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A Brief History of Anti-Violence-Against-Women Movements in the United States

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Multiple efforts in the U.S. to confront rape and incest, wife beating, stalking, workplace sexual harassment, and sex trafficking emerged in the late 1960s and '70s. All were shaped by a larger cultural context of civil rights and second-wave feminist activism that recognized systemic injustices and inspired collective political action. The most organized and sustained efforts to confront violence against women have been the battered women's and anti-rape movements,[1] which have employed similar strategies and experienced parallel trajectories. Both began as a series of responses to the practical needs of women who had been victims of male violence and to the larger systems that had long condoned and legitimized such behaviors. Through organized networks and coalitions, these movements challenged cultural beliefs and called

attention to the ongoing violence faced by women in their homes; in public spaces; in the legal, medical, and mental-health systems; and in society at large. They worked to prioritize efforts to combat gender-based violence in programs, communities, organizations, and public policy, eventually making domestic violence and sexual assault mainstream issues. Each has also played a central role in developing models of service provision and advocacy that are in widespread use today.

Some prominent segments of each movement were so successful that, since the mid-1990s, intimate partner violence and sexual assault have become core issues in federal efforts to address violence against women. The passage of the first Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 and its three subsequent renewals have unmistakably signaled that domestic violence is finally

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being taken seriously on a national scale—a long-hoped-for goal of many activists. Similarly, in 2011, the U.S. Department of Education's initiative to shape how colleges handle sexual misconduct, followed by the McCaskill *Sexual Violence on Campus* report in 2014 and legislation to address sexual assault in the military, has focused attention on the issue of sexual assault and provided an infusion of energy for the anti-rape movement's efforts.

Neither of these movements, however, has been without its critics. The passage of VAWA in 1994 was part of a larger cultural shift in the 1980s and early '90s toward law enforcement approaches to solving social problems through criminalization. Much criticism has centered on whether the criminalization of gender-based violence, though helpful to many women and men who have been victims of abuse, has also excluded many women from redress and has had outright negative effects on others. In addition, critics have charged both movements with straying from their grassroots and radical beginnings in the early 1970s, pointing to the increasing professionalization, organizational hierarchies, and service-centered approaches that contrast so dramatically with the movements' explicitly political and feminist grassroots origins. Less controversial have been efforts to stop sexual violence in higher education and the military, although there has been considerable debate about the appropriate processes for doing so. When it comes to sexual assault, criticism has focused more on the failure of the criminal justice system to take the problem seriously and to develop mechanisms to ensure that victims are not harmed in the law enforcement process.

Since the 1990s, many groups within the mainstream battered women's and antirape movements have taken seriously the criticisms that they have relied too heavily on criminal justice solutions to violence, excluded socially precarious populations from interventions and services, and overprofessionalized their programs. In response, many have experimented with changes. At the same time, these critiques—many of which come from groups formally or informally excluded from mainstream efforts—have galvanized other activist movements to address all types of violence as a manifestation of larger, structural issues of oppression and social injustice that require community-based (as opposed to criminal-justice-based) solutions. Currently, there is not one single movement but, instead, multiple movements seeking to end gender-based violence in the United States.

Historical Roots

Rape has been regarded as a crime since the colonial period in the United States, and then it was codified into law once the nation was established. Above all else, early rape laws protected the property interest that men had in the women who belonged to them and reinforced social ideals dictating appropriate feminine behavior. Embedded in the statutes themselves and in the judicial deployment of rape law were the social prejudices of race and class that deemed only some women worthy of legal protection from rape (Schulhofer, 1998). Legal requirements unique to rape, including prompt reporting, witness corroboration, the admissibility of a victim's prior acts and reputation, and "resistance to the utmost," revealed both concerns about women's assumed propensity to lie about victimization and a larger cultural assumption that only women who did not violate gender expectations could truly suffer harm (Dripps, 2010). The assertion by Chief Justice Sir Matthew Hale in 1680 that "rape is an accusation easily to be made, hard to be proved, and harder to be defended by the party accused, tho' never so innocent" continued to inform American statutes and instructions to juries well into the 20th century (as quoted in Caringella, 2009, p. 16). According to early legal codes, there was no such thing as rape within marriage; if rape was ultimately a crime against a man with rights over a particular woman, then it was legally nonsensical that a man could commit such a harm by forcing sex upon his own wife.[2] It was only well into the 1970s that sexual-assault activists

successfully lobbied the first states to pass laws against marital rape, and it took until 1993 for it to be criminalized in some fashion in all 50 states, though spousal exemptions remain in some form in many states to this day (Bergen, 2006).

