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National Institute of Justice

**Broadening Our Understanding of Violence Against Women  
Among Racial, Ethnic and Cultural Minorities: Workshop  
Summary**

Sponsored by Violence and Victimization Division, National Institute of Justice, U.S.  
Department of Justice  
Held October 11-12, 2001

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Sponsored by Violence and Victimization Division, National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice

Held October 11–12, 2001

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Thursday, October 11, 2001

## **Welcome**

**Sally T. Hillsman**  
**Deputy Director**  
**National Institute of Justice**

Dr. Hillsman said the new NIJ director, Sarah V. Hart, is concerned that research sponsored by NIJ better serve our country's different cultural, ethnic, and racial communities. This is a time of growth and transformation for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Dr. Hillsman said, with several new presidential appointees taking office, including John Gillis as Director of the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC); Diane Stuart heading the Violence Against Women Office (VAWO), and Assistant Attorney General Deborah Daniels directing OJP. In times of transformation, she said, it is important to focus on the future.

Dr. Hillsman said NIJ has played a significant leadership role in research on violence against women, working hard to secure funding for research in a time where there are unmet needs in other areas. The Congressional allocation of \$5 to \$6 million for research carries a responsibility to use the money wisely with respect to policies and practices, she said; and in the second Violence Against Women Act, Congress recognized NIJ's role in organizing Federal collaboration for research. Dr. Hillsman recognized Mr. Aucter for his role in coordinating and managing many of these collaborative efforts.

NIJ sponsors both research and program evaluation and two dimensions of that work—collaboration and inclusiveness—should be emphasized. Collaboration among Federal agencies has been an important theme in NIJ’s research programs. Inclusiveness ensures that researchers and practitioners work together more closely so that the research has practical implications.

Dr. Hillsman said practitioners often have been drawn into the research in ways not traditional to the social sciences. Although NIJ’s Violence and Victimization staff have tried to encourage this, it is often difficult for researchers who are not used to collaborating with practitioners. NIJ has also tried to include the voices of women who have been victims, she said; and ethnic, racial, and cultural differences are also an important part of NIJ’s thinking about inclusiveness.

This workshop is very future oriented, Dr. Hillsman said. Everyone must think about how to do their jobs better, how to be of greater benefit to various minority communities, how to include those who have been left out of the conversation, how to develop research strategies that are well suited to the task, and how to ensure that products based on scientific inquiry make a difference to people. It helps bridge the gap when users participate in the research process, she said, but it is also a very complicated situation.

Dr. Hillsman said a new NIJ solicitation is forthcoming, in addition to the current solicitation on sexual assault. NIJ is also starting an intramural research project to look at the role of shelters, with a focus on diverse ethnic and economic groups. There has been comparatively little research on shelters, she said, and other researchers are encouraged to explore this area as well.

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## Introductions and Key Issues

Dr. Hillsman asked participants to introduce themselves and note one or two key issues they would like the workshop to address.

**Margaret Zahn** said she is on leave from North Carolina State University for a year to head NIJ’s Violence and Victimization Division and has studied violence, especially homicide, for 30 years. Some of her research has focused on violence against women, she said, including work on female homicide victims and projects involving Puerto Rican women and people from other Hispanic cultures. Dr. Zahn also noted her background as an educational administrator and said she worked with Navaho and Hopi tribes when she was with Northern Arizona University. After moving to the South, Dr. Zahn said, she “started looking at homicides of African Americans, and broadly at race and crime.” Her ultimate goal is to develop a theory that explains violence among different communities.

**Leora Rosen**, an NIJ program manager with the Violence and Victimization Division, noted that she comes from South Africa and is a social anthropologist. She is interested in the meaning of diversity when approaching any kind of problem and has a central interest in violence against women. Dr. Rosen said that toward the end of her 13 years working for the U.S. military as a civilian, she began looking into issues of violence against military women.

**Ileana Arias** said she began her research on violence against women 15 years ago, first by looking at batterers and then victims. She is now most interested in “preventing violence altogether” and pointed out that this is an area in which the research has failed to focus.

**Bonnie Duran**, who is with the University of New Mexico, noted that she is a mixed race person who was born in Louisiana and has also lived in San Francisco. She said she has done research with the Navajo Nation and has a background in trauma and mental health research.

**James Gray**, a program specialist with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), noted that some of the workshop participants are also part of African-American and Latina alliances against domestic violence funded by DHHS. He has been involved in family violence efforts for 20 years, starting in the Army; has worked in family advocacy in both Germany and the United States; and recently received a doctorate in social work from Howard University. Dr. Gray said he is interested in spiritual well being and other factors as they relate to African-American men who batter.

**Randy Magen**, who is with the University of Alaska School of Social Work, said that as a researcher, his focus has been on violence against women and child maltreatment. He is now doing research in rural Alaska, 300 miles from health services and 100 miles from a shelter for battered women. Dr. Magen said he wanted to focus on how research and service approaches need to differ in different communities.

**Lorraine Malcoe**, who is with the University of New Mexico, said she began studying violence against women in Oklahoma about 6 years ago under a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Malcoe said her research has primarily involved Plains tribes in western Oklahoma, and that she has been looking at both risk and protective factors for intimate partner violence. Since coming to New Mexico, she has been studying female arrestees and the violence in their lives and has found that often they have been traumatized from a very young age. Dr. Malcoe is interested in understanding the impact of social policies and conditions—for example, high unemployment—on violence against women.

**Leslye Orloff** said that 20 years ago, she was the only Spanish-speaking attorney in the District of Columbia working in the domestic violence arena. She noted her background working in community-based advocacy, developing services for battered immigrant women, and conducting research on immigrant women. Ms. Orloff said she has long seen the benefits of good research—for example, its influence on congressional policy—but has been unable to convince the National Network to include “Working with Researchers” on its conference agenda.

**Julia Perilla**, a member of the psychology faculty at Georgia State University, said she was a community advocate long before she was a researcher. She directs a new center on violence against women at Georgia State, where staff are inviting community service providers, advocates, and legal representatives to talk about research needs. The center serves not only battered women but their batterers and children, she said, because that is what the women requested. Dr. Perilla also works with the Immigrant and Refugee Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Much of what she is learning about Latinas, she said, also applies to other groups. Dr. Perilla said her most recent interest is the issue of women who partner with women—which is also being explored at the request of the community—and that the research literature on this topic is almost nonexistent.

**Winnie Reed**, acting director of NIJ’s Crime Control and Prevention Division, said she is dealing with violence against women issues in her work on American Indians. This workshop, she said, represents an opportunity to work across divisions at NIJ. She said she is especially interested in evaluation.

**Callie Rennison** said she works on the National Crime Victimization Survey for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and tries to publish findings from the survey on violence against women at every opportunity.

**Beth Richie**, a faculty member in Criminal Justice and Women's Studies at the University of Illinois-Chicago, said she is also a member of Incite!, a women of color organization. Incite!, she said, "tries to center the issues regarding violence against women of color, not add on to existing initiatives" after an agenda has already been set. Dr. Richie is finishing a project at the Cook County Jail and other correctional facilities. Although the project looked at violence against women as a separate issue, she said, it is deeply embedded in issues of substance abuse and poverty. Dr. Richie said she would like the workshop to address "overreliance on the criminal justice system and other systems that do not necessarily support community life and community development." For example, she said, because of public housing requirements and a heightened law enforcement response, calling the police is the only—but not always the best—option for some women. Dr. Richie would also like to discuss how to more effectively mentor new scholars in this work. She said there appears to be an aging-out process and that either there are not as many researchers interested in the issue, or there are not as many people with both advocacy and academic backgrounds.

**Fernando Soriano**, who is with the Department of Human Development, at the University of California-San Marcos, said his primary area of expertise is adolescent violence. He became involved in domestic violence issues, he said, when Latino communities began asking him for data on the problem. "We cannot answer many of the questions that need to be answered to fund projects in the community," he said. Dr. Soriano said his background is in psychology, with a focus on the role of culture in behavior and how to measure the cultural influence. The Latino population is very heterogeneous, he said, but even when the focus is on one group—for example, Mexican Americans—it is important to understand cultural influences and take them into consideration.

NIJ Director **Sarah V. Hart** said she has a great interest in violence against women issues. As a prosecutor, she said, she was "extremely upset by the devaluation of domestic violence" by some of the police detectives she encountered. While working at Round House, prosecutors sometimes had to search for a judge to get a protective order issued. Ms. Hart recalled that while doing pro bono work for the rape crisis center, in one case she was asked to take, a judge permitted the rapist, who was the victim's father, to reenter the girl's room. The judge also subpoenaed the victim's files and those of her mother. Later, a different judge ruled that the victim's privacy rights had been violated and barred the use of the subpoenaed records. Ms. Hart said these experiences made a tremendous impression on her. She also talked of having a close relative who was a rape victim and noted the devastating effect this had on the victim's school performance and mental health.

