

Category B – DEFINITION & MEASUREMENT

VIOLENCE & VICTIMIZATION RESEARCH DIVISION'S
COMPENDIUM OF RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

1993-2009

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Category B – DEFINITION & MEASUREMENT

Development of Risk Assessment Instruments

1998-WT-VX-0019:	Field Testing Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Instruments: A Planning Study for an Experimental Evaluation
Amount:	\$97,661
PI:	Chris O’Sullivan
Monitor:	Leora Rosen
Status:	Completed

A variety of instruments are currently being used to assess a domestic abuse victim’s level of risk, but rigorous evaluation of the validity and reliability of the assessment instruments have been lacking. The investigators in this project will address these issues and conduct test of such instruments. In addition, investigators will address the need to search for practical, quasi-experimental designs that will answer the question of predictive validity while protecting victims and treating offenders appropriately. This project’s investigators will assess feasibility and design a study to provide empirical data on the value, benefits and consequences of using a variety of relatively new risk assessment instruments and techniques. The goal of the experiment will be to assess the impact on victims of the risk assessment process; to determine the validity of risk assessment factors on the six most widely-used instruments, to evaluate in particular one instrument, the Mosaic-20, and to determine the appropriate weighting of the risk factors for women to be re-victimized, stalked, assaulted, or killed by partners or ex-partners. The following project (2000-WT-VX-0011) built on this feasibility/planning study.

2000-WT-VX-0011:	Risk Assessment Validation Study
Amount:	\$1,323,241
PI:	Jacquelyn C. Campbell
Monitor:	Bernard Auchter
Status:	Completed

This project evaluates the effectiveness of four extant risk assessment instruments in predicting future danger of intimate partner violence which are already in use. The four instruments under study are the Mosaic-20 (DV-MOSAIC) and the Danger Assessment (DA), which are intended to assess the risk of lethal violence; and the Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI) and the Kingston-Screening Instrument for Domestic Violence (K-SID), which aim to predict re-assault. The four instruments and other assessments of risk will be randomly administered to 3,000 battered women who have sought help against a violent partner in various ways: by calling 911, filing for a protective order, going to a shelter or hospital emergency room, or enrolling in a program for stalking victims or troubled families. Six months later, participants will be queried about all forms of abuse and violations of court orders since the risk assessment. They will also be asked about protective measures and offender sanctions. Criminal records will be checked one year after the baseline interview.

Product: NCJ# 209731/209732

Intimate Partner Violence Risk Assessment Validation Study (2005) – J. Roehl, C. O’Sullivan, D. Webster, J. Campbell

To respond to the increased demand for services, agencies dealing with victims and offenders have adopted a number of mechanisms to identify high risk cases in order to direct scarce resources and intensive services to those most in need. The central purpose of this study was to assess the accuracy of several different approaches to predicting risk of future harm or lethality in domestic violence cases. The four methods assessed, DV-MOSAIC, DVSI, K-SID, and DA, were designed for different purposes and settings and therefore vary greatly in length and complexity. These methods were chosen because of their widespread usage and because little is known about how accurately they assess the likelihood of future violence. In addition to assessing these four methods, researchers also tested the predictive accuracy of the victims’ own assessment of re-assault and other risk factors drawn from the literature and other assessment tools. Researchers found that: 1) 91% of the cases in which a follow-up interview was conducted, some sort of action was taken after the baseline interviews that could have reduced the risk of

subsequent abuse, many of which were taken by the victim; 2) all four of the risk assessment tools were significantly related to subsequent severity of abuse, but not very highly related; 3) the DA and the victim’s self-rated level of risk had the highest correlations with subsequent abuse, although these correlations were low; 4) the risk assessment methods correctly classified most of the women who were indeed re-assaulted, (i.e. they showed the highest sensitivity); 5) despite protective actions, 31% of the women were physically abused between baseline and follow-up interviews; and 6) the risk assessment methods (including the victims’ predictions) also had a high rate of predicting re-assault for women who did not experience assaults during the follow-up period.

