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## **Gender agenda erodes civil rights progress**

*Honest, open dialogue absent from today's legal system*

Last summer, a group of Colorado district attorneys put their names to a letter that was printed widely in state newspapers. The letter lambasted a commentary that questioned both the accuracy and collection of sexual assault statistics. That guest essay, which appeared July 22 in the *Rocky Mountain News*, followed the arrest of Kobe Bryant on sexual assault charges in Eagle, Colo.

Disturbing, it was, to see district attorneys en masse portray “facts” in an über alles manner. A free and constitutional society relies on open, honest dialogue—especially at the judicial level. Today’s “gender justice” zealots use women and children to justify male hardship and sacrifice—a trend pervasive throughout the millennia and one sorely in need of reform.

In their letter, DA’s cited statistics on sexual assault reminiscent of those now widely discredited and once used to fan hysteria over such related issues as domestic violence. “A woman is beaten every nine seconds” became a national rallying cry despite its mathematical impossibility. And this month, a domestic violence coalition has placed flyers around Eagle County reading: “Always believe the victim!”

What we have are so-called progressive groups that would return society to the days when a hasty, angry consensus could get you lynched. Such backward thinking breeds an appalling lack of sympathy. As just one example, consider the case of a Maryland man exonerated after having served eight years in prison on a rape conviction only to have the state charge him for back child support.

Mike Spaniola, Equal Justice Foundation vice president, says, “We have an obligation to speak up when we see injustices. Like it or not, rape has had a historically high rate of false accusations and convictions. Recent DNA testing shows that many men have been imprisoned falsely over the years.”

He explains that many statistics whether on rape, domestic violence or sexual assault go unverified and often are gathered in secrecy at battered women shelters or through confidential, anonymous government surveys.

“While the ACLU caterwauls over the rights of terrorists, there's little concern for injustices that occur when politically expedient statistics are published without opposing views or verification.”

A big problem today is the expansion of the legal definition of rape at a time when the evidence required by courts to convict has been reduced or impaired significantly. Making matters worse, many DA offices no longer actively prosecute perjury or false allegations, placing ideology over fact.

In fact, some DA’s who signed the letter could themselves be cited for having foisted politically correct injustices on innocent people.

Numerous examples indict Denver DA Bill Ritter. Ritter's office incredibly charged two young brothers a few years ago with felony child abuse after one of the guy's girlfriend stabbed her own 3-year-old daughter with a butcher knife during a domestic altercation. One brother was actually sleeping when the stabbing took place. Ritter proudly referred to his charges against the brothers as "novel." The woman was not charged.

As to Jeffco DA Dave Thomas, his office brought felony child abuse charges against a father who broke his leg in a futile attempt to save his boy in an accidental drowning case. The DA's heartless decision angered many people. Later that summer, Thomas's office chose not to file charges against a mother in Conifer who ran over her toddler while backing out of her driveway. His office ruled the death accidental: case closed.

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*The Equal Justice Foundation is a non-profit organization that promotes progressive justice and civil liberties for all citizens. For more information, contact Dr. Charles Corry at (719) 520-1089, or e-mail him at [ccorry@ejfi.org](mailto:ccorry@ejfi.org). EJJ's Web site is [www.ejfi.org](http://www.ejfi.org) and the foundation also sponsors [www.dvmen.org](http://www.dvmen.org) dealing with domestic violence against men.*