shy from raising our voices against sexual harassment. All women who care about equality of opportunity – about integrity and morality in the workplace – are in Prof. Anita Hill's debt."

In view of all this new-found and welcome caution, it's well to recall how much damage Anita Hill's accusations have done to women, especially in the workplace. I have been told in confidence by two small business owners who formerly hired many young professional women college graduates that they've stopped doing so, and now hire young men almost exclusively; the possibility of an off-the-wall charge of sexual misconduct is simply not worth the grief. And one manager told me, "I don't dare even tell a woman working for me that she looks nice today, except for my secretary who's worked for me for ten years and I can trust her," implying that his standard is to distrust women, a standard that many men now share. There is no doubt in my mind that Anita Hill has reduced the professional employment opportunities (and hence wages) for women, and has caused an increased workplace hostility toward women, which is to the detriment of women. (*See p. 72 for further discussion.*)

Of course there are good political reasons why the press and women's organizations have suddenly gotten religion and starting acting responsibly. Journalists and feminists are overwhelmingly self-described in polls as liberals and voting for Democrats. A sexual harassment charge against a Democrat, especially Hillary's husband, creates a serious political problem.

People on all sides of this issue have been comparing Jones to accusers of Thomas and Packwood. In the end, there are reasons to believe and reasons to disbelieve Anita Hill, and the same is true of Paula Jones.

In my opinion, those who have tried to argue one way or the other that, for example, Hill is more credible than Jones or that Jones is more credible than Hill, are being mostly self-serving. I personally believe both Jones and Hill lack credibility, but at the very least they are approximately equally credible or incredible.

The fact that sexual harassment is really sexual politics is proven by the current reversals in the positions of both Democrats and Republicans. For

example, Al Gore said on the Today show on Friday that "Most people are getting sick and tired of women coming out of nowhere and making unsupported sexual charges," certainly a remarkable statement coming from a liberal Democrat.

In fact, the political nature of sexual misconduct charges was very well proven during the Clarence Thomas hearings, when Senators expressed belief or disbelief of Anita Hill apparently on almost nothing else but whether they were Republicans or Democrats. There is simply no credible non-political explanation for the Senators' positions.

The fact that politicians on both sides use these women for their own political purposes is an outrage. But there is a higher standard for feminist groups, since their constituents are women; and these groups have shown themselves to be willing to damage the interests of women in general in order to further their own crass political motives.

People like Patricia Ireland and Hillary Clinton, who have now seen the light, owe an apology to women and to the public as a whole. I won't be holding my breath waiting for it.

Nixon: A Retrospective

(Note: This column was posted on 4/25/94, three days after Nixon's death.)

*If life is just a highway
Then the soul is just a car.
And objects in the rear-view mirror
May appear closer than they are.
— Meatloaf*

The fact that I remember most vividly about President Nixon's resignation on August 9, 1974, is an offbeat one — that in the week prior to his resignation his approval rating was 22%. It was astounding to me at the time that more than one in five people in the United States approved the way that Nixon was handling the presidency in the week prior to his resignation. I was particularly reminded of this about five years later, when Carter's approval rating dropped to about 20%, lower than Nixon's ever was.

I've spoken to many people over the years about Nixon, and I don't believe I've ever met anyone born prior to 1960 who didn't either love Nixon or hate him. One only has to listen today to Bob Woodward or Dan Rather or other journalists who passionately hated Nixon, or people like his daughters or Henry Kissinger or

Reverend Billy Graham who idolized Nixon, to realize how much Nixon's shadow lies over our time. Just mention anything from the bombing of Cambodia to the Watergate coverup to almost anyone who was politically aware in the early 1970s, and you'll see how Nixon inspires emotions in most people which are far more powerful than the emotions felt for any other president of our time.

It's hard to think of anyone more tragic than Richard Nixon. Other men have struggled to make the presidency work, but like geniuses in other fields, Nixon made it look easy, at least in the first years. He was outstanding in his political ability to handle domestic policy according to his vision, and he was brilliant at handling foreign policy. Even today's Russia policy is probably based more on the advice and counsel of Richard Nixon than anyone else, as Clinton himself has hinted. And Claire Booth Luce is supposed to have said, "1000 years from now, they'll just write that Nixon went to China."

And yet, Richard Nixon could not grasp, was incapable of grasping, what he had to do. He always believed that personal growth came out of defeat, and he seemed to seize on the Watergate break-in as a way of getting maximum personal growth out of his experience as President. He even tape recorded all his White House conversations, guaranteeing that sooner or later the public would have to learn of his deceit.

He first learned about the break-in shortly after it happened, and immediately started taking steps to use it to commit political suicide. He obsessively seized on every little fact he learned and ordered his aides to cover it up – to keep the press and the public from learning about it. Each such mini-coverup was itself another fact to be covered up, creating a chain reaction of mini-coverups. When each mini-coverup came out, as it always did and always does, it produced a never-ending series of bombshells that, taken as a whole, was a major conflagration exposing a massive coverup.

The bombshells forced many of Nixon's aides to resign, but no coverup could ever be pinned specifically on Nixon himself, until August, 1974, when the Senate found the "smoking gun." The great smoking gun event that forced his resignation was a tape recording of a conversation with the CIA asking them if they could use their powers to try to stop the Watergate investigation, on the basis that the investigation was bad for the nation's security. That was it, and that it immediately caused his resignation would be laughable except that, when combined with all the other mini-coverups, was totally and completely illegal. He rationalized that these illegal coverups were in the best interest of the country and, incredibly, it apparently never even occurred to him that his breaking the law was bad for the country.

After his resignation, Nixon spent the rest of his life rehabilitating himself by focusing especially on foreign policy, his area of greatest brilliance, writing books, advising Presidents, and becoming a world-renowned elder statesman.

And he succeeded. For the other half of Nixon's need for tragic defeat is his ability to come back from defeat, as he has done repeatedly. This is the real theme of Nixon's life — not that he was ever defeated, or disgraced, but that he always triumphed in the end.

Nixon's death does not end Nixon's influence, and indeed it almost seems that Nixon chose his time of death on purpose. I find it incredibly ironic and eerie that Nixon's death came on the day that Mr. Clinton held a press conference defending his bombing of Bosnia, and Mrs. Clinton held a press conference defending her handling of Whitewater. Those of us who try to learn from history will be watching to see what influence Richard Milhous Nixon continues to have from his grave.

*Rest in Peace
Richard Milhous Nixon
January 9, 1913 to April 22,
1994*

Romeo and Juliet

(This column was posted on 7/18/94, shortly after Nicole Simpson was murdered, and long before O.J. Simpson went on trial.)

*There is no torture and no cunning trick,
There is no force which can compel my speech. ...
So let [Zeus] hurl his blazing thunderbolt,
And with the white wings of snow,
With lightning and with earthquake,
Confound the reeling world.
None of this will bend my will. ...
Seek to persuade the sea wave not to break.
You will persuade me no more easily.*

— Aeschylus' character *Prometheus*,
refusing to submit to fate, just
before the universe crashed around him

Many media commentators have referred to the death of Nicole Simpson Brown as a Greek or Shakespearean tragedy. Indeed, this concept leads to some fascinating speculation, and raises important questions as to whether anything can ever be done to prevent domestic murders.

I am not an expert on tragedy as an art form, but as a Greek I know that a sense of tragedy is in my bones. Tragedy as an art form was invented in ancient Greece, and three of four great tragic artists of all time were Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides of ancient Greece, with the fourth being Shakespeare.

Many people misunderstand the deepest meanings of tragedy. If a child is killed in a random traffic accident, then it's a terrible event but it's not a tragedy in the classical sense, because of that randomness.

The essence of classical tragedy is that the tragic event is not random. The tragic event is inevitable: it *must* occur, and the reason it must occur is because of the nature, the personality, the very *character* of the protagonists. A true tragedy cannot be prevented, even by those who foresee it, because the forces bringing about the tragedy are too powerful for anyone to stop.

Like the child killed in a random traffic accident, the protagonists of a true tragedy have a great future before them, and in the Greek view, perhaps even a heroic future. But the heroic future turns into disaster because the players in the true tragedy move step by step towards that disaster; and all of us on the outside can see it coming, because these particular players are uniquely capable of inflicting this disaster on one another.

So if the death of Nicole was a tragedy in the classical sense, then the mutual destruction of O.J. and Nicole was preordained and inevitable, like the deaths of Romeo and Juliet (or like the death of Tony in that play's modern incarnation, *West Side Story*).

Now as I recall, O.J. met Nicole in the early 1980s, when she was 18 and he was 35. The question is this: Once that fateful meeting took place (and assuming that O.J. actually murdered Nicole), was the actual murder inevitable? In fact, suppose you had had a crystal ball 15 years ago in which you foresaw the murder; could you or anyone have done anything whatsoever to prevent it?

Nicole and O.J. were instantly attracted to each other and became virtually inseparable, and of course eventually married. No one could have done anything to prevent their attraction or their marriage.

O.J. evidently was very possessive of Nicole. Young women find such possessiveness by a man to be very flattering, very attractive, even very erotic. It creates a framework for their relationship which constantly renews the passion – she does something (purposely or not) to make him jealous, he becomes possessive or even abusive, and this turns both of them on, and all is forgiven after a night of erotic passion.

As I understand it, Nicole was no passive participant in this arrangement. She was physically aggressive with O.J., often hitting or slapping or taunting him in various ways to enrage him. This kind of mutual aggression is a very powerful, very erotic force, which brought the two of them together. It's quite reasonable to suppose that no one with a crystal ball could have done anything which could have separated them in view of this force.

I've heard it argued that any form of love is neurotic, and I'm inclined to agree. I've seen relationships that have lasted for decades that were based on, it seemed to me, serious neuroses. But if a relationship lasts, then who am I to judge whether the neurosis is a good one or bad one?

Still, when the neurosis is mutually destructive, it's possible that one party or the other will want to move on to something different, and unless both parties change together, then the relationship will become unstable.

This is apparently what happened. The possessiveness that Nicole found so attractive and passionate when she was young simply became tiresome as she grew older. The abuse that she bore and felt could be overcome by her love eventually became just plain painful.

This is the next, fateful, inevitable step moving toward the tragic ending. No one with a crystal ball could have done anything to stop this change in Nicole, this change that must have so enraged O.J.

If O.J. committed these unbelievably brutal murders, then a corner of his mind must have harbored an enormous amount of fury and hatred. Who knows where it came from? Perhaps his fury was directed toward his parents, perhaps it was directed toward all whites. But if he committed the murders, that fury and hatred must have been there.

Could any public policy have prevented the murders? Surely no one believes that a restraining order would have made any difference. And given the brutality of the murders, I personally don't believe for a minute that a brief jail term for domestic violence would have mattered either.

So as of the first half of 1994, all the pieces were in place. Nicole and O.J., though divorced, were spending many nights together, working on their relationship, trying to decide whether or not to get back together. Nicole was pulling away from O.J., making him more possessive and threatened. I understand that he once told her that if he couldn't have her, no one would have her.

Finally, Nicole made it definite: Their relationship was completely over, and she was going to move to another home, farther away from him, though still in Brentwood. Nicole was growing, but O.J. was still in the grip of his jealous passions. Nicole's decision, and her announcement of it to O.J., was all he needed.

He could no longer think of anything else but keeping someone else from having her. He tracked her down, saw her with Ron Goldman, and killed them both.

Now, none of this, or any action of Nicole, could ever excuse O.J. for abusing or murdering Nicole, if he in fact committed those crimes. But assuming that he did murder Nicole, the evidence shows that the tragedy did not stop with her destruction.

For, how else can we explain the fact that after executing the evidently well-planned murder of Nicole, he left one bloody glove at the murder site, and its bloody mate in his own house? The same obsession that drove him to destroy Nicole guaranteed that he would not stop until his own destruction was completed as well.

Both Nicole and O.J. had wonderful potential futures ahead of them. But instead, from the day they met some 15 years ago, they proceeded step by step to their mutual self-destruction. The step-by-step sequence by which their human passions drove them to their mutual destruction is almost poetic in nature. The essence of classical tragedy is that the beauty of this poetry contrasts sharply to the horror of the final result.

That's why tragedy is so timeless. And it's why no public policy has any chance whatsoever of preventing domestic murders, or any murders of passion.

The Verdict

(This column was posted on Saturday, October 8, 1995, five days after a jury found O.J. Simpson "not guilty" of murder. A week earlier, I had written a column that was posted just before the jury started its deliberations. In that column, I explained in detail the reasons why the jury might find him guilty, and the reasons why they might find him not guilty.)

I'm pretty proud of myself this week: my analysis in last weekend's column on how the jury might find a perfectly legitimate evidence-based "not guilty" verdict was pretty close to what the jury actually did.

However, I'm not very proud of some of my liberal and feminist friends. This was the week I saw several of them call the verdict and the jury that rendered it "racist," which they most certainly were not, and forcing one black woman on CNN's *Talk Back Live* to respond by saying to a white woman, "to you, O.J. is nothing but just another nigger."

Yesterday, a liberal friend told me she was certain that O.J. was guilty. I said she felt that way because she was white, and if she were black, she would probably think he was innocent. "I don't think so," she said. "I would hope I wouldn't be so bigoted." I was appalled and sickened.

This was the week that District Attorney Gil Garcetti said that "[the jury's] decision was based on emotion that overcame the reason." One juror replied that she "didn't come here to serve as a sequestered juror for nine months to be really humiliated like that."

That didn't stop Marcia Clark from insulting the jury still further with "a majority black jury won't convict in a case like this. They won't bring justice." I guess she thinks that black jurors don't have minds of their own, and that the Hispanic and the two whites on the jury didn't have minds of their own either.

Incidentally, when O.J. called Larry King the other night to complain that Marcia Clark had misrepresented limousine driver Allan Park's testimony, it turns out O.J. was right. Maybe Marcia lost the case because she and Gil were working on wishful thinking instead of looking at their own evidence. It's typical for businessmen to get into trouble when they start believing their own press releases; maybe prosecutors do too.

Domestic Violence versus Racism

Polls show that roughly 80% of whites think that O.J. is guilty, but roughly the same number of blacks — both men and women — believe that O.J. is innocent. Unlike the jury, which reached its conclusions based on the evidence, the people in the general public are basing their conclusion not on justice or evidence, but on emotional symbols. O.J. is a symbol of both domestic violence and racism.

Many of my white liberal and feminist friends are having difficulty comprehending why blacks, especially black women, are siding with the racism symbol instead of the domestic violence symbol. The confusion comes from the fact that however bad a problem domestic violence is among white females - very few are affected - the problem of homicide, racist cops, and incarceration is much worse for young black males. On any given day, 32% of black males are in the criminal justice system, in jail or on probation or parole, a figure which is too large for whites to comprehend, like the figure that 72% of black children are born out of wedlock. And as tragic as the death of Nicole Simpson was, blacks are murdered ten times as often as whites, and males are murdered five times as often as females. As bad as domestic violence is as a problem, it's by far not the greatest problem that our society faces.

Some of my liberal and feminist friends, who have for years been lecturing anyone who'd listen how sensitive and caring they are, are now pandering to every racial stereotype in the book, as they vilify the jurors as illogical, non-deliberative, race-obsessed dingbats driven by misguided emotions to protect someone of their

own race. I can't recall ever hearing this much racism in my entire life – at least not since the time that blacks had separate drinking fountains.

In fact, several jurors have come forward and explained quite rationally why reasonable doubt exists: the perception that the bloody glove on O.J.'s estate was planted, the weakness in prosecution timeline, requiring him to have done too much in five minutes, and the fact that the glove didn't fit.