2001-WT-BX-0503:	Development and Validation of a Coercive Control Measure for Intimate Partner Violence
Amount:	\$430,924
PI:	Mary Ann Dutton
Monitor:	Leora Rosen
Status:	Completed

This study will develop a conceptual model of coercive control by conducting a comprehensive review of the literature followed by input from an expert panel. The study will then develop an ecologically and statistically valid measure of nonviolent coercive control using ethnographic and classical test theory methodologies. The psychometric properties of the newly-developed measure will then be assessed within each of five heterogeneous subgroups: 1) identified male IPV perpetrators (n=100); 2) identified female IPV perpetrators (n=100); 3) identified female IPV victims (n=100); and 4) a community sample of 100 males and 100 females. A community sample of 50 males and 50 females involved in a current relationship but with no reported IPV will be used to examine content validity. A preliminary test of Johnson’s typology will then be conducted using data from the validation groups.

Product: NCJ# 214438

Development and Validation of a Coercive Control Measure for Intimate Partner Violence (2006) – M.A. Dutton, L. Goodman, R. James Schmitt

Two decades of research on intimate partner violence have failed to resolve the controversy concerning gender symmetry. Based on the position by advocates and researchers, it seems clear that the notion of nonviolent coercive control should be included in future work on typologies of IPV. However, ongoing efforts to understand the relational context of IPV are hampered by two significant obstacles: 1) the field has yet to develop a clear theoretical understanding of coercive control; and 2) there exists no adequate measure of “nonviolent coercive control” for IPV. The overall goal of this project was to address the issues raised above in the development of a measure of nonviolent coercive control for use in the measurement of IPV. The study team developed: 1) a conceptual model of coercive control; and 2) an ecologically and statistically valid measure of nonviolent coercive control. The psychometric properties of the newly developed coercive control measure were assessed in a total sample that included males and females recruited from community agencies involving identified intimate partner violence victims and perpetrators, agencies providing non-IPV services to demographically similar participants, community college settings, and general public community settings. Psychometric analysis of Coercion, Demand, Surveillance, and Response scales found evidence for hypothesized factors. Convergent and predictive validity of the Coercion measure was also found.

2002-IJ-CX-0029:	Risk Management of Sexually-Reactive Children and Adolescents
Amount:	\$534,420
PI:	Robert Prentky
Monitor:	Nicole Gaskin-Laniyan
Status:	Completed

The overarching goal of the proposed research is to improve the accuracy of management and dispositional decision about high risk, sexually abusive youth, thereby decreasing the incidence of victimization and re-victimization of other children. Toward this end, this study proposed to implement two strategies: 1) examine the predictive efficacy of J-SOAP, a scale developed specifically for assessing risk with juvenile sex offenders and 2) develop and test an alternative, empirically-driven archival risk assessment scale adapted specifically for use with a broad range of sexually abusive youth. These primary goals are expected to be achieved with seven concrete objectives: 1) base rate analyses; 2) testing risk models; 3) predictive accuracy; 4) cross-validation; 5) assessing risk posed by female abusers; 6) classification; and 7) testing etiologic models. The project will select from a sample of 1,500 boys and

girls, ages 5-18, that have engaged in sexually abusive behavior and have been evaluated as part of the Assessment for Safe and Appropriate Placement process in Massachusetts. All of the subjects involved are or were in the care and custody of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services. The data analysis plan will address the objectives in five phases.