Ms. Hart said there were some excellent programs at NIJ before she arrived, and that she is looking forward to working with the Office of Science and Technology's Division on DNA evidence and its use in solving sexual assault crimes. The country has not done a good job in testing DNA samples, she said, noting that rape kits have not been processed systematically and that DNA databases are incomplete because DNA samples are not routinely taken from "maxed out" sex offenders.

**Debra Stoe**, acting director of the NIJ Crime Mapping Research Center, said she is trying to convey the connection between crime mapping and domestic violence. For example, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems capture data on domestic violence 911 calls in which the officer resolves the situation in the field and does not file a report. The information is available, she said, but it does not get shared. Ms. Stoe said that recently she has been involved with Native American issues.

**Dian Sujono**, who is with the Violence Against Women Office, said she has been an advocate and a prosecutor and has trained law enforcement officers. Key issues to address, she said, are the need to consider "diversity within diverse minority groups"—for example, different cultures within the group labeled Asian and Pacific Islander—and the need for a greater emphasis on stalking and sexual assault.

**Richard Titus** said he monitors victim services grants for NIJ, conducts research as part of NIJ's intramural program, and has done research on low-income communities. He noted that different groups may use different terms for various concepts and said these differences need to be taken into account when constructing surveys and doing research.

**Antonia Vann** said she runs a small domestic violence agency in Milwaukee, which provides mental health services as well as outpatient services for sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, and other health problems. The agency also works with males and females in prisons. Key issues for discussion, she said, include defining what it really means to collaborate on a research agenda and exploring how to increase the capacity of practitioners to initiate research. She noted that many practitioners have data and know researchers they could work with.

**Mieko Yoshihama** said she was an advocate by training, working with community-based organizations in Los Angeles that assist Asian immigrant and refugee women. "I was dissatisfied with the research I saw," she said, "and went back to school to learn to do it." Dr. Yoshihama said she has been trying to understand the socio-cultural roots of violence against women and is interested in methodological approaches to the research. She is also trying to capture women's lifetime experiences and understand the cumulative effects of violence and oppressive practices, including oppressive political and social forces. She said the effects of criminal justice system interventions versus other types of interventions are still not well understood and that the safety of women who might participate in research gets overlooked. Even sending a mail questionnaire to a household is dangerous, she said. Dr. Yoshihama also noted a need to consider differences within groups, pointing out that Asian groups are very complex.

**Edna Erez**, a professor at Kent State University, said she has done research on victims, violence, and intimate violence against women. When she traveled throughout the world on sabbatical, she said, she was struck by the fact that immigrants are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of crime—a topic that was addressed well by Martinez in the NIJ Criminal Justice 2000 series.<sup>[1]</sup> The most prevalent type of victimization among immigrant women is domestic violence, she said, noting that she has looked at this in partnership with Leslye Orloff. Their project involved interviewing women representing 35 countries and 14 languages. The issues among these women are more similar than different, she said.

**William Riley**, who is with the Department of Health and Human Services, emphasized that there is a disconnect between research and practice in domestic violence that needs to be overcome. He also said it is important to understand and consider the diversity among cultures.

**Etiony Aldarondo** participated in the workshop via speakerphone. Dr. Aldarondo is a professor at Boston College and co-chair of the National Latino Alliance Against Domestic Violence.

Other workshop participants from the NIJ Violence and Victimization Division were **Bernard Auchter**, director of the Violence Against Women and Family Violence Research Program; **Angela Moore Parmley**, social science program manager; **Anna Jordan**, social science program manager; **Katherine Darke**, social science program manager; and **Natalan Zachary**, program assistant.

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## Group Discussion: Benefits and Relevance of the Research to Minority Communities

**Mr. Auchter** posed two questions for discussion:

- How has the research benefited minority communities?
- Has the research been relevant to minority communities?

### **Similarities Among Minority Groups: Victimization Experiences, Family Influences, Effects of Poverty**

**Dr. Erez** said that sometimes people think of minorities in terms of “they” and “us,” but there are often similarities between majority and minority groups, including similarities with respect to violence against women. Privacy, for example, is very important to both Islamic and white communities. There is sometimes a tendency to “culturalize” or “racialize” violence and to think of it as endemic to minority communities, Dr. Erez said, but it is not; for example, white women are sometimes shot in domestic violence situations. Research has benefited everyone, she said, but some of the solutions need to be adapted to meet the needs of different groups. Dr. Erez emphasized that the similarities are much more pronounced than the differences. She also cautioned against “homogenizing” minorities, as there are many differences between and within various minority groups.

**Dr. Perilla** noted a need to rethink the roles of different institutions in addressing violence against women and to get beyond remedial responses. She asked whether the goal was to continue what has been done so far or to look toward true transformation. “For example,” she said, “How do we expand the methodologies to include not only the women but also their children?” Dr. Perilla said that comparison studies are good, but that when it comes to actually working in communities, the interaction of poverty with violence against women is more important than immigrants’ differences from other groups.

### **Differences in Violence Between and Within Different Minority Groups: Issues of Class, Theoretical Framework, Immigrant Status**

**Dr. Richie** said that although victimization experiences are similar, she is inclined to see violence as different among different groups. We must think more precisely about class, she said. This is a very significant factor in the African-American community with respect to the experience of violence. Dr. Richie said there is a need to add to the question about minorities and ask why the research has not served communities of color very well. For example, the battered woman’s syndrome references a particular kind of woman who has a particular kind of response to domestic violence. Women who fall outside that framework do not stand to benefit from the concept and the research related to it. One negative consequence of having such a generalized understanding, she said, is the inability of women in particular communities (prison, for example) to access services.

**Ms. Orloff** added that much of the work on domestic violence assumes that women will leave the situation in which they are battered, but this is not the reality for many immigrant women. For this reason, she said, her research has been looking at the use of protective orders (POs) even when women are staying. There is a need to measure the effectiveness of POs based on whether violence is reduced, not in terms of whether the orders are violated.

## **Benefits of the Research: Influence on Policy, General Benefits in Filling Information Gaps**

With respect to policy, **Ms. Orloff** said, data such as that produced from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is very important; without it, funding for research, programs, and policy development would not be forthcoming. The data would be of greater benefit if there were a better focus on various cultural communities, she said, but the NCVS is very valuable.

**Dr. Soriano** said that most would agree there are some benefits from the research, regardless of whether it focused on specific groups, but there is a need to articulate what those benefits are and how relevant existing data sets are for minority communities. Socioeconomic status is a definite correlate of domestic violence, he said. Other correlates include residential movement, the breaking up of support networks, alienation, and family functioning, but these experiences may differ among groups and subgroups. Dr. Soriano suggested NIJ consider developing a paper on how the existing studies are relevant or not to minority communities.

## **Drawbacks of the Research: Lack of Relevance to Practice, Inattention to Context, Broad Answers to Broad Questions**

**Ms. Vann** said those who receive research grants are benefiting, but much of the research is not useful for programs and service delivery. It is not clear, she said, how the data and information from much of the research can be applied to improve the lives of those who are experiencing the problem. She added that the context in which violence is perpetrated is important, and that this context is very different in poor communities for the victim, the abuser, and the children. Substance abuse and mental health issues also need to be addressed. "Practice needs to inform the research," she said, "and that's what is not really happening."

**Dr. Arias** added that with respect to context, ethnicity, culture, and race are discussed as if these concepts are commonly understood; however, there is the issue of heterogeneity and a need to distinguish differences within groups. We need to identify the contexts we are interested in, she said, and define those contexts—find ways to make them more concrete and specific—to help inform the research.

**Dr. Magen** said the unit of analysis must be considered; for example, a slap is a slap, but precedents and antecedents differ. We have asked broad questions and have gotten broad answers, he said. This has resulted in institutionalizing responses, but it is a one-size-fits-all approach. We need to ask how these particular responses work in various communities.

## **Issues for Future Research: New Variables, Context, Inclusion, Within Group Differences, Victim and Community Isolation, Racism, Sexism, Poverty**

**Dr. Malcoe** encouraged other participants to give their views on the future research they believed would be important. She noted several issues: the effects of partner abuse on children, the much higher incidence of intimate partner violence among the extremely poor, and violence in the lives of women who are in prison. "Do we know enough already?" she asked. "Do we need to move on? Do we need different types of intervention trials? What kinds of data would you find valuable?"