The abuse of wives[3] was certainly not a new phenomenon in the 1960s and 1970s, nor was the opposition to such abuse, especially in cases where a husband's "abuse of authority" resulted in "unjustified" beatings (Siegel, 1996). Even during historical periods when common law permitted the corporal punishment of wives—as long as no permanent physical injury resulted—there was simultaneous recognition of the potential harms of such "chastisement," especially when such acts became excessively brutal.[4] Nineteenth-century reformers, most notably temperance advocates and women's rights activists, successfully challenged laws and social norms that granted husbands the prerogative to beat their wives. As *chastisement doctrine* gave way to late-19th-century legal approaches that defined the marriage relationship as private and thus largely outside the purview of legal intrusion,[5] an array of court cases challenged the limits of such privacy and asserted women's rights within marriage and their rights to divorce on the grounds of physical cruelty. The 19th century also saw the gradual criminalization of some forms of "wife beating" and building opposition to "domestic tyranny" by feminist leaders, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone (Pleck, 1983). In the 1890s, the Women's Christian Temperance Union successfully lobbied for legal change and, in San Diego, opened a home as a refuge for orphans, neglected and abused children, and poor mothers, including those who had been abused by husbands (Pleck, 1983, pp. 463–464). In Chicago, the Protective Agency for Women and Children, sponsored by the Chicago Women's Club, likewise extended support to abused wives and rape victims, including legal support (Pleck, 1983, p. 465). After the turn of the 20th century, however, the Progressive Era government effectively turned over to social scientific professionals the authority to define and address the problem of wife beating, and women's activism around the issue waned. Social workers and psychiatrists used therapeutic terms like "marital discord" and "domestic difficulties" that implied that both men and women shared equal responsibility for the problem. Then, under the influence of psychoanalysis in the 1930s, women's stories of abuse were often labeled fantasies or, in the 1940s and '50s, examples of female masochism. It was not until the 1960s that the contemporary feminist movement sought to regain control over the public interpretation of the issue (Arnold, 2006).

What *was* new in the era of civil rights and feminism was a perspective that defined *domestic violence* as a distinct form of violence. Such abuse was reconceptualized as symptomatic of other forms of oppression that extended well beyond the household. Rape, too, was reconceived as an act of power and domination (rather than an act of sex) enacted at the individual and collective level. Whereas many early anti-wife-beating initiatives had claimed to uphold patriarchal family ideals—most often finding fault with the temperaments of individual men or with the evils of drunkenness—the late 1960s and 1970s ushered in the beginnings of an analysis of oppression and male dominance that located the problem of domestic violence in the inequality inherent in patriarchy itself. Similarly, a new feminist analysis of rape as a mechanism of patriarchal social control demanded an approach to the issue that addressed both immediate, individual harms and the entrenched social norms and practices that activists argued produced a *rape culture* that perpetuated sexual oppression.

THE ANTIRAPE
MOVEMENT'S EARLY YEARS

The antirape movement worked to bring visibility to a problem surrounded by silence and deep social discomfort and, like the battered women's movement that followed, owed its early momentum

to feminist consciousness raising. In conversations with other women in small-group settings, survivors of rape discovered that they were not alone and that the harms they had suffered suggested larger, systematic patterns of male power and women's oppression. Unprecedented activist events, like the speak-out organized in 1971 by the New York Radical Feminists in New York City, brought rape into public discourse and framed it as much more than a rare individualized act of sexual aggression; feminists developed an analysis of rape as working to silence and victimize individual women while simultaneously maintaining patriarchal privilege and control. Armed with this understanding, antirape activists sought to reform the male-dominated institutions—courts, law enforcement, and medical practices—that revictimized women, reinforced victim blaming, and promoted cultural misunderstandings of rape (Koss & Harvey, 1991). They also developed their own organizations, rape crisis centers (RCCs), to provide emotional support and practical assistance for women traumatized by rape.

The first rape crisis centers were founded in 1971 in Berkeley, California, and 1972 in Washington, D.C. Both were grassroots efforts by local women to provide medical and legal information and advice and emotional support for rape victims, and both became national networking hubs as more RCCs and hotlines were established in quick succession across the country (Matthews, 1994). RCCs were seen as more than just a mechanism for service provision, however. In the early 1970s, feminists developed an influential critique of the hierarchical and nondemocratic decision-making structures of traditional institutions. Such structures, they argued, embodied patriarchal values and reinforced the status quo in which women were subjected to the political, economic, and social control of men. Their response was to create RCCs organized as feminist collectives in which responsibilities and decision making would be shared equally among a largely volunteer staff.

The police and hospitals became early targets of activists in the growing movement, who advocated more responsive and sensitive treatment of rape victims. At the same time, legal scholars were also challenging the ways in which rape law and legal practice blamed rape victims and hampered prosecution. The first congressional response came in 1975, with the establishment of a National Center for the Prevention and Control of Rape. By and large, however, the movement remained organizationally segmented until the first formal national coalitions were formed in the late 1970s (Matthews, 1994), most notably the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) in 1979.

The overarching social project of the early antirape movement was to challenge the prevailing cultural view of rape as a sex crime committed by a few sick men or brought on by women's suspect behavior. Activists framed rape as an act of violence integral to male domination and worked to expose culturally entrenched *rape myths* (e.g., women always lie about rape, no means yes, etc.) that continued to shape the assumptions underlying social, institutional, and policy responses to the problem. The early activist figures of the antirape movement—Susan Brownmiller and Susan Griffin, chief among them—voiced a growing recognition of the widespread and systematic oppression of women as a function of patriarchy and sexism that helped to connect the personal experiences of individual women with larger political systems.