One juror indicated that he thought O.J. was probably guilty, but because of the reasonable doubts he had to find him not guilty anyway, and I agree with that sentiment completely. I was working at home during most of the trial and watched a lot of it. I was evaluating the evidence throughout the trial, but I was shocked, on the next to last day of trial testimony, after the credibility of the LAPD (Los Angeles Police Dept.) was already in question, to see police detective Phil Vannatter get on the stand and lie under oath. As far as I was concerned, that was the last straw.

Indeed, I'm telling anyone reading this that a "not guilty" verdict was more than reasonable. The prosecution case was an absolute mess. That jury found O.J. Simpson not guilty for valid evidentiary reasons. The evidence may show probable guilt, but not guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. If at least Mark Fuhrman had gotten a search warrant before jumping that wall, then O.J. might have been convicted.

And if you think that O.J. is really guilty, and you don't like the way our justice system works, just remember this: if guilty people could be convicted on insufficient evidence, then so could innocent people, and that's not acceptable to our justice system under our Bill of Rights.

A Sickening Week

What I've been hearing this last week is sickening, but it answers a lot of questions. For years, I've heard some of my liberal and feminist friends tell me how, in their hearts, all people are racists, and I never understood what they were talking about. This last week I figured it out though: they were talking about themselves.

The way that this jury has been vilified reminds me how, for years, the liberals blamed the Vietnam War on the servicemen who fought in it. They should have restricted their vilifications to the President and other government officials who formulated the policy, and sympathized with the troops who did their jobs in carrying that policy out. It took twenty years for liberals to even recognize that odious mistake.

The same is true now. If my friends must vent their hatred, they should not direct it at the troops. If they wish, they should direct their venom at the Johnnie Cochran and Barry Scheck, who were the principal actors who won the case; or, if they prefer, they should direct it at Gil Garcetti and Marcia Clark, who screwed up the case and lost it; or, if that's not good enough, direct it at Judge Ito. But leave the people who did their job alone.

Finally, it's time for whites to stop blaming blacks for celebrating the acquittal. Yes, it's inappropriate for blacks to be celebrating the acquittal, but the blacks are celebrating over an emotional symbol, racism. If the verdict had been "guilty," then whites would be celebrating just as much, and it wouldn't be any more or any less appropriate. If liberals and feminists want domestic violence to be taken more seriously, maybe they should take their own racism more seriously, and not just exploit it when it's convenient to them for political or fundraising purposes. Let's have a permanent moratorium against calling blacks bigots and racists when they show the same sorts of desire for justice that we whites have.

There are plenty of ways to use this case to fight domestic violence in positive ways, without beating down the jury, or blacks in general. For example, Denise Brown, Nicole's sister, is using her experiences as a launching pad for a domestic violence education project. And perhaps Marcia Clark, who recently signed with the William Morris Agency, might be convinced to be a spokesperson against domestic violence.

This is a scary time. On the one hand, there is a resurgence of interest in Minister Louis Farrakhan of Nation of Islam, who has propounded rhetoric that appears to be anti-white, anti-Jew and anti-female, and on the other hand, many supposedly liberal whites are coming forth with rhetoric that sounds pretty anti-black to me. There's something going on that's not pleasant, and there's no way to tell how it will all end. All we can do now is hope that it ends in some healing.

Can't we all just get along?

Angry Black Men

(This was first posted online on October 14, 1995.)

A year ago, we learned that the Republican takeover of Congress was caused by a rebellion of "angry white men." Now it's the turn of angry black men to have an impact, and the reasons may have some similarities.

It seems that every major political movement has both negative and positive aspects, and there's no doubt that many of us are very concerned about the anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, anti-gay and anti-American aspects of earlier comments by

Nation of Islam minister Louis Farrakhan. These hate comments are very disturbing.

But I want to put that aside, because in doing so I cannot overstate how excited and enthusiastic I am over the Million Man March scheduled to take place two days from now, on Monday, October 16. For the first time in my life, we're seeing an event specifically about men – black men, to be sure, but all men and all families and society as a whole stand to benefit from what is being called a non-violent "day of atonement and reconciliation."

Isolated Men

Few people want to admit or address the fact that men are incredibly isolated and alone in society today. Men's emotions, attitudes, feelings and concerns about women, families, children and themselves are ignored and trivialized, especially whenever men's views differ from views put forth by women's political organizations. The media constantly portrays men unsympathetically, as deadbeats, harassers, abusers, murderers, or just plain jerks.

As a middle class white male, I cannot in any way claim to fully understand the rage felt by young black males and the humiliation they feel on a daily basis, but I have a tiny slice of insight based on my studies of men and divorce. I've interviewed hundreds of white middle class divorced men, and I know how disoriented, bitter and isolated they feel, having had their homes, families and children ripped away from them, and being objectified by the court system as having no function in their children's lives except to provide money to their ex-wives.

Now multiply that isolation by a thousand. Imagine men who mostly never were even married to their children's mothers-over 70% of black children are born out of wedlock. Imagine men one out of three of whom are in the criminal justice system-in jail, or on probation or parole-and men who are stopped by police simply for being in the wrong neighborhood. Imagine men who, even when well educated successful upper or middle class family and career men, can't get a taxicab because drivers fear violence because they're black.

These factors are not part of the lives of me or the white divorced men that I interviewed, but they're the factors motivating what polls suggest will be the involvement in the Million Man March by hundreds of thousands of black men in Washington, with support by millions of black men and women nationwide.

There are dangers, of course. Farrakhan's hate messages might draw too much focus. But hopefully other blacks, like Rev. Jesse Jackson, who like many responsible black leaders is supporting this non-violent march, will make sure that doesn't happen.

Women Excluded

One of the most controversial aspects of the march is its exclusion of women. I know that many of my women friends find this exclusion to be confusing and repugnant, but I and many other men feel that something like this is necessary. Men have enthusiastically and lovingly supported "women's issues" in the past, and will continue to do so in the future. But there are some things that men can learn only from other men, only by talking to other men, only by listening to other men, and those include things like being a loving, non-violent, successful husband, partner and father, things that, in the end, are just as important to women as to men. I hope that women who find this men-only march confusing will nonetheless suspend their criticisms and fully support those men who feel they need the company of other men to learn how to be better men.

The media has been telling us a lot lately about sharp divisions in opinions between white and black Americans, but it's time for angry white men and angry black men (and all other men) to realize that even though there are differences, we have a lot in common as well. Any man, whether white or black, who has suffered humiliation, whether justified or not, or who has not had appropriate involvement and influence in his children's lives, whether through his fault or the fault of someone else, or who feels that his attitudes and feelings are being belittled by society, should support the men in the march. And anyone else who has ever complained about men being deadbeats or irresponsible should now be cheering enthusiastically over the fact that a large number of men are going to atone, are going to reconcile, and are going to start taking more responsibility for their families, their children, and themselves.

Men's Powerful Emotions

(This was first posted online on 9/10/95. For more on Gottman's research, see page 209.)

The sentence leaped out at me when I read it: "Young girls find young boys quite annoying, and young girls are just not much fun for young boys." Since I've often seen women in online forums refer to me and other men online as annoying, I wondered if there were some eternal truths being discussed.

The sentence appeared in the book, *What Predicts Divorce?* by University of Washington psychology professor John Gottman.

In this chapter, Gottman was exploring the question of whether divorce is caused partially by the fact that children are mostly sex-segregated, boys playing

with boys and girls playing with girls, so that boys and girls don't learn how to communicate with each other.

He explored the different playing styles of boys and girls: Boys' games, like cops and robbers, usually involve unrestrained activity or pretend assault, and often contain an element of fear and danger which the boys have to deal with within the game. Emotion can be displayed, but it's never permitted to disrupt the game; the game has to be kept moving.

By contrast, girls' games, like house or hopscotch, involve restrained movements, and seldom introduce fear. The game is not important by itself, but is a context for bringing up, exploring, expressing, and understanding emotions and relationships. Whenever there is conflict that the girls cannot handle they discontinue the game and talk about what happened.

One anecdote of cross-sex play really made me chuckle. A boy and girl who were best friends were playing house, pretending that they were married, that the doll was their baby, and that they were going around showing the baby to friends and relatives. Suddenly the boy announced that the baby was dead, and had to be taken to the hospital! He became the ambulance driver, but drove so fast that the girl said she was afraid, and he had to reassure her. When they got to the hospital, he turned into a surgeon, and brought the baby back to life!

Regulating Negative Emotions

Such differences in styles of play explain why boys and girls usually sex-segregate themselves, but what explains the different styles of play? Gottman ties this into some research studies from as early as the 30s that indicate that boys may have more powerful emotions than girls.

This really rings some bells with me. There was a time, decades ago, when I went through a time of "getting in touch with my feelings" after a period of depression. During this time, I speculated that the reason I had turned all my feelings off in the past was that my feelings, both positive and negative, had been so powerful that there was simply no other way for me to handle them. I finally dropped this speculation, assuming it was at best a fantasy and at worst a conceit, but Gottman's book is the first time I've seen anything in print to support it.

Gottman speculates that boys' style of play comes from the fact that they have more difficulty regulating their own negative emotions than girls. "So, in a sense, boys are working at containing their emotions by using the outside structure of the rules of the game, in which emotions are subordinated to another, more important goal, namely, the game."

He explains: "Because young boys are far worse than young girls at regulating their own negative affects, and because young boys' greater aggression is part of a greater interest in danger and adventure than girls, boys become socialized to suppress their own emotionality in the service of an external goal, which usually involves exciting play, combat, and competitiveness. ... I suggest that because the play of girls does not afford the opportunities boys need for suppression of emotional expression, for high levels of excitement in pretend adventure, and for a mastery approach to fear, and because girls prefer the direct expression of emotion, boys ... avoid girls. If this is true, young girls find young boys quite annoying, and young girls are just not much fun for young boys."

Gottman has a very rigorous presentation style that doesn't permit him to speculate any further, but that doesn't stop me from doing some speculating on my own, especially about how his observations might extend to a number of gender issues.

For example, it could also explain why historically men have discriminated against women in the workplace. There's a difference between boys and men, of course. Young boys may not think young girls are much fun, but adult men find women fun to play with in sexual ways, and this seriously complicates adult relationships. The feminist view of the patriarchy and misogyny has always seemed silly to me, but what I could believe is that interaction with women in the workplace generates powerful emotions in men that they have difficulty regulating, with the result that men find it easiest to mitigate or alleviate those feelings by setting up rules of the game that discriminate against women, keeping them "in their place," out of the way of men, or even out of the workplace altogether. Sexual harassment of women by men could be explained as a failure to regulate powerful emotions.

But the knife cuts both ways. Those same powerful emotions drive men to "keep the game going," and not let things like emotional family disruptions interfere with business. If women, like girls, are more likely to "discontinue play" when an emotional disruption occurs, that would explain why women are less likely than men to be successful in management positions. This difference between men and women would not justify discrimination, but it would provide a reason for understanding why equality of opportunity doesn't always result in equality of results.

A Great Social Experiment

You know, the post World War II era on planet Earth has been quite remarkable in that, as a society, we've decided that sexual discrimination must not

exist, and that women should have the same opportunities as men. This requires a willingness of men to "play with" women on a daily basis in non-sexual ways, which requires a commitment by men to deal with regulating their own negative emotions on a daily, constant basis. And yet, despite all this tremendous work and effort, it feels like we men still never hear anything from women except how annoying we are. Poor us!

Instead of all this talk about patriarchy and misogyny, I think women and feminists should start congratulating men for undertaking this arduous task. Those men who still harass women should be condemned, without doubt, but the rest of us deserve to be cheered for being successful at regulating our emotions.

The fact is that both men and women are committed to this great social experiment to have a society free from sexual discrimination, an experiment which is unique by historical and evolutionary standards, and there's no way to tell now whether this era will last another 5 years, 50 years or 5000 years. How long it lasts may depend on how well we solve related societal problems like violence and fatherless children. It may be that making it last will require men and women to declare a truce and start working together to solve problems, rather than just always blaming the other gender.

Abortion and Stem Cells

Abortion is not my issue, and so I normally don't write about abortion. However, some people have indicated that abortion is an important gender issue, and I should at least state my position on abortion, for those readers who wish to know, especially in a book like this one that's supposed to be encyclopedic.

So here's a summary:

- Both pro-choice and pro-life people are pretty unprincipled, emotional and irrational. Almost everyone on both sides sanction state-sponsored murder, by omission or commission, in other areas. Almost everyone supports at least one of these: capital punishment, bombing Iraq in 1991, not intervening in the Rwanda genocide in 1995, bombing Bosnia in 1999 (and now in Afghanistan), euthanasia, triage, self defense, or birth control pills that prevent fertilized eggs from being implanted. During the Vietnam War era, the right excused war deaths in Vietnam, and the left excused the massive genocide in the killing fields of Cambodia following the war.
- I'm pro-choice during the first 5-6 months of pregnancy. To those on the right who say that this excuses murder of unborn infants, I refer you to the list in the preceding paragraph of other state-approved murders.

- I'm pro-life in the last 4-5 months of pregnancy. To those on the left who say that a woman should have control of her body, I would say that she does, but by not having an earlier abortion she has made a *de facto* commitment of her body to the fetus and to society to bring the baby to term. (Women *are* capable of making commitments, aren't they?) In particular, once a fetus is viable, the mother does not have the right, in my opinion, to have the baby pulled out and smashed in the head with a metal rod to keep it from being born alive.
- With regard to stem cell research, almost everyone is hyping this research unreasonably in my opinion. I have a very long memory and I remember things like the "swine flu" fiasco in 1976. I also remember how much venture capital money was poured into finding a vaccine or a cure for AIDS in the mid-80s, and we still don't have either of these in sight after 15 years. Those who are promising that stem cell research will quickly cure paraplegia or Alzheimer's disease are raising hopes unreasonably and even cruelly, and are akin to snake oil salesmen in my opinion.
- For those on the right who say that George W. Bush went too far in allowing federal funding for stem cell research for a limited number of identified "stem cell lines," I would say you're being really silly in that those stem cells were already doomed to death, and you should be glad that Bush bought you some time with regard to research on the other stem cell lines.
- For those on the left who say that George W. Bush didn't go far enough, I would say that your concerns are almost certainly groundless. Federal research will proceed on the limited stem cell lines, and if that research ever shows any sign whatsoever of new treatments for paraplegia or Alzheimer's disease or anything else, at that moment the large drug companies will start pouring in private funding, attempting to be the first on the market with a profit-making treatment.

Ironically, despite the fanatics on the left and the right, abortion is settled issue in the United States. Public opinion agrees with me (pro-choice in first few months, pro-life in last few months),[♦] and there's no realistic legal scenario that will change the legal status of abortion in America, except possibly in the area of third-term abortions (which everyone says are rare anyway) and fringe issues (insurance funding for abortions and parental consultation for pregnant teens).

In particular, one thing that neither the left nor the right likes to admit is that even if abortion were somehow made illegal in the U.S. (which is almost impossible), it would, on a statistical basis, change neither the number of abortions nor the safety of abortions (since girls and women would continue to

get safe illegal abortions in private doctors' offices, using health of the mother as a pretext).

For support of this view, I refer you to the figures on the web site of The Alan Guttmacher Institute* (<http://www.agi-usa.org>) which indicate that abortion is, on the average, as common and safe in countries where abortion is illegal as in countries where it's legal.

This means that fanatics on the left and right can stop arguing about abortion, and move on to some other subject – like creationism vs. evolution.

Creationism vs. Evolution

I've criticized the Christian right in this book (mainly because their attitudes towards men and fathers are often quite similar to those of the feminist left in painting men as predators and women as victims - see pp. 74 and 230).

