

## **Problems with applying “mutual combat” to batterer program participants**

**The general population surveys suggest cases of “mutual combat” and argue for “gender neutral” intervention (e.g., couples counseling), BUT**

- The findings from general populations samples don't necessarily apply to court populations
- Court samples are primarily male-dominated violence and more severe violence than the mutual combat cases in the surveys.
- Many apparent “mutual combat” cases overlook the constellation and history of abuses the reveal male-dominated abuse
- The survey measures do not adequately account for the motive, intent, impact, and context of the abuse which often point to male-dominated abuse
- The tactics-based category of mutual combat does not account for undetected coercion (Stark, 2007)
- The claim of mutual combat is naïve to the effect of social context that gives different meaning to violent events (e.g., rape and harassment, sex traffic, on-line porn, child molestation, men's sports, slasher movies, MTV)