Over time, however, the field has become characterized by significant ideological diversity (Koss & Harvey, 1991). While most RCCs still engage in community education to challenge prevailing attitudes and beliefs about rape and rape victims, their priorities often lie with providing crisis response and victim advocacy services. There has been a lot of internal movement debate about the degree to which victim services are compatible with social-change objectives. Service provision, including legal advocacy, often involves close cooperation with established social-service and criminal justice agencies. Many social-change-oriented activists believe this leads to a dilution of feminist ideas and undermines the oppositional politics of the

movement. These concerns were intensified with the availability of federal funding for RCCs, beginning with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) and the Department of Labor's Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) in the mid-1970s. In order to qualify for such funding, centers have to demonstrate organizational stability and community support that, in practice, typically requires that they adopt the traditional hierarchical structures and professionally credentialed staff that the early feminist RCC eschewed. Whether or not such organizational characteristics do indeed result in depoliticization and co-optation by the state is a matter of continuing debate (see, for example, Koss & Harvey, 1991).

The antirape movement suffered setbacks in the 1980s, including the loss of funding in many states and an antifeminist backlash against the gains of the 1970s (Greensite, 2009). Nonetheless, many activists and state coalitions at the core of the antirape movement continued to collaborate to push for crucial local and statewide changes to practices in hospitals, courts, and police departments as the radical origins of the movement gave way to more liberal reforms (Caringella, 2009).

The Early Battered Women's Movement

Like their antirape counterparts, early battered women's advocates struggled to dismantle stereotypes and common myths about survivors, who were often blamed for their abuse, including the ways that professional discourses and practices, like psychology and law, located the root causes of battering in the behavior of the abused woman themselves. Early battered women's activists also looked to similar efforts in England and Scotland, where activists had opened the first shelters for battered women earlier in the decade.[6] Some of the very first shelters, including Rainbow Retreat in Phoenix, Arizona (opened in 1973), and Haven House in Pasadena, California (opened in 1974), had originally intended to serve women victimized by "alcoholic husbands" but quickly recognized that the problem of battering extended well beyond the effects of alcoholism and became refuges for all abused women (Tierney, 1982). These early grassroots activist efforts most often combined practical necessity and engagement with larger political or social concerns. They typically provided for the immediate needs of women fleeing abuse—safety, shelter, and personal support—while also often offering spaces for education, awareness, and consciousness raising that focused attention on larger systems in need of change.

Some early collectives supplied temporary housing, either in informal arrangements or in already existing spaces provided by organizational or personal donations and state grants (Schechter, 1982). Although many activists, including former survivors, had been informally offering safe space and resources to individuals on a small scale for years, the first recognizable U.S. shelters just as often emerged out of organized grassroots or community-based efforts. Some started out as gender-focused services like women's crisis lines or legal services or grew out of feminist consciousness-raising groups and collectives. Women's Advocates in St. Paul, Minnesota, for example, was first a consciousness-raising group and then evolved, in 1973, into one of the first known shelters in the country (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). Other shelters grew out of organizing efforts in racial or ethnic communities and focused on the needs of minority women. In 1974, Casa Myrna Vasquez opened a Latina-run battered women's shelter in Boston, and in 1977, the White Buffalo Calf Woman's Society opened the first tribal shelter on the Rosebud Reservation of the Sicangu Lakota Nation in South Dakota. The first shelter for Asian women opened in 1981 in Los Angeles and was called Everywoman's Shelter ("Herstory," n.d.). Nearly all of these shelters relied primarily on volunteers, donations, and small grants for their day-to-day operations. Although there was wide variation in the provision of

shelter from state to state, by 1980, battered women could find a shelter in every major city, and by 1982, there were between 300 and 700 shelters and safe-home projects (Ferraro, 1996; Schechter, 1982).

Mobilizing against domestic violence took a number of forms and strategies, and even in the period of early grassroots organizing, there was no single ideology or set of strategies that defined the growing organized support for battered women. Even though the activism on behalf of battered women was recognizably feminist and clearly linked to other second-wave feminist efforts, not all of the early attempts to reach out to battered women and to provide services were feminist in nature. As Kathleen Ferraro points out, "traditional charity, social work, and religious efforts to assist battered women" operated alongside more clearly feminist efforts, such that "a survey of existing shelters in 1977 found only 46 percent identified as 'feminist' in orientation" (Ferraro, 1996, p. 83).

Although not all shelters or resources for battered women averred feminist ideals, in the 1970s and '80s, feminist battered women's shelters became iconic symbols for the movement to end violence against women. Dobash and Dobash (1992) assert that shelters were much more than safe spaces for battered women and their children. As with rape crisis centers, battered women's shelters became both the symbolic locus of the larger political movement and a physical base for ongoing political organizing. In the experiences of the women who lived and worked in shelters, they were also a tangible reminder of the deep economic dependence of women on male-dominated households. The domestic violence shelter operated both symbolically and in practice as the liberatory alternative to the private, patriarchal home, where abuse was all too common.