I'm always astounded by the sheer lunacy I see in politicians on the left and right regarding religion. The current lunacy on the left is claiming that a moment of silence in schools is going to hurt somebody. In my opinion, it takes a really dumb politician to believe something like that. (I'm not claiming that the politicians who say it are dumb; I'm claiming that they don't believe what they're saying.)

And the current lunacy on the right is claiming that the theory of evolution, and the huge, massive amounts of research evidence supporting that theory, are wrong because Chapter 1 of the *Book of Genesis* in the Bible says it's wrong.

I'm going to show that both creationism and evolution are consistent with one another, but before doing so, I'd like to tell my own "biases."

My first exposure to philosophy of religion was a couple of books on philosophy given to me by my cousin, Jason Xenakis, who was a Professor of Philosophy at a university, when I was a teenager in high school. Those books discussed the proofs and counterarguments to God's existence. Incidentally, my very religious Mother never forgave my cousin for giving me those books, but that's another story.

I've never been religious, but while in college at MIT, I studied religion assiduously. I was fortunate for two years to be able to sit in on the classes of *Religions of the East and West* given by Professor Huston Smith, probably the greatest religious scholar in the world. His classes were both inspiring and fascinating.

I also spent a few years studying the *Bible Correspondence Course* given by Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God. These guys were fundamentalist Christians, and held the principal views that anti-evolution

fundamentalist Christians hold – in particular that the Bible is the literal inspired word of God, and that God created the earth in 4004 B.C. The Bible Correspondence Course forced me to study the Old and New Testaments very closely. It was fascinating.

However, despite all this studying and exposure to religion, I was never "blessed with faith," to use the phrase of a friend.

Being so interested in religion, I spent time with a number of friends in the United Christian Fellowship, and naturally my question of them was: "How can you study science, including evolution, at MIT, and still be a Christian?"

Their unequivocal answer: "No problem. Genesis doesn't tell you *how* God created the Earth, and I believe that God used evolution to create the Earth."

But what about the creation taking seven days and evolution taking billions of years? "No problem. The creation took seven days, but not seven Earth days."

Now, fast forward to the 1990s, and the latest battles about evolution versus creationism. I started to get interested in this subject again in August, 1999, when the Kansas Board of Education voted to forbid the teaching of evolution[♦] in the science curriculum, something that's so bizarre that it must have been extremely embarrassing to many citizens of Kansas. Other states that have considered similar laws include Arizona, Alabama, Illinois, New Mexico, Texas and Nebraska.

Because of this controversy, I decided to review the question again: Are evolution and creationism really totally consistent with one another?

It turns out that there are two reasons that anti-evolution Christians give as proof that evolution cannot be consistent with creationism:

- *Genesis* says that the world was created in seven days, and evolution took place over billions of years.
- There are some remarkable phenomena in nature that evolution cannot explain; the only explanation is creation.

Here, for example, are the words of Bert Thompson, a leading modern critic of the theory of evolution:

Why do people assume that when the Bible speaks about six days to create the Earth, it could have meant ages? You never hear people assuming that Joshua and his army might have walked around the walls of Jericho for seven ages or that Jonah was in the belly of a whale for three ages. No. We accept that those were days, as we know

them. The Bible clearly states in Genesis that after each creation day there was an evening and then a morning."

Thompson is arguing that the word "day" appearing in the Bible must be taken literally, but what's a day? Is it possible that the Bible means something different between a day at the time of creation and a day at the time of Joshua or Jonah?

To try to resolve this, I went back to the story of creation in Genesis, Chapter 1, to see if the Bible itself gives some clue to this question. Here is a table of creation:

Creation schedule from Genesis:

Day 1: Light, Day and Night.

Day 2: The firmament.

Day 3: Earth, seas, plant life

Day 4: Sun, moon, stars

Day 5: Fish and fowl, whales and birds

Day 6: Man and woman

Day 7: He rested.

So how long is a creation "day"? Well, the Bible doesn't say, but the Bible does say one thing: Whatever a "day" at creation time is, it is most certainly *not* an earth day.

How do we know that? Because the Sun wasn't created until Day 4!!! And you can't possibly have an earth day without the sun. So, whatever the six days of creation were, they were *not* earth days.

Now, perhaps Bert Thompson and other evolution critics have some secret way of knowing that a creation day was 24 hours, but what I'm saying is that they've attained that "knowledge" from a third party or from their own contemplations. They did *not* learn it from the Bible, despite what they might claim. If you don't believe me, go to the Bible and read it for yourself: The sun wasn't created until day 4.

But still the question remains: How long is a creation "day"? Well, current research leads astronomers to believe that the universe is 12 to 13 billion years old. So, if that's true, Genesis Chapter 1 seems to imply that a creation day is around 2 billion of today's earth years. How could a day be two billion years long? Well, who are we to say how long God's days are? The Bible sure doesn't tell us.

So if you're a religious person, and you believe that the Bible is the literal inspired word of God, and you don't want to embarrass yourself by denying several hundred years of science, now you don't have to. If your teacher or priest or rabbi or minister tells you that the Bible says that evolution is wrong, you can now respond: Hey look, *you're* wrong: the Bible does *not* say that evolution is wrong. Evolution is simply the method that God used to create the earth.

This brings us to the second type of evidence that some people use to oppose the theory of evolution: They say that evolution doesn't explain everything. They point to some plant or animal whose behavior is so exceptional, so amazing, that scientists cannot explain how evolution could have caused that behavior.

Well, that's a funny criticism, since those who oppose evolution can't explain what caused each plant's and animal's behavior either, but in fact each decade scientists make more and more discoveries that explain more things. For example, when I was an MIT student in the 60s, no one knew where birds came from. But in the last 25 years, scientists have made remarkable discoveries linking birds to dinosaurs, so that it's now believed that dinosaurs evolved into today's birds.

However, maybe there's some natural phenomenon that you feel can *only* be explained by creation. There's no way, you feel, that evolution can explain everything.

Well, even that's no problem. You can still believe that God used evolution to create the earth and also believe that God intervened from time to time, perhaps to help out or to make things better or to solve some particular problem.

Actually, my Christian friends from MIT made it clear to me that they believe in at least *one* specific intervention that God made in the process of evolution. They told me that when the first man evolved from an ape, they believe that God intervened at that time and gave that man a soul.

So you can believe in evolution and still believe that God intervened from time to time, and that solves any remaining problems.

And so, I can say this to all my pro-creation and pro-evolution friends: Go forth and love one another. Nothing that you believe contradicts what the others believe, and so you can stop arguing about it.

Or, alternatively, you can just go back to arguing about abortion full time.

Computer Games for Girls and E-commerce

(This was posted online on February 14, 2001.)

Surprise! More females than males play computer games online. It was only a few years ago that all computer games appeared to be a no-woman's-land.

However, men and women tend to play different games and use very different styles of game play. The different male and female styles of game play correspond to the different styles of online discussion and communication used by males and females (see section below).

These differences between males and females in both online game play and online discussions raise questions about whether existing e-commerce web sites are set up to encourage the maximum number of online purchases by women.

"Our latest study shows that women make up about 51% of the online gaming population," says Sean Wargo, PC Data Inc., in an interview. However, while men are more likely to be playing shooter games or sports games, "what appeals most to women is card games, games based on a trivia theme [like Trivial Pursuit] and games with a gambling theme."

These are the games that have a collaborative element, permitting groups of people to play together and share experiences online.

It's been true forever that young boys and young girls have very different tastes in games. The best and most humorous statement I've seen on this difference is the one by Professor John Gottman of University of Washington: "Young girls find young boys quite annoying, and young girls are just not much fun for young boys."

When I was a boy, there were two or three times when I asked a girl about the rules for hopscotch, and never got an answer that made any sense to me whatsoever. Even today, my fifty-something male mind simply cannot understand the point of hopping around all those squares if there isn't a way to win!

The choice of computer games by adult men and women appears to parallel game play by young boys and girls. Males enjoy the very competitive, sometimes solitary games like car racing or shooting monsters, while females are looking for games that emphasize sharing and communication, or which test their intelligence and problem-solving skills in non-competitive ways.

PC games for girls that have sold well include the Barbie games from Mattel Media Inc. (www.mattelmedia.com). These games, which are targeted to 5-10 year old girls, emphasize clothing and fashion. But "Detective Barbie: Mystery Cruise" is an adventure game starring Barbie, who has to solve an art-theft mystery using a variety of gadgets to uncover clues.

The Nancy Drew series games from Her Interactive Inc. (www.herinteractive.com) have sold well through four titles since 1997, and are targeted to girls 10 and older.

"What's interesting is that girls had never really been asked what they want in games, with the results that most games have been designed by males for males," says Megan Gaiser, president of Her Interactive. "We took a look at how they use the computer and what they like and dislike, and they've given us a fresh perspective on what games should be."

The latest title, "Nancy Drew: Message in a Haunted Mansion" topped the Amazon.com children's software list for a part of the 2000 holiday season, according to Gaiser, who says that girls collaborate on this game together in much the same way they play collaboratively in hopscotch or in online games.

"We find that girls tend to play this game in groups of two or three," she says. "They work together. One girl sits at the computer, and one girl writes down the hints and the clues that you need to solve the mystery."

I installed and played the review copy of "Haunted Mansion" that they sent me, and I found it to be a very nice game that almost anyone, male or female, teen or adult, could play and enjoy. You walk around the mansion talking to people, opening drawers, looking under furniture, opening people's mail and reading people's diaries, until you deduce the solution. About the only real difference between this and typical adventure games is that this one takes place in a mansion loaded with beautiful furniture and richly colored fabrics, while male oriented adventure games are more likely to take place in a war zone or a prison.

However, the packaging makes it clear that this is a "no males allowed" game, and the first thing you see when you open it is a banner reading, "Girls are cool." My teen son, who's willing to try almost any computer game, wouldn't go near this one, although he watched me play it and only took command of the mouse when I was well into it.

How important is an occasional "no males allowed" message to this and other games targeted to girls?

Tami Cotter, a communications professional with two young daughters, 3 and 5, says that in her experience this kind of gender differentiation is very important.

"I don't think it has to do with the parents, because we're very open," says Cotter. "But even when Ashley was very little she just wanted to play with dolls, and her attitude towards trucks was, 'I'm not interested - those are for boys.' [Trying to get girls to play with boys' toys] definitely goes against human nature - you just can't get them to do it."

This theme appears in the Tomb Raider games from Eidos (www.eidos.com) in a different way. The lead character in this series is the character Lara Croft, who is being heavily cross-promoted. Lara wears a Timex TMX Grip Clip watch in the game, and you can also buy that watch in stores. And a Tomb Raider movie is scheduled for release this summer, with Academy Award winner Angelina Jolie playing the lead as Lara Croft.

Although more males than females purchase Tomb Raider games, the percentage of female purchasers is very high — over 10%, as compared to less than 1% for most PC games.

And according to Paul Baldwin, VP marketing for Eidos, "no males allowed" is at least a part of what women look for in this game.

"Lara Croft is an intelligent female heroine, never had time for males, always adventurous," says Baldwin. "There's a big puzzle and adventure element, including exploration in 3D worlds. For example, you can visit the massive tombs

in Egypt and explore for hours. There are puzzles, but they don't test your reactions, which is a male thing, but they touch your mind."

The billion dollar question, of course, is whether the big differences between the way males and females play games online and conduct discussions online (see below) can tell us something about selling products to women online.

We all know the stereotypes that when a man goes to the mall, he goes in, buys what he wants, and leaves; but when a woman goes to the mall, she often goes with friends, and takes a great deal more time.

We also know that some 80-85% of all consumer purchases in the US are made by women. This means that four times as many consumer goods are purchased by women as by men.

This point is overlooked by some analysts. A recent Forrester Research Inc. report finds that "the e-commerce gender gap has closed," because as many women as men are buying online, and that women and men follow similar patterns in purchasing online. From this, the report concludes that "gender is a red herring," and that other factors are more important.

However, these analysts do not take into account that if women make four times as many consumer purchases offline, then they should make four times as many online as well. Until this four to one factor is taken into account, we have no way to be sure whether the style of current e-commerce sites is simply "too male" with too few women breaking through, and that therefore analysts are simply studying the buying habits of those few women.

It remains to be seen whether collaborative or occasional "no males allowed" factors play a part in successful e-commerce web site designs targeted to women. However, those factors do play a part in online game play and communications for women, and until the four-to-one ratio is duplicated online, we won't know for sure.

Gender differences in online discussions

These recent discoveries on the differences between men and women in online game play are exciting to me because they parallel some research that I performed almost ten years ago on the differences between men and women in online discussions.

These gender differences also explain another hot topic these days: why e-mail messages are often misinterpreted and misunderstood. At least part of this problem can be attributed to differences in styles between men and women online.

In brief, the "male" discussion style is often like a game. (I put "male" in quotes, because nothing is completely male or female.)

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

When two males are discussing politics or other subjects, each attempts to score points against the other.

But it's not a competition where the goal is to always win, just as you don't always expect to win every game in your weekly tennis match against your favorite opponent. It's also fun to lose points, as long as you're compensated by learning something for your loss, or sharpening your skills, or becoming a better player.

The male style is a very efficient and enjoyable way for two men to exchange information, and it's typical for both men to come out of the "game" having won some points, lost some points, learned a lot, and feeling very satisfied.

The "female" style is, as in game play, more collaborative. While men tend to emphasize differences, women tend to emphasize points of agreement. Women enjoy building on these points of agreement with each other, and handle differences by relating personal anecdotes which illustrate the differences. In this way, both parties still exchange information, but without scoring points the way males do, and they both come out feeling very satisfied.

However, gender differences can cause problems, as I discovered when I studied male-female online discussions.

When a woman emphasizes areas of agreement in a discussion with a man, it sometimes comes across to the man as pandering. And when a male scores a point in a discussion with a woman, it sometimes comes across to her as an attack against her personally.

This explains one reason why office e-mail messages can sometimes be misunderstood.

Indeed, Professor Gottman's previously quoted statement about children's games, "Young girls find young boys quite annoying, and young girls are just not much fun for young boys," seems to apply very well to online non-sexual conversations between adult men and women.

That's why I recommend to people that they go on the Internet and get involved in vigorous online discussions.

Men who have difficulty talking to women without pandering or getting angry should get into an online women's issues discussion and try to adopt a "female" style: Look for areas of agreement, and try to frame disagreements by means of a personal story.

Women who are afraid to confront men in the workplace should start confronting men online in a "male" style, where it's possible to do so anonymously and safely: don't take confrontations personally, and in fact try to have some fun by scoring points against the guys.

None of this is in concrete, however, and both men and women are capable of all styles, if they try.

And we shouldn't assume that women are somehow limited in their online communications skills. I've been online since 1984, and in those 17 years I've seen that women are just as skillful as men at being competitive.

I've been in many online communities, forums and discussions, and there are two people who stand out in my mind as the most ferocious "flamers" or attackers. One was a male with the handle "Barbarian," and the other was a female named Suzanne.

Even "flame wars" are not male only. One of the most aggressive I've seen was among women on the topic of Christianity versus certain "goddess" religions. And you can be certain that this particular flame war was definitely "no males allowed."

The case of Barbarian was especially interesting because he had made a number of enemies online because of his relentless attacking style.

One day his wife messaged me and asked, "Why do you hate my husband?" I replied, "I don't hate your husband, but I really dislike how he attacks me all the time." She said, "I attack you all the time too, but you don't dislike me."

I was really taken aback by this statement because she was absolutely right! In fact, people attacked each other online all the time, but something about Barbarian was unique. Her purpose in messaging me was that she was concerned about how many people disliked her husband, and she wanted to ask my help to see if anything could be done about it.

