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Russian Newspaper Tells Battered Women to Cheer Up Because Abuse Increases Odds of Having Sons

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Russia is on the verge of decriminalizing several forms of domestic violence, despite the country's enormously high rate of abuse against women. As federal lawmakers in Moscow march ahead with this controversial initiative, one of Russia's most read newspapers, Komsomolskaya Pravda, published an article this Wednesday, citing research that supposedly suggests women with abusive partners stand a better chance of giving birth to sons — a "valuable advantage," the newspaper claimed.

"For years, women who have been smacked around by their husbands have found solace in the rather hypocritical proverb, 'If he beats you, it means he loves you!'" columnist Yaroslav Korobatov argued in Komsomolkaya Pravda. "However, a new scientific study is giving women with irascible husbands new grounds to be proud of their bruises, insofar as women who are beaten, biologists confirm, have a valuable advantage: they're more likely to give

birth to boys!"

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The article refers to research by the controversial evolutionary psychologist Satoshi Kanazawa, who's been denounced by many in the field as a "bad scientist" and a "racist." He is known for arguing that African countries suffer chronic poverty because of "low IQs," and for claiming that black women are "objectively less attractive" than the women of other races.

In 2005, Kanazawa published an article claiming that "violent men have more sons," and three years later he followed it up with a blog post for Psychology Today, arguing that "women may have been selected [evolutionarily] to tolerate a certain level of nonlethal violence in their mates," in order to increase the odds of bearing sons.

In his piece for Komsomolskaya Pravda, Korobatov also cites the so-called "returning soldier phenomenon," suggesting that men returning from combat in World War II ended up fathering more sons because they were "sex starved" and therefore pumped full of hormones when they had intercourse with their wives, once back home.

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