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Ronald E. Hall
Michigan State University

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The Feminization of Social Welfare: Implications of Cultural Tradition vis-à-vis Male Victims of Domestic Violence

RONALD E. HALL

Michigan State University
School of Social Work

As pertains to feminization of social welfare, the inability to acknowledge male victims of domestic violence is attributed less to personal preference and more to cultural traditions of the Western patriarch. Yet, according to scholarly literature, men in the U.S. are equally as likely to be the victims of domestic violence by women as are women by men. Solutions to cultural tradition aimed at eliminating male victims of domestic violence must necessarily begin with acknowledgement of the characteristic warning signs and symptoms. Moving beyond the feminization of social welfare as pertains to domestic violence can be accomplished by the recognition that cultural tradition should not be the sole determinant of services. An effective tool is application of more objective policy models which better locate the role of culture in the perception and attention to all victims in need.

Key words: feminization, social welfare, domestic violence, male victims, cultural tradition, policy

According to Merriam-Webster (1993), social welfare is defined as “organized public or private social services for the assistance of disadvantaged groups” (p. 1115). According to Zastrow (2009), in America the social welfare system operates by way of the “residual” model. In the residual model a stigma is attached to receiving social welfare aid. Those who require assistance are perceived by society as dysfunctional or otherwise inadequate. The underlying cultural traditions associated with the residual model of social welfare discourage

societal provisions for male victims of domestic violence and inhibit the willingness of same to seek social welfare services. Thus, the social welfare system in America at federal, state, and local levels has operated within a cultural tradition which sees women as victims and men as perpetrators of domestic violence (Loiacono, 2010). Commensurate with such traditions, women in need have qualified for various social welfare services less available to men (Mincy, 2006). This began in 1935 when Democrats founded the Social Security Act, which was mainly a means to assist needy elders, but included a provision for women unable to sustain themselves without support of welfare services (Grabham & Smith, 2010). The Social Security Act offers a dramatic illustration by which social welfare disparities between men and women can be exposed and investigated. Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and the Maternal and Child Health program benefitted women in need without public opposition because said services reserved for women conformed to cultural tradition, hence feminization (Smith, Brooks-Gunn, Klebanov, & Lee, 2000).

The prestige brought by the federal government in funding social welfare services comes from a culturally-motivated public and political intervention. By its own policies and actions government then influenced the institutions of social welfare to the extent that services now show less consideration to needy men (Jagannathan, Camasso & Sambamoorthi, 2010). This is so despite evidence acknowledging males in need, resulting in the feminization of poverty. Subsequently, while the feminization of poverty did not result in less attention to poor men, the feminization of social welfare has resulted in less attention to male victims of domestic violence.

According to Pearce (1978) and Northrop (1990) the feminization of poverty illustrates an existing bias against women and/or female-headed households. Subsequently there exists a disparity in the levels of poverty between men and women. This feminization of poverty may also account for the increasing impact of sex roles as a determining factor in both perceived rates of poverty and the ability of male victims of domestic violence to access social welfare services.

Because of feminization, the evidence of men victimized by domestic violence has not been sufficiently addressed in

public discourse (Hines & Douglas, 2010). Efforts on the part of government less inclined to assist male victims of domestic violence are embraced by the most politically conservative members of society (Mayer, 2008). Those who object do so only regarding which programs serve which population and how much they should cost. The feminization of social welfare as a cultural tradition and its implications for male victims of domestic violence are seldom acknowledged.

The intent of this paper is to illustrate vis-a-vis domestic violence the impact of feminization upon the provision of social welfare services as pertains to male victims. While feminization will be addressed in the context of domestic violence, it is suggested that feminization permeates all aspects of the social welfare system because it is commensurate with the cultural traditions of Western civilization (Kimenyi & Mbaku, 1995). Feminization herein is thus defined as a social, institutional and political motivation to sustain objectives, however unintended, counter to assisting males in need (Kelleher, 2010). By addressing feminization of social welfare through domestic violence this paper will expose the disserving characterizations of an otherwise vulnerable population of men who, by cultural tradition, are designated less entitled (Hall & Pizarro, 2010). The vulnerability of these men provides a rationale for the construct of a more scientific and/or technological social welfare paradigm to objectively allocate social welfare resources. The following will facilitate comprehension of the circumstances: (1) the feminization of social welfare; (2) a brief overview of domestic violence; (3) male victims of domestic violence; and (4) solutions to cultural tradition.