**Dr. Erez** said there were many critical variables that could be explored—not only gender but religion, class, number of years in the country, and others—and agreed that context is important. She noted that although the impact of protective orders may be much more pronounced in immigrant communities, it also has some broader relevance.

**Dr. Yoshihama** said exclusion is one problem with respect to Asian communities. Asian people are usually not included in the studies; most studies are done in English only or English and Spanish, and the results “lump all of the cultures and generations together.” In addition, she said, most of the large, federally funded research projects assume there is only one domestic violence phenomenon. Moreover, it is not just a matter of being poor or not poor; people face a variety of economic challenges. We also need to look at the macro context, she said, noting that at the time of the O.J. Simpson case, service organizations in some communities saw a significant increase in calls, whereas her shelter (which serves Asian women) did not.

**Ms. Vann** added that context has to do with both the isolation of the community and the isolation of the victims themselves. She said the Milwaukee African-American community is isolated politically and economically, and it is also isolated from resources. Victims within those communities are further isolated and their help-seeking behaviors are limited. Ms. Vann also pointed to the influence of racism on African Americans’ view of the criminal justice system. Also important is class. “There are African Americans who would not use my agency’s services,” she said. Ms. Vann also noted that the city has “a huge group of 13- and 14-year-old prostitutes who work for food, shelter, housing, and clothes.”

**Dr. Duran** noted that her own concept of domestic violence among a group of Native American women, which was based on data she obtained, did not seem to be of particular importance to the Native American women who were working in the domestic violence area. This may have been because the research had not taken into consideration the broader issues of racism, sexism, and poverty, she said.

### **Research as Social Change**

**Dr. Aldarondo** said the first discussion question suggested that the research that has been funded was intended to promote social change, but that he was not sure that was the case. “Somehow we think if we have good research it will fall into the hands of good people who will make good policies,” he said. But to achieve social change, he added, it is necessary to speak to a number of people. He asked, “How should studies aimed at policy audiences differ from other studies, and not just with respect to methodologies?” Our work needs to be balanced, he said, between understanding the issues and promoting social change.

**Dr. Perilla** said current methods usually stop when researchers find correlations. This may be fine for an academic, she said, but is not useful for communities. Dr. Perilla said the ability of research to change people’s lives has to do with how the research is conceptualized and the tools that are used. For example, there are resilient women who are also extremely poor. It is important to learn from these women, but this cannot be done by asking yes or no questions or even by using a Likert scale. The researcher needs to engage in a dialogue with these women. Dr. Perilla said she doubts the validity of some of the studies that are coming out. “Interviewees, I think, are telling what they think the researcher wants to hear.”

**Dr. Richie** said part of the problem is that “we can’t unpack big terms like ‘economic status’ so they make sense for either research or practice.” She observed that early on, people worked hard not to “pathologize” domestic violence to any one group, but that researchers have not figured out how to translate the information we have into good analyses or good interventions.

“What we do is study poor people, not the impact of poverty on people’s lives,” Dr. Richie said. For example, people who are poor may not trust service agencies. It is important to look at the specific impact of policies on violence against women. Policies like welfare reform have differential impacts

on women. Dr. Richie encouraged the group to think about these “macro forces,” not just individual characteristics.

**Ms. Sujono** said some workers in Asian communities have requested community or regional needs assessments. She noted that while the VAWA Arrest Policies Program encourages arrest, this is not true of all violence against women programs. **Ms. Rennison** pointed out that different research methods are needed to serve different purposes. Qualitative studies may help describe or explain a problem, whereas survey results may not explain but can call attention to issues. There is no one type of study that will solve everyone’s information needs, she said.

**Dr. Yoshihama** noted two difficulties with violence against women research in general: (1) The types of violence studied are being defined by researchers; and (2) researchers are not making a distinction between poverty and being poor. In this country, she said, the disparity between wealth and poverty is great, and we cannot separate being poor from the larger picture.

**Ms. Orloff** said that with respect to conducting research to achieve social change, she is concerned that not enough is known about how to intervene in different cultural contexts. We need to know more about what it means to be culturally competent in the delivery of services, and to consider the differences between services provided by mainstream organizations and those provided by coalitions. This could give people who work in communities some concrete tools, she said, and might help STOP program administrators decide what to fund based on what is likely to be successful.

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## Luncheon Presentation

### Prevalence and Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence Against Native American Women in Western Oklahoma

**Lorraine Halinka Malcoe**  
**University of New Mexico**

Dr. Malcoe presented highlights of this study, which was funded by the HHS/DOJ Interagency Consortium on Violence Against Women and Family Violence. She explained that a local WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Office in Western Oklahoma had talked to her about having seen clients who had been abused. WIC staff wanted to know more about the extent and nature of the domestic violence problem among the Native American women it served. Dr. Malcoe said she discovered very little published research—perhaps a total of 10 to 15 studies—on intimate partner violence among Native American women.

This study proceeded in two phases, Dr. Malcoe explained. The first phase was a qualitative study that involved 37 women. The purpose of this phase was to obtain general information on risk and protective factors. Dr. Malcoe explained that the study tested several hypotheses: that the partner’s severe alcohol use, economic stressors, and other chronic stressors were associated with severe intimate partner violence; and that good communication and social support served as protective factors.

The second, quantitative phase of the study involved 431 women of childbearing age. Most were recruited through the WIC Office, although some were identified through a local vocational/technical program and through various tribal facilities. The research protocol was approved by both a university Institutional Review Board and a tribal board. The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) was used,

but it was modified to some extent. For example, participants were asked about “any type of sex” rather than asked to specify anal, vaginal, or oral sex. In addition, the CTS assumes that more conflict equals more violence, but there is very little research on this, Dr. Malcoe said, and is one of the current criticisms of the CTS. With this in mind, the study explored reasons and “triggers” for arguments by adding 13 questions based on the qualitative phase of the study. Reasons for arguments included drinking, jealousy, family factors, and others. The TWEAK (Tolerance, Worried, Eye-opener, Amnesia, Kut down) screening test was used to identify alcoholic and heavy binge drinkers.

Dr. Malcoe reviewed highlights of the study findings. She said it was important to understand that one-third of the women’s male partners were not Native American men. In response to a question about limitations of the research, Dr. Malcoe noted difficulties in trying to enlist a representative sample of women and pointed out that one-third of the women did not have telephones in their homes. However, working with the WIC Office helped to overcome this problem. She added that childcare was an issue for many of the women, and the researchers often had to either help arrange childcare or provide money for it. Interviewer selection is also important, she said, as well as the willingness of the principal investigator to listen to the interviewers when they report difficulties and adjust survey questions accordingly. Dr. Malcoe also noted that the interviewing process has an emotional impact on the interviewers because they feel they are not in a position to help the victims.

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## Group Discussion: How To Involve Communities of Color in the Research

**Dr. Moore Parmley** said that one prominent issue in the previous discussion was the need for definitions—how to define culture, for example. She asked the group to consider these questions: How should we approach communities of color for research purposes, and who should do the approaching?

### **Issues of Trust, Culture, and a Need for More Minority Researchers**

**Dr. Perilla** said researchers need to step back and ask why they want to do research on a particular issue. Just because a person is interested in an issue does not mean that person is the right one to do the research.

“There is a very healthy mistrust in our communities between researchers and practitioners,” she said. Community members want to know what they will gain from the research. When a researcher is new to a community and when the issue is as difficult and dangerous as violence against women, Dr. Perilla said, there must be a period of time when the researcher establishes trust with those who will be participating. “We cannot be sure the data is valid without this,” she said. “Who conducts the interview makes a tremendous difference, and researchers need to listen when interviewers express concerns about questions they have trouble asking.” Dr. Perilla said researchers do not have to be of the same color or ethnicity as the community participants, but there must be a collaboration. Boundaries have more to do with whether the researchers have a presence in the community, she said, than with race or ethnicity.

**Dr. Soriano** said access is a significant challenge and that part of the challenge is cultural. For many people, being a respondent in a study is a novel idea and an intrusive one. Also, participants’ lack of mobility can cause delays in the research process.

"There are not enough minority investigators, period," Dr. Soriano said, "And those we have are not necessarily linked with senior researchers who can mentor them. Having more well-trained minority researchers is not only good for minority communities, it is good for science." Dr. Soriano said being a minority person does make a difference, regardless of the researcher's experience with the subject. But the research is meager, he said, noting that he encourages investigators—minority or not—to get involved. "You don't need to be a minority researcher; you do need to understand the cultural groups you're studying and the challenges you face."