Product: NCJ# 214261

Risk Management of Sexually Abused Youth: A Follow-Up Study (2006) – R. Prentky

This study is a continuation of ongoing research designed to test the predictive accuracy of the Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol—II (J-SOAP-II), a risk assessment scale designed for juvenile sex offenders. The current study obtained data on a sufficiently large number of juvenile sexual re-offenders to examine the J-SOAP-II’s predictive validity. Although study findings provided strong evidence of the predictive validity of the J-SOAP-II, the findings were specific to a child welfare sample drawn from one northeastern state (Massachusetts). The J-SOAP cannot be assumed to have comparable predictive validity in racially and ethnically diverse samples of youth drawn from the juvenile justice system. Since the J-SOAP is used mostly with youth in the juvenile justice system, its predictive accuracy must be tested on large samples of such youth. The J-SOAP has 28 items in 4 scales: Sexual Drive and Preoccupation; Impulsive; Antisocial Behavior; Clinical Intervention; and Community Stability.

Context, Meaning and Motive

1993-IJ-CX-0036:	Divorce Mediation and Spousal Violence
Amount:	\$73,914
PI:	Jessica Pearson
Monitor:	Bernard Auchter
Status:	Completed

This study will examine how divorce mediation programs in United States courts handles the problem of domestic violence in their caseloads using a national mail survey, telephone interviews, and in-depth studies of court mediation programs. The sites selected for the in-depth analysis and the techniques they utilize with respect to domestic violence are Santa Ana, California, Tucson, Arizona, Chicago, Illinois, Middletown and Litchfield, Connecticut, and Portland, Maine.

Product: NCJ# 164658

Divorce Mediation and Domestic Violence (1997) – J. Pearson

Using the various collection procedures, the mail survey was completed by 136 administrators of public-sector, divorce mediation programs in courts to uncover official policies and procedures for identifying and handling domestic violence, and telephone interviews were completed with 30 administrators of court-based divorce mediation programs. Based on the overview of national practices and in-depth examinations of the five programs from California, Arizona, Illinois, Connecticut, and Maine; the researcher made the following conclusions with regard to divorce mediation and domestic violence: 1) domestic violence is common in divorce mediation cases but varies greatly from case to case; 2) mediator attitudes toward domestic violence have changed through training; 3) there is a need for multiple and individualistic methods for identifying domestic violence; 4) mediation approaches have changed due to the increased recognition of domestic violence; 5) definitions of “success” in mediation are changing due to domestic violence; and 6) there has been intensive communication between the domestic violence and mediation communities. In addition, researchers found that, the reactions of domestic violence advocates are mixed and that the reaction of attorneys and judges are generally favorable.

Additional NCJ Citations: 202564

1999-WT-VX-K008:	Investigating the Roles of Context, Meaning, and Method in the Measurement of Central Violence Against Women Constructs
Amount:	\$354,494
PI:	Sarah Cook
Monitor:	Leora Rosen
Status:	Completed

The goals of this project are to: 1) review measurement instruments and research practices that are currently used in research on violence against women; 2) determine the prevalence of violence against women constructs across contexts and propose and validate a new model; and 3) determine the efficiency of using computer-based data collection techniques for research on violence against women in correctional and health care settings. Twenty-nine measurement instruments used in the study of sexual assault and domestic violence will be compared for areas of consensus and disagreement. A sample of 200 active researchers will be surveyed to determine most commonly employed practices and those believed to be essential to the development of a comparable empirical database. Interviews will be conducted with two randomly selected samples of a total of 400 women to determine the prevalence of victimization across contexts (conflict, control-instigated, random, and coercive). Participants will be selected from two population groups – incarcerated women from a prison, and poor urban women in non-emergency health care clinics. A new model of victimization will be developed based on the incarcerated sample and validated with the health care sample. Validity will be assessed with multiple group structural equation modeling techniques.

Product: NCJ# 212244

Self-Reports of Traumatic Events in a Random Sample of Incarcerated Women (2005) – S. Cook, S. Smith, C. Tusher, J. Raiford

As the number of incarcerated women increases, in-depth knowledge about women’s life experiences is needed to direct treatment, pre-release planning, and supervision. This study describes the nature, scope, and socioeconomic correlates of traumatic life events in a random sample of 403 women entering a state correctional facility. Ninety-nine percent of the sample reported having experienced at least one traumatic life event; 81% experienced five or more. Reports of several experiences differed by age, race, and marital status. The most compelling findings were related to the experience of homelessness. Women who had been without a place to live for at least seven days were between 2.19 and 5.62 times more likely to have experienced 14 of 21 traumatic events. Most of these events were defined by interpersonal violence. Implications for correctional policy are discussed, particularly the potential for incarceration to replicate or ameliorate symptoms of traumatic stress through the structure and routine of the prison environment.