The Feminization of Social Welfare

The feminization of social welfare illustrated by domestic violence as vehicle is a long-standing tradition embedded in the cultural perception of women as care-givers (Wakabayashi & Donato, 2006). In Western patriarchal societies such as the U.S., women as care-givers are assumed subject to the authority of men. In fact, women as care-givers are no more or less significant to care-giver roles than are men to whose authority they are assumed subjected. What's more, those among

decision makers who reinforce feminization in the context of cultural traditions are more often male judges, male politicians, male police officers, and male social workers employed in the social welfare system (Muller, Desmarais, & Hamel, 2009). Thus male social workers who should oppose patriarchy are no less culpable than women in sustaining it. Their inability to acknowledge male victims of domestic violence is attributed less to their personal preference and more to traditions of the Western patriarch. Subsequently, by Western patriarchal tradition, submission is believed of women (i.e., victim) and aggression is believed of men (i.e., perpetrator). Social welfare programs and services are then necessarily feminized, because the benefits of patriarchal chivalry have been the traditional cultural domain of women (Herzog & Oreg, 2008). Yet according to McNeely and Robinson-Simpson (1987), scholarly literature published in respected peer-reviewed journals consistently illustrates that men in the U.S. are equally as likely to be the victims of domestic violence by women as are women by men.

The feminization of social welfare is recapitulated among male social workers who provide services to women clientele. According to Hall (2007), male social workers who do not actively oppose male patriarchy are in fact breeching the NASW Code of Ethics (1999). Hall's insistence that male social workers actively oppose patriarchy leaves little doubt as to its existence. In *Black Males Left Behind* (Mincy, 2006), referring to Pouncy's contention that "opposition comes from advocates for low-income women" (p. xvi), the feminization of social welfare is then institutionally sustained as standard. Evidence exists in gains made by low income women and is suggested in their higher earnings brought by welfare reform efforts. According to Haskins (2001), both employment and earning gains for women during the Clinton Administration were much stronger than for similarly economically situated men.

Voyce (2008) investigated the significance of cultural tradition in male patriarchy relative to domestic violence. Subsequently it was determined that male patriarchy as a cultural tradition is also manifested in affairs of the state relative to its administrative apparatuses of power contributing to feminization. Said manifestation is apparent in both legal and illegal forms of male power. Thus wealth as a male cultural

tradition is sustained as a critical form of governance. Such dynamics operate similarly to sustain the perception of women as exclusive victims of domestic violence. It is, in essence, the means by which the feminization of social welfare is normalized institutionally (Schuh, 2006).

The aforementioned pertaining to the feminization of social welfare is normalized not only by the cultural traditions of its patriarchal institutions but by the associated social welfare scholarship as well. That normalization is evident in the databases where feminization by cultural tradition has dominated scholarly literature (Monteiro, 2000). This otherwise obvious assumption is not the least subject to challenge, as indicated by one of social welfare's most esteemed sources: the *Social Work Abstracts* database.

The *Social Work Abstracts* database contains peer-reviewed papers published for years 1964 to 2010. The following terms alluding to feminization as cultural tradition were searched by the author: men (3,861), women (7,402), mothers (3,680), fathers (1,500), husbands (631), and wives (790). The results indicate that papers published on men were only 52% (52.16) of those published on women. Papers published on fathers were only 41% (40.76) of those published on mothers. Papers published on husbands were only 80% (79.8) of those published on wives. Such disparities reflect cultural traditions which influence social welfare agencies to prioritize services and resources commensurate with the feminization of social welfare, not exclusive of domestic violence.