In response to her invitation, I retrieved a large number of message exchanges between Barbarian and myself and other people, and in analyzing them I discovered something which truly astounded me: Barbarian did not, in fact, attack significantly more often than other people.

What made Barbarian unique was that he didn't intersperse conciliatory comments with his attacking comments. Barbarian would write "You don't know what you're talking about," while others would be more likely to write, "Sorry I misunderstood you on the first point, but you don't know what you're talking about on the second point." Both styles attack, but one includes a conciliatory message that makes all the difference in the world.

It's this alternation of attack and conciliation that distinguishes a ferocious attacker from an ordinary person online.

A final word: All of these online skills are transferable to the offline world. Learn how to be a better online citizen, and you'll automatically learn how to be a better world citizen as well.

Women I've Known ... Online

I've been online since 1984, and over the years I've met a number of women online, most of whom I've now lost track of. However, certain of them have made the greatest impression on me, and it's fitting to devote the last section of the last chapter talking about some of them.

In 1984, the World Wide Web didn't exist, and the Internet was being used only by the defense and academic communities. However, there were two major non-Internet online services that anyone with a computer and a modem could join, to meet other people online, and share information. One was called The Source, and the other was CompuServe.

I joined a group called Participate on the Source (POTS), an online community of hundreds of people. POTS was extremely innovative, with forums, discussion groups, electronic lectures and support groups. POTS led the way for the industry in everything from online education to discussions of the meaning of online love (called "electronic love," to distinguish it from old-fashioned, ordinary "analog love").

When The Source merged with CompuServe in the late 80s, the POTS group migrated over to The Point, a Participate service on CompuServe. The Point itself went out of business in 1995, because its older technology was taken over by the fast growing World Wide Web.

The men and women of Participate who pioneered online forums were extremely helpful to me in writing early drafts of this book during those eleven years. In fact, in 1992 I started a forum based on my research on men and divorce, and it was one of the most popular forums in Participate's history, processing hundreds of messages per week. This interaction was extremely valuable to me, since most of the people in the forum made it clear that they disagreed with a lot I wrote, and they never let me get away with a misstatement or an unsupported claim.

Among the women, *Kathy*, who used the handle *Arsinoe*, provided a great deal of expert input, based on her experiences as a social worker who worked in Child Protective Services in New York City in the 70s. She closely and critically reviewed early drafts of my book, and corrected a number of my misunderstandings. Her early input was crucial.

Another woman, *Jeannie*, who used the handle *Sheba*, was a grandmother who was a feminist with a heart. She'd had a tough life — a couple of abusive husbands — and now she was in a relationship she was comfortable with, and with two fine sons, married with kids of their own. She was supportive to me, but not surprisingly (I guess), she wasn't very sympathetic with me and with the father's side of divorce situations that I presented.

Then suddenly Sheba posted a message in my "Divorced Men" forum saying that her son was going through a divorce, saying that she was going to take a trip across country to see him, asking for advice. I told her that there's a good chance her son would be charged with battering, even if it weren't true, since it was a standard practice of divorcing wives. I also warned her that although her son had some rights to see his kids, in most states grandparents have no rights at all, so she should be very careful what she said.

I lost track of her around then. I felt very bad because I knew she would soon be learning about the other side of the divorce equation, as she would be watching her son suffer the discrimination that all fathers suffer from the divorce courts.

Another woman, *Diana* was a good friend who was going through a divorce herself. She and I shared our experiences, and she helped me put my own divorce into perspective.

There was a footnote to my relationship with Diana. We had always discussed the possibility of meeting one another one day, and we finally did at a Participate get-together in Cambridge around 1990. Much to the surprise of both of us, there was no chemistry at all between us in person. This shows that online relationships don't always survive meeting in person.

Starting in the 90s, I joined several women's issues forums, where I estimate that I exchanged some five or ten millions words worth of forum messages over the years. Some of the women were supportive and helpful, others were hostile and anti-helpful.

The major irony is that the most supportive and helpful of the women I ran into had, like Sheba, been abused by men themselves. However, just as a man can hate his ex-wife without hating all women, these women were able to avoid generalizing their experiences with one or two men to all men.

Probably the greatest single accomplishment of my online experience was the Model Harassment Policy developed jointly with *Cheryl Kondratow* (see page 252). Cheryl had been sexually harassed on the job, and became an activist, starting the New Jersey organization, Women Against Sexual Harassment (WASH).

The early discussions with Cheryl were actually very difficult, and occasionally acrimonious. But both of us stuck it out, and we completed the Model Harassment Policy (chapter 7, page 252).

When *Rosie* was eight, she had to go visit her godfather every Tuesday, and every Tuesday he raped her. Now, in her forties, she was trying to work through what had happened to her by writing poetry and helping other abused women. Rosie had every right to be mad at every man she met, and yet she was very sympathetic to me and what I was going through. In my opinion, Rosie puts to shame many of the whiny feminists I met online who complained that their fathers or some other men weren't sympathetic enough to women's needs or

whatever. Rosie had learned to focus on what was important, not on some political agenda. Rosie is very special, and I wish her the best.

I met *Dana* in a very peculiar way. She posted something about how men treat men and women differently, and to prove it, she said she'd been having a technical computer discussion with a man in another forum which remained friendly as long as he thought Dana was a man's name, but got unfriendly when she revealed that she was a woman. Always ready to defend men, I posted a message opining it that in my experience it wasn't really true that men online are friendly to men and nasty to women in technical discussions, and there must be some other problem. I suggested that online communications were always difficult, and maybe he had felt that Dana had been fooling with him by appearing to be a man for a while before revealing she was a woman.

Well, Dana was not very happy with my suggestion. Dana started flaming me vociferously, sometimes sending me ten to fifteen flame messages a day at one point. This continued for something like a year. But though Dana was angry, and made me into her project with a determination to beat me online, she was always honorable and honest, and in retrospect ended up being one of the most interesting people I met online, and added a great deal to my understanding of feminism.

I met *Angie* online when she won a make-believe contest I had run, whose prize was a trip to Hawaii. I ended up buying a picturesque book on Hawaii and mailing it to her as her prize. We remained good friends, and she turned out to be my conscience. Whenever I was getting into an argument online about some touchy subject, Angie would usually make fairly neutral contributions, but whenever Angie started getting critical of me, I knew that I was getting a little too far afield. Angie was very helpful to me when the goings were really rough.

I had many vigorous debates with many of these women, and it's impossible to overstate how much I learned from them. I've estimated that over the years I posted thousands of messages to feminists, totaling five to ten million words, and that doesn't even count the words in messages that were posted to me. These exchanges helped me gain a sensitivity to the problems and issues that women face that I could not have gotten any other way.

Cynthia L. Stern, Sysop of the MSN Feminist and Womanist Philosophy forum, was a big help to me. This is a very interesting forum anyway, because it combines ordinary day to day issues with real philosophical issues, and I got involved in some lengthy discussions on a variety of issues in this forum. Cyn not only encouraged me to contribute, but also contributed many thoughtful comments of her own.

Another very supportive Sysop was *Deborah Russell* ("Russ") became Forum Manager of the CompuServe Women's Wire forum during the middle of my

struggles. Although we never had any political discussions, we did exchange pleasantries a number of times, including several discussions about her cat, and I considered her a friend. At one point, when I was getting pretty battered down during some discussions, Russ wrote this private e-mail message to me:

John - I just wanted to drop a friendly note. While I don't agree with everything you say, I must say that I find most of your presentation to be presented in quite a reasonable way, even when I disagree with your conclusions.

I can really appreciate how difficult it must be for you to try to communicate with die-hard feminist activists who are often angry and worn down by their struggles. I'm sure you know that you are a lightning rod for their frustrations.

I just wanted to say that I think the sincere search for truth is an end in itself, even if the journey does not always take us where we thought we wanted to go. So hang in there, and know that not every hard-core feminist thinks you're evil incarnate or deliberately supporting the rationalizations of batterers.

Cheers - Russ, Forum Mgr.

This was one of the nicest messages I've ever received, and it was truly an enormous pleasure to receive it, and of course I thanked her for it. I knew that that as long as she managed the forum, it would always be a home for sincere, thoughtful discussion of the type I was interested in, and which led to this book.

Unfortunately, I didn't have such a good experience with Betsy, the Forum Manager who replaced Russ.

The first time that I interacted with Betsy was when she was just a section leader, and a vociferous discussion between pro-choice and pro-life women on abortion was going on in the CompuServe women's issues forum. Betsy responded to this with an announcement that "I am placing a two-week moratorium on the subject [abortion] in this public forum. All relevant, current messages will be [removed] as soon as possible. Should any new messages appear, they will be [removed] as well."

Although I don't get involved in abortion discussions, what interested me about all this was the dynamics of this kind of censorship. I had gotten into many discussions of censorship in other forums, and couldn't resist putting in my two cents here. I posted this response to Betsy: "I think I can objectively comment on this because I have not participated in the abortion debate (nor do I wish to) and because I've been online since 1984 - for 11 years. This is a very big mistake. There is no justification for this kind of censorship. Censorship gets a lot of people ticked off. It also causes a lot of confusion."

Today, of course, I would hesitate before posting anything so direct in a women's issues forum, unless I knew the person I was writing to pretty well which,

in this case, I didn't. However, I was really reacting the way I would in an "ordinary" forum — i.e., anything but a women's issues forum.

What happened after this shows a great deal of the difference between men and women online, and to this day I'm astonished at what happened. In anything other than a women's issues forum, there would have been a vigorous debate on what had happened, with different people taking different sides, and in the end, the objections to the censorship would have been so loud, that it would have been quickly ended. Before that time, I've never seen this kind of censorship last very long without a lot of loud strenuous objections.

Much to my surprise, there was only person posting an objection to the censorship — me.

The vast majority of women in the forum pretty much ignored the whole thing, and went on posting messages on their favorite subjects, except that after Betsy's directives, they suddenly studiously avoided the subject of abortion.

I was astounded. Why were all these women sheepishly obeying this censorship dictate from a section leader? This sheeplike obedience must surely be a major difference between men and women — few men I've known online would have obeyed.

However, if there were no objections posted to the censorship, there were plenty of objections posted to what I had written — for daring to criticize a woman in a women's issues forum. A typical comment was: "John, [I'm] just pointing out how long we have been fed up with men telling us how to think and behave. That's another form of censorship as well you should know."

When that happened, I decided that if I was in for a penny then I was in for a pound, and I stated my strongly held beliefs against this kind of censorship, and made the point that what was going on was that *women's* voices were being censored by another woman. To one women's criticisms of me, I replied, "This week the Pope has been visiting the United States, and the topic of abortion has been much in the news. There is only one forum on CompuServe where discussion of those subjects is forbidden, and that's the CompuServe Women's Wire forum. Shouldn't you be telling yourself that there's something terribly wrong about that?"

I'll come back to the subject of censorship later, but I was always squarely in Betsy's gun sights after that. Betsy was a section leader, but unlike the other participants and section leaders, she never participated in actual forum discussion, but restricted her participation to making administrative and policy decisions, mostly about who was going to get locked out of the forum — mostly men, but also women who posted messages she didn't like.

Betsy made one policy decision after another about whom she would lock out of the forum. Any man could be locked out for any reason, but Betsy would just

as easily lock out any woman who criticized feminists or especially anyone who criticized Betsy or the forum. And Betsy would be the one who would decide whether someone was doing these things.

Men were usually the lightning rods for her decisions, but in fact most of her decisions were directed at hurting women – and in fact it's been a major purpose of this book to show that most actions of the political feminists have been most harmful to women.

A special target of Betsy was stay at home moms (SAHMs). Many feminists in general are critical of SAHMs, something which many SAHMs themselves have given as reasons why they aren't feminists. (I specially recall that *Washington Post* columnist Sally Quinn got into an argument with Katie Couric on the *Today Show* around 1990, with Quinn arguing that feminists were too hostile to mothers who want to have children and take care of them.)

Russ had started a number of forum sections specifically for SAHMs – a good business idea, because in those days most women who had access to CompuServe were, in fact, SAHMs. However, as Betsy became more and more powerful, she ended the SAHM sections, and drove away a number of women.

In a private e-mail discussion, one woman wrote to me that she felt very insulted by Betsy. "Since I'm not a college graduate," she wrote, "and decided to stay home with my children while they are young, and because I don't conform to Betsy's idea of feminism, I was ignored."

I felt I was safe from being locked out as long as Russ was the forum manager, but when Russ left and Betsy became the manager, I knew I was doomed. I cut way back on discussions in the CompuServe forum, except for an occasional foray, but I always was careful to walk on eggshells for fear of giving Betsy an excuse for locking me out.

Finally, I got drawn into a very interesting discussion on rape, which began to get a little contentious. I was defending traditional marriage, and when someone posted a message saying that my defending marriage in a women's issues forum was like defending white supremacy in an African-American forum, that's when I made my big mistake.

It was about midnight when I read her message, I was tired after a long 16 hour day, and her message was so offensive it sickened me. It related to the fairly common feminist comparison of marriage to American slavery. This comparison is so offensive to men and to women who love their husbands, and especially to SAHMs. Even worse, to compare a loving wife to a slave who was owned as property was so offensive to blacks, a fact which black feminist women often point out in their writings. I was truly disgusted. I was sick of the offensiveness to men as well as the racism in the forum. I decided I didn't want anything more to do with this discussion, so I impulsively deleted the message I had posted. In addition, though this wasn't my intention, I apparently also accidentally deleted

the message which had been addressed to me (which the forum software evidently permitted, since the message was addressed to me).

This was all the ammunition that Betsy needed, and she locked me out of the forum. A couple of women e-mailed to me a file containing all the messages from Betsy's top-secret women-only sysop-only section of the forum, where I was able to read all of Betsy's gloating that she had finally found an excuse to lock me out. In a message to me, one woman referred to her and her friends as "a bunch of spoiled brats."

I had a discussion with a couple of women who urged me to fight this lockout with CompuServe management. I considered this option, since being locked out of this forum was a big loss for me, but decided against it for several reasons. First, by that time (1996) there were many other opportunities on the Internet to discuss women's issues, and I really didn't need this forum anymore. And second, I doubted that I'd win such an appeal, since CompuServe management left things like lockouts to the individual forum managers.

So, I wrote an e-mail message to Betsy stating how racially offensive the posted messages were, and added the following:

No woman has ever renounced feminism for anything I've said, and none will ever renounce feminism for anything I *will* say or *could* say. And yet polls show that women have renounced feminism in droves because "feminism doesn't speak for me." It's *your* voice, not mine, that has driven so many women away from feminism. Every time a feminist talks about patriarchy, male supremacy, or how women are "sex objects, breeders, domestic servants, and cheap labor" doing men's bidding, you lose another woman from feminism. If the work of your forum is to make feminism look ugly and drive as many women away from feminism as you can, then I'm not going to apologize for being a nuisance who isn't helping your goals.

As my book on gender issues nears completion, I realize I've done a lot of valuable research in this forum and its predecessor in the areas of sexual harassment, domestic violence, child abuse, rape and other issues, and I hope that my work will help reduce the incidence of these crimes in the future. But unfortunately the only positive thing to come out of this latest episode is that I now have one more story to tell about my experiences, though not one that I welcomed or sought.

I've also noticed that [as you've taken over as forum manager], you've become increasingly censorious, parochial, intolerant and controlling. I've commented on this (as have a number of women) several times in the last couple of years, but it's only gotten worse.

Many women - I would guess dozens - have left the forum because they were, essentially, driven out for challenging some aspect of your agenda. And now your latest turn toward exploiting racism is even more worrisome. And with your finger on the "lock out" button to zap any nuisance person who posts views or facts that don't suit your taste, things may get worse.