The story of the battered women's movement in the 1970s is one of increasing coalition building, the development of practical responses and theoretical explanations for domestic violence, and the mainstreaming of domestic violence as a social problem. The movement itself comprised a number of different constituencies, each with slightly different interests, contexts, and sets of relationships. There were feminist activists who were more radical, including many women of color, who had forcefully articulated an antipatriarchal critique and helped build the analysis of battering as a systemic rather than individual harm. This analysis provided the impetus for early networks that modeled self-help and peer support as strategies for empowering survivors of violence. More mainstream, liberal feminists also worked toward political awareness and reform, joining the issue of domestic violence to other demands for gender equality, including equal pay and reproductive rights.

The problem of domestic violence gained national recognition as it became newly visible in politics and the media. The mid-1970s witnessed growing attention to the issue by feminist groups at the local and national levels, including the National Organization for Women's (NOW) Task Force on Battered Women and Household Violence (1975) and the International Women's Year Conference in Houston, Texas (1976). Coalitions at the city and then at the state level emerged and claimed goals that included the creation of networks of information and support, along with fostering political power in state legislatures through lobbying. State coalitions also became the organizations in charge of setting standards for antiviolence programs at the state level, for disseminating federal funding, and for providing a consistent analysis of the problem (Schechter, 1982). Growing out of strong state coalitions and a nationwide conference on domestic violence in 1978, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) was formed, the beginning of a system of networking and organized political activism on a national scale (Tierney, 1982).

Historically, state coalitions have also served as locations where some groups of women of color could organize. For example, a Women of Color Task Force was founded in 1985 as part of the predecessor to the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence and task force members later worked with the state coalition to

increase visibility and outreach to communities of color (Aszman, 2011). The various women-of-color task forces and caucuses also became an important mechanism for networking, information sharing, and organizing to address issues specific to battered women of color on state, regional, and national levels. Nonetheless, as the battered women's movement coalesced and became recognizable as a mainstream effort, many women of color criticized its emerging focus on gender to the exclusion of other forms of oppression that made people vulnerable to violence. In reality, they argued, the oppressions of gender, race, and class are not discrete and insular and cannot be treated as if they are without neglecting the experiences of women who are not white and middle class. In other words, this problem cannot be addressed with a color-blind approach (Wang, 1996).

Women of Color

As domestic violence gained a national profile, the dominant narrative of the causes and solutions to abuse shaped by liberal feminist interests often eclipsed analyses that placed domestic violence in the context of other oppressions like racism and poverty. At the first NCADV conference in 1980, the lack of women of color in visible leadership positions led some members to form the Third World Women's Caucus (later renamed the Women of Color Task Force) (Schechter, 1982). This group pushed NCADV to form alliances with organizations that dealt with issues important to women of color, to actively promote women of color as members and leaders in the organization, and to collect antiracism documents and tools that could be used in domestic violence agencies (Schechter, 1982). Their efforts were successful enough that in 1982, the second NCADV conference started with a Women of Color Institute on the first day. A growing analysis of the layers of gendered, organizational, and state-sponsored oppressions that women of color routinely faced meant that issues of police brutality, racialized patterns of

incarceration, and systematic discriminatory treatment and surveillance by social services became central to discussions about intimate partner violence. The 1984 New York Women Against Rape conference, for example, became a "multiracial, multiethnic conference that confronted multiple challenges facing women organizing against violence against women—by partners, police, social service agencies, and poverty" (Thompson, 2002, p. 345). Community-specific resources also began to emerge, most often in large cities, to provide culturally competent support to survivors who could not easily or comfortably access more mainstream services. In 1978, for example, the Center for the Pacific Asian Family opened in Los Angeles to provide help for Asian and Pacific Islander women experiencing sexual or domestic violence, followed in subsequent years by the New York Asian Women's Shelter (1982) and the Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco (1988) (Shah, 1994, p. 149).

Organizing across racial lines has always been difficult for both the antirape and battered women's movements. Mainstream feminism in the U.S., including the first efforts focused exclusively on combating violence against women in the 1970s, has been predominantly white. At the same time, historians like Becky Thompson (2002) and Sherna Berger Gluck (1998) argue that the organized efforts by women of color to confront violence against women have been largely written out of the history of the feminist movement. These women, Thompson observes, worked on three fronts in the 1970s: in white-dominated feminist groups; in women's caucuses in existing mixed-gender organizations; and in autonomous Black, Latina, Native American, and Asian feminist organizations. Activists confronted gender-based violence from within groups that, at the same time, targeted the interlocking race, class, and other forms of systemic discrimination. To this day, these groups have tended to concentrate on the immediate needs of the community and provide a range of programs, not only housing battered women and assisting victims of rape but also providing

multilingual abuse hotlines, legal advocacy for refugee women, drug abuse intervention, challenges to forced sterilization, and women's leadership training alongside a host of other social and political efforts (Lin & Tan, 1994; Shah, 1994; Thompson, 2002).

