



Photo of Boudica taken in London England by Joseph Earnest

by Joseph Earnest

Newscast Media HOUSTON—As the media flashes images and plays tapes of Mel Gibson screaming at his former lover, one has to wonder what the other side of the story is. It is obvious that Mel Gibson was set up by his girlfriend, whom he claims tried to extort him.

While I don't condone any kind of violence, I have to present to my reading audience some cold hard facts that the 'mainstream media' has chosen to ignore in relation to domestic violence.

Forensic expert Arlo West said on Good Morning America, in regard to the tapes, "I believe these are professionally done. I think she had help. She clearly was speaking into what we call a large diaphragm microphone. To authenticate a recording it must be an original."



At the Fountain of Four Rivers Piazza Navonna Rome, Italy –Photo by Joseph Earnest

The information you are presented with comes from investigative research of data produced by reputable organizations like Harvard Medical School, The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Psychiatric Association, just to mention a few.

The mainstream media seems to imply that men are the sole perpetrators of violence against women, but research proves otherwise. A recent study by Harvard Medical School conducted a survey of 11,000 men and women and found that 50% of the violence was reciprocal. Both men and women also took responsibility for being equally violent in the heat of passion.

The Harvard study found that when violence was one-sided, meaning unprovoked, both men and the women themselves who took the study said 70% of the time it was the women who committed violence against the men. Another study by the American Psychiatric Association that backs the Harvard Medical School study was published by Joan Arehart-Treichel who says, "When it comes to non-reciprocal violence between intimate partners, women are more often the perpetrators." (The entire Harvard study can be found May 2007 edition of the *American Journal of Public Health*. Volume 9, 5th Edition, pages 941-947.)



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Health Watch

In Brief

Domestic violence: Not Always One Sided

Mention of domestic violence immediately brings to mind an intimidating male batterer. But a 2007 article shows that the problem — also called intimate partner violence — is often more complicated and may involve both women and men as perpetrators.

Nearly 11,000 men and women, a representative sample of the American population ages 18 to 28, participated in a national survey. They were asked the following questions about their most important recent sexual or romantic relationship:

1. How often in the past year have you threatened your partner with violence, pushed him or her, or thrown something at him or her that could hurt, and how often has your partner done that to you?
2. How often in the past year have you hit, slapped, or kicked your partner, and how often has your partner done that to you?
3. If there has been any violence in your relationship, how often has either partner suffered an injury, such as a sprain, bruise, or cut?

Almost 25% of the people surveyed — 28% of women and 19% of men — said there was some violence in their relationship. **Women admitted perpetrating more violence** (25% versus 11%) as well as being victimized more by violence (19% versus 16%) than men did. According to both men and women, 50% of this violence was reciprocal, that is, involved both parties, and in those cases the woman was more likely to have been the first to strike.

Violence was more frequent when both partners were involved, and so was injury — to either partner. In these relationships, men were more likely than women to inflict injury (29% versus 19%).

When the violence was one-sided, both women and men said that women were the perpetrators about 70% of the time. Men were more likely to be injured in reciprocally violent relationships (25%) than were women when the violence was one-sided (20%).

That means both men and women agreed that men were not more responsible than women for intimate partner violence. The findings cannot be explained by men's being ashamed to admit hitting women, because women agreed with men on this point.

Whitaker DJ, et al. "Differences in Frequency of Violence and Reported Injury between Relationships with Reciprocal and Nonreciprocal Intimate Partner Violence," *American Journal of Public Health* (May 2007): Vol. 97, No. 5, pp. 941-47.