I will take advantage of what might possibly be our last exchange ever to make the following observation: if you're not careful, Betsy, you may look in the mirror one morning and discover that, like what happened in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, you've turned into exactly the kind of person that you claim to despise the most. Good luck!

Sincerely,

John J. Xenakis

I'm going into this subject at length because I feel so strongly about censorship online and its negative consequences. For some reason that's beyond me, people who advocate censorship don't realize how destructive it is to do so.

Unfortunately, censorship has been a part of a number of other women's issues forums. For example One Chinese woman who experienced censorship in China became alarmed when a feminist forum she was part of was considering censoring men. The woman, Kate Zhou, is a Chinese political scientist now working in the United States. Here's what she posted on that feminist bulletin board:

Dear Sisters:

I am a feminist from China.♦ For many years, sexist language was banned by the Chinese state (at least in the urban public sphere). Urban Chinese women were very much "free" from sexist verbal attacks. Many women including myself were willing to give up freedom for some degree of protection and security. When everyone lost the freedom to speak, women's independent voice was also gone. When women's voices were silenced, women suffered.

Yes, we did not have to be bothered by sexist language and pornography. But we could not complain that we had to line up two or three hours for basic food. We had to take less interesting work because we had to take care of the family. It was not politically correct to complain about the double burden.

Is it clear to feminists that there has been no feminist movement in those countries that practice state censorship?

My experience in China seems to suggest that women are often the victims of any kind of censorship. As a feminist, I believe that women have the ability and power to defend their interests if given a

chance. We should welcome complex and diversified debates. Difficult and complex debates help to train us. If we try to shut someone up because we dislike what he has to say, we just confirm our weakness and sexism.

Professor Zhou's point is something that all feminists should understand: When you start practicing censorship, then it's feminists who will be censored first.

Questions and Answers

- Q (*With regard to my essay on Jackie O. on page 294*): John, I don't think the general American distaste for Jackie's second marriage had anything to do with the fact that Onassis was Greek. What it mostly was, in my opinion, was the idea that after her marvelous Camelot fairy tale romance, she had then gone on to marry for *money*. In American eyes, this is a distinctly unclassy thing to do, and they didn't like it when their fairy tale princess - rightly or wrongly - was perceived as having stooped to anything so mundane. ... I think they would have felt the same if his name had been Jones or Smith.

A: Sorry, but I don't buy this at all. For one thing, the Kennedys were and are one of the wealthiest American families, with money made, as I recall, in the oil industry which is not, to my knowledge, a particularly more honorable industry than shipping.

Secondly, if Jackie had married a wealthy American, especially someone who was close to the Kennedys, then she would have been universally applauded, whether she had married for money or not.

My mother, and most Greek-Americans, considered consider the reaction of the media and the public toward Aristotle Socrates Onassis to be pure racism. I'm inclined to agree.

- Q: If JOHNX and I disagree, and he called me a stupid bitch, he would be insulting *me*. If, in the same disagreement, I called him an ignorant Greek, I am insulting John and every other Greek - hardly fair. (I am afraid I don't know any really insulting terms for Greeks, so this is the best I can do. <g>)

A: How about what they used to call my mother when she was a girl: a greasy Greek.

- Q: It can't be an accident [that Jackie] married the U.S.A.'s brightest rising star and gritted her teeth through the philandering and the coldness of the marriage just so she could be the First Lady, then happen to marry the World's Richest Man.

A: You make a very interesting point – that JFK and Onassis were really quite similar. They were both extremely wealthy, powerful, and charming – exactly the sorts of things that many women are attracted to.

Appendix – Feminist Literature

Despite the enormous roles that feminist women and pro-feminist men play in our lives, few men are familiar with feminist beliefs. I've read a number of feminist books, and I've been amazed by what I've seen in there.

This appendix does not pretend to be a summary of all of feminist literature. Indeed, it's not even a summary of all the feminist literature that I've read. Rather, it's a summary of just a few feminist books that made an impression on me, and helped me form my impression of what feminism is.

Do feminists themselves really believe this stuff? Yes, they do.

Whenever I discussed this literature online with feminists, and made some critical remark, the comment I would get back is "This is radical feminism, not mainstream feminist." So I always asked, "Tell me something in the book that's so radical that you disagree with it." Not once did any of these feminists express any disagreement with any of the material in these books.

Instead of criticism of radical feminism, the overwhelming responses I got back were of agreement and support of radical feminism. Here is one typical comment posted by a woman online:

In my experience, men who label Susan Faludi et al as bitter hating women are often deeply disturbed by seeing a feminist analysis of their impact on the world as it both challenges the right of men to behave as they do and pushes the fact that it is male created structures that result in so much inequality, oppression etc.

So as you read through this summary, you should assume that these are in fact generally the beliefs of women who call themselves feminists, and you should understand that these women – whether they're your wives, your sisters, mothers, daughters, or social workers – actually believe these things about men.

Susan Faludi's Backlash

This book is undoubtedly the most admired feminist book of the 1990's. "Her work is really an inspiring model of what good journalism can be," says one woman online in a typical comment of praise.

Reviewers gushed, when the book was published. One writer summarized the situation as follows:

"Spellbinding and frightening,"[♦] said Harvard economist Robert B. Reich. "Totally brilliant," wrote feminist author Letty Cottin Pogrebin. When Faludi appears at bookstores, hundreds of women cluster around. They also bombard her with letters: "I thought I was crazy– I thought it was just me"; "I've just finished your book, and the world will never be the same."

Susan Faludi's book is *Backlash, The Undeclared War Against American Women* (Anchor/Doubleday, 1991). It was a best seller, and was the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction.

According to Faludi, the purpose of the book is to address the following question: Why do surveys show that so many young career women vociferously deny that they are feminists, even though they just as vociferously believe in the traditional goals of feminism, including such things as equal rights and equal wages for women?

Faludi answers this question by claiming that journalists in particular and society in general has been reacting by trying to put women back to where they were prior to the feminist gains:

In the last decade, publications from the *New York Times* to *Vanity Fair* to the *Nation* have issued a steady stream of indictments against the women's movement, with such headlines as WHEN FEMINISM FAILED or THE AWFUL TRUTH ABOUT WOMEN'S LIB. They hold the campaign for women's equality responsible for nearly every woe besetting women, from mental depression to meager savings accounts, from teenage suicides to eating disorders to bad complexions. The "Today" show says women's liberation is to blame for bag ladies. A guest columnist in the *Baltimore Sun* even proposes that feminists produced the rise in slasher movies. [*Backlash*, pp. x-xi]

She explains this as follows: "Fear and loathing of feminism is a sort of perpetual viral condition in our culture," [p. xix] she says, claiming that the acuteness of this loathing comes and goes. She argues that "these outbreaks [of hatred] are backlashes because they have always arisen in reaction to women's 'progress,' caused not simply by a bedrock of misogyny but by the specific efforts of contemporary women to improve their status, efforts that have been interpreted

time and again by men ... as spelling their own masculine doom." So hatred of feminism comes and goes, according to Faludi, but misogyny, hatred of women, is a bedrock of society.

Let's stop here and talk about misogyny. An ordinary man, and most women, can go through a year without the word "misogyny" every coming up in conversation. Lots of ordinary people don't even know what this word means.

But that's not true for feminists. This word, and its variations, occur in feminist speech as often as words like "door" and "apple" appear in ordinary conversations.

This is a major distinction between feminists and ordinary people. I once did an analysis of the messages being posted in one feminist women's forum, and I found that "misogynist" or a variation occurred two or three times a day. By contrast, at one point a few years ago, I asked a number of "ordinary" women acquaintances if she uses the word "misogyny" a lot, or if she believes that society hates women, and of course almost every one told me she didn't.

So the use of this word, as well as the word "patriarchy," is a major differentiator between people who identify themselves as feminists and those who don't.

Faludi does not disappoint in this area. Her book begins by claiming that society is based on a bedrock of misogyny, and every story she tells is another example, according to her, of how society hates women.

However, there's a logic flaw in Faludi's book, a classical logic error known as "assuming that which is to be proved."

In order to show that there's a backlash against feminism, she provides hundreds of horror stories, each one describing something terrible that men have done to women. However, her selection of stories, and her retelling of each story, are highly selective, in order to prove the backlash.

I call this her "misogyny filter." She assumes misogyny is a bedrock of society, and therefore she selects her stories based on whether they illustrate misogyny. And, in each story, she selectively states the facts so that they point to misogyny. Her misogyny filter controls all of her choices, and in the end she's able to use her stories to prove that misogyny is rampant throughout society. So she assumed misogyny, and used it to prove misogyny. QED.

You can let the book fall open to almost any page and you see how she uses the misogyny filter: by taking any set of facts she's collected in her research and passing them through a sort of "misogyny filter" and interpreting them as evidence of hatred of women and a backlash.

I have, in fact, performed that experiment, but let me take just one example. Page 149 is the story of how Marilyn French's novel, *The Women's Room*, came to TV in 1978. Now I know nothing of the facts other than what Faludi presents,

but it's easy to see from reading her account how her misogyny filter works. She frames the story as a war between one female executive, Esther Shapiro, and various male executives. The page contains several quotes from Shapiro, all of which paint her as eminently reasonable. No male executive's words are ever quoted, but they're automatically made to appear as unreasonable.

For example, Shapiro recalls her reaction when she first saw the script. "It was terrific, I thought, this is something we have to get on television." According to Faludi, Shapiro thought it was a guaranteed hit, based on a best-selling book. "Women had loved the story of the liberated housewife who leaves home," says Faludi.

However, Faludi only describes the male executives through Shapiro's eyes. "The men were monolithic in their opposition," writes Faludi, and "Not only would they personally stonewall the idea, they assured her, no advertiser would touch the feminist-tainted subject matter either." Finally, Shapiro persuaded the network to run it, but only after the men "instructed her" to shrink it from a miniseries to a one-night event, as if women talk to men, but men only instruct women.

In trying to understand what was going on here, I noted that Faludi's description of *The Women's Room* as "a story of a liberated housewife who leaves home."

That didn't exactly correspond to my [very vague] memory of the movie, so I went to CompuServe's movie guide (GO ALLMOVIE), and got the following description:

The Women's Room is nineteen years in the life of divorcee Lee Remick, from the repressive 1950s to the liberated 1980s. This three-hour ABC THEATRE presentation is very much a compendium of 1980 sensibilities. The men are almost invariably scum, while the women perpetuate the stereotype of the loudmouthed, humorless feminist. The film also suggests that the only way a middle-aged woman can find true fulfillment is to bed a man half her age. Somehow the "wisdom" accrued during Ms. Remick's two-decade quest for a lasting relationship qualifies her to be a college lecturer at fadeout time. Dated and knee-jerk though it may be, WOMEN'S ROOM impressed enough people in 1980 to earn three Emmy nominations: one for "Best Drama Special", and one each for costars Patty Duke Astin and Colleen Dewhurst.

Now, my point here is not to say that the movie reviewer's opinions are right and Faludi's are wrong. My point is that from the review one can see the outlines of the debate surrounding this movie, and yet Faludi's description never reflects that debate. Faludi has done her research, but every fact she's uncovered is passed

through her misogynist filter, and the filter removes any facts which detract from her case, and twists the remaining facts to prove that men hate women.

Almost every story of Faludi's book is like that.

Susan Faludi's book presents herself as a prosecutor in a trial of society on the charge of misogyny – hatred of women. But in an ordinary trial, the prosecutor would have endure cross-examination of her witnesses, experts who would try to show that the investigation was shoddy, and experts who would argue that her experts are liars. She also would have had to endure a judge who decides which parts of her evidence may even be presented.

But Susan Faludi has no such hindrances. Faludi's book starts with opening statement where she claims that hatred of women is a bedrock of society; she then presents witness after witness to present facts, many of them spurious and irrelevant, to bolster her case; and she ends with a closing statement (an epilogue) where she declares her case proven. Not a single one of her statements or witnesses is ever challenged. This is the problem with almost all of radical feminist literature.

Any journalist knows that you can prove anything you want by being selective. This happens throughout feminism, as when feminists ignore violence by women, especially by women against children, as discussed in chapter 3. Faludi's methodology is as old as time. You can prove that left-handed piano players are vicious or dirty or stupid by using the same technique of selective reporting.

You'd think she would actually feel shame at using this disreputable technique, but there is a question: Does Faludi do what she does accidentally or on purpose? Is she misquoting or quoting sources selectively because she doesn't know any better, or because she wants to reach a predefined solution.

Well, Ms. Faludi is a Pulitzer-prize winning journalist. She knows what she's doing. Her skill, though, is not so much as a journalist, but as propagandist, someone who knows how to use selective reporting and skewed statistics to prove what she wants.

How About Faludi in Reverse?

To illustrate what's wrong with Faludi's book, suppose that I wanted to write a "Faludi in Reverse" book. It would be very easy.

Take chapter 3 of this book, on family violence. This was incredibly hard chapter to write, because I wanted to provide a complete, balanced picture of family violence, including violence by both men and women – not just inflammatory remarks about one gender only, as many feminists do. I wanted to show that family violence really affects only a small percentage of families – not

using phony, inflated statistics as many feminists do. And I wanted to suggest some actual solutions that might really work – not just whine and complain as many feminists do. And when I was writing this chapter, when the facts went in a direction where I didn't want them to go, I followed the facts, instead of skewing the facts to meet my desires.

But suppose I wanted to write that chapter as a "Faludi in Reverse" chapter. It would be incredibly easy.

Let's take just one example – suppose I wanted to claim that family violence was a one-sided problem, and wanted to focus exclusively on violence by mothers against their children.

Here's how to do it. At one point during the mid-90s, I used CompuServe's Executive News Service (GO ENS) to collect news clippings on a variety of subjects, such a divorce or child abuse. I ended up collecting tens of thousands of news clippings during that time.

Many of the stories about child abuse were about men, and many were about women. If I wanted to write a "Faludi in Reverse", then I would ignore the stories I didn't like and quote only the ones that fit my theory. I could start with the Susan Smith case (Susan Smith is the woman who drowned her two children in 1995) and with the Evelyn Yates case (the woman who drowned her five children in 2001), then I could collect stories about women sticking their kids' hands into boiling water, women chaining their kids to the toilet for a week, women locking their kids in the car trunk, and so forth, put them all together, and voila! I would have a chapter with loads of examples, "proving" that society is built on a bedrock of mothers abusing their children.

I wouldn't have to stop there. There are thousands of statistics about child abuse published each year, some of which are about men, some of which are about women. I could select out the ones about women, and add those to the chapter, and I'd be able to supplement my anecdotes with statistical "proof" that women are typically violent with children. In addition, I could interview a number of experts, and review expert research, and selectively extract expert quotes which support, or appear to support, my claim.

See how easy it is? And the great thing is that it would be thoroughly researched, loaded with "facts" that are completely true, and every one of them could be supported by an impressive footnote. I'm sure I could easily come up with hundreds or thousands of rigorously footnoted facts, all proving the "Faludi in Reverse" case.

And if someone objected, I could reply (paraphrasing what someone wrote to me in a women's issues forum), "Well, your problem is that you're deeply disturbed by an analysis that proves that women are typically violent with children." In other words, you're convicted, and any defense you make only proves just how guilty you are.

Now reverse the genders, and that's what's going on with Faludi. Open her book to almost any page, and you'll see something that's totally slanted and biased by selective reporting. Faludi's book is not valid research and is not valid journalism. It's simply a biased polemical hatchet job against men.

Marilyn French and The War Against Women

The "misogyny filter" used by Faludi is actually a technique which is pretty common to all feminist literature.