2000-IJ-CX-0002:	Evaluation of the Transfer of Responsibility for Child Protective Investigations to Law Enforcement Agencies
Amount:	\$744,650
PI:	Richard Gelles
Monitor:	Nicole Gaskin-Laniyan
Status:	Completed

Increasing demands on public child welfare agencies, concerns about the safety of children, and confusion between the law enforcement and service delivery functions has led some policy makers and researchers to recommend a separation between investigations and services within the child welfare system. In response to these concerns, Florida has become the first state in the country to pass legislation that allows for the transfers of the entire responsibility for child protective investigations to a law enforcement agency. Three counties in Florida (Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco) are in various stages of implementing this transfer of responsibility. The proposed project will compare the outcomes in the three counties where responsibility for investigations in being transferred to the Sheriff’s Office to determine whether children are safer, whether perpetrators of severe child abuse are more likely to face criminal sanctions, and whether there are impacts on other parts of the child welfare system. A randomized experiment will also be explored in one of the counties. The researchers will conduct a thorough process evaluation in order to describe and compare the implementation processes in the three counties and to identify the major factors that could have an impact on project outcomes.

Product: NCJ# 210489

Transfer of Responsibility for Child Protective Investigations to Law Enforcement in Florida: A Supplemental Study (2005) – S. Kinnevy, V. Huang, M. Dichter, R. Gelles

In May 1998, the Florida Legislature mandated the transfer of responsibility for child protective investigations in Manatee, Pinellas, and Pasco Counties from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to the Sheriff’s offices (SO) in those counties. The National Institute of Justice and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Florida DCF funded an evaluation on the impact of this change. The evaluation was completed in 2003 with inconclusive results. The findings indicate that the law enforcement intervention did not prove as successful as intended. This report presents supplemental findings to the original study and further explores under-examined or

unanswered questions from the original study. This secondary analysis indicates that the transfer of investigative responsibilities to law enforcement has not had the desired or expected impact. It supports the original findings that the investigative transfer had little impact on recurrence and recidivism, although there seemed to be more convergence among all counties than had been previously revealed. The study was able to establish to some extent the percentage of perpetrators likely to experience criminal sanctions in Broward County.

Additional NCJ Citations: 189634

2001-WT-BX-0500: A Multiple Models Approach to Assessing Risk of Repeat Domestic Violence
Amount: \$15,000
PI: Lynette Chow-Martin
Monitor: Richard Titus
Status: Completed

This project will categorize cases from a newly available data source (the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study) to assess how diverse risk factors affect different types of domestic violence and how those risk factors interact to influence the likelihood of a person experiencing repeat, or severe repeat, violence and another for severe repeat, intimate-partner violence. The applicant will use a recently developed risk assessment tool that features a classification-tree methodology to maximize distinctions among categories. The goal is to develop two screening tools-one for repeat violence and another for severe repeat violence-that will enable criminal justice personnel and clinicians to categorize domestic violence intimate terrorism (IT), violent resistance (VR), and mutual violent control (MVC). To assess the extent of repeat violence in each of the four categories, the applicant will calculate the base rate of partner violence, then use the multiple-models classification tree method to evaluate the likelihood of repeat violence and combine it into a composite prediction score. The application will use CHAID (Chi-squared Automatic Interaction Detector) to assess the statistical significance of the bivariate association between eligible risk factors and the dichotomous outcome measure.