### **Collaborations: Benefits, Tradeoffs, and Issues of Trust and Inclusion**

**Ms. Orloff** said finding common ground between researchers and the community helps address the access problem, but there are tradeoffs. Researchers gain access into the community by working with the community-based organization (CBO). If there is a common goal, it is best to be true partners, with part of the research money going to the CBO. But if researchers proceed this way, she said, the validity of the research is often questioned. She also pointed out that many immigrants are undocumented, and that new immigrants face different issues than those who have lived here for a while. New laws since October 2000 may make immigration relief available, she said.

**Dr. Erez** noted that the solution to problems such as trust and language barriers may not always be what outsiders think is best. For example, police may enlist an interpreter, but responses may still be distorted because of a victim's shame.

**Dr. Magen** noted other challenges: determining whom to trust within a community and finding accurate information about the extent of a problem. These were issues when he was asked to help start a shelter in rural Alaska, he said. Various community members had different views about the extent of the problem, the nature of the problem, and what to do about it. A researcher has to be careful not to align too much with one particular faction, he said.

On the other hand, there is the issue of community members' trust of the researcher, Dr. Magen said. For example, one community member who initially was reluctant to participate said, "the only white people who come in are madmen, missionaries, and mercenaries."

The project period was extended considerably, Dr. Magen said, in order to address community needs and not merely push the research agenda. For example, training was provided at the community's request. "We didn't do 'Domestic Violence 101,'" he added. Rather, the training addressed the subject from a variety of perspectives. This relates to the themes of collaboration and inclusion noted earlier in the workshop, Dr. Magen said. "The community asked for [the training], and it was our responsibility to make it useful for them. The community doesn't want researchers coming in and asking only negative things about the community. It is important to identify strengths as well."

**Ms. Vann** said that because hers is the only African-American domestic violence program in the State, she is approached by many researchers. Often, however, the grant opportunity has been identified and the research agenda set before she arrives at the first meeting. Researchers want to name her as a partner in the decisionmaking process, she said, but "the decisions are already made and then shared with me." Ms. Vann said collaborations with individuals who work within systems—rather than the systems themselves—have served her agency well. She agreed that research validity is important and that this is influenced by congressional funding. However, often the issue that gets further study is the issue that "misses the mark." Community organizations often are not asked about a particular community's needs or about the organization's needs for data.

The investigator's race and ethnicity do influence the process, she added. For example, for one study, young social workers/researchers alienated older African Americans when they called them by

their first names. "How the information is gathered is just as important as what is gathered," she said.

**Dr. Moore Parmley** asked for recommendations on how to involve more researchers of color. She asked whether solicitations should contain a requirement that researchers of color be included; and if not, what advice can be offered to funders?

**Ms. Vann** noted that large "grand diva" programs are driving policy decisions and can easily access resources. Smaller CBOs need technical assistance and resources that can increase their capacity to participate in research.

**Dr. Malcoe** said that as a reviewer of violence against women grant applications, she has heard these criticisms: that the proposed researcher-practitioner partnership was not a true partnership; or that the approach does not meet the standards of good research. Practitioner reviewers have advised NIJ to provide resources to the CBOs before the solicitation is even released, she said, but there is no funding for such a participatory process, and it usually takes at least a year to form and strengthen a partnership. Moreover, community-researcher partnerships are not fostered in most academic institutions, requiring researchers who wish to take such an approach to go against the organizational structures in which they function. Small grants designed specifically to foster collaborations could go a long way, she said, but someone with power and money has to say the approach is important and support it.

**Dr. Perilla** said researchers must think about whether they are "just jumping at the next RFP [request for proposals] that comes out," or whether they are "working on something that speaks to our hearts and that may be able to effect social changes." The message needs to be conveyed in graduate schools that researchers must get connected to communities before the RFPs come out. Although this takes time, she said, it works.

### **Ideas To Promote Collaboration and Become More Inclusive**

Several participants suggested ways to promote researcher-community collaboration. **Ms. Orloff** noted that VAWA grant recipients are required to go to conferences and suggested that NIJ might require researchers to go to practitioner meetings, including meetings of workers serving various cultural, ethnic, and racial minorities. **Dr. Aldarondo** suggested coming up with a "community solidarity review" process, similar to an IRB (Institutional Review Board) process, in which researchers would have to demonstrate how they will make alliances with communities and in which the quality of their connection with the community can be assessed. **Ms. Sujono** suggested this might involve a document similar to an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). **Dr. Duran** noted that the Navajo Nation has its own IRB. Researchers must submit a paper describing how the research will be useful to people on the reservation or in the tribe. If other communities of color would do that, she said, research might be less exploitative. She noted that for the past 2 years, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has sponsored research to reduce racial disparities, increase the cadre of Native American researchers, and increase partnerships between Native American communities and universities.

Finally, she said, "Just don't give the money to people who have no experience in communities of color."

Some participants expressed disagreement with this. **Dr. Malcoe** said if there had been such a requirement in place, her work in Oklahoma could not have been done; no one else had done any research on Native American women in western Oklahoma. She agreed that researchers must approach such projects "in an open way, with tremendous humility, and in collaboration." But

especially in rural areas, she said, there are not many researchers who can do the work. Dr. Malcoe suggested that there should be “openings for first-time researchers” to work in minority communities. **Dr. Zahn** added that her first project was on black drug traffickers in Harlem. Although she is not black, she said, she gained access “because I’m short and handicapped and was not perceived as a threat.”

**Dr. Yoshihama** said the principle is still important that researchers should have experience in minority communities. There is a need to increase the capacity of minority researchers and the infrastructure supporting them, she said; support is needed for training and for collaborative working groups, although that part does not get funded. In addition, researchers and practitioners need to get together and talk about innovative methodologies, she said. **Mr. Riley** pointed out that collaboration is more than talking to one another. Achieving it involves training communities on how to assist in research. Incubating approaches can be taken, he said, to build a cadre of local people who can assist with research.

**Dr. Soriano** explained that he directs the National Latino Research Center. The Center recently collaborated with Yale University to sponsor training for researchers, including graduate students, who were interested in teens and drug use. Researchers who had no experience in Latino communities gained insights into different cultures, he said. He suggested that while NIJ does not have the same training mission as NIH, it might work as a partner with NIH to get more minority researchers involved in domestic violence issues. This “could help calibrate senior as well as junior researchers,” he said.

**Dr. Erez** noted that for one COPS Office grant, she and other researchers were interviewed by police and got the job. The same could be done with respect to communities looking for domestic violence researchers, she said.

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## Group Discussion: Research Methods in Minority Communities

Dr. Moore Parmley suggested that the group focus on the issue of research methods for violence against women studies involving minority communities.

### **Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods**

**Dr. Erez** noted that qualitative research was important; **Dr. Soriano** said so much information is needed that all methods should be considered. Qualitative research is especially valuable with respect to issues of cultural context, he said, noting that for concepts like acculturation, researchers must have a grasp of what this means for the populations they are studying. Qualitative methods can also help researchers more clearly explain their findings, he said. Vignettes and case studies are powerful ways to make clear what the data represents in terms of human beings and could increase policymaker support for research.

**Dr. Hillsman** said she has done qualitative research and has advocated mixing methods. The challenge, she said, is that although many have done good qualitative research, it must increasingly become systematic, and not enough is known about systems for collecting qualitative data. If we could explain the methodology for this work to the scientific community, she said, we would get much more funding for it.

**Dr. Yoshihama** said she also advocates mixed methods, although the appropriate method depends on the question. Qualitative research is better at exploring context, but the value of the work depends on the willingness and imagination of the researchers. For example, a study may be well executed, but the researcher may choose to explore issues of gender over issues of race, she said.

**Ms. Orloff** said that in trying to translate data for public policy, she has found that some people believe policymakers will listen only when the data is quantitative. However, the qualitative data—for example, a collection of stories about violence against women—is equally important, she said. **Dr. Malcoe** asked for others' opinions about good qualitative studies. Researchers' personal biases, she said, tend to influence interpretations of qualitative data. This is less of an issue with quantitative data, where researchers can point to the consistent use of an instrument. There is a need to use techniques (such as more explicit coding schemes and double coding) to address bias, she said.

**Dr. Hillsman** said she thinks "qualitative research is back on the table in academic circles." With respect to micro-level analyses in certain communities, she said, we have to understand whether the principles discovered manifest themselves differently in other contexts—for example, in Navajo country or in Harlem—but we must also discover the commonalities. "Think about the maximum we can get out of qualitative research," she said.