A Brief Overview of Domestic Violence

A brief overview of domestic violence can also be gleaned from the databases pertaining to papers published. One of the largest data bases is Proquest, which contains scholarly papers written from 1894 to 2010. To assess the issue of domestic violence, the author searched the following terms: male batterer; female batterer; male perpetrator; female perpetrator; male victims; female victims; women victims; men victims; violent men; violent women. The results are presented in table format (see Table 1).

Table 1. Domestic Violence Search in Proquest Database

Search Terms	Number of Results	Percentage of Majority Finding
<i>Batterer</i>		
Male	134	
Female	7	5%
<i>Perpetrator</i>		
Male	710	
Female	366	52%
<i>Victim</i>		
Male	1,384	49%
Female	2,803	
Men	47	6%
Women	798	
<i>Violent</i>		
Men	1,129	
Women	252	22%

According to Table 1, papers pertaining to female batterer (7) were 5% of those pertaining to male (134); papers pertaining to female perpetrator (366) were 52% of those pertaining to male (710); papers pertaining to male victim (1,384) were 49% of those pertaining to female (2,803); papers pertaining to men victim (47) were 6% of those pertaining to women victim (798); papers pertaining to violent women (252) were 22% of those pertaining to violent men (1,129).

The Social Work Abstracts is a database aimed specifically at the social work professions. It contains scholarly papers published from 1964 to 2010. To assess the issue of domestic violence, the author searched the following terms: wife victim, husband victim; male batterer; female batterer. The results are similarly presented in Table 2. According to Table 2, papers pertaining to husband victim (28) were 58% of those pertaining to wife victim (48); papers pertaining to female batterer (18) were 51% of those pertaining to male batterer (35).

While most victims of domestic violence are women, those prone to acts of domestic violence cannot be universally

identified as male (Stuart, Meehan, Moore, & et al., 2006). The community appearance, status and demeanor of perpetrators, regardless of sex, make them appear personable and loving to their partner and family members. Their acts of domestic violence may occur in private, concealed from public display. They may act out physical violence against their partner by injuries easily hidden, such as scars not normally visible due to clothing or injuries which do not require medical attention. What qualifies such assaults as domestic violence is that they do not occur by accident. Perpetrators do not act solely out of stress, excessive drinking or drug abuse. Domestic violence is in fact committed for purposes of control by one partner of the other. The ensuing level of violence may escalate until the desired control outcome is reached. Failure to reach such an outcome may conclude in homicide (i.e., murder or otherwise death) (Liem & Roberts, 2009).

Table 2. Domestic Violence Search in Social Work Abstracts Database

Search Terms	Number of Results	Percentage of Majority Finding
<i>Batterer</i>		
Male	35	
Female	18	51%
<i>Victim</i>		
Husband	28	58%
Wife	48	

Some of the most thorough investigations of domestic violence have been conducted by scholars in the U.S. The executive of the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire, Murray Straus, and a sociologist at the University of Rhode Island, Richard Gelles, are amongst the most noted. For more than twenty years they have tracked domestic violence, compiling what are believed to be the most accurate data available through the National Family Violence Survey (NFVS). It was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). According to what investigators

found, 84% of American families do not engage in domestic violence. Of those 16% who are violent, most engage in some form of slapping, shoving, and grabbing. Approximately 3-4% of about 1.8 million engage in extreme forms of domestic violence including kicking, punching, or using a weapon. Straus and Gelles further contend that 188,000 women a year are subjected to violence severe enough to warrant medical attention. While that number is extreme, it is not in the assumed millions that some have reported (Gelles & Straus, 1988).

Other studies pertaining to domestic violence include that published by O'Leary, Barling, Rosenbaum and Tyree (1989). It involved 272 couples in a longitudinal study of early marriage. Results indicated that 44% of the women compared to 31% of the men were physically aggressive. After 18 months, 36% of the women and 27% of the men reported being physically aggressive. After 30 months of marriage, investigators found no significant differentiations in physical aggression between men and women. However at each interval women were, in fact, more aggressive than the men to whom they were married. These various forms of aggression included pushing, shoving, and slapping. By the use of conditional probability analysis, and given the likelihood of aggression at 30 months and before marriage and at 18 months after marriage, scores were .72 for women and .59 for men.

