

A CALL TO MEN

National Association of Men and Women Committed to Ending Violence Against Women

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN A Call to Men: It's time to become part of the solution

Anthony Porter

It's time for those of us who are "well-meaning men" to start acknowledging the role male privilege and socialization plays in domestic violence, sexual assault as well as violence against women in general. As well-meaning men, we must begin to acknowledge and own our responsibility to be part of the solution to ending violence against women.

What is a "well-meaning man?"

A well-meaning man is a man who believes women should be respected. A well-meaning man would not assault a woman. A well-meaning man, on the surface, at least, believes in equality for women. A well-meaning man believes in women's rights. A well-meaning man honors the women in his life. A well-meaning man, for all practical purposes, is a nice guy, a good man.

It is with this understanding that our work, our vision, is not to beat up on well-meaning men, but instead to help us understand through a process of re-education and accountability, that with all our goodness, we have still been socialized to maintain a system of domination, dehumanization and oppression over women.

There are three key aspects of male socialization that have created, maintained and normalized violence against women:

- Men viewing women as "less than"
- Men treating women as property
- Men seeing women as objects

All three are major contributors to violence against women, perpetuated consciously or unconsciously by all men, including well-meaning men.

As well-meaning men, we must begin to examine the ways in which male socialization fosters violence against women. We must examine the ways in which we "keep" women in marginalized roles throughout every aspect of society that enforces and maintains our male dominance.