### **Communicating With Practitioners and Community Members**

**Dr. Hillsman** noted a need to teach new skills to the people with whom researchers would like to collaborate. It adds value to a community when a CBO learns to do its own mini-research project.

**Dr. Perilla** said she has listened to many researchers who hold quantitative research in higher esteem than qualitative. But she hears a consensus that both are needed; they serve different purposes. "When working with communities, I cannot go back to just working with numbers," Dr. Perilla said. "For minority populations, the idea of being reduced to just a number is a foreign one." In many places, she said, asking long lists of questions is very disrespectful; however, some who do qualitative studies are also disrespectful. We must think about how to involve the community not only in planning but also in analysis, Dr. Perilla said, and we must be concerned about what happens to the research product. Will it result only in articles for academic rewards, she asked, or will readable articles be published in English, Spanish, and other languages? Where can we get financial support for this?

When **Dr. Aldarondo** asked how many researchers present do their work primarily because they want to promote a safer society and justice, about a half dozen workshop participants indicated by a show of hands that they did. Dr. Aldarondo said that when people talk about value-based research, they must also talk about how the knowledge will be used. The quality of the research and how well it is communicated is of no little importance, he said; but it is important to ask what kind of data is needed and to whom it will be provided.

**Dr. Rennison** noted that some of the quantitative research is of poor quality, but that the deficiencies are easier to hide than with poor qualitative work. It is important for quantitative researchers, she added, to make the presentations of their data interesting and relevant.

**Dr. Erez** said it is not impossible to publish for both research and lay communities and cited the NIJ Research in Brief publications as an example. She also emphasized that because qualitative research deals with issues of context, researchers need to read through the data before coding begins. **Dr. Duran** pointed out that qualitative research is essential for designing interventions.

**Ms. Orloff** asked whether NIJ could require the researchers it sponsors to publish in ways that would be useful to communities. She added that in a current project, “each of us sees things in the data that the other does not.” **Mr. Auchter** said NIJ often encourages and provides for publications aimed at more than one audience. NIJ is also sponsoring a number of studies that address the need to improve measurement and methods and anticipates funding more such studies this year. **Dr. Rosen** added that NIJ asks grant applicants for a data dissemination plan, and that most reviewers take that proposed plan very seriously.

Later in the discussion, **Ms. Vann** suggested that CBOs may need to have an approved list of researchers. She said she knows researchers, but that where she needs their help is in “figuring out how to reduce a harmful variable when working with a particular individual. This is where we need assistance and real partnerships,” she said. **Mr. Riley** said he needed to know “where we are going with a program—how to make it better,” and to be able to suggest approaches to others based on good research.

### **Validity of the Measures**

Earlier in the discussion, **Dr. Yoshihama** said one challenge is the possibility that existing measures do not work, even though they have been validated as reliable. When validity is based on use with the mainstream population, there is a need to question the validity of those measures. Researchers who do not want to use them, however, may either “go for broke” and use their own methods or instruments, or take the “side door approach,” in which they propose measures they do not believe in and change them later. **Dr. Megan** said most researchers deviate from the ideal model and that they have to decide for whom they will make the greatest compromises—for example, for a university or for a publisher.

**Dr. Erez** noted that service does not carry much weight with respect to tenure, although it does count somewhat. Rigorous research is important regardless of methodology, she said, and researchers need to select the most rigorous methods among the choices they have.

**Dr. Arias** noted that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is now looking at three instruments—the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), Hudson, and Webb—with respect to their validity with various populations. CDC also tried a model that involved funding CBOs, which retained researchers. However, the CBO may not know how to evaluate researchers well, she said. There is a need to train CBOs on how to choose a good researcher in terms of the science, in addition to helping them see the potential benefits of research to the community.

**Dr. Soriano** said Andrea Hazen, who could not attend the workshop, maintains that qualitative methods are very important for understanding the use of both existing and new measures with minority populations. He said the relevance of existing measures is also an issue of concern to him. In addition, there are translation problems, including literacy differences; differences in working with rural populations; and a need for more information sharing about methods.

**Dr. Moore Parmley** said she wanted to pick up on the notion of presenting certain methods to the grantor agency, “then saying, ‘here’s what we’re really going to use.’ What methods should we be using?” she asked. “Are we really measuring violence against women in communities of color?”

### **Issues Related to Sample Size and Reliability**

**Dr. Rennison** expressed concern that the small sample size with the National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS) requires that categories be combined for analysis. It is valuable to talk to CBOs, she said,

but studies will still miss crime victims who do not use CBOs. She asked how to include more Asian and other minority women. **Dr. Moore Parmley** said others have expressed concerns about the combining of categories and about whether the NCVS and other large surveys are really representative. **Dr. Rennison** said the public does not understand the sampling issues involved, and that while she does not like analyses such as “Hispanic versus non-Hispanic,” she must follow certain rules.

**Dr. Perilla** said CBO staff often have the trust of the community and can help researchers gain access to people who do not use CBOs. However, some who do not respond to surveys—including victims of intimate partner violence—are unwilling to participate because of the way they were approached or because of who came to their door. “I myself don’t do those kinds of interviews,” she said. “Why would people who have just arrived in this country participate?” She added that some researchers propose one method (for example, using a standardized instrument) and then do something else because they see “a lack of respect for different ways of doing things.”

**Dr. Malcoe** suggested that the NCVS sampling design could probably be altered if obtaining data on victims who are minorities were a priority. Oversampling could be done, as it is in surveys on low-birthweight babies. This could be done with fewer than the 80,000 currently sampled by the NCVS, she said, if agency leadership wants to make the effort.

With regard to research proposals, Dr. Malcoe said researchers need to make a good argument for why the valid instruments are not appropriate for the population in which they are interested. For example, they can cite the literature that shows the instrument was validated only with white, upper-income college students.

With respect to the purposes of research, Dr. Malcoe said communities want to know what they can do about the problem, in contrast to such research questions as, “Does social support influence IPV?” Different designs are required for the different questions, she said. She asked what NIJ’s standards will be for intervention research—for example, research on protective orders for domestic violence victims—and whether researchers must have randomized designs.

**Mr. Auchter** said **Dr. Rennison’s** comments on sample size argue for separate surveys. He noted that BJS has made a victimization survey instrument available to local jurisdictions and asked whether CDC, BJS, and NIJ might pursue something similar, but with a specific focus on minority communities. **Dr. Rennison** said the problem of increasing the NCVS sample or developing a new survey is not so much a lack of instrumentation as it is a matter of money. Because of flat funding at BJS, the NCVS sample was reduced from 120,000 to 80,000. Moreover, the NCVS may not be the right instrument to reach minorities, she said, and there is still the issue of missed populations.

**Ms. Orloff** said her survey team reached recent immigrants by using snowball and door-to-door techniques, achieving a survey sample of more than 200 and a control group of more than 100. This needs to be replicated in more communities, she said. The problem is in creating a larger sample without the validity of the methods being challenged. “There must be a way,” she said, “so we don’t get attacked for a survey being too small.”

**Ms. Stoe** said the American Indian and Alaska Native Affairs Office wants to survey American Indians living in nonurban environments but was told that a new survey would cost \$4 to \$5 million. NIJ is now trying to do a technology needs assessment in Indian Country. **Dr. Rennison** said BJS will be adapting the NCVS to capture data on American Indians living in non-urban environments; however, a considerable number do not live on tribal lands. BJS is considering the use of a multistage cluster sample, she said, but is concerned about buy-in with this approach, because not

every group would be interviewed. Later in the discussion, **Dr. Rennison** noted that the NCVS is administered in several languages.

**Dr. Perilla** said that while the NCVS data is important, it is just as important to understand minority women's reality with respect to domestic violence and get that information into the knowledge base. The numbers do not have to be that large, she said. Dr. Perilla noted that comparison groups in domestic violence studies are very difficult to create because of ethical issues and asked what new methods could become a standard.

### **New Methods for Studying Violence Against Women Who Are Members of Minority Groups**

**Dr. Moore Parmley** commented that despite concerns about the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), researchers continue to use it. "We have not yet reached the point where something substantially different is done," she said. **Dr. Duran** said it may be that the CTS was valuable when the general prevalence of domestic violence was not known. Now, more specific information about different populations is needed. Even so, she said, a \$4 million survey in Indian Country used the CTS.