2001-WT-BX-0501: Explaining the Prevalence, Context, and Consequences of Dual Arrest in Intimate Partner Cases
Amount: \$772,189
PI: David Hirschel
Monitor: Angela Moore Parmley
Status: Closed

This two-phased project will examine the factors associated with the consequences of dual arrest in intimate partner violence (IPV) cases. Phase 1 will examine the general legal and organizational context in which police responses to IPV occur. It will involve a broad-based examination of the prevalence, general context, and variance in rates of dual arrests in 3,084 police departments in 25 states. Phase 2 will be a more detailed examination of dual arrests in six jurisdictions. The project objectives are to: 1) compare the prevalence of dual-arrest rates and examine the context of IPV cases in the United States; 2) explain the variation both in dual-arrest rates and between IPV cases and other domestic-violence cases; 3) determine the proportion of police responses to IPV that resulted in no-arrest, single-arrest, or dual-arrest outcomes and how well these responses match victim needs and preferences; 4) study the factors associated with each of these outcomes; 5) identify and examine characteristics that best predict the arrest of females; 6) describe how the criminal-justice system treats women arrested for IPV cases; and 8) examine the impact of dual arrest on subsequent reports of violence.

2001-WT-BX-0502: An Empirical Examination of a Theory of Women’s Use of Violence in Intimate Relationships
Amount: \$388,803
PI: Suzanne Swan
Monitor: Leora Rosen
Status: Completed

The proposed study will examine women’s use of violence in intimate relationships. The study will recruit 450 (150 white, 150 black, and 150 Latina) from four primary health care clinics in the New Haven area. Participants will be administered an approximately two hour paid interview. A comprehensive model of women’s violence, its

correlates, antecedents, and outcomes will be tested. In addition to the quantitative portion of the study, nine focus groups; 3 African-American, 3 Latina, and 3 White, will be conducted to qualitatively assess the role of culture, ethnicity, race, and class on women’s motivations for and beliefs about their use of violence in intimate relationships. The focus group data will contribute to understanding the occurrence, meaning, and outcomes of women’s violence within and across racial/ethnic groups and will aid in the interpretation of findings derived from the quantitative analysis.

Product: NCJ# 208611

An Empirical Examination of a Theory of Women’s Use of Violence in Intimate Relationships (2004) – S. Swan, L. Gambone, A. Fields

Quantitative interviews were conducted with a community sample of 112 White, 150 African-American, and 150 Latina women. In addition to the quantitative portion of the study, 11 focus groups were conducted to assess the role of culture, ethnicity, and race in women’s motivations for and beliefs about their use of violence in relationships. To be included in the study sample, a woman must have committed at least one physically violent act against a male partner in the previous 6 months. The study examined the women’s violence in the context of their victimization from male partners; and it explored women’s motivations for using violent behavior as well as the strategies they used to cope with violence in their relationships. Also measured were the women’s experience of childhood abuse and the status of their mental health. The study found that the women were more likely to have experienced coercive control, sexual coercion, injury, and stalking from their intimate partners than they were to have engaged in these behaviors against their partners. Many participants were apparently battered women. The women’s motivations for their violent behaviors were complex and stemmed from a combination of factors. Many women used violence in self-defense, but many also used violence to control their partners, with jealousy being a frequent motivation. Poverty and a range of mental health problems also characterized the majority of women. The findings suggest that the context for women’s violence against their partners is different from that of men who abuse their female partners. Understanding these differing contexts is important in tailoring an appropriate criminal justice response to domestic violence cases that involve women as perpetrators.

