

SPECTRUM

The Wimmin's Room

"Excuse me, your honor ..."

JUSTICE! *It seems just a little absurd that wife beating has now become a defense for murder. But that is exactly what is happening.*

by Valerie Kilfoil

Excuse me, Your Honor, I didn't mean to kill my wife.

That was the sentiment of a Kings County man earlier this year during his trial for killing his wife. Men are the number one killers of women in Canada. Last year 125 women were killed by their partners. Seventy-five percent were killed after they had left their partners.

The average charge for men who murder women is not murder, but manslaughter. Manslaughter means you accidentally killed someone or you have a just cause, like self-defense.

So, just what did Mr. Tribes, who had a record of violence against his wife, mean to do while he was beating her to death. Was it a case of... "Excuse me, Your Honor, I didn't mean to kill my wife... I just meant to beat the shit out of her like I always do."

Or, "Excuse me, Your Honor, I didn't mean to kill my wife... I just meant to ????? MEANT TO WHAT?? If you beat your wife or partner, you are obviously trying to hurt her. So, if you kill her, it makes sense to me that it is pre-meditated murder since harm was intended, especially when there is a history of abuse.

It is not like "Excuse me, Your Honor, I didn't mean to kill my wife... but I didn't see that patch of black ice and the car went out of control." Or, "Excuse me, Your Honor, I didn't mean to kill my wife... but I was overcome by smoke rescuing the children from the fire and couldn't save my wife."

THOSE are accidents. Those cases could be considered manslaughter if carelessness or negligence was involved. It is just not the same thing as beating someone to death. A man's fist does not just "accidentally" or "carelessly" keep bashing into a woman's face. And when a woman dies as a result of those blows, then that is murder.

Abusive men who kill women have a history of violence against the woman and, in most cases, they kill them with their bare hands. Yet, despite these facts, these men can say "Excuse me... I'm REALLY sorry... after all, I've lost my best punching bag..." And the justice system believes them. A man in the United States got five years in prison for killing a dog... that's longer than the average sentence for a man who kills his wife.

It seems just a little absurd that wife beating has now become a defense for murder. But that is exactly what is happening.

Can you imagine what would happen if women started showing up in court and defending themselves with things like... "Excuse me, your Honor, I didn't mean to permanently ruin his sex life, I just meant to kick him very hard in the balls."

Or, "Excuse me, Your Honor, I

didn't mean to cut off his entire dick, I just prefer my men circumcised."

Can you imagine how hard and how fast shit would hit the fan if ridiculous cases like that started appearing in court? Yet, no one blinks an eye when a man defends himself in court by saying "I didn't mean to kill my wife, I just meant to severely beat the shit out of her." This defense is actually taken seriously.

Other examples of ridiculous and damaging paradoxes are right on campus. There are at least two convicted wife beaters on staff.

First, there's engineering professor Esam Hussien - convicted March 25, 1992 of assaulting his wife.

Then there is Tom Fish at Saint

Thomas. He has also been convicted of assaulting his wife. He may be a wife beater, but according to Saint Thomas University, he's one damn fine teacher of HUMAN RELATIONS! A bastion of objectivity, I'm sure. Yes sir, that good

ol' Catholic university stuck by their man - the convicted wife beater. I guess there's nothing in the 10 commandments that specifically covers wife beating.

And hey, call me a sticker for

standards in education, but isn't having a convicted wife beater teaching human relations sort of like letting a child molester teach sex education or Malcolm Ross teach Jewish history?

BRUNS NOTICE

The Brunswickan is interested in adding a native column to the Spectrum pages. Presently, we are in the process of trying to find a native student(s) who would be interested in writing such a column. The Brunswickan would appreciate any suggestions for this column and if you or somebody you know may be interested in writing this column please give us a call at 453-4983 and ask for the editor-in-chief.

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