Male Victims of Domestic Violence

In 2009, a male cheerleader at the University of Missouri was brutally attacked by two players on the women's basketball team. The incident was preceded by the cheerleader's decision to conclude a team party being held at his residence. He thus requested that guests vacate the premises. However, as reported by the local *Riverfront Times* newspaper, the two noted women players, unprovoked, began a violent assault upon the male cheerleader. They beat and punched him about the facial area until they broke his nose and injured his eye. Party-goers attempted to restrain the assailants but were unable to do so. Both players were suspended from the team and were not prosecuted (Garrison, 2009).

Twelve percent of homicides in the U.S. are committed

by women, and 12% of the serial killers are women (Newton, 2000). They are likely to murder a spouse 19% of the time, a friend or acquaintance 17% of the time, and a boyfriend or girlfriend 10% of the time. What's more, the rationale for women who kill is money 41% of the time. When an abused woman murders her husband or partner, drugs are commonly involved (Prospero & Kim, 2009).

As party to feminization of social welfare, the government has contradicted itself considering its own research. According to the Justice Department, 41% of spouses murdered were men. Another study conducted by Mann at the Department of Criminal Justice, Indiana University at Bloomington indicates that no more than 59% of women who murdered their husbands claimed self-defense. Of those, about 30% had been previously arrested for violent crimes. Furthermore, according to the Justice Department, of those women who murdered their husbands, 12.9% were acquitted. Of those men who murdered their wives, only 1.4% were acquitted. What's more, those women found guilty of murdering their husbands received an average sentence of six years, while their male counterparts received 17 years for murdering their wives (Mann, 1990).

Some of the most highly respected among public officials are no less inclined to the feminization of social welfare which views women as victims, such as Donna Shalala, recent Secretary of Health and Human Services. The Secretary reported that 4 million women are "battered" in a given year by their significant male other (Shalala, 1994). She does not report the source of her data but her stated statistics are in conflict with official documentation. According to a 1993 Harris poll, two percent of the 2,500 women interviewed reported being "kicked, bit, hit with a fist or some other object" (Brott, n.d.) If that number is calculated by the approximately 55,000,000 women associated with a significant male other, the result is 1.1 million. Subsequently, there is an excess of 2.9 million reported. The only reasonable explanation might be that women who reported being "pushed, grabbed, or shoved" were considered having been battered (Brott, n.d.). Despite this fact, social welfare professionals (i.e., social workers) as well as the lay public do not accept that women are equally the perpetrators of domestic violence as are men, likely due to cultural

norms (O'Leary et al.,1989). Furthermore, professionals and the lay public refuse to accept that such men can be the victims of domestic violence as often as are women. The cultural belief among Americans is that men, being more aggressive than women, are prone to violence, despite evidence to the contrary.

Women who commit domestic violence against men encounter a double standard when compared to men who commit domestic violence against women. Much of it is on display in the literature consisting of investigations exclusively by various social science scholars. Bohannon, Dossier and Lindley (1995) collected a sample to assess domestic violence between husbands and wives. Their results indicate that of 94 military couples, 11% of wives and 7% of husbands were engaged in behaviors considered physically aggressive, as reported by the wives.

Ellison, Barkowski and Anderson (1999) found an association of religion with incidents of domestic violence. Their subjects were selected from the first wave of The National Survey of Families and Households. It included 2,420 women and 2,242 men. The self-administered survey results suggested that women were significantly more likely than men to act out violent behaviors toward their male partners. As per religiosity, "regular attendance at religious services is inversely associated" with domestic violence for both men and women.

Headey, Scott and de Vaus (1999) conducted a study of domestic violence in Australia. For data they used the International Social Science Survey/ Australia 1996/97. Their sample consisted of 1,643 subjects (804 men, 839 women). Each answered questions pertaining to their experiences with domestic violence within the last 12 months. Investigators found that 5.7% of men and 3.7% of women reported being the victims of domestic assaults. As pertains to physical injuries, women were found to inflict bodily harm at least as often as men. Statistically, 1.8% of men and 1.2% of women reported that the bodily harm they sustained required first-aid. Lastly, 1.5% of men and 1.1% of women reported that their injuries required treatment administered by a health care professional.