A coalition model came to predominate in antiviolence work overall, in which racially and ethnically homogeneous movement organizations with independent bases, typically representing and serving their own distinct racial or ethnic constituencies, work together in coalitions when their interests overlap. The women who work especially in ethnically based organizations often believe that women in crisis are more likely to feel comfortable and use services if they are provided by someone like themselves (Dubrow et al., 1986; Kanuha, 1987). Activists learned from experience that for an organization like a rape crisis center to be effective, it is important for it to be *of* the community that it is trying to serve (Matthews, 1994).

The needs of women of color who are victims of rape and battering often differ in significant ways from those of white middle-class women. Gender-based violence cannot easily be isolated as a separate issue from other problems of poverty, racism, and anti-immigrant sentiment, so programs tend to be broader in scope. But even to provide services in ethnic-minority communities, organizations often have to overcome long histories of distrust of educators and health care providers in order to make contact with those in need. There are also often language barriers to communication and cultural prohibitions about seeking help outside of the family for emotional or psychological problems. All of these barriers require that these organizations invest much more time and effort into outreach and community education than those in white communities, especially when they are first getting established.

CRIMINALIZING RAPE AND ABUSE

If the story of the anti-violence-against-women movements in the 1970s and early 1980s is one of building awareness and coalitions, the end of the 20th century was a time when the dominant voices within these movements persuasively articulated the need for legal remedies and a criminal-justice-centered approach to ending violence against women.

Propelled by scathing critiques by Susan Brownmiller, Susan Griffin, and Catharine MacKinnon in the 1970s and Susan Estrich in the 1980s, antirape activists fought for legal reforms to remedy the criminal justice system's failure to take rape seriously. In spite of attempts at legal reforms to rape laws by the American Law Institute in the early 1950s, rape laws continued to focus on physical force as the key element to the crime (and by implication, active resistance on the part of the victim) and to require corroborating evidence in rape cases (Schulhofer, 1998). Feminist activists denounced the misogynist assumptions underwriting such statutes and criticized the retraumatizing practices of law enforcement and the criminal justice system, where victim-blaming strategies and skepticism of victims' stories were commonplace. In 1975, NOW convened a National Task Force on Rape, which aimed to reform legal standards and courtroom practices. By the 1980s, these feminist reformers had successfully led efforts to dismantle the corroboration requirement required (only) in rape cases, to do away with the special cautionary instructions to juries reiterating Matthew Hale's 17th-century warnings, and to enact rape shield laws that made evidence of the victim's prior sexual history and reputation more difficult to allow into legal testimony (Schulhofer, 1998). After the successes of feminist legal reforms, the antirape movement lost some of its momentum. As Susan Caringella (2009) observes, the movement "drew less and less attention from feminists as the issue of rape drew less attention in the aftermath of legislative changes and was replaced by a growing concern about domestic violence" (p. 2).

The differential treatment of domestic violence cases by law enforcement also became one of the primary targets for feminist reform in the 1980s. Feminists argued that police would often

decline to arrest in cases of domestic assault, perpetuating a long-entrenched understanding of battering as a private problem exempt from legal intrusion and a double standard whereby intimate partner abuse was treated as a less serious offense than stranger assault. A controlled police experiment conducted by Lawrence Sherman in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1981 and 1982 suggested that arrest (as opposed to asking an abuse suspect to leave or attempting to counsel the parties) most successfully deterred future incidents of domestic violence (Sherman & Berk, 1984). Successful lawsuits against police departments in Oakland, California; New Haven, Connecticut; Chicago; Atlanta; and Los Angeles held police accountable for taking action in cases of domestic violence. The case of Tracey Thurman in Torrington, Connecticut, in 1983 gained national attention when her lawsuit claimed that police officers stood by and watched as Thurman's husband severely beat her, causing her permanent physical damage (Wallace, 2002). By the mid-1980s, the norm in police departments across the country had shifted, as policies for preferred or mandatory arrest in domestic violence cases became more common and as states reformed their criminal statutes to allow for warrantless arrests in domestic violence misdemeanor cases (Wallace, 2002). At the same time, *civil orders of protection* (called *restraining orders* in some states), an innovation of the mid-1970s, became increasingly accessible to victims of violence.

The passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 signaled the successful joint efforts of battered women's advocates, anti-rape advocates, and law enforcement personnel in the first federal legislation that recognized domestic violence and sexual assault as crimes. VAWA established the Office on Violence Against Women as part of the Department of Justice, provided funding for community organizations, coordinated criminal justice efforts to respond to domestic and sexual violence, and provided civil remedies for assault victims. While the latter provision was struck down by the Supreme Court in 2000, subsequent reauthorizations expanded protections to include stalking and dating violence, protections for immigrant and LBGT populations, and provisions for Native American women abused by non-native men on reservations.