**Dr. Rennison** said that people need to become "critical consumers of statistical information" and that researchers need to clearly explain a survey's limitations. However, incomplete or imperfect numbers may be better than nothing, she said. **Dr. Soriano** noted a recently completed NIH project on assessing mental health status. The project tried to be mindful of different ethnic and racial populations, he said, and attempted to devise culturally valid and culturally reliable instruments.

**Dr. Aldarondo** said part of the reason researchers do not try something different is that they are not well trained in looking critically at what they want to accomplish. "We lose perspective of the broader vision and then keep using the same instruments," he said. He recommended that NIJ articulate clearly how research on domestic violence could play a role in social change. This would help clarify the ways in which qualitative methods could help achieve those objectives, and it would also point to the need for different methods to accomplish different goals.

**Dr. Erez** noted that experimental research in domestic violence has been done and that it supported the movement to pass mandatory arrest laws, although mandatory arrest may not be a good thing for immigrant women. Experiments have also been done with respect to the length of batterer intervention programs, she said.

**Dr. Magen** pointed out that with the NCVS, the unit of analysis is the household, whereas in Alaska, a more useful unit of analysis is probably communities. However, use of communities as a unit of analysis is not likely to be acceptable in academic circles.

**Dr. Malcoe** asked whether intervention research, directed at determining how to best intervene to effect change, is more important than other types of research for people working in advocacy and policy development.

**Ms. Orloff** said it was, but that "it still misses the target." The real issue, she said, is how do we serve victims best? What models should we be promoting? As long as we keep looking at how much violence against women is occurring, she said, we cannot get to the issue of how to best serve people.

**Mr. Riley** said information on the small picture as well as the big picture is needed. **Ms. Sujono** added that currently there seems to be an important emphasis on measuring the effectiveness of certain strategies. **Ms. Vann** said information on the small picture—knowing that addressing a

particular variable could improve women's lives—is what will help her work in the community, but that information on the big picture can help eliminate the problem in a broader sense.

**Dr. Richie** said that, for the most part, people are doing what they have always done and have “colored up” existing programs. Part of the problem, she said, is that in relying on large-scale measures and looking at reduction of violence, or even in conducting intervention studies, certain influential family and community factors are not taken into account. We have not talked about the quality of people's lives, she said. It is not just a matter of whether the violence has stopped but whether the household is decent and the children are safe. We do not have a national picture of what is wrong in people's lives. It is difficult to imagine how to do this, she said, but we need a different standard besides instance of violence.

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Friday, October 12, 2001

### Highlights of Thursday Discussions

Mr. Auchter said there were several ways to think about the group discussions of the previous day. The first approach would be to use categories such as “research questions,” “methodological issues,” and “announcements.” Second, as one participant suggested, much of the day might be summarized in one question: “Can we be methodologically rigorous, practical, and meet funding guidelines all at the same time?” A third approach might be to list the terms used most prominently throughout the day; for example, “women's voices,” “social change,” “context,” “measure effectiveness,” “needs assessment,” “qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods,” and “correlates, including race, sex, literacy, racism, and quality of life.” Mr. Auchter suggested that it might be more true to the conversation to select some of the quotes from participants that helped capture the day. He highlighted more than 20 comments that touched on a range of issues, then asked for other reflections on the first day's conversations. Several participants noted that the following issues had been mentioned but not yet discussed at length:

#### **The type of research that should be done with respect to violence against women who are members of various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups.**

- A need to think about “how we want to advance women of color.”
- Reliance on criminal justice responses where those responses do not support minorities (for example, removing Native American and immigrant women from their communities and alternatives to this).

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### Presentation and Group Discussion: NIJ Research Portfolio on Violence Against Women

**Dr. Rosen** provided highlights from the paper “NIJ Research Portfolio on Violence Against Women, 1993–2000,” which had been distributed earlier to workshop participants. She noted that NIJ and CDC jointly funded the National Violence Against Women Survey in 1993. The 142 grants awarded since then were divided into six subject categories specifically for the purpose of this paper (the categories do not reflect deliberate funding decisions by NIJ).

Dr. Rosen pointed out that the 10 studies in the category, "Social and Cultural Context," are not limited to issues of race and ethnicity but include other studies that take social context into account. She said NIJ funding has helped support a number of publications on violence against women, but little in the social context category had been published. Dr. Rosen expressed the hope that a synthesis would be done—possibly an edited volume—featuring work related to social and cultural context, and that the workshop participants might consider contributing to such a publication. She added that grants related to social context began to increase with the passage of VAWA, and that solicitations mentioned diversity whether or not this was the specific focus of the solicitation. When a solicitation features a new concept or approach, she said, proposals tend to be less polished than those received in more traditional areas. The first round of submissions in a new area may not be fundable because of a need to refine the research approaches.

**Dr. Moore Parmley** noted that at one time, NIJ funded only grants that would fall into the "Criminal Justice" category. Now the goal is to be more proactive, expand the portfolio, and encourage more research in certain areas such as sexual assault. Later, **Mr. Auchter** said most of the grants in the portfolio are VAWA-funded, but a few are investigator-initiated. **Dr. Erez** noted that once a solicitation has been issued, NIJ has no control over the possibility that there will be a low response. **Dr. Moore Parmley** said that while this is true, NIJ can anticipate that certain researchers are not likely to apply unless their particular area of expertise is emphasized.

**Ms. Vann** said that although social context is relevant to her agency's work with women in jails and prisons, Mr. Auchter had also suggested a need to "look upstream" at why women were incarcerated, because many were convicted of nonviolent offenses. Many have a long history of victimizations, she said. In light of this, would research on groups with special needs be an appropriate category to consider? **Dr. Rosen** said it would, as would the "Life Course" category.

### **Investigator and Grantee Profiles**

**Dr. Richie** asked whether NIJ could provide a profile of who the principal investigators (PIs) are: for example, the number doing qualitative or quantitative research, or both; the number of PIs who are people of color; university-based versus other organizational affiliations; collaborations with community groups; and the number of researchers with special backgrounds or interests in domestic violence and sexual assault. **Dr. Rosen** said the PIs' organizational affiliations could be seen in the handout, but the other breakdowns have not been done. **Mr. Auchter** said NIJ would be able to provide some of the other breakdowns.

**Ms. Orloff** said it would also be good to highlight other types of NIJ grants that affect communities of color. She asked whether the National Evaluation of VAWA, for example, could delineate the proportion of STOP money going to communities of color.

### **NIJ Planning Process**

**Dr. Erez** asked for more information on the process NIJ uses in deciding what issues should be included in solicitations. **Dr. Moore Parmley** said the process includes meetings like this workshop to provide ideas, strategic planning among NIJ staff, discussions with the Violence Against Women Office, commissioned papers on various issues, and other information from the field. For example, the need for more research on sexual violence was discussed at meetings with the CDC. "NIJ is a political organization to an extent," she added, "and that also affects the work we do." **Mr. Auchter** said another source has been the National Academy of Sciences' work and its report on violence against women. In addition, the 2000 Violence Against Women Act charges DOJ with leading an interagency research task force on domestic violence. Such a task force would look at what is known, what is not known, and which agency might take the lead on which issues.

Finally, **Ms. Orloff** encouraged NIJ to consider how it might influence other Federal agencies that have not given as much thought to collaboration.

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## Group Discussion: Future Directions

**Dr. Moore Parmley** referred to Dr. Richie's comment about continuing to take the same approaches as in the past—batterer intervention programs, for example. "Have we been doing essentially the same thing in the research area?" she asked. "Do we need to be doing something different?"

### **Community: Context, Readiness to Change, and Protective Factors**

**Dr. Arias** observed that all of the research has had an individual focus; that is, the onus to change is on the victim or the perpetrator. This is necessary, she said, but those individuals also live in the context of their communities. We need to ask how communities can change, respond to instances of violence in their midst, and take some responsibility. **Dr. Aldarondo** said he agreed but has had a grant proposal that emphasizes those ideas turned down three times. **Dr. Moore Parmley** asked for more ideas about the role research could play in exploring community change, responses, and responsibilities.

**Dr. Arias** said some researchers have been looking at community readiness for intervention—that is, the extent to which a community recognizes interpersonal violence as a problem, as well as ways in which researchers can help if this realization is not there. This approach could involve experts in human behavior generally, as well as experts in intimate partner violence.

**Dr. Richie** suggested focusing on protective factors by looking at women with similar backgrounds who are not victims of family violence and by looking at community resources that are protective factors. She said this involves asking discreet questions; it is not simply a matter of whether or not an individual went to school. Some communities have developed "strategies of resistance," she said, where the recipients of resources are other than criminal justice agencies. Dr. Richie also noted that the evaluation of proposals is especially important and asked who might assist researchers with applying to NIJ.