2001-WT-BX-0504:	The Context, Motives, and Meaning of Mutual Intimate Partner Violence
Amount:	\$499,960
PI:	Linda Marshall
Monitor:	Leora Rosen
Status:	Completed

This project will involve an analysis of data from Project HOW: Health Outcomes of Women to test M. P. Johnson’s model of intimate partner violence. The goal is to study intimate partner violence from the perspective of low-income women in three ethnic groups (African-American, Euro-American, Mexican-American). Investigators will interview women who participated in that project, shifting the study focus from men to women. This study will address five gaps in the literature: 1) the context of IPV; 2) motives of IPV; 3) the meaning of IPV; 4) how these factors function to affect women’s health and use of the criminal justice system; and 5) the perceived mutuality of control, threats of violence, acts of violence and sexual aggression between partners will be used to evaluate whether Johnson’s typology (common couple violence, violence resistance, mutual violence control, intimate terrorism) effectively represents women’s experiences. By disseminating the results, this project will achieve the objective of impacting research and developing the knowledge necessary to enhance prevention and intervention efforts through victim assistance services and the justice system.

Product: The Context, Motives, and Meaning of Partner Violence: Effects on Women’s Mental Health and Use of the Justice System – L. Marshall, R. Weston, J. Temple, S. Outcalt

This study addressed knowledge gaps about male and female intimate partner violence by testing a model of ten major domains: 1) women’s personal history and past victimization (distal context); 2) environment; 3) personality-state; 4) relationship (intermediate context); 5) women’s behavior for proximal content, 6) motives, and 7) emotion and intimate partner violence (immediate context); as well as their partner’s behavior for 8) proximal content, 9) motives, and 10) emotion and intimate partner violence. Eight hundred and thirty-five volunteers were interviewed six times since 1995 and at Wave 6, 39.5% of the sample were African American, 29.9% were Euro-American, and 30.6% were Mexican American. Structural equation models were used to identify interrelationships among the domains and effects on outcomes. Outcomes were psychological and emotional distress and justice system use. The following proposed paths were supported, from: 1) relationship to proximal content; 2) proximal content to motives

and emotions; 3) motives to emotions; 4) emotions to distress; 5) and environment to relationships and justice system use. Patterns differed by perpetrator of violence and ethnicity.

2001-WT-BX-0505:	Female on Female Violence in an Urban Area
Amount:	\$14,878
PI:	Nancy Hirschinger
Monitor:	Leora Rosen
Status:	Completed

The aim of the proposed study is to examine female-on-female assault in a population-based study of predominately black woman living in an urban, low income area. The study respondents originally were interviewed in hospital emergency departments after seeking medical treatment for intentional interpersonal injuries. This research is one of the first studies to examine female-on-female assault across a range of non-intimate relationships including family members, friends/acquaintances and strangers. It is well established that violence is a major health problem for black women, yet little is known about black women’s involvement in assault with other women. The major goals of this dissertation are to characterize the circumstances surrounding non-intimate female-on-female urban violence and to develop and test the merits of a theory of female-on-female assault. The proposed research provide descriptive information on assaults to women and an analysis of injured women with the goal of identifying differences in risk factors by gender of the antagonist. In addition, this research will propose and test an integrated theoretical framework that draws on situational theory, and structural-cultural perspective, and sexual rivalry.

Product: NCJ#199366

Study of Female-on-Female Intentional Injuries in an Urban Community: A Proposal and Test of Gendered Theory (2002) – N. Hirschinger

In this study, 167 females were injured by other females and 155 females were injured by males. Most injured women, 82%, were victimized by acquaintances/friends or family members. Violence against women by other women tended to occur in the view of witnesses. The most prevalent form of a violent act was one-on-one bodily physical contact, 83%, and the most frequents location of injury was the head or face. A significant minority, 23%, were stabbed or cut. Multivariate logistic regression revealed that women were more likely to engage in violence over relationship issues and personal esteem, and were more likely to report physical abuse by a mother figure during childhood. In contrast, women injured by men were more likely to sustain an injury during predatory crime and to have a history of partner abuse. This report advises that future policies should recognize the adaptation function of violence in the lives of urban females; recognize the central role of relationship in the lives of women, develop conflict prevention/intervention programs and policies based on a gendered approach; recognize the drug/alcohol and violence nexus and weapon availability; recognize the diverse roles assumed by females involved in violence; increase public safety within communities; and recognize the need to minimize cultural stereotypes against Black females and the risk of victim blaming.