One of the clearest expositions of the feminist view of men's hatred and control of women is *The War Against Women*, by Marilyn French, Summit Books, 1992, which says, "The entire system of female oppression rests on ordinary men, who maintain it with a fervor and dedication to duty that any secret police force might envy. What other system can depend on almost half the population to enforce a policy daily, publicly and privately, and with utter reliability?" (p. 182)

The War Against Women is, in many ways, a monumental feminist work. The section titles of her book tell her point of view: "The war against women in education," "the war against women's personhood," "the war against women as mothers," "sexual war," "wars of control: legal system," "wars of control: scientific researchers," and so forth.

French has compiled women's complaints about men from every discipline and from every country around the world. There's no male action which she can't find a way to interpret as proof that men hate women.

Consider her view of historians:

Men obliterate women from history, and "close ranks to appropriate women's projects or attribute them to men. Male historians present a united front in omitting women from all kinds of history." [p. 48]

Consider her view of the Catholic Church:

The Catholic Church teaches boys that "they must renounce the mother, be reborn through men, and maintain male solidarity against women. They are taught men's secret ways of terrifying women (with the fearful sound of a swinging whip, say), taught that the essence of maleness is control of female power. The ritual teaches boys to war against women, to subjugate *them* as they are being subjugated, by male solidarity and intimidation." [p. 85]

She argues over and over that men subjugate women, not only making them sexual objects, but even forcing "women into the position of domesticated

animals." [p. 104] And yet, she later argues that men consider women so worthless that they massively eradicate them [p. 114]. Well, if women are such useful sexual playthings and workhorses, why would men even want to eradicate them? She doesn't answer that.

With regard to rape, she says "so automatic is society's acceptance of male rapists as a fact of life that journalists often conceal this form of male predation." [p. 194] She says that men who commit rape and incest are in fact "normal," and adds, "My own informal survey of adult women suggests that very few reach the age of twenty-one without suffering some form of male predation – incest, molestation, rape or attempted rape, beatings, and sometimes torture or imprisonment." [p. 195]

One issue that some feminists don't answer is the fact that many more men than women are killed, either by crime or by war, indicating by the logic of feminism that it's not women but other men that men hate. However, French has an answer to even this: "wars kill the children to whom most women devote their lives." [p. 157] So if women are killed, it's proof that men hate women; and if men are killed, they're depriving women of their sons, so once again it's proof that men hate women!!

This book is so bad that, like the worst grade B horror movies of all time, this book brings badness and dreadfulness to an art form, and is almost good for that reason.

Andrea Dworkin

I was curious to read something by Andrea Dworkin because she's so frequently referred to as almost a goddess by feminists. I suspected that she would be extremely offensive to men, and I was not disappointed.

Just the titles of her books – *Woman Hating*, *Letters from a War Zone*, *Our Blood: Prophecies and Discourses on Sexual Politics*, and *Right-wing Women* tell you what's coming in attitude and politics.

Here's a fairly typical paragraph from one of her books, *Woman Hating*:

We want to destroy sexism,[♦] that is, polar role definitions of male and female, man and woman. We want to destroy patriarchal power at its source, the family; in its more hideous form, the nation-state. We want to destroy the structure of culture as we know it, its art, its churches, its laws: all of the images, institutions, and structural mental sets which define women as hot wet fuck tubes, hot slits.

So the list of things that Andrea Dworkin wants to destroy is pretty much everything, I guess.

The last few words of the last quotation, referring to women as "hot slits," gives rise to something of a controversy: Does Andrea Dworkin (who is a self-described lesbian) believe that all heterosexual intercourse is rape? She has claimed that she has been blasphemed, misquoted by enemies, when such a claim is made.

I don't know whether Dworkin ever claimed that all sex is rape, but I do know what she says in her book *Intercourse*: "Intercourse as an act[♦] often expresses the power men have over women. Without being what the society recognizes as rape, it is what the society – when pushed to admit it – recognizes as dominance."

Having explained what she views as the politics of sex, she reaches her conclusions about sex itself:

A human being has a body that is inviolate;[♦] and when it is violated, it is abused. A woman has a body that is penetrated in intercourse: permeable, its corporeal solidness a lie. The discourse of male truth – literature, science, philosophy, pornography – calls that penetration *violation*. This it does with some consistency and some confidence. *Violation* is a synonym for intercourse. At the same time, the penetration is taken to be a use, not an abuse; a normal use; it is appropriate to enter her, to push into ("violate") the boundaries of her body. She is human, of course, but by a standard that does not include physical privacy. She is, in fact, human by a standard that precludes physical privacy, since to keep a man out altogether and for a lifetime is deviant in the extreme, a psychopathology, a repudiation of the way in which she is expected to manifest her humanity. There is deep recognition in culture and in experience that intercourse is both the normal use of a woman, her human potentiality affirmed by it, and a violative abuse, her privacy irredeemably compromised, her selfhood changed in a way that is irrevocable, unrecoverable.

So sex may not always be rape, according to Dworkin, but it is a violative use and abuse of a woman's body.

I could try to respond to all this, but I know that anyone who likes Dworkin will not be dissuaded by anything I say. At least Susan Faludi and Marilyn French did some actual research; even if they skewed the facts and reported them selectively, at least there was some scholarly effort involved. But there's no evidence of much research in Dworkin's work. Basically, in my opinion, Dworkin is a very troubled woman and her writings are bilge. If you're among those who like and respect Dworkin, then go in peace, but please just go.

Lenore Weitzman's Child Support Hoax

The most influential book on child support ever written is undoubtedly *The Divorce Revolution: The unexpected social and economic consequences for women and children in America* (Free Press, 1985) by Lenore J. Weitzman, Ph.D., an associate professor of sociology at Harvard University (now at George Mason University).

In her book, Professor Weitzman analyzed existing data to prove that, after a divorce, "on the average, divorced women and the minor children in their households experience a 73 percent decline in their standard of living in the first year after divorce. Their former husbands, in contrast, experience a 42 percent rise in their standard living."

That these figures are totally wrong is no longer disputed, even by Weitzman herself. But given the way she behaved – almost ten years of stonewalling, stalling and prevarication – we can be fairly certain that the incorrect figures were not a mistake but a hoax on Weitzman's part, and that she only admitted the errors when she was forced to by dozens of other researchers.

It may be one of the most successful hoaxes in history, because figures almost instantly became part of the common wisdom and resulted in changes of numerous laws.

It's fair to say that Weitzman's findings are the most widely known and influential social science results of the last few decades, widely publicized by feminists and credulous journalists, and cited by a number of state legislators as a reason to substantial increase child support payments to women.

Within three years of the publication of her book, her figures were characterized as "ranking among the most cited demographic statistics of the 1980s."[♦]

According to one journalist, "A search of the Nexis database found more than 175 newspaper and magazine stories[♦] citing Weitzman's numbers." Richard R. Peterson, a researcher we'll meet in a moment, found citations in 348 social science articles,[♦] 250 law review articles and 24 appeals and Supreme Court cases. Weitzman's flawed statistics even appeared in President Clinton's 1996 budget. 'This has been one of the most widely quoted statistics in recent history,' says Anne Colby, director of the Murray Center."

The Runaround

Weitzman's book was actually intended to be a study of no-fault divorce, and to show specifically that no-fault divorce was worse for women than divorce laws

which required one party or the other to show fault before a divorce was granted by the court.

For this reason, Weitzman's findings were also disputed by some feminists, most notably Susan Faludi, a proponent of no-fault divorce laws, who saw Weitzman's figures as part of the conservative backlash against feminism. (This is quite startling. In all my years of reading feminist writings and literature, there have been only two times I've seen one feminist criticize another: Faludi's criticism of Weitzman, and Naomi Wolf's criticism of "victim feminism" – see below, page 350).

Faludi tracked down the two researchers who had first disputed Weitzman's figures, and learned the following:

In the summer of 1986, soon after Lenore Weitzman had finished testifying before Congress on the failings of no-fault divorce, she received a letter from Saul Hoffman, an economist at the University of Delaware who specializes in divorce statistics. He wrote that he and his partner, University of Michigan social scientist Greg Duncan, were a little bewildered by her now famous 73 percent statistic. ... They found a much smaller 30 percent decline in women's living standards in the first year after divorce and a much smaller 10 to 15 percent improvement for men. Moreover, Hoffman observed, they found the lower living standard for many divorced women to be temporary. Five years after divorce, the average woman's living standard was actually slightly *higher* than when she was married to her ex-husband.

What baffled Hoffman and Duncan most was that Weitzman claimed in her book to have used *their* methods to arrive at her 73 percent statistic. Hoffman's letter wondered if he and Duncan might take a look at her data. No reply. Finally, Hoffman called. Weitzman told him she "didn't know how to get hold of her data," Hoffman recalls, because she was at Princeton and her data was a Harvard. The next time he called, he says, Weitzman said she couldn't give him the information because she had broken her arm on a ski vacation. "It sort of went on and on," Hoffman says of the next year and a half of letters and calls to Weitzman. "Sometimes she would have an excuse. Sometimes she just wouldn't respond at all. It was a little strange. Let's just say, it's not the way I'm used to a scholar normally behaving." Finally, after the demographers appealed to the National Science Foundation, which had helped fund her research, Weitzman relented and promised she would put her data tapes on reserve at Radcliffe's Murray Research Center. But six months later, they *still* weren't there. Again, Hoffman appealed to NSF officials. Finally, in late 1990, the library began receiving Weitzman's data. As

of early 1991, the archives' researchers were still sorting through the files and they weren't yet in shape to be reviewed.

Another researcher, Sanford L. Braver, professor of psychology at Arizona State University, had done his own analysis,[♦] similar to Hoffman's and Duncan's, and found the same errors. In addition, he believed he had discovered the precise mathematical error that Weitzman had made to reach her conclusions.

In 1989, he telephoned Weitzman, asking questions about her results, and got the usual runaround. He describes what happened next:

Then I asked her the loaded question I had prepared.[♦] "You know, Dr. Weitzman, I have an idea I want to run by you about why your results were so different from everyone else's." [He then described the mathematical error he thought she might be making.] "What do you think, Dr. Weitzman, is that possibly a mistake that you also made?"

There was silence, except for labored breathing on the other end of the phone. I determined not to say anything more. I waited a very, very long time. Finally she answered, "I'm not sure I can rule out what you said. I'll investigate it and get back to you." And she hung up.

But she never got back to me.

Weitzman's stalling continued for years. In March, 1993, the NSF threatened to withdraw Weitzman's funding,[♦] and she capitulated, and made the data available. Richard R. Peterson, a sociologist at the Social Science Research Council, re-analyzed Weitzman's data and verified that her conclusions were invalid.

It wasn't until 1996 that Weitzman finally had to admit that her figures were wrong. She denied an intentional hoax, but after 11 years of stonewalling and lying, there's really no other reasonable conclusion. Her hoax had done 11 years of damage. Indeed, just like the famous "Super Bowl Hoax" (see p. 119), credulous newspapers and television journalists still refer to her invalid results as common wisdom.

Unmasking the Errors

Those wishing a detailed analysis of the flaws in Weitzman's work should refer to Sanford L. Braver's book, with Diane O'Connell: *Divorced Dads, Shattering the Myths: The surprising truth about fathers, children and divorce* (Jeremy P. Tarcher / Putnam, a division of Penguin Putnam Inc., 1998).

The mathematical error discovered by Braver is only one of a number of flaws. Here is a summary of the other problems:

- Weitzman did not use income in making her comparison, but instead used the obsolete "standard of living" formula[♦] for the ex-spouses. The standard of living is computed by means of a "needs adjusted formula," based on Bureau of Labor figures from 1961. Under this computation, a father living alone in one-room rooming house could be considered having a higher standard of living than his ex-wife, living with her children in a large comfortable house, because her having the children is considered as economically lowering her standard of living. This type of computation was phased out in 1982, before Weitzman's book was published, but evidently she felt this obsolete computation was useful for her political purposes.
- Weitzman didn't take into account numerous tax advantages that the mother has.[♦]
- Weitzman didn't take into account the fact that many fathers make fairly substantial purchases during visitations.[♦] These include food, clothing, child care, transportation, and recreation expenses. The mother continues to receive child support even, for example, during fairly lengthy summer visitations.
- Weitzman used a "standard of living" computation which assumes that the mother needs extra bedrooms[♦] and other space for the children, and that the father doesn't need any of these things. Of course, the father needs all the same things, because he must have a home large enough to accommodate visits by his children.
- Weitzman does not account for the sometimes very substantial transportation costs the father bears[♦] when picking up and dropping off the kids.
- Weitzman does not account for fairly substantial medical and dental expenses and insurance[♦] that fathers must pay.

- Weitzman does not account for the expenses of starting over[♦] – finding a new place to live, buying new furnishings, new toys, games and computers for the kids, and so forth.

In other words, Weitzman not only made mathematical errors that favored her desired result, she purposely skewed the result by using an obsolete cost of living computation, and included in her computation those expenses which favored her result, omitting all legitimate expenses which didn't favor her desired result.

The result is a shabby, shameful piece of work that no reputable professional researcher would be willing to admit to having done.

Professor Braver himself has been studying the effects of divorce for several decades, and has found results that support many of the conclusions that I've described in this book – that women file for divorce twice as often as men do, and often for trivial reasons (chapter 4), that fathers are discriminated against by social workers (chapter 1), and that emotionally men on average fare much worse than women in divorce.

He also showed that most of the common wisdom about child support is nonsense.[♦] The widely quoted figure that only 25% of all mothers raising their child alone receive child support is based on Census Bureau statistics that include many single mothers who either don't know who their children's father is or who know but don't want him to know. Among divorced couples, Braver has shown that child support compliance is in the 70-90% range.

With regard to the computation of the "standard of living," Braver has brought the computation up to date,[♦] and showed that in 1986, when Weitzman's book was written, on the average mothers and fathers had approximately the same changes in standard of living. (And, unlike Weitzman's, Braver's figures are all publicly available.)

However, that was true as of 1986. In the years since then, many states have enacted laws substantially increasing child support payments, as a result of Weitzman's flawed figures. Braver finds that today, as a result, divorced women have a substantially higher standard of living,[♦] on the average, as divorced men. This is particularly true in Massachusetts, which has the highest child support rates in the country.

Weitzman's Other Recommendations

Weitzman's standard of living figures are the ones that have garnered the most sensational press attention, but in fact they're only one part of the recommendations in her book.

The thrust of her book is to oppose no-fault divorce, and she summarizes her position as follows: "When the legal system treats men and women 'equally' at divorce,[♦] it ignores the very real economic inequalities that marriage creates."

Weitzman makes it clear that the legal system should not treat men and women equally in any sense – it should always strongly favor the mother.

It's worth pointing out here that Weitzman is being consistent here with what we've seen before – that feminist professionals never compromise with a man under any circumstances. We saw this in chapter 1, where social workers and other feminist professionals have a policy of *always* siding with the mother against the father (pp. 1 and 9), even when a mediator is involved (p. 41), and again in chapter 5, where feminist and pro-feminist wives' lawyers never compromise (p. 223), apparently with the idea of jacking up their legal fees. All of this means that divorces are going to be a lot more bitter.

Therefore, Weitzman reasons that the divorce system should be as biased against fathers as possible, and she has a number of very punitive recommendations in the policy area:

There should be explicit recognition of the child's entitlement to share the standard of living[♦] of higher-earning parent. ... In addition, all support awards should include automatic adjustment for cost-of-living increases. Children would also benefit from the use of more effective techniques to enforce these awards, including wage assignments from the inception of the award, income tax intercepts, national location services, property liens and bonds, and, where necessary, the threat and use of jail.