Kessler, Molnar, Feurer and Appelbaum (2001) investigated mental health patterns relative to domestic violence in the United States. Their sample consisted of 3,537 subjects. Of

these, 1,738 were men and 1,799 were women. These data were extracted from the National Co-morbidity Survey, which is a nationally representative survey conducted between the years of 1990 and 1992. All who qualified were married or cohabitating males and females between the ages of 15-54 years. The findings suggest that "17.4% of women and 18.4% of men reported being the victims of physical violence at the hands of their current spouses and/or partners" (Kessler et al., 2001, p. 491).

McCleod (1984) investigated domestic violence against men. Said investigation was based upon an analysis of official and national victimization data. It consisted of 6,200 cases of spousal abuse in the Detroit area from 1978-1979. Findings indicate that men resorted to weapons 25% of the time. Women, on the other hand, resorted to weapons 86% of the time. As a result, 74% of men incurred injuries and accordingly 84% required medical attention. Subsequently, McCleod determined vis-à-vis empirical data that men are more often injured and are injured more seriously than women.

McNeely, Cook and Torres (2001) set out to determine whether domestic violence is a gender issue or a human issue. They contend, based upon empirical evidence, that domestic violence is in fact a human issue and not due to the commonly held belief that it is a gender issue. The confusion may be a result of men's "legal and social defenselessness" (p. 2).

Mechem, Shofer, Reinhard, Hornig and Datner (1999) investigated the history of domestic violence involving male patients seen at an urban emergency department. Their sample was compiled during a 13-week period at a Philadelphia emergency clinic. Investigators found that 12.6% of 866 men were domestic violence victims. Citing secondary data, investigators acknowledged that 14.4% of women treated in similar emergency departments had been victims. By juxtaposing non-victims, victims were more likely to be single (52%), younger (7.5 years) and identified as African-American (61%). By reference to assaults, 48% of males contend that they had been kicked, bitten, choked or punched by a female partner. Another 37% confided that they had a weapon used against them.

Lastly, Ridley and Feldman (2003) reported on female violence against males in a domestic context. Their sample

consisted of 153 female volunteers. They were administered the *Abusive Behavior Inventory*. Findings were that 67.3% of subjects admitted to at least one event of violent behavior conducted by them personally in the past 12 months. The most common forms of violent behaviors consisted of pushing, shoving, and holding-down (45.1%). The next most common form of violent behavior consisted of slapping, hitting, and biting (41.2%).

While the aforementioned evidence of domestic violence by women aimed at men is dramatic, it is also a factor of entertainment, according to Marcus (2010). The recent television hit series "Jersey Shore" promoted violence against men during one of its highly touted episodes. One of the female characters, named J. Woww, smacked "The Situation." In a later episode, a drunken Angelina struck "Pauly D" in the facial area. What's more, in response to a previous episode where a male character struck a female character, the administrators of the show featured a public service announcement abhorring domestic violence in response. This show is aired by the MTV cable station. As a consequence of what it broadcasts, violence against men by women is tolerated while violence against women by men results in a public service announcement. Jersey Shore is not the exception (Marcus, 2010).

Another MTV series which tolerates violence against men is "Teen Mom." One of the central characters, Amber, on more than one occasion has acted out violence against Gary, who is the father of her child. Another Teen Mom character, Farrah, was reportedly assaulted by her mother Debra. While the assault was not caught on camera, much of the episode focused on Farrah's follow-up with an attorney to press charges against her mother and her referral for therapy to cope. In response to Farrah being assaulted, MTV broadcast a number for a domestic violence hotline. When women were victims of domestic violence, as was Farrah, the cable station acted. When men, such as Gary, were assaulted by women, the cable station has yet to respond with a public service announcement objecting (Marcus, 2010).

MTV's reality series have left much of the public confused. It would appear that it has embraced a double standard. That is, domestic violence is permissible as long as it is female to

male. Subsequently, if the Gary character had struck Amber it is likely that the police would have been called and shortly thereafter the station would have aired a PSA against domestic violence. Failure to do so when men are the victims of domestic violence is a disservice to all victims of domestic violence, regardless of sex (Marcus, 2010).