CRITIQUES OF CRIMINAL-JUSTICE-CENTERED APPROACHES

While the 1994 VAWA legislation represented the long-sought recognition of gender-based violence as a pervasive social problem demanding redress, feminist scholars have considered it to be a double-edged sword. At the same time that it framed the problem as a social-justice issue, VAWA also cemented an understanding of gender-based violence as fundamentally a criminal justice problem. As Beth Richie (2012) points out, VAWA was part of the much larger Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act—"one of the most comprehensive, far-reaching crime bills in the history of the United States" (p. 86)—that stripped educational opportunities from incarcerated individuals, expanded the federal death penalty, and spent over $9 billion on prison construction. For people living in communities that had been negatively affected by mass incarceration and a weakening of the social safety net in the previous decade, VAWA's particular version of safety had the potential to exacerbate the disenfranchisement of already marginalized communities and the women in them who are the most vulnerable to male violence.

Many regard VAWA as the culmination of a trend that began in the 1980s. Rather than consistently bringing about greater autonomy and agency for women, some legal interventions in domestic violence have had serious unintended consequences for victims, especially those who are already disadvantaged because of their race, class, sexual orientation, disability, or immigration status (Goodmark, 2012; Miller, Iovanni, & Kelley, 2011; Mills, 1999). In particular, the mandatory criminal justice interventions advocated by many feminists and widely adopted in

the 1980s, including mandatory arrest, prosecution, and reporting, have since been criticized for inflicting a variety of harms on victims. These include the greater likelihood that victims will be subject to police mistreatment, that noncitizen battered women will be deported, and, more generally, that victims risk increased and ongoing state intrusion in their lives (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003; Coker, 2008; Wacholz & Miedema, 2000).

There are various explanations for why criminal justice reforms have not consistently benefited battered women and have even sometimes backfired. Some trace the problem to the pervasive influence of male values and practices in the occupational culture of law enforcement (see, e.g., Corrigan, 2013; Ferraro, 1989; Randall & Rose, 1981; and Stanko, 1989). A second line of reasoning is that gender bias is built into the seemingly gender-neutral rules and procedures that govern laws and law enforcement practices (e.g., Arnold & Slusser, forthcoming; Frohmann & Mertz, 1994; Martin & Powell, 1994; Pence, 1999; Sandefur, 2008). A third group points to the restructuring of the state according to neoliberal principles since the 1980s, which has intensified regulation of the poor and minorities. These latter critics argue that contemporary state interventions in domestic violence cases reproduce the kinds of controlling dynamics that women experience in abusive relationships, including lack of choice in decisions, social isolation, degradation, and terrorization (Bumiller, 2008; Haney, 2010; Mills, 1999; Wacholz & Miedema, 2000; Wacquant, 2009). They and similar critics (e.g., Curre, 1995; Goodmark, 2012) also point out that it should be no surprise that the expansion of an already class- and race-based criminal justice system has exacerbated the unequal impacts of legal interventions on different groups of women. Policies that criminalize domestic violence have largely been designed with the needs of white, heterosexual, middle-class women in mind, for whom interventions such as mandatory arrest often work. However, poor women of color and other marginalized identities often have different needs and interests, including the need to secure alternative housing and maintain a steady source of income, which are ill served or even harmed by these policies (Coker, 2008).

This latter position overlaps with a fourth group of critics who have called attention to the ways that the effects of structural inequality have been ignored in the overreliance on criminal approaches. Deborah Weissman (2013), for example, argues that the overwhelming neglect of class relationships by antiviolence activists means that the disproportionate harms that lower-class people experience as a result of domestic violence get overlooked. Framing domestic violence as a "classless" problem, as liberal feminists tend to do, she argues, requires willfully ignoring that a criminal justice approach does little to address the context of inequality that renders entire groups of people more vulnerable to interpersonal violence in the first place. Critiques like Weissman's argue that the alliances between mainstream feminist advocates and criminal justice approaches have pushed aside longstanding efforts by women of color and white antiracist feminists to situate domestic violence and battering within larger oppressive structures, including racism and classism, that extend beyond gender inequality alone. This strategy has precluded partnerships between, on the one hand, mainstream activists in both the battered women's and antirape movements and, on the other, antiviolence efforts led by women of color that foreground intersectional approaches in theory and practice. In a similar vein, Kathleen Ferraro (1996) has argued that efforts to criminalize domestic violence have overshadowed the original aims of the social movements to end violence against women and that antiviolence efforts have even ceased to be recognizably feminist. She notes that early activists regarded police intervention and battered women's shelters to be mere stop-gap measures on the road to women's liberation. True liberation required sufficient material and emotional resources for women to survive outside of abusive relationships, including child support and childcare, affordable housing, and education. In practice, however, funding for

these crucial public supports has been cut while the mainstream movement has focused nearly exclusively on limited criminal justice and crisis intervention strategies. In short, Ferraro argues that mainstream activists have largely abandoned broad-based feminist demands.