Weitzman's punitive recommendations have been adopted by many state legislatures, and as discussed in chapter 4, these punitive measures are used particularly harshly against blacks (pp. 196 and 202).

However, Weitzman provides not a word advocating punishment for mothers who spend child support on her own clothing, parties, dates, drugs, cars or a new boyfriend.

In my own survey of hundreds of divorced fathers, not a single one said anything to express unwillingness to support their children. Their hatred and contempt was always for the mother who was depriving them of involvement in their children lives, and often spending child support money on other things:

"My ex-wife has cut off my kids from me, and I still have to pay child support to strangers who have no part in my life."

"My ex-wife gets a big child support check, but she spends it on herself and sends the kids over to me to buy them clothes. Why should I have to pay child support twice?"

"It's nice to be able to buy things for your kids, but when you're paying all your money in child support you can't afford to buy them anything."

"Why should I have to pay child support for her boyfriend? ... I can understand why men kill their ex-wives. These women can work themselves, but the man has to keep paying more and more to these women, not to the kids. It's the system that makes these men turn to killers. If a man has to pay all this child support, what's the guy supposed to do to live? If she has little kids, I can understand that. But if the bimbo can work, and has a boyfriend living off her, that's not right." (*This quote is repeated from chapter 1*).

"They [the divorce bureaucrats] don't understand fathers or the link between payments and desire for the children. I don't like the idea of just handing my wife a check, and that's it. I never go to the store with my kids to buy clothes for them. For me it's not only wrong and unjust, and wrong for the children, but it's heartbreaking. Some fathers, who have the money, do it anyway, but they're spending way over what they'd spend if they were married."

These men believe that if they can't pay child support money directly on the child, then at least the mother should be forced to spend child support money on the child. The phrase "child support" should mean exactly what it says – support for the child – and a woman who spends child support money on his own clothing or dates or another boyfriend should be considered a "deadbeat mother," just as a father who spends child support money on the same kinds of things is considered a "deadbeat dad."

But Weitzman doesn't even mention punishment for such a mother, no matter how abusive she is.

In addition, she makes a number of additional support recommendations:

[Women] should be awarded full support in the early years after divorce[♦] to enable them to maximize their long-range employment prospects. This means generous support awards and balloon payments immediately after divorce to finance their education, training, and career counseling. Insofar as possible, every effort should be made to provide them and their children with full support in the transitional years so that forced employment does not interfere with their training and child care.

Weitzman proposes that the balloon payments should continue for several years,♦ and that all support awards "should provide for cost-of-living increases.... In addition, penalties and interest should be assessed on late payments."

Her proposed solution for division of the family home is more complicated.♦ The mother and the children should be allowed to stay in the family home, so "a legislative directive is needed to require judges to delay the sale of the family home." One way is "to require judges to postpone the sale and division of the family home until the youngest child reaches eighteen," and the other way is "to require a postponement for an initial period [such as five years], and to allow the court to extend the period after reviewing the family circumstances after that period of time."

And "How should the equity in the home be apportioned?♦ There are two solutions with considerable appeal," according to Weitzman. One method is for the mother to give the father an interest free promissory note for his share of the equity at the time of divorce, but not pay it until the home is sold after the children leave home.. The other method is simply have the mother live rent and interest free until the children leave home - requiring the father to pay all rental and mortgage payments, as well as any nonroutine home repairs.

Presumably Weitzman thinks that it's only fair that the mother be able to provide as expensive a home as possible to her new boyfriends, but let's do a little math here: Assuming that it's 18 years before the children leave home, the Net Present Value (NPV) of what the father would get from the house under this proposal would be less than 5%. In other words, Weitzman essentially gives over 95% of the family home entirely to the mother. For an older divorced woman, Weitzman prefers a rule simply giving the family home to the mother, and gives the mother a share of the husband's income for the rest of their lives.

If the father owns a business, Weitzman recommends♦ giving half the value of the business to the mother, in addition to all of the above.

With all the balloon payments and support payments, giving up home and business, meeting Weitzman's requirements would require several times as much money as any man actually has or makes.

Weitzman epitomizes the hate-filled attitude of many feminists that fathers have no purpose in life except to supply sperm and financial support to women. Furthermore, Weitzman may be a college professor, but like many women, she has no concept of money, except for its use for revenge against and manipulation of a man. You'd think a Harvard professor would actually exhibit some intelligence about money, but she shows nothing but lack of intelligence.

If Weitzman's proposals were adopted literally, then it would be mathematically impossible for most men to meet the requirements.

However, Weitzman's recommendations have been enacted into law to the greatest extent possible in most states. As Dr. Braver's research has shown, since the publication of Weitzman's book, getting pregnant and becoming a single mother is very lucrative.

This is the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle which explains why so many women file for divorce, as explained in chapter 4, and also why so many young women "go hunting" for men with money to pay them weekly checks as non-custodial fathers. Thanks to new laws enacted as a result of Weitzman's flawed study and eleven years of stonewalling and prevarication

It's worthwhile repeating what one young woman said to explain why she and her friends "go hunting" for men with money to get them pregnant and pay child support:

"We own you. You're a slave. You're going to pay us every single week for the next 20 years. We can have an outside agency [the Massachusetts Department of Revenue] collect the money for us and send it to us, and if you don't pay us, we can have you put into jail. And you'll do anything we say, because otherwise we won't let you see your child."

This is the legacy of Lenore Weitzman's hoax. She should be ashamed of herself, but I suspect that, wherever she is, she's probably gloating.

The Sexual Politics of Meat

A satire on feminism? I'd never seen anyone dare to actually make fun of feminism before, and that's why my eyes were drawn to this book on a dollar-a-book remainder table. I noticed that it had on its cover a rear-view picture of a nude woman with various parts of her body labeled "chuck," "rib," "loin," "round," and so forth. I looked like it might be some sort of books of cartoons.

It's only when I started reading Carol J. Adams' book, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, Continuum, 1993, that I realized that this woman was dead serious. She's a vegetarian who wrote a 260 page book showing that the only reason our society eats meat is because of the repressive male patriarchy that harasses and abuses all women.

Look at some of the chapter titles:

The Sexual Politics of Meat

The Rape of Animals, the Butchering of Women

Frankenstein's Vegetarian Monster

For a Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory

Destabilizing Patriarchal Consumption

And here's a sample paragraph:

Eating animals acts as mirror and representation of patriarchal values. Meat eating is the re-inscription of male power at every meal. The patriarchal gaze sees not the fragmented flesh of dead animals but appetizing food. If our appetites re-inscribe patriarchy, our actions regarding eating animals will either reify or challenge this received culture. If meat is a symbol of male dominance then the presence of meat proclaims the disempowering of women. [p. 187]

I finally decided to buy *The Sexual Politics of Meat* anyway, because of all the nonsense from feminists that I've read over the years, this book sets a new record. Like *The War Against Women*, this book is so dreadfully awful, it's almost good.

Naomi Wolf's Fire with Fire

Naomi Wolf's *Fire with Fire, The New Female Power and How It Will Change the 21st Century* (Random House, 1993) is, in my opinion, the most important book by a feminist on feminism for the decade – though I doubt that many feminists will agree with me. This book had an enormous influence on me personally, when I first read it late in 1993.

The reason that I consider this book so powerful is that it made me see the positive, powerful side of feminism.

Before reading this book, feminism was nothing more than a complete negative to me. Feminists at the local level were social workers who treat men contemptuously as a matter of policy, and feminists at the national level were women talking heads who see men as having no function except to abuse, batter and harass women, and no function in life except to pay money to women.

Naomi Wolf's book changed that for me because I began to see the parts of feminism that made it so important and valuable to women – and to men. It's ability to supply a framework so that women can be helped when help is needed and to provide role models for self-esteem and growth.

How did she do this? She did it by bifurcating feminism into "victim feminism" and "power feminism." Up till that point, I was only aware of the victim feminism side; this book opened up my eyes to power feminism.

By the way, the fact that Naomi Wolf wrote this book was not exactly popular with some other feminists. For example, Phyllis Chesler, in an article called "A Wolf in Feminist Clothing," critically dissected Wolf's book and summarized her

conclusions with, "Wolf takes a cheap shot when she opposes 'victim' to 'power' feminism.♦ By all means, let's not be victims, let's have power feminism. But Wolf fakes power like some women fake orgasm."

Still, Wolf more than survived such attacks. Previously, she had firmly established her feminist credentials with her first book, the best seller *The Beauty Myth*, in which criticized the repressive male patriarchy for putting such a premium on female beauty – an especially ironic thesis given that Wolf herself was incredibly beautiful, of almost supermodel status.

She went on to write other books, including her 1997 best seller, *Promiscuities*, which criticized the repressive male patriarchy for muffling female sexuality.

And in 2000, Wolf was appointed as an advisor to Al Gore. You may recall that it was Naomi Wolf who helped Gore learn to act and dress as more of an "alpha male."♦

So Wolf is definitely a feminist. As you know from this book, one of my own criticisms of feminism is that it seems to say that all women's problems are the fault of men, blamed on men's discrimination, men's aggressiveness, men's violence, men's promiscuity, men's unwillingness to put the toilet seat down. Wolf has plenty of that in her book, and indeed sometimes seems to go overboard with it, evidently for fear of losing her feminist credentials.

However, as we'll see, what makes this book quite different from other feminist writings is that Wolf does not succumb to the second of my criticisms, namely that feminists refuse to take responsibility for anything.

History of Feminism

Wolf's terminology distinguishes between "power feminists" and "victim feminists." She traces these two strains historically by saying, "two distinct traditions have always coexisted tensely in feminism. One tradition is severe, morally superior, and self-denying; the other is free thinking, pleasure loving, and self-assertive. [p. 166]"

She traces both strains back to the nineteenth century, when industrialization moved men into offices and factories, and forced women "into lives of enforced domesticity, sexual repression, economic dependency, and unpaid 'good works.' ... An elaborate propaganda of flattery gave these women a sense of pride in their imprisonment. [p. 167] ... The basic tenets of [this] ideal include self-effacement martyrdom; an obsession with rigid norms of 'respectability,' which include the task of policing other women's behavior; the belief that women are sexless, and men sexually bestial; ... and the belief that women's 'maternal nature' makes them

fundamentally different from and better than men." These are the roots of victim feminism which is hostile to men.

The second strand rejected the view of enforced domesticity, believed that "sexual self-determination for women was an 'inalienable right,'" and valued reason, "seeing it not as the enemy, but as the counterpart of emotion; clear thinking and the public voice are not 'masculine.'" [pp. 170-71]"

She traces both strands down to the current day, and argues "that the current split, fashionable in parts of the progressive community, into male - evil - sexually-exploitive - rational - linear - dominating - combative - tyrannical on the one hand, and female - natural - nurturing - consensus-building - healing - intuitive - aggressionless - egoless - spirit-of-the-glades on the other hand, belies the evidence of history and contemporary statistical reality. It denies the full humanity of women and men. And it re-creates a new version of the old female stereotype that discourages women from appropriating the power of the political and financial world to make power at last on their own. [pp. 148-49]"

Victim Feminism

Here are some of the ways that Wolf describes victim feminism [p. 136]:

- Charges women to identify with powerlessness even at the expense of taking responsibility for the power they do possess.
- Is sexually judgmental, even antisexual.
- Idealizes women's childrearing capacity as proof that women are better than men. [*This is especially relevant to the issues of divorce and custody.* - JX]
- Denigrates leadership and values anonymity.
- Sees money as contaminating.
- Puts community first and self later, hence tends toward groupthink, as well as hostility toward individual achievement.
- Believes it is possessed of "the truth," which must be spread with missionary zeal.
- Projects aggression, competitiveness, and violence onto "men" or "patriarchy," while its devotees are blind to those qualities in themselves.
- Casts women *themselves* as good and attacks men *themselves* as wrong.
- Wants all other women to share its opinions.

She says that these attitudes have to change:

We must do a better job of separating hating male violence and sexism from hating men. Editors at *Ms.* once titled an essay of mine on how men are not the enemy, "Sleeping with the Enemy." When I went with a pro-feminist boyfriend to hear Andrea Dworkin speak, he was almost dismembered by a mob that began to mutter, "We don't want men here." Men who take women's-studies classes are sometimes told, "You'll never understand – you are the oppressor." When theologian Mary Daly lectures, she refuses to take questions from men.

The Fund for the Feminist Majority sells buttons that read, "Adam was a Rough Draft" and "A Woman Must be Twice as Good as a Man to be Considered Half as Competent. Fortunately, This Is Not Too Difficult." In *Ms.* magazine, Kay Leigh Hagen compares loving men to "raising orchids in the Arctic." "Under male supremacy," she writes, "heterosexuality insures that each woman is intimately colonized by the dominant class ... individual men are microcosms of the larger misogynist climate ... it's the nice men who allows us to slip into denial ... a chilling rule coined in my early forays into the Arctic is 'if he can hurt you, he will' – meaning, that's what he is trained and directed in the culture to do." Leigh Hagen's indictment of the conditions surrounding heterosexual love is not that outré in some feminist circles. Even responsible feminist media slip into this mode on occasion. [pp. 188-89]

Wolf argues that this attitude is harmful to women, in the following ways:

- It trivializes rape and violence against women by equivalencing them with such things as sexual jokes and innuendo and sexist attitudes. [pp. 191-197]
- "The 'feminist' reluctance to assign women responsibility for their actions, evil as well as good, mirrors the opposition's traditional claim that women are children, incapable of signing a contract, managing their own affairs, bearing witness in court, or voting. [p. 201]"
- She makes the following comments about women who kill their husbands:

Elizabeth Schneider, the Brooklyn College Law School professor who helped promote the argument that abused women who killed their husbands were not aggressors but victims, has had a change of heart. "Courts and society have glommed on to the victim image," she told *The New York Times*. "But it's a two-edged sword. Many battered women lose custody of their children because judges see them as helpless, paralyzed victims who can't manage daily life." ... Nan

Hunter, another professor at the college, agrees: "Woman-as-victim is a cultural script that evokes sympathy without changing the hierarchical structure. It's a kind of melodrama that doesn't lead to any change in the conditions that cause the victimization." Charlotte Taft, founder of a Dallas abortion clinic, says that feminism "has been afflicted with the hallmarks of victim status: whiny denials of responsibility, and attempts to blame someone else. We've been whining for some white-guy legislators to pass laws taking care of us.... Instead of trying to change people who don't want to change, we need to be changing ourselves."

Power Feminism

By contrast, here are some of the ways that Wolf describes power feminism [pp. 137-38]:

- Examines closely the forces arrayed against a woman so she can exert her power more effectively.
- Knows that a woman's choices affect many people around her and can change the world.
- Encourages a woman to claim her individual voice rather than merging her voice in a collective identity, for only strong individuals can create a just community.
- Seeks power and uses it responsibly, both for women as individuals and to make the world more fair to others.
- Acknowledges that aggression, competitiveness, the wish for autonomy and separation, even the danger of selfish and violent behavior, are as much a part of female identity as are nurturing behaviors; understands that women, like men, must learn to harness these impulses; sees women as moral adults.
- Hates sexism without hating men.
- Sees that neither women nor men have a monopoly on character flaws; does not attach men as a gender, but sees disproportionate male power, and the social valuation of maleness over femaleness, as being wrong.
- Wants all women to express their own opinions.

