

## REPLY TO PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Cathy Young's opinion piece about women's violence (July 26, 2009) leaves out a lot in overstating her case and maligning thirty years of progress against domestic violence. In numerous academic articles over the years, established researchers have countered on methodological grounds the studies claiming women are as violent men. A highly touted analysis of domestic violence surveys, along with studies from courts and social services, shows that the domestic violence cases appearing in the courts and social services are dominated by men's violence against women. A recent academic book by a long-time court consultant and a study funded by the US Department of Justice confirm the pervasiveness and impact of coercion and control of men over women in these cases.

The "scathing analysis" attacking the Duluth model of batterer intervention, mentioned by Young, has been rebutted in published academic articles by me and other researchers. It also avoids the broader criminal justice research that supports this sort of approach with violence offenders in general. Our multi-site evaluation of batterer intervention programs across the country, for example, showed a substantial reduction in abuse and violence attributable to batterer intervention programs similar to the Duluth model.

Young also fails to acknowledge that the conference she draws from represents a faction known for its anti-women groups and backlash tactics. She overlooks the countless conferences on domestic violence each year that present a very different picture. Her claims, as a result, sound out of touch with the advances and topics in the mainstream of the field, including programs throughout the country to help women when they are abusive or violent.

The tendency of this faction is to dismiss everything that it disagrees with as "ideological". In the process, it discredits itself, cuts off debate, and undermines progress in the field.

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