**Dr. Zahn** said she thought Dr. Arias's approach could be valuable and noted that the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods has revealed characteristics of communities that have low violence rates. It remains to be seen whether this translates into low rates of domestic violence, she said. **Dr. Duran** said a public health perspective would suggest looking at community-level interventions. NIJ might consider wording a solicitation by drawing on language associated with the concept of "universal intervention," which is selected for situations where there is a high level of risk and which is similar to tertiary prevention.

**Ms. Orloff** said looking at protective factors, especially support systems, could aid in developing different services. She noted that for one program, immigrant women began to come only after the program organized survivors to conduct outreach. She also said the current, multi-million-dollar DHHS/VAWA research agenda does not place much emphasis on "how to make programs better today." A "straight up" evaluation of the VAWA programs, she said, is not enough; it does not get to minority issues. With respect to the criminal justice response, more is known about how this works among African-American communities, she said, than among immigrant populations.

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## Program Evaluations

**Ms. Orloff** said she did not know if the answer lay in conducting more evaluations of today's programs. Many programs operate without Federal funds, she said, although this is changing with VAWA, and it is not clear how the effectiveness of VAWA-funded programs can be reported to Congress within the prescribed timeframe. Any research that tells more about model programs that seem to be working, she said, would be much more valuable than taking a random sample of grant-funded programs.

**Dr. Malcoe** said it is important not to simply require all programs to have evaluations, but to think about evaluation designs that could provide reliable information about effectiveness, given the desired program outcomes. There are serious issues involved in designing this work, she said, especially where there are no comparison groups in a community (for example, at a particular pueblo or among newly arrived Asian people). A quasi-experimental, pre-post design, she said, is probably the most rigorous design possible, because a randomized design cannot be done without a comparison population.

Regarding future directions, **Dr. Magen** expressed concern about "a lack of creativity" and "linear thinking." He said that, as an example, people have conducted research on child witnesses without clearly saying what it means to be a child witness or exploring why some children are unaffected by being a witness. We continue to create more shelters and more batterer programs, he said, and although things may need to be done differently, there are legal and regulatory constraints. Alaska, for example, has criteria for batterer intervention programs.

### **Program Example: Information Campaign in a Milwaukee Community**

**Ms. Vann** explained her agency's approach to getting information to the community. DHHS partially funded an "It's Your Business" campaign, which was developed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund. Her agency in Milwaukee was a test site for this campaign's replicability. The campaign ended December 31, 2000. The agency purchased radio and television airtime; arranged to appear on talk shows; paid for a professional marketing firm to launch the campaign; saturated the community with billboards; placed ads on buses; and sent out 4,500 packets of posters, pens, stickers, and other items with the agency's phone number on the items. Information was posted in restaurant bathrooms, liquor stores, check-cashing establishments, and other locations. The issues were discussed in churches, in schools, and at other CBOs.

The target population was African-American males, who must take a major leadership role in ending violence against women and children, Ms. Vann said. Black males do not usually call the agency, she said, but during the campaign, their calls equaled the number received from women. Ms. Vann said this campaign was a beginning in the process of the community taking ownership of the problem.

### **Future NIJ Portfolio**

**Dr. Soriano** said the violence against women field is relatively young, and information is lacking in many areas. He suggested that NIJ stand back from its current research portfolio and think about different areas where research is needed. In addition to evaluation, one area is research on prevalence/incidence, particularly with respect to subgroups such as teenagers, Latinas, and others. Another need is in the "basic research/ideological area" to examine some of the factors responsible for the prevalence and incidence rates. NIJ will still have to be involved in research on system responses, but prevention and intervention efforts should be separated and examined at different levels—for example, prevention at the school and community levels. It might be appropriate for NIJ

to explore this in cooperation with other agencies. With respect to measurement, he said, more is needed on developing instruments that are culturally appropriate for different subgroups. There is also a need for data that is comparable across groups and a need to learn how to balance these two interests.

## **Research and Activism**

**Mr. Riley** said he often thinks in terms of researcher-activists or researcher-advocates. In groups with which he works, he said, the researchers/evaluators have a certain commitment to addressing violence against women, but they may be held back and not receive money if they do not go about the research in a certain way.

Imagine what might happen, he said, if NIJ said it wanted “outlandish” researchers. He emphasized the importance of leadership to encourage creative research approaches and foster connections between researchers and service providers. Although the talk about technology transfer “fell of its own weight,” there is still a need for researchers to work closely with program staff to try new approaches. The alternative, he said, is research that breeds more research, while people struggle to solve what seem to be intractable problems. NIJ could be a leader along with others in changing this, he said.

**Dr. Richie** observed that violence against women research has a particular link to activism; it involves research on something that began as a social movement, unlike research on child welfare or other health and social issues. She expressed doubt that the findings on community efficacy in the Chicago Neighborhoods project would carry weight with respect to violence against women. Certain communities in Chicago and Harlem have been infused with resources as empowerment zones, she said, but it is not clear that women are safer there or in other communities where there has also been an intentional infusion of resources. It might be possible to conduct intense community studies where work has been done to empower people to solve their own problems. The studies could see if there has been a shift in gender roles and a shift in violence against women in particular. However, new funding sources would be needed for such studies, as well as new collaborations with people experienced in studying community dynamics. In Chicago, Dr. Richie said, women’s safety has not been on the agenda for some of those community empowerment initiatives.

**Dr. Aldarondo** joined Mr. Riley in encouraging NIJ to take a stand on the kind of vision the agency wants to promote. He suggested the vision could reflect a balance between personal and community wellness; and it could include issues involved in promoting healthy communities, although “not at the expense of healthy relationship issues.” Leadership is needed, he said, since academics are not usually rewarded for this type of work.

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## **Group Discussion: Future Research Strategies**

**Dr. Moore Parmley** noted several issues raised earlier in the workshop: the need for a separate focus on violence against minority women, rather than treating the issue as merely an add-on to other population studies; an overreliance on criminal justice system responses; and the notion of removing women from communities and what that means for immigrant women. Issues of race and ethnicity should be part of the population studies, she said, but research that centers on minorities is needed. One concern is that the research on minorities might use only traditional research methods, rather than new strategies. She asked, “What should those research strategies be?”

## Researcher-Practitioner Collaborations

**Dr. Soriano** said there is a need for innovation in developing good partnerships between researchers and study participants. He suggested a project might be funded to explore different collaborative research models, noting that incidence and prevalence studies may not require the same level of collaboration as other studies.

**Ms. Vann** suggested creating a clear definition of what is meant by collaboration and the role of researchers in that collaboration. There are many African-American researchers who could be excellent partners, she said, and who could add significantly to the richness of the information produced. Others who work in minority communities are skilled in assisting researchers with interviewing. Training might be provided, with the collaborations seen as an ongoing educational process for both researchers and practitioners. Ms. Vann said she agreed that researchers should have experience working with minority populations. This does not mean the researcher has to be a member of the minority group being studied, she said, but the researcher can at least partner with someone who has the needed experience.

**Dr. Malcoe** said it was essential to partner with community people, particularly with respect to case studies and various types of intervention studies. Intervention studies also require upfront work to determine together what outcomes are desired and how they can be achieved and measured, she said. In addition, there is a role for researchers in helping to assess the effectiveness of what is already being done. Future research studies also need to consider context, Dr. Malcoe said. Researchers can look at changes at the individual, family, community, and organizational levels. At the individual level, they can measure changes in violence, attitudes, quality of life, and safety. Questions at the family level include: Is she staying with or leaving her partner? What happens to the children? At the community level, questions relate to the ability of community programs to have an impact on families' stressors, and community attitudes and readiness for change. We need to know more about what works, or at least helps, and what does not, she said.

## Separating Sexual Assault and Stalking From Intimate Partner Violence

In response to a question from Dr. Richie, **Mr. Auchter** said most grantees study sexual violence and intimate partner violence separately, although some of the work on measurement looks at both areas. **Dr. Richie** said intimate partner violence very often includes sexual assault, although sexual assault victims may not experience intimate partner violence. **Dr. Malcoe** said those studying intimate partner violence also look at intimate partner sexual violence, but **Dr. Moore Parmley** said this is still a major issue. When sexual violence occurs in the context of intimate partner violence, it is viewed as intimate partner violence, she said. Although there is disagreement among researchers about how distinctions should be made, separating the two areas may result in an undercounting of sexual violence. The focus of most NIJ proposals has been on intimate partner violence, she added. This is why there is now a specific solicitation on sexual violence, but the hope is that those researchers will also explore intimate partner violence if it is occurring as well.

