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### **Domestic Violence against women in Canada**

Many people might think that in our society, we exaggerate the fact that women are the only ones that are victims of domestic violence, and that men are also victims. However, according to Statistics Canada, “between 87 - 92% of the victims of "domestic violence" are women and more than 90% of the perpetrators are men (The Ontario Women’s Justice Network).” Also, in 2007 ten percent of all crimes committed were under the category of assaults, which “constitutes the intentional application of force without consent, the attempt or threat to apply force to another person, or openly wearing a weapon (or an imitation) while accosting or impeding another person (Statistics Canada),” which are the elements included in a great number of domestic violence cases. Therefore, we can state that domestic violence in Canada is a major problem. It was also shown that domestic violence has not decreased significantly since 2000 (Statistics Canada).

Before the laws against domestic violence, the act of assault was hidden in the domestic sphere and the victims were mostly women. Because there were no specific laws against domestic violence, men decided that they could do whatever pleased them in their home; therefore, women were silenced. Women were the target of this violence, because women were not treated equally in a patriarchal society; therefore, men could take advantage of women. Women did not really have an income to their name and they could not



escape an abusive relationship if they wanted to, because they could not afford to leave. An example of a very old form of domestic violence was the scolding cap that women were forced to wear if they talked back to their husbands in public or in private during the medieval period. Women would have to wear a sort of steel hat that sometimes had a piece to insert in their mouths to keep them from talking for a certain amount of time.

In our day, many services exist to support victims of domestic violence in Canada. There are specialized courts that treat cases of domestic violence like the Domestic Violence Court of Toronto. There are also better laws to protect victims who are reluctant to participate in trials against their aggressor, because they do feel safe when the aggressor was allowed to be released from prison (Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development). In the past few decades, the Canadian government and other organizations have created many transition houses and shelters for women who are victims of domestic violence. These women can benefit from these services up to twelve months. In Canada, domestic violence is a known problem and there are many services offered to women in need, but there is still a lot of work to be done to have a significant change in our society. As a society, we must realize that the enormous number of male aggressors do have serious problems. This problem is compared to an addiction sometimes, because men cannot stop themselves from being violent and they often have a surge of rage come through them when they are being violent towards their wives or girlfriends and then they beg for forgiveness. However, women also have their share of responsibility, because it is the woman who can stand up and refuse to be treated in a horrible way; women must leave the men who beat, hit, slap or torture them to protect themselves and their children.

## Work Cited

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