Political Tensions

The prioritization of criminal justice approaches in contemporary movements to end violence against women, as symbolized by VAWA, has arguably narrowed their pool of supporters and reinforced ideological tensions within the movements. This strategy has sidelined the interests of women of color and poor women especially. As Beth E. Richie (2012) points out, the Omnibus Crime Bill, of which VAWA was a key part,

> included some of the most draconian provisions that had a very serious impact on disenfranchised people. For example, it overturned a law that had allowed inmates to receive funding for education while incarcerated; it created 60 new death penalty offenses, and provided for huge increases in law enforcement budgets and prison construction. (p. 86)

Similar concerns about the disproportionate impact of antiviolence legislation on communities of color prompted a 2003 roundtable discussion sponsored by the Ms. Foundation for Women (Dasgupta, 2003). The roundtable report celebrates the achievements associated with changes in the legal system that have allowed for many women to access resources and increase the choices they have for safety. At the same time, it suggests that the effect of the legal-system-centered approach has not been successful for women of color: "Racial bias permeates the legal and other state systems, with disproportionately devastating effects on communities of color, poor, and immigrant peoples" (Dasgupta, 2003, p. 12). Dasgupta's report cited a National Institute of Justice study that showed very different outcomes of service distribution and mandatory-arrest policies for white women and black women. Such patterns, she asserts, show the need to place advocacy for battered women alongside forms of advocacy that challenge the larger structures of oppression that give rise to violence in the first place. In addition, focusing only on criminal justice efforts threatens coalition building among women from across classes, races, and citizenship status.

DEVELOPMENTS IN MAINSTREAM ANTIVIOLENCE MOVEMENTS

This critique of the mainstream battered women's movement, while shining a spotlight on the limitations of criminal justice approaches to ending violence against women, does not acknowledge the ways in which mainstream antiviolence activists have succeeded in installing a sustainable, if, at times, imperfectly practiced, feminist perspective in many institutional systems dealing with violence against women. They put the issue on the political and cultural agenda and developed models of service provision and advocacy that have benefited many women. Over the years, activists in mainstream programs have had to adapt to new social contexts and new bureaucratic demands while wrestling with how best to define the root causes of violence and the best ways to combat it. In the process, they have taken criticisms about their overreliance on criminal legal systems seriously, have learned from their mistakes, and continue to challenge systems that fail survivors of abuse. Moreover, a widespread recognition that system-level changes, particularly criminal-justice-oriented changes, have backfired for those survivors who are the most vulnerable because of their social location has been the basis for some of the most important innovations and corrections in this branch of the battered women's movement.

There are a number of areas in which now-mainstream practitioners and service providers have developed interventions to serve survivors more effectively. For example, in the area of

feminist mental-health innovations, they have undertaken a continuous effort to develop feminist therapeutic interventions that target the particular kinds of trauma experienced by victims of physical or sexual violence. A series of highly effective trauma-focused therapies has emerged, such as prolonged exposure (Foa, Hembree, & Rothbaum, 2007) and cognitive processing therapy. The latter, which is a trauma therapy that adapts principles of cognitive behavioral therapy specifically for rape survivors, has proven especially effective in treating the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms of violence survivors (Resick, Nishith, Weaver, Astin, & Feuer, 2002; Resick & Schnicke, 1996). While it would be difficult to argue that any therapeutic modality is inherently feminist, these interventions were explicitly designed to address responses to trauma by dismantling survivor self-blame and by challenging stereotypical cultural beliefs about abuse often internalized by survivors and their supporters. While the early voices of antiviolence movements tended to focus on a sociopolitical analysis aimed at ending the sexual and physical violence in women's lives as the primary path to empowerment, increasingly, they have included mental-health services as a crucial way for individual women to regain power and control over their lives.

Definitions of women's safety and policies governing battered women's shelters have also undergone key shifts. The work of Jill Davies, especially her *Safety Planning With Battered Women: Complex Lives/Difficult Choices* (Davies, Lyon, & Monti-Catania, 1998), prompted a movement-wide debate about the structures of services designed to help battered women. Davies's work highlighted the crucial differences between *service-defined advocacy*, a structure of advocacy premised on dictating women's decisions by means of prescribed rules, expectations, and guidelines for behavior and action, and *woman-defined advocacy* that was premised on individual women's own set of defined needs as the basis for action. Davies criticized a one-size-fits-all approach to advocacy and a universal definition of safety, calling particular attention to the multiple life-generated risks that women have to weigh in decision making, in addition to the more familiar batterer-generated risks typically foregrounded in domestic violence work (Davies et al., 1998). In addition, critiques of typical shelter structures have raised questions about the ways shelter rules may inadvertently replicate the tactics of abusers by maintaining women's isolation, defining (and enforcing rules about) appropriate parenting, governing women's ability to secure or maintain employment, and dictating their hours of sleep and sociability (Koyama, 2006; McDermott & Garofalo, 2004; Olsen, 2007). Such critiques have prompted changes and experiments with a variety of shelter and assistance models and at least one multi-state study of shelter experiences (Lyon, Lane, & Menard, 2008). Attention from within the field to the diversity of women's experiences, identities, and contexts as survivors continues to shape research and generate innovations in practices to become more inclusive and responsive.