Solutions to Cultural Tradition

By definition culture includes lifestyles, customs, art, religion, language, values and behavior associated with a particular group at a particular point in time (Deal & Kennedy, 1983). Culture enables life by empowering the weak to be collectively strong and thus integrating large numbers of people on the basis of a shared commonality. Culture does not require legal sanction in order to be effective, but more often than not in advanced technological societies, culture influences the structures of litigation.

In actuality culture is a “catch-all” term which appears to exclude very little quality of life matter (Van Wormer, Besthorn & Keefe, 2007). However for comprehending the feminization of social welfare relative to domestic violence, interested parties must consider the associations of culture with patriarchal tradition. Similar to culture, tradition in general includes a set of interrelated phenomena through which reality is created, communicated and by social welfare, administrated. Social welfare relevant phenomena include methods of service, demographics of personnel, perspectives, standards and ways of relating in a cultural context. When such phenomena operate in conjunction, they come to represent a significant aspect of what is assumed in the U.S. to be the most prudent operation of social welfare services, which under the current circumstances enables feminization (Monroe & Tiller, 2001).

The application of tradition gains validation through correlation to several attributes. It gives credibility to the existence of culture for fashioning the delivery of services and its demographic priorities. The traditional social welfare modus operandi emphasizes values and norms of the patriarch, which establishes women as victims of domestic violence and men as perpetrators of same. Without overt formal and/or informal communication, social welfare by cultural

tradition then prioritizes victims of domestic violence according to the standards of feminization. The delivery of services and distribution of social welfare resources become less amenable to scientific facts, which conflict given the existence of male victims (Straus, 2009). Within social welfare institutions, male victims of domestic violence are then located in opposition to similarly victimized women, resulting in unnecessary and disserving tension. Said tension discourages focus on the elimination of domestic violence in toto for focus upon women as the defining and most urgent victims of the problem.

Solutions to cultural tradition aimed at eliminating male victims of domestic violence must necessarily begin with acknowledgement of the characteristic warning signs and symptoms. No partner involved in an intimate relationship, regardless of their sex, should submit themselves to living in fear of their significant other, whether legally joined or not. When the warning signs or violence becomes apparent, victims should not hesitate to terminate the relationship or seek immediate help. According to domesticviolence.org (2010), when attempting to escape the risks of domestic violence, the following are things one needs to think about:

1. Having important phone numbers nearby for you and your children. Numbers to have are the police, hotlines, friends and the local shelter.
2. Friends or neighbors you could tell about the abuse. Ask them to call the police if they hear angry or violent noises. If you have children, teach them how to dial 911. Make up a code word that you can use when you need help.
3. How to get out of your home safely. Practice ways to get out.
4. Safer places in your home where there are exits and no weapons. If you feel abuse is going to happen try to get your abuser to one of these safer places.
5. Any weapons in the house. Think about ways that you could get them out of the house.

6. Even if you do not plan to leave, think of where you could go. Think of how you might leave. Try doing things that get you out of the house—taking out the trash, walking the pet or going to the store. Put together a bag of things you use everyday. Hide it where it is easy for you to get.

7. Going over your safety plan often.

The aforementioned is advised regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic and marital status. Solutions to the cultural traditions of domestic violence must include redefining culture and its appropriate place in the conduct of social services. In the face of two powerful barriers—traditionalism and the status quo—this characterizes the reduced viability of the attempt. Culturally diverse scholars stress the process of self-acknowledgment and the proclamation of existence as the first critical step in personal and later social acceptance of what is different (Hall, 2003). For male victims of domestic violence, this simple proclamation by social welfare personnel would be a revolutionary act in its repudiation of a culturally-imposed limitation upon access to programs and services. Male victims of domestic violence are unique in that their defining difference (sex) is an experience with which the mainstay of social welfare professionals, including both male and female social workers assigned to domestic violence, lack affinity. Since males in need can be identified by their appearance, their access to domestic violence services may be unnecessarily complicated for traditional cultural reasons (Straus, 2009). As a result, to the degree that social welfare and who has access to services is a culturally constructed phenomenon, victimized males in need require advocates in all areas whose sole purpose is problem resolution.

