

# Gabby Petito: Tip of the Iceberg of Violence Against Women in America



By Frosty Wooldridge

A beautiful 22-year-old, naïve, innocent and cherished young woman lost her life to her fiancé in the last week. The major news networks splashed the drama all over America. Brian Laundrie, her fiancé, remains on the run.

What's almost beyond understanding stems from the fact that a motorist called 911 to report that Laundrie hit and slapped her alongside the road. A cop intercepted the couple. He talked to them. He could see her distress and the cut on her face, but for some reason, he allowed her excuses to not arrest Laundrie. Of course, Laundrie showed his best, kind and friendly behavior for the cop. She, like so many women, even defended Laundrie. From there, the cop let them drive away.

When in fact, she should have told the police officer, "Please take me into protective custody. I think I'm in grave danger."

When the entire sordid affair comes to a conclusion, more than likely, Laundrie will be found as the killer...and then a trial...and life in prison.

I remember 30 years ago when I was walking with a friend in Fort Lauderdale, we saw a guy and girl arguing. He slapped her, so we walked over to investigate. Just as we walked up, he round-housed her with a punch. He knocked her to the ground.



“Hey, dude, we’re going to kick your ass,” my friend said as we rushed toward him.

She jumped up from the ground pleading, “Don’t hurt him...it was my fault.”

I muttered to my friend, “Man, this is sick and there’s no fixing this mess...let’s get out of here.”

We left the couple to their own drama. There’s endless male-on-female violence in this country and many countries around the world. From a lifetime of watching it, and also from stories of my police veteran brother, such violence toward women continues on a massive scale. Men just punch, kick and degrade their significant-other or wife, and or kill them. Most likely, it’s been going on for centuries.

Let’s face it, rapes have been going on for centuries. No matter the consequences, some men stalk and rape women. Men enjoy superior strength to overpower woman at any time.

“Despite the fact that advocacy groups like National Organization for Women, (NOW) have worked for over three decades to halt the epidemic of gender-based violence and sexual assault, the numbers are still shocking. It is time to renew our national pledge, from the President and Congress on down to City Councils all across the nation to END violence against women and men, girls and boys. This effort must also be carried on in workplaces, schools, churches, locker rooms,

the military, and in courtrooms, law enforcement, entertainment and the media. NOW pledges to continue our work to end this violence and we hope you will join us in our work." NOW spokeswoman

### **Three Women Murdered Daily in the USA from Male Violence**

In 2005, 1,181 women were murdered by an intimate partner. That's an average of three women every day. Of all the women murdered in the U.S., about one-third were killed by an intimate partner. This pattern continues in 2021. Three women die daily at the hands of their partner.

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (Intimate Partner Violence or Battering)**

Domestic violence can be defined as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, women experience about 4.8 million intimate partner-related physical assaults and rapes every year. Less than 20 percent of battered women sought medical treatment following an injury.

### **SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

"According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, which includes crimes that were *not* reported to the police, 232,960 women in the U.S. were raped or sexually assaulted in 2006. That's more than 600 women every day. Other estimates, such as those generated by the FBI, are much lower because they rely on data from law enforcement agencies. A significant number of crimes are never even reported for reasons that include the victim's feeling that nothing can/will be done and the personal nature of the incident." NOW spokeswoman

As to religious violence in America, Muslim men commit an average of 23 to 27 honor killings in the USA annually from middle eastern immigrants. Also, over 500,000 cases of female

genital mutilation, which is assault and battery, are performed in the USA annually. The United Nations reported that 20,000 women annually lose their lives to honor killings in the Muslim world. (Source: Staff report, DHS, Assistant DA Ed O'Callaghan, February 18, 2018)

So, America, not only did Gabby Petito lose her life to a violent man, but three other women lost their lives on the same day to violent men. As you read this column, three more women will lose their lives today to violent men.

What can change here in America? I flat out don't know! Hopefully, good parents teach their boys to respect girls, women, mothers, grandmothers and all other human beings. As well as all animals! Perhaps schools could teach mandatory classes on anger-management and working out anger issues with sports. In the end, while researching the facts for this column, and realizing how widespread the violence in America against women is...I'm sick to my stomach. My dad was always kind to my mom. I've always been kind to women. I can't imagine taking my 6'2", 190-pound frame to do violence to the weaker sex. To have seen that kind of violence in action that one night in Florida, still haunts me all these years later.

We simply MUST work toward a kindlier, loving and more protective civilization toward women, children and animals.

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