2005-WG-BX-0007:	Stalking Victim’s Journey: Offender Patterns, Victim Help-Seeking and the Criminal Justice Response
Amount:	\$277,807
PI:	Chris O’Sullivan
Monitor:	Christine Crossland
Status:	Completed

This study will examine how interactions between victim assistance, criminal justice system, victims, and stalkers influence the short and long term persistence, escalation, and desistance of stalking among crime victims in New York City. Further, this study will examine differential patterns of help-seeking, criminal justice, and social services responses across cultural groups. The prospective design will include in-depth structured interviews to be conducted with a sample of 200 women who may not have labeled their current or ex-intimate partner’s behavior as stalking. The interview instrument will capture data in seven domains: 1) demographic information/individual history on the victim and stalker; 2) prior relationship; 3) stalking behaviors; 4) physical violence; 5) victim’s knowledge of stalker and stalker’s knowledge of victim; 6) victim’s assessment of stalker’s motivation and risk; and 7) help-seeking and interventions. Multivariate analyses will be used to examine relationships among the categorical variables, identify predictors of escalation and measure the correlates of criminal justice and social services interventions. A further goal of this study is to test and refine existing stalker typologies.

Product: NCJ #227220

Understanding Intimate Partner Stalking: Implications For Offering Victim Services (2009) – S. Botuck, P. Berretty, S. Cho, C. Tax, M. Archer, & L. Cattaneo

To help fill the knowledge gap regarding best practices in dealing with victims of intimate partner stalking, this study describes the experience of intimate partner stalking as it occurs over time. This study had six objectives: (1) Describe the stalking behaviors the participants experienced over the course of the study; (2) Describe participants' stalking-related experiences in terms of perceived safety and stalking-related distress; (3) Describe participants' physical and mental health status over the course of the study; (4) Describe the relationships among these experiences and their relationship to stalking behavior over time; (5) Describe the extent of participants' contacts with criminal justice and victim assistance sources over the course of the study; and (6) Describe the relationships between stalking and contacts with criminal justice and victim assistance sources. Through this study, the authors concluded the following: (1) there is no consistently effective intervention across time points; neither contact with victim service nor with criminal justice professionals is uniformly effective; (2) what is helpful to victims appears to change over time; (3) practice should be conducted with an explicit understanding that what works today may not work tomorrow; and (4) contingencies for future contact with sources of help should be outlined.

2007-WG-BX-0013:	Custody Evaluators' Beliefs About Domestic Abuse Allegations
Amount:	\$318, 212
PI:	Daniel Saunders
Monitor:	Bethany Backes
Status:	Ongoing

The goal of this research is to reduce violence against women and their children by improving the knowledge and ability of custody evaluators and other professionals who make recommendations to the court regarding child custody and visitation matters. The safety of women can be jeopardized when ongoing intimate partner violence is not adequately considered in the court arrangements regarding child custody and visitation. Ultimately this study aims to prevent violent crimes against women by eliminating particular vulnerable occasions and having decision makers focus on the safety needs of abused mothers at times of separation. The study will investigate the extent to which child custody evaluators and other professionals who make family court recommendations hold the belief that women commonly make false allegations of domestic violence in divorce proceedings. Both quantitative and qualitative methods will be used. In a survey of beliefs, the primary respondents will be 445 custody evaluators. In addition, 70 family court judges and relevant court staff will participate in the survey. For comparison purposes, 70 domestic violence advocates will also be surveyed. Qualitative interviews will be conducted with 24 noncustodial domestic abuse survivors in four states. A review of their custody evaluation documents will be conducted. In addition, interviews will be conducted with the key decision-makers in their cases. The findings of the study will form the foundation for studies of training for decision makers and for policy development

For an index of all grants, go to <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/223572-grants-index.pdf>.