

# Lorena Bobbitt Revisited

✘ I'm not at all familiar with CNN's correspondent, Alina Cho. I know she wasn't all too happy with former San Francisco Mayor [Willie Brown](#)'s op/ed piece he wrote back in 2008 about the rise of Sarah Palin. Other than that, I haven't paid any attention to her...until a few weeks ago.

She recently [interviewed](#) Lorena Bobbitt Gallo. You might remember she was the woman who, after being subjected to domestic violence and sexual assault by her husband, cut off his member.

Ms. Cho introduces Ms. Gallo as "the wife who employed, uh, shall we say, a dramatic response to an abusive relationship with her then husband, John Wayne Bobbitt." During the interview, we learn that Ms. Gallo started an organization called "Lorena's Red Wagon" through which she helps women and children in domestic violence situations.

And then the following question and answer:

CHO: I have to ask you this. As you well know, there was a time when joking about the Bobbitts was a national pastime. I wonder after all of these years – are you finally able to laugh about it?

LORENA GALLO: I finally am. And it took a lot of time, it took a lot of years, and definitely a lot of – I went to psychologists, and thanks to the doctors, the therapies I'm here, and I'll be able to now basically start all over again and start a new relationship and have a family and basically I can laugh now. But it's not a subject of laughing matter when we talk about domestic violence, though. It's a serious problem and what happened to me was very bizarre, obviously. But I was a victim, I'm not a victim anymore, and that's the message that I come – I have to come across and say it, and domestic violence is a serious issue and it affects 32 million

people in the United States and is a worldwide epidemic, it's a social epidemic that if we don't do anything about it, then we faced with a bigger problem in the future for our newest generations to come.

I appreciate the fact that Ms. Gallo recognizes domestic violence is a serious issue but the idea she can now laugh about it is outrageous. But, I'm going to put that aside.

My problem is with Ms. Cho. What was she thinking?

Could anyone even imagine Ms. Cho asking this question of a man? "After all these years, can you now laugh about mutilating your wife?"

Let's take it even one step further. I recall a horrific crime in California in the 70s committed by [Lawrence Singleton](#) who raped a teenager and chopped off her arms and left her for dead. Well, she survived and he was eventually convicted. How about if Bill O'Reilly had interviewed him and asked the same question? "So, Mr. Singleton, tell my viewers, after all these years, can you now laugh about mutilating your victim?" The outrage would be deafening.

But, I see this double standard over and over in the media. Another perfect example is the reporting of sexual assault on students by teachers. When a male teacher assaults a female student, it's rightfully called a "sexual assault" or "rape."

I can't count the number of times when I've read or heard reports of female teachers who sexually assault male students. While criminal charges are brought and are described according to the local penal code, reporters very often describe these assaults as a "sexual liaison," "sexual relationship," or "a teacher sleeping with her student." Seldom is the teacher described as a rapist or pedophile but often characterized as "blonde," "20-something," "hot," or "good-looking."

Why the double standard? Having worked in the area of child abuse law for over twenty years, I can assure you the long-term effects do not differ much between male and female victims.

I think the absolutely worst case involved 34-year old Mary Kay Latourneau, who began assaulting her 13-year old victim, who she eventually married after having two of his children and serving time in prison. She initially pled guilty to child rape and was given a seven-year sentence but was only required to serve three months under certain conditions, one being that she wouldn't have any further contact with her victim. She served the three months, was released and was later caught inside a "steamed up" car with the victim. She was sent back to prison for 7 ½ years.

What's disturbing about this story is how it was described in the media. [Tru.tv](http://Tru.tv) describes its article as "Mary Kay Latourneau: The Romance That Was a Crime." Gregg Olsen's true-crime book was entitled, "If Loving You Is Wrong." Lifetime's made-for-tv movie was called, "Mary Kay Latourneau: All American Girl."

Can you imagine the same treatment by the media had the criminal been a male and the victim a 13-year old girl? Of course, you can't. It wouldn't happen. (Oh, except if you're a rich Hollywood director named Roman Polanski.)

On a lighter side, tv sitcoms have changed dramatically over the years. I remember the handsome men who portrayed husbands and fathers in shows like "Bachelor Father" (John Forsythe), "Leave it to Beaver" (Hugh Beaumont), "The Donna Reed Show" (Carl Betz), "My Three Sons" (Fred MacMurray) and "Father Knows Best" (Robert Young). All these men were masculine, intelligent, successful, hard-working role models for their children. I think the worst quality these Dads ever possessed may have been absent-mindedness. Other than a lapse of memory, these fathers/men were not demeaned on early

television. Now, we too often see on sitcoms a bunch of overweight, doofus-looking, low achievers, where every joke is at their expense.

Can anyone imagine women portrayed the same way in sit-coms today? I doubt it.

I'm sure Alina Cho won't be fired for her stupid question but I'd bet a man would and NOW would have been picketing outside CNN headquarters. I doubt we'll see honest reporting of sexual assaults by teachers regardless of their gender. I also doubt we'll ever see a handsome and witty man married to a slovenly, dopey woman on a tv sitcom. I wonder why the feminists aren't seeking equality in these areas. Hmmm.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.