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## Men Are More Likely Than Women To Be Victims In Dating Violence, UNH Expert Says

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DURHAM, N.H. -- A 32-nation study of violence against dating partners by university partners found that about a third had been violent, and most incidents of partner violence involve violence by both the man and woman, according to Murray Straus, founder and co-director of the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire. The second largest category was couples where the female partner was the only one to carry about physical attacks, not the male partner.

Straus' new research also found that dominance by the female partner is even more closely related to violence by women than is male dominance. These results call into question the widely held belief that partner violence is primarily a male crime and that when women are violent it is self defense.

"In the 35 years since I began research on partner violence, I have seen my assumptions about prevalence and etiology contradicted by a mass of empirical evidence from my own research and from research by many others," Straus said. "My view on partner violence now recognizes the overwhelming evidence that women assault their partners at about the same rate as men. However, when women are violent, the injury rate is lower."

Straus will present his controversial research at the Trends in Intimate Violence Intervention conference in New York City May 22-25, 2006. This research is part of the International Dating Violence Study, a multinational study of violence against dating partners by university students. A consortium of researchers around the world collected data from 13,601 students at 68 universities in 32 nations.

In the paper, Straus calls for an end to the focus on men as the only perpetrators of dating violence, saying the refusal to recognize the multi-causal nature of the problem is hampering the effort to end domestic violence and ignoring half the perpetrators. As recently as December 2005, the National Institute of Justice refused to consider applications for funding that dealt with male victims.

"Changes in policy that acknowledge men are not the only perpetrators of partner violence are needed immediately," Straus said. "It is time to make the prevention and treatment effort one that is aimed at ending all family violence, including spanking children, not just violence against women."

Straus is the author or co-author of more than 200 publications, including "Beating the Devil Out Of Them: Corporal Punishment By American Parents and Its Effects on Children." More

information on the International Dating Violence Study and papers reporting results are available at <http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2/>.

**Editors: Murray Straus can be reached at 603-862-2594 or [murray.straus@unh.edu](mailto:murray.straus@unh.edu) until 10:30 a.m. Monday, May 22. Beginning the evening of May 22 he will be in New York. Interview requests can be faxed: May 22-24: Washington Square Hotel, fax: (212) 979-8373. May 25-27: Garden Inn, fax: 212-974-0291. He will also be on e-mail: [murray.straus@unh.edu](mailto:murray.straus@unh.edu).**