

- The Roman Code of Paterfamilias said a man could kill his wife for adultery or for walking outside without her face covered.
- In Renaissance France, when it became clear that too many women and children were being beaten to death, and it was hurting the economy, men were restricted to blows that did not leave marks.
- In eighteenth-century England, the law said that a man could only hit his wife with a whip or stick no thicker than his thumb. Although many people think this is where the phrase "rule of thumb" originated, that's not actually true.

(HEIDI interrupts. She moves to stand next to the LEGIONNAIRE as if they are the father and daughter from American Gothic.)

HEIDI. Remember that thing I said about the male-to-female ratio in Washington state being nine to one? That's not true. That's what my history teacher Mr. Berger taught me. There were thousands of women in Washington, of course: the women of the Wenatchi tribes, the Salish tribes. And, apparently, some of these women had been marrying white men for a long time, and according to these women's journals, some of these marriages were actually pretty good! Then Washington became a state and was under the umbrella of the Constitution, which meant indigenous women were no longer considered people, the marriages became illegal, and they brought in a bunch of white women like my great-great-grandma Theresa. (To LEGIONNAIRE.) Go ahead.

LEGIONNAIRE.

- In 1910, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a wife could not press assault charges against a husband, because it would open the doors of the courts to

accusations of all sorts of one spouse against the other.

- In 1977, the California Penal Code stated that wives charging husbands with criminal assault must suffer more injuries than commonly needed for charges of battery.
- In 2005, the Supreme Court ruled that Jessica Lenahan could not sue the Castle Rock Police Department for failing to show up to protect her and her children.
- In 2011, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ruled that the United States violated the human rights of Jessica Lenahan and her daughters.

HEIDI. Thank you, Mike. Everybody, this is Mike. He is a wonderful actor, a wonderful man, and... When I realized that there was going to be so much violence in this play, I really wanted some positive male energy up here with me.

(She turns to him. He looks a bit confused.)

- Then he begins to speak. As he tells his story, he starts to remove his LEGIONNAIRE accoutrements: jacket, hat, tie. He is now MIKE.)

[Note: This story is based on the real life of actor Mike Iveson. There is an alternate monologue at the end of the script based on the real life of actor Danny Wolohan. Please feel free to use the alternate story if it suits you or your actor better.]

START MIKE. I'm representing a real person from Heidi's life, Mel Yonkin, who was a Legionnaire. Fought in World War II. He was an incredibly sweet man who would travel around the country with Heidi and her family from contest to contest. He always told her how proud he

was of her, and when she won he would get kinda... misty. Pretend he had a cold.

I was very excited that Heidi asked me to be in the show, though I did think it was like a serious responsibility to be representing "positive male energy." I feel like I spent so many years refusing to be boxed in gender-wise, and I guess I thought of myself as having "gender-neutral" energy? Which, given that I always present myself as male, just seems sorta irresponsibly privileged to me sometimes.

Also, I would like to be able to report that I too had a crush on Patrick Swayze when I was younger like Heidi did, but the truth is I was kind of more into Mel Gibson. Yeah. I remember really wanting to be him in that movie *The Road Warrior*. After the movie came out I was always talking to my friends about: (*Bad Australian accent.*) "Oh I'm gonna dye this little tuft of my hair blond over my ear," like Mel had in the movie. I thought I had a hilarious Australian accent, but you just heard it, it's a Cockney accent.

Which is interesting because my dad is a British working-class immigrant, but he's not a Cockney, he's from Wales and Yorkshire, which are two totally different accents, and I'm not going to do them and you are welcome. My dad is an incredibly charming guy, all my friends are really crazy about him and I remember when I was a kid both admiring his, like, masculine charisma, and also knowing that something about it was like a little put on?

For example, he went through a CB-radio phase. I was in high school, we were driving across country together, but we were in two separate cars, and he wanted us to stay in touch via CB radios. My dad would say stuff like, "Heads up, Mike, we're gonna take a left at the next exit," and I would say stuff like, "Hey, Dad, when are we going to get a bathroom break?" And one time another

guy's voice busted in: "Coupla queers on the line." Some trucker or somebody – definitely a deep male voice, probably deeper than mine or my dad's. There was a terrible pause and a kind of pit in my stomach. Was my dad, like, lisping inadvertently? Or was I? Or something? And then my dad responded: "And a faggot listening in!" Which, all things considered, good save? I must not have been out to my dad at that point. There's no way he would've used that kind of language if he'd known I was gay back then.

END

I mean I didn't think I was gay back then either. Maybe I thought of my sexual orientation as "nerd." A couple years after that, I was in college, and I was going to drive from Maine to Boston to live with my girlfriend. I was still dating women at the time. And I was wearing a YSL slate blue suit vest as a shirt; tight cotton cutoffs with big red, white, and blue stripes on them; and brown ankle boots with thick pink socks and of peeking out the top. My dad saw me as I was walking out the door and he said: "You look ridiculous. You cannot wear this." I know he was just trying to protect me.

And maybe he had a point because a couple years after that, when I was first living in New York City, I was with four of my friends, I was walking from the Tunnel Bar to a bar that was just called The Bar, that was in the East Village. I was wearing black spandex Patricia Field hot pants with these little red velvet polka dots. And we passed a group of teenagers, and one of them punched me in the face.

As I've gotten older, I've become more comfortable just presenting as basic male. It feels, I don't know, more "me." I think?

A couple years ago, I was in Baltimore and I was at a sports bar called Pickles Pub. There was a guy at the bar – like six foot two, two hundred and thirty pounds,