By adopting this attitude, women can change things with the resources they already have:

- Women have the power of electing legislators, since the ratio of women to men voters is increasing. [p.307]
- Women can "cross-target."
Women or groups of women make deals to do for each other whatever it is that would get them fired – or terrify them – if they had to do it for themselves. Are women political aides on Capitol Hill unable to make noise about the lack of protection against sexual harassment? Their power group can tip off a power group of clerical workers in Baltimore who can come down to yell and scream about it. Then the Washington women owe the Baltimore women some use of their own access or courage. [p. 308]
- Women have power as consumers of products. [p. 309]
- Women have power as consumers of media. [p. 311]
- Women have the power of their charity dollar. [p. 313]
- Women have the power to make scenes. [p. 314]
- Women can publicize their self-defense skills. "Why not publicize the fact that one woman out of nine carries a gun?" [p. 315]

Wolf's book actually has two major themes. One is victim feminism versus power feminism.

The second theme is an explanation of why so many women reject the label "feminist," while still embracing its principles, or at least some of them.

In her interviews with women, she found that women reject many of the attitudes associated with feminism.

In this year of opportunity, many women identify feminism with specific issues that may or may not include them, rather than with a theory of self-worth that applies to every woman's life without exception. Is it about abortion? "Well, I am not certain I know when life begins," a woman might say. Is it about lesbianism? "Well, I am a married woman." It's for middle-class white women, isn't it? "I am working class." Is it about fighting against men? "I am an African-American woman, and there is no way I'm going to put down an African-American man." It's antipornography, right? "I don't believe in censorship, and I don't want anyone telling me what to do in my bedroom." Is it about not wearing makeup? "I like to look good." Is it restricted to women? "Well, I am a parent, and I care about my

daughter, but I am a man." Is it about sexual abuse or rape? "That may have happened to me, but I am interested in putting it behind me, and I don't want to define myself as a victim." [p. 61]

Homophobia also widened the gap. One of the most common reasons women give for avoiding the feminist label is that "feminist" has become synonymous with "lesbian." Insider culture tends to dismiss such women as homophobic and, therefore, to count their alienation as no loss to the movement. [p. 68]

She gives numerous examples of "dyke-baiting," such as a quote from right-winger Beverly LaHaye: "NOW is a militant fringe whose priorities, such as lesbian rights, are alien to most women. [p. 70]" She claims that the press has mercilessly and unreasonably played such comments up, giving feminism an unfairly bad name. She even claims that women are afraid of calling themselves feminists for fear of losing their jobs, saying that "corporate America discovered that the best way to stop the women's revolution was to give them something to lose," — their livelihood [p. 73], a really bizarre form not only of paranoia but of victim feminism.

This business of blaming the press for the downfall of feminism is a Faludi-like copout and is contradicted elsewhere in the book, where Wolf claims a string of victories by women practicing power feminism, even extending to electing Bill Clinton. Apparently she doesn't believe that dyke-baiting did anything to hinder those victories, and indeed it didn't.

Naomi Wolf's *Fire with Fire* is an important and valuable book, and it deserves more attention than it's gotten.

End Notes

Note: In some cases, a page reference actually refers to the last paragraph on the preceding page.

Page	Reference
v	"Fraternizing with the enemy": Dr. Henry Kissinger
xvii	"there's not much difference between Gore and Bush": Just as I'm about to send this book to the publisher, the terrible terrorist attack of 9/11/01 occurred, and George W. Bush has just announced that we're a nation at war. Anyone reading this book will quickly see that politicians of any party are not my favorite people, but I'm sure everyone is as pleasantly surprised as I am about how well George W. Bush has risen to the occasion and performed brilliantly, and how people in the Congress of both parties have joined together to fight this attack as a common front. These people are acting like statesmen, rather than just as politicians, and this is very reassuring, and has brought the country together in a way that hasn't happened for decades. Would Gore also have risen to the occasion and performed brilliantly? We'll never know, but there's no reason to believe that he wouldn't have.
xxi	"bottle-feeders express disapproval of women who breast-feed in public": "Breastfeeding vs. Bottle Debate Gets Ugly," ABCnews.com, 8/22/01
xxii	"And then there are the words of Doris Lessing": Fiachra Gibbons, "Lay off men, Lessing tells feminists; Novelist condemns female culture that revels in humiliating other sex," from the <i>Special report: Edinburgh books festival 2001</i> , in <i>The Guardian</i> , August 14, 2001. http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,3604,536565,00.html
1	"Dr. Scott obliged by writing a letter": The full text of the letter is as follows: "May 30, 1986 / Dear Mrs. Xenakis, / My professional opinion regarding visitation rights is that a child less than 2 years of age needs frequent short exposures to the non-custodial parent. Four or five times weekly for 2 hours a session would be ideal. Two times weekly would be acceptable. / No prolonged visits (more than 3 hours) are necessary or desirable for children in this age group. / As children grow, these needs change. / It is important that both parents work together for what is best for the child. / Sincerely yours, (signed) Mary D. Scott, M.D. / Longwood Pediatrics, 319 Longwood Ave, Boston, Mass. 02115. "
5	"Society is based on a 'bedrock of misogyny'": Susan Faludi, <i>Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women</i> , Doubleday, 1991, p. xix.
6	"Ruth Sidel finds it even in popular movies": Ruth Sidel, <i>On Her Own, Growing up in the shadow of the American Dream</i> (Penguin, 1990), p. 108-09
6	"And Catharine MacKinnon, a feminist legal scholar": Catharine A. MacKinnon, <i>Feminism Unmodified, Discourses on Life and Law</i> (Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 5, 113.
6	"Catharine MacKinnon claims that over 90 percent of American women":

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Page	Reference
	MacKinnon, C. "Sexuality, Pornography and Method: Pleasure under Patriarchy", <i>Ethics</i> , vol. 99, no. 2. Quoted in Valerie Bryson, <i>Feminist Political Theory, An Introduction</i> , Paragon House, 1992, p. 217.
6	"According to Susan Brownmiller": Brownmiller, S. 1977) <i>Against Our Will</i> , Harmondsworth: Penguin, quoted in Bryson, op. cit., p. 218.
6	"According to Jalna Hanmer": Hanmer, J. (1978) "Violence and the Social Control of Women," in G. Littlejohn et al., <i>Power and the State</i> (London: Croom Helm), quoted in Bryson, op. cit., p. 218.
6	"Marilyn French, in <i>The War Against Women</i> ": Marilyn French, <i>The War Against Women</i> , New York:Summit Books, 1992, pp 182, 195
7	"We live in a culture that condones and celebrates rape": bell hooks, "Seduced by Violence No More," 1993, appearing in: Adele M. Stan (editor), <i>Debating Sexual Correctness: Pornography, sexual harassment, Date rape, and the politics of sexual equality</i> , Delta Trade Paperbacks, 1995, p 231
8	"The male legal ownership of children": Phyllis Chesler, <i>Patriarchy, Notes of an Expert Witness</i> , Common Courage Press, 1994, p. 47
9	"In many colleges, expressing a non-feminist political point of view is considered per se sexual harassment": Paul Trout, professor of English, Montana State University, "Second Thoughts on Sexual Harassment," appearing in <i>The Montana Professor</i> , Ed 113, Eastern Montana College, Billings, Montana 59101, pages 5-18.
12	"Two Full-Time Parents": Michael Samuels is a lawyer in San Rafael, California. This article appeared in the Winter 1993 edition of <i>Family Advocate</i> magazine, published by the Family Law Section of the American Bar Association (volume 15, number 3)
18	"A mother who whips her child is not beating the child alone", Simone de Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> , translated and edited by H. M. Parshley, New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, Inc., 1952, p. 513.
18	"The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) and its head": Richard J. Gelles, <i>The Book of David: How Preserving Families can Cost Children's Lives</i> , New York: Basic Books, 1996, p. 135
19	"Bruises indicate that four of Andrea Yates' five children struggled as they were drowned": Pam Easton, "Autopsy Shows Yates' Kids Struggled", Associated Press wire story, 7/13/2001
19	"Most mass killers are sociopaths": Evan Thomas, "Motherhood and Murder," <i>Newsweek Magazine</i> , July 2, 2001
20	"Katie Couric, the feminist advocate on NBC's <i>Today Show</i> ,": <i>Today Show</i> , NBC, 8/13/2001
20	"The Houston chapter of NOW created the 'Andrea Pia Yates Support Coalition'": Lisa Teachey, "NOW creates coalition to raise funds for Yates: Spotlight placed on depression issue," <i>Houston Chronicle</i> , 8/23/01
20	"But there's another part of my mind": Anna Quindlen, "Playing God On No Sleep: Isn't motherhood grand? Do you want the real answer or the official Hallmark-card version?," <i>Newsweek Magazine</i> , July 2, 2001
20	"It appears Andrea believed murdering her children was the solution to a problem": Susan Howard, "Yates family needed more of the 'outside world'," <i>Houston Chronicle</i> , 7/11/01
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39	"while divorced mothers experience a fourfold increase in such symptoms": B.L. Bloom, S.J. Asher, and S.W. White, "Marital disruption as a stressor: A review and analysis," <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> , 1978, 85:867-93 quoted in Sanford L. Braver Ph.D., with Diane O'Connell, <i>Divorced Dads, Shattering the Myths: The surprising truth about fathers, children and divorce</i> , Jeremy P. Tarcher / Putnam, a division of Penguin Putnam Inc., 1998, p. 262
39	"these gender imbalances last as long as ten years": P.M. Keith, "Financial well-being of older divorced/separated men and women: Findings from a panel study," <i>Journal of Divorce</i> , 1985, and J.S. Wallerstein, "Women after divorce: Preliminary report from a ten-year follow-up," <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</i> , 1986, 56:65-77, quoted in Sanford L. Braver, op. cit., p. 262
39	"Suicide rates for divorced were found to be five times higher than for married men": S.J. Price and P.C. McKenry, <i>Divorce</i> , Newbury Park, CA:Safe, 1988, quoted in Sanford L. Braver, op. cit., p. 262
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51	"Perhaps the role that loneliness plays for men, but not for women": John Mordechai Gottman (University of Washington), <i>What Predicts Divorce? The Relationships Between Marital Processes and Marital Outcomes</i> , by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers (Hillsdale, N.J.), 1994, p. 257
54	"visiting' their children tended to engender persistent feelings of loss and depression": Edward Kruk, Ph.D, "Discontinuity Between Pre- and Post-divorce Father-Child Relationships: New Evidence Regarding Paternal Disengagement," appearing in a journal published in 1991 by Haworth Press Inc., Binghamton, NY, pages 195-227. Edward Kruk is assistant professor at the University of British Columbia, School of Social Work, in Vancouver, B.C.
54	"I have been a very attentive father" – James R. Dudley, "Increasing our Understanding of Divorced Fathers Who Have Infrequent Contact With Their Children," <i>Family Relations</i> , 1991, 40, 279-285. Professor James R. Dudley is in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, N.C. Quotes from Professor Dudley appearing in this chapter come from both this article and a telephone interview.
54	"I feel very bad – I feel I am lost with nowhere to go" and "I feel numb – I don't feel anything anymore" – Kruk, op. cit
54	"Divorced fathers that lose contact with their children suffer more severe health problems" – Edward Kruk, op. cit.
56	"out of four pregnant women is battered" – The women were referring to

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	<i>"I paid for you to practice, so you're going to stay on the ice and practice," Spethmann said Golden would scream at the shivering child in the homemade chiffon skating outfit.</i>
	<i>Another woman said once when Harding protested, Golden slapped her so hard she fell off a stool.</i>
	<i>But Golden defended her treatment of her daughter, saying she saw skating as Harding's ticket out of trailer park poverty.</i>
	<i>"I just wanted her not to have a life like I had," said Golden, who worked as a waitress to pay for skating lessons and sewed her costume.</i>
	<i>As a teen, Harding finally rebelled and the two became estranged, but Golden showed up last week to watch Harding, now 23 and the U.S. Figure Skating Association National Champion, practice.</i>
	<i>The two hugged and talked briefly.</i>
	<i>The discipline has perhaps helped Harding withstand the publicity and suspicion surrounding the Jan. 6 beating of Nancy Kerrigan, her main U. S. skating rival.</i>
	<i>Four people have been arrested, including her former husband, and there have been press reports that the grand jury will indict her for complicity in the attack.</i>
	<i>On Tuesday an Oregon judge, citing new information, extended the time limit on the grand jury until Feb. 18, just 72 hours before the skating draw at the Olympics in Norway.</i>
	<i>Harding has denied involvement and the lawyer for ex-husband Jeff Gillooly denied a story published in the Detroit Free Press that he would incriminate her.</i>
	<i>"She was raised to be competitive with no set of values," said Pat Hamil, whose daughter skated with Harding as a child. "If someone was a competitor or looked promising, that girl was the enemy."</i>
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Concept Index

The following pages contain a *Concept Index*. For example, in a discussion of child abuse, chapter 1 contains a reference to Simone de Beauvoir's classic book, *The Second Sex*. Suppose you're looking for that entry. Since the entire concept is indexed, you can find this quotation by looking up any of the words in the concept – including Simone, Beauvoir, second, sex, child and abuse – in the Concept Index. So if you're looking for information about some concept, you can find that information if you can think of just one word in the concept.

Please note the following notes about page number references:

- Page numbers in lower case roman numerals (i - xxv) are in the front of the book, such as the Preface; Arabic numerals refer to pages in the main text (1 - 356); and page numbers in upper case Roman numerals (I - LV) are at the back of the book, such as in the End Note.
- A double page reference in the form "XVII (243)" refers to an End Notes entry on page XVII, and the End Notes entry refers to text on page 243.
- If you don't find what you're looking for on the referenced page, then look at the bottom of the preceding page, or the top of the following page.

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Colophon

This book was created from standard ascii text files, and formatted by means of a series of Microsoft Word 2000 macros. (The Concept Index required an additional tool, written in Java.)

Microsoft Word's macro language is incredibly powerful, and permits you to automate a great deal of work. The drawback is that Word's macro processing has many bugs, including a number that hang the system and force a reboot. The worst bugs are in header/footer handling, which has a buggy, clunky implementation.

Nonetheless, the power of the capability saved me an enormous amount of time, even including the time rebooting and recovering from bugs. In fact, there's a lot I could not have done without Microsoft Word's wonderful macro processing.

The fact is, outside of writing the macros, adding all the special features to this book — cross-references, end notes, concept index — was neither hard nor time consuming.

The reason I make this point is that any publisher could make a one-time investment in the proper tools, and use them to add a great deal of richness to many types of books. I can imagine such things as tiny asterisks signaling additional information elsewhere, or page numbers in the margins or at the foot of the page for related material.

These enhancements could be used densely in complex technical books or textbooks, or sparingly in such books as novels, to remind a reader the page number where a certain character was first introduced.

In fact, I recently read a technical book which used the cross-referencing feature ("see page xxx") heavily, and it's hard to exaggerate how much of a *pleasure* it was. Whenever the author referenced an earlier discussion, she always had an adjacent page number reference that made the book much easier, faster and more fun to read.

The ironic thing, of course, is that these are the paper book analog of "hyperlinks" on the internet, or in electronic books. The fact is with very little trouble, we can get many of the advantages of high-tech electronic books within our old low-tech printed books, and publishers should look at ways to do that.

John J. Xenakis

FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY

About The Author

John J. Xenakis has been a computer industry consultant for over 30 years, and a technology journalist and columnist for over 20 years, having written on technology for the *Boston Globe* and other publications. For ten years, he was Software Editor for the Boston Computer Society magazine, for two years he was Boston Bureau Chief for *InformationWeek Magazine*, and for nine years he was Technology Editor for *CFO Magazine*.

Starting in the early 1990s, he began writing a bi-weekly column called "Fraternizing With The Enemy," which he published on CompuServe. Some of the material in this book was adapted from those columns.

Mr. Xenakis is divorced, living in Framingham, Mass.