Conclusion

According to Kosberg (2002), men are portrayed in social welfare literature as “gay” or in an otherwise negative context. Women are disproportionately portrayed as victims, powerless, vulnerable and disadvantaged, due to the sexist and racist efforts of men. Such characterizations impose upon the public

perception of male victims of domestic violence, despite scientific evidence to sustain their plight. Therefore, relative to feminization, much of the available literature on domestic violence has justifiably emphasized the needs, problems, and empowerment of women to the exclusion of equally justifiable male victims (Alaggia & Millington, 2008). Such concerns for women are no doubt a legitimate issue. However, the extent of such concern results in the feminization of social welfare, which accommodates an imbalanced frame of reference to a serious social pathology.

“Profession” according to Merriam-Webster (1993) is defined as “a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation.” The feminization of social welfare in the U.S. extends from the traditional cultural norms and preferred values of society (Farber, 1977-1978). Indeed, social welfare personnel, such as social workers, are members of a values profession not irrelevant to cultural traditions in the conduct and delivery of services nationwide. In fact, some have referred to the U.S. as a Christian nation, not irrelevant to the operations of social welfare (Stone, 2008). As an institution, social welfare was in fact subject to the nation’s forefathers who understood clearly the potential for abuse when cultural traditions in the form of religion operate in an otherwise multicultural, multiracial society whose fundamental creed is freedom (Lupu, 2010). Thus, by official decree they took action to insure that no one religion, philosophy or other state-sponsored value system would prevail. That belief was sustained by many operatives in the scientific community who felt imposed upon by value systems in the conduct of their work. They preferred separation of culture and services science in an effort to insure attentions to need would prevail, independent of cultural and political influences (i.e., feminization). Unfortunately, such influence has not discouraged the oversight of male victims subjected to domestic violence. The feminization of social welfare thus remains an impediment to the elimination of domestic violence and validation of rigorous scientific discourse.

In the aftermath of their advocacy for male victims of domestic violence in need, both male and female social workers are subjected to unnecessary stress in attempts to maintain coherence and direction (Senge, 1990). Thus, when social welfare

institutions contradict science and cannot reach consensus about the priority of programs and services, neither men nor women victimized by domestic violence can be optimistic about the future. An effective tool is application of more objective policy models which better locate the role of cultural traditions in the perception and attention to all victims in need.

Moving beyond the feminization of social welfare as pertains to domestic violence can be accomplished by the recognition that cultural tradition should not be the sole determinant of services. That is, as an institution, social welfare's attention to those in need must be considered by development of a social welfare technology. While this technology may operate within a cultural context, the resolution of problems must be dictated by scientific objectivity (Wallington & Moore, 2005). Recognized schools of thought suggest that scientific objectivity relative to technological competence means the capacity of social workers within the social welfare system to execute a particular task free of cultural bias (Jones & Alcabes, 1989). This simple definition becomes obsolete when applied in the absence of science, leaving feminization of social welfare to fill the void. Furthermore, as per the feminization of social welfare, technological competence enables services because the variations in tasks are made more consistent and intelligible, commensurate with differing treatment methodologies and demographic categories, including sex (O'Neal, 1999). Whereas decision-making ability, treatment modality, and knowledge base as an extension of culture is important, none of these as a single criterion reign sufficient without the benefits of scientific objectivity. However, considered in conjunction with scientific objectivity, they can potentially comprise social welfare's professional technology.

Cynicism and burnout stem partly from people loyal foremost to culture and tradition (i.e., feminization). It is a common event for those employed in social welfare fields, including social workers, who are often overworked and underpaid (Ng, 2010). Women, in particular, who clearly understand the urgency of domestic violence and who are not influenced by its feminization in their view of male victims, are most at risk for such burnout. Their struggles more often take place within an environment where agencies do not share a common vision about the problems of society. Thus by necessity in resolving

the problem, domestic violence most be moved from a cultural to a social justice context.

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