**Dr. Richie** said there is clearly a gap in the research with respect to sexual violence; that it is part of the experience of many immigrant women and women in prison; and that there is a wide range of perpetrators, from correctional officers to parents, who use power and control. A theoretical link is needed that goes beyond intimate partner violence and sexual violence, she said. **Dr. Moore Parmley** added that increases in prostitution, as well as pimps who perpetrate violence against many women, are also aspects of the problem that are not usually studied. **Dr. Malcoe** suggested that perhaps sexual violence was studied separately at first because of a focus on rapes by strangers; however, because we know most sexual assault involves acquaintances and intimate partners, she said, it may be important not to separate sexual violence and intimate partner

violence. **Dr. Moore Parmley** said NIJ's working definition of violence against women as intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and stalking did not give special consideration to oppression as a form of violence against women. We may need to rethink this, she said.

### **Multiple Victimizations and Immigrant Women**

**Ms. Orloff** said the issue of multiple victimizations is huge. For example, immigrant women may experience sexual assault as part of the immigration process, as well as rape or other sexual assault in the workplace. Some have experienced prostitution and trafficking. To help women survive and improve their outcomes, the possibility that they have had multiple victimizations must be considered. However, the most difficult part of working with victims, Ms. Orloff said, has been getting them to talk about sexual assault, and it is even more difficult when the sexual assault perpetrator is an intimate partner. Often, they do not know it is considered assault. In addition, there is reluctance among victims who are immigrants to use any source of assistance.

The use of interpreters is another important issue, she said. Urban Institute data project that 27 percent of our population in the near future will be immigrants or the children of immigrants; up from the current 18 percent. We need to know if there is a difference in outcomes when police use interpreters. These outcomes are important in terms of getting courts and other agencies to pay for interpreters, she said.

### **Mentoring**

The mentoring and training of minority researchers is critical, **Dr. Richie** said. Various culturally specific institutes are in an excellent position to mentor researchers of color. There is a need to consider how people can integrate these opportunities into their research agendas, she said, and to focus on new Ph.D.s and people entering Ph.D. programs.

**Ms. Vann** said mentoring should also involve seasoned researchers mentoring CBOs that serve victims. **Dr. Aldarondo** said the National Latino Alliance is considering ways to address these concerns. Groups like the Alliance are needed to train a new generation of academics, he said, and to come up with creative ideas for attracting more minority researchers to the field. The Alliance is also working with front-line workers and administrators to help document their interventions and to "help them see in a systematic way how the work they do is really research, too." The hope is that this will create a wave of practitioner-researchers. Dr. Aldarondo encouraged NIJ to continue its relationship with the different institutes on domestic violence, which have "more ideas than we do resources to carry them out."

### **Research Topics: Men Who Batter, Economic and Other Correlates, Women Who Partner With Women**

**Dr. Gray** said NIJ reviewers need to become more aware of the difficulties associated with different types of methods. New reviewers may have different backgrounds, he said, noting that his own experience has focused on male batterers. Various interventions need to be considered with minority communities; for example, spiritual well-being and its influence on African-American men. Moreover, there are many programs that appear to be successful but have not been evaluated with Federal money, Mr. Gray said, and research is needed on programs that deal with men who batter.

**Ms. Orloff** said another important issue is the effect of welfare and economic survival on resilience. We will be facing a major battle regarding welfare reform, she said, and we are "facing a world

where forcing marriage is seen as a solution to welfare.” A lack of job skills is part of the problem, but part of it is domestic violence. Research can help, she said, if it can be done soon enough.

With respect to the relationship of economic standing to violence against women, **Dr. Soriano** advised trying to fund more studies that separate out culture from economics. In addition, NIJ collaboration with other funders like CDC and NIH, he said, could address correlates in other areas, such as substance abuse and alcoholism.

**Dr. Richie** said that, as Dr. Perilla noted earlier in the meeting, the issue of same-sex violence and sexual assault needs a focused research agenda.

### **Other Needs and Issues: Options, Syntheses, Replications, Lessons From Trauma Research, Information Dissemination**

**Dr. Richie** said that taking a focused look at underrepresented groups may result in a conclusion that nothing works. The research is young, limited interventions have been used, and the interventions are discreet given the magnitude of the problem, she said. “I just want to encourage research that points toward options, not just failures.”

**Dr. Magen** said the development of innovative strategies is helped by (1) Federal government collaborations like the one between NIJ and CDC, and (2) various syntheses, such as one on batterer interventions and the Green Book<sup>2</sup> produced by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. It would also be valuable to invest in the mentoring and training of minority researchers, he said. Dr. Magen suggested that funding replication studies might in part address the lack of comparison groups, “although replications don’t get published.”

**Dr. Duran** said that in addition to cultural differences among minority groups, there is a cultural difference between NIJ-funded research and those who study women and trauma. NIJ studies look more at “the extreme end of the trauma—the trauma that actually results in arrest,” rather than at how people reach this point. Also, trauma work does not make the same distinctions between victims and perpetrators. It might be useful to bring some of the trauma literature to bear on violence against women issues, as well as literature on the accumulating process of violence. A person does not abuse substances without experiencing other problems, or fail in school without other problems, she said, and the same is true with violence against women. **Dr. Erez** added that issues of multiculturalism include the meaning and role of culture in criminal proceedings.

**Dr. Soriano** noted a lack of models for disseminating the information we do have and making it more usable and practical for the different audiences. **Dr. Aldarondo** said NIJ could require grantees to specify the types of advocacy and community meetings they will attend to present their work. Researchers need to find a different way of conveying information, he said.

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### **Closing Remarks**

Dr. Zahn said that in the coming year, she will be working to expand the NIJ portfolio to include studies of collective violence such as terrorism and hate crimes. Researchers focused on violence against women have much to offer, she said, as women in battering relationships are indeed terrorized. She said she has also been asked to develop “a different infrastructure to facilitate the

work on violence in this country.” This includes building better capabilities in terms of both research staff and information dissemination to various populations.

Dr. Zahn noted some of the ideas she is taking from this workshop: lists of researchers that could be distributed to community groups, the training and mentoring of minority researchers, training for researchers in issues of concern to minority people, training for community activists on what research is, and training grants for new kinds of researchers.

“The research of the past is not equipped to be the research of the future,” Dr. Zahn said. “We are here to make a difference. We need to let young researchers know it is all right to articulate their values along with trying to obtain objective information.” She recalled a class she took in which Günner Myrdal asked students to first write down what they cared about in life, what their values were. Although her American professors did not allow her to carry this approach through, she said, violence against women research crosses both researcher-practitioner lines and disciplinary lines.

Meetings like this could benefit from including an ethnographer, Dr. Zahn said, and a sociolinguist could help with understanding meaning. For example, several participants emphasized studying context. She said context usually suggests to her various features of a situation, such as the presence of guns, or alcohol use by a perpetrator. But context as used by Ms. Orloff had to do with understanding that one cannot take a person and divide him or her into a series of variables. Others have different meanings for context, although all agreed it should be studied.

Dr. Zahn also emphasized the importance of methodological issues, noting that historically measurement has received less funding than other issues. There are also definitional problems in longitudinal studies, she said. For example, what does violence mean to a 4-year-old versus an 18-year-old?

NIJ will be expanding its agenda: developing a better infrastructure, developing partnerships with other Federal agencies such as NIDA, and building on the work Mr. Auchter has been doing with CDC, Dr. Zahn said. There has been considerable funding for violence research, she said, although NIJ does not have as much money for this as a number of other agencies.

In closing, Dr. Zahn said, “I hope you will consider how the work you have been doing can contribute to new questions about terror, hate, and how to make this a better world.”

With respect to next steps, **Mr. Auchter** said he anticipates that in the future NIJ would hold another workshop similar to this one. In the interim, NIJ will discuss internally—within the Violence and Victimization Division and in broader-based groups—how the workshop recommendations fit with NIJ’s work in both the near and distant future; continue to foster researcher-practitioner collaborations; develop plans to sponsor another grantee conference, perhaps jointly with CDC; and continue to bring more practitioners in to assist with the work at hand.

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<sup>1</sup> Ramiro Martinez, Jr. and Matthew T. Lee, “On Immigration and Crime.” In *Criminal Justice 2000*, Vol. 1. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> The Green Book, a publication by the Family Violence Department, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, is titled *Effective Interventions in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment*

*Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice.* Washington, D.C.: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, NCJ 180603, 1999.

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