Strategies to address the economic vulnerability of violence survivors have also evolved as activists have learned from experience. It has long been clear to advocates that many women are trapped in abusive relationships because they are financially dependent on abusers, who keep tight control over the family's finances and often undermine the women's attempts to work outside the home. The situation is even worse for poor women, who typically have no economic resources of their own and little training that qualifies them for any but the lowest wage jobs. In response to the economic crises in which many survivors find themselves, early activists typically focused on helping women enroll in government-run cash assistance programs like Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). By the late 1990s, women's access to cash assistance programs, in particular, was undercut by welfare reform, and many activists began to rethink how to address the underlying economic issues that make women vulnerable to abuse. The result has been the development of a number of alternatives intended to give women greater economic independence. Programs

currently in use include economic-literacy classes, job training and counseling, microenterprise loans, and enrollment in asset development programs (e.g., Correia, 2000). One advantage of structural approaches such as these is that they address the intersection of class and gender oppression that often heightens women's vulnerability to violence (Websdale & Johnson, 1997).

Shifts in the stance of the mainstream battered women's movement toward law enforcement provide some of the clearest examples of activists learning from experience. Mainstream activists' first major effort was getting legislation passed in all 50 states that makes it possible for battered women to obtain court restraining orders. These civil restraining orders have also proven to be an important tool for individual battered women in a variety of ways, including as a means to establish child custody, to get the abuser to stay away, or to threaten further legal action in order to elicit concessions from the abuser. Civil orders, moreover, continue to be a focus for innovative research and practice as advocates within the criminal justice system work to make such orders increasingly accessible, enforceable, and useful to abuse survivors. Specialized domestic violence courts have also been set up in many jurisdictions—some focused solely on civil matters and others integrating civil and criminal cases—and are designed to increase the safety of the survivor and her children; to hold abusers accountable; and to provide a more coordinated, community-wide response to domestic violence (Sack, 2002). In addition, scholars and practitioners alike continue to propose new ways to provide meaningful access to legal resources, including proposals to make civil orders more flexible for survivors who need or want to maintain limited contact with their abusers (Goldfarb, 2008; Murphy, 2003).

In response to criticisms of the criminal-justice-focused approaches endorsed by VAWA, alternative models of community response emerged in mainstream institutions that de-emphasized the centrality of law enforcement. For example, the Collaborative for Abuse Prevention in Racial and Ethnic Minority

Communities (CARE), begun by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, set out to address barriers to resources for racial- and ethnic-minority survivors and to develop culturally competent responses to intimate partner violence by a network of community organizations that excludes criminal justice organizations (Whitaker et al., 2007). This network model takes a community-based, grassroots approach that capitalizes on knowledgeable minority voices within already existing organizations to target the needs of minority survivors. Examples of similar public-health approaches to violence prevention in minority communities, including gender-based violence, are Futures Without Violence, based in San Francisco, and the Prevention Institute in Oakland, California. Both combine strategies of community education and awareness, leadership training, and policy initiatives to promote prevention and improve system-level responses to violence and abuse within communities. Such innovations speak to the ability of those working within recognizably mainstream organizations to adapt their structures and practices to respond to the needs of communities underserved by mainstream efforts and ideologies.

While the battered women's movement has seen its mainstream branch embrace and experiment with conventional service delivery approaches, the mainstream branch of the anti-rape movement has taken a slightly different path, especially in terms of its relationships with social institutions. As Patricia Yancey Martin (2005) has shown, most early rape crisis centers that emerged in the 1970s adopted more confrontational (and sometimes even hostile) stances toward law enforcement, publicly criticizing the patriarchal structures, practices, and attitudes of the larger criminal justice system that continues to blame, stigmatize, and retraumatize victims of rape. The tense relationships between RCCs and other institutions providing services for rape victims often had negative consequences for the rape victims caught in the middle. In response, by the mid-1980s, RCCs increasingly began to work cooperatively with mainstream systems (Martin, 2005). Rather than publicizing the

failures and missteps of these systems, RCCs engage in what Schmitt and Martin (1999; Martin, 2005) have termed *unobtrusive mobilizing*, operating within institutions like hospitals and police departments to change the priorities, practices, and attitudes of professionals who regularly come into contact with rape victims. Working behind the scenes as trainers, consultants, and community partners, RCC workers influence and change mainstream organizations from within so that survivors can receive respectful and informed care. The community-wide partnerships that many RCCs have cultivated have enabled them to help rewrite protocols for medical examinations of victims in hospitals, offer model prevention programs to schools and universities, and collaborate on policy changes—all of which have significantly shifted the ways that institutions and states support victims and survivors (Martin, 2005). Although some critics and early activists have seen this trajectory of increased collaboration and working within systems as evidence of wholesale cooptation, others recognize the enormous changes and increased public awareness of the issue that have resulted (e.g., Martin, 2005; Collins & Whalen, 1989).

In comparison to many battered women's programs, the different positioning of RCCs within larger mainstream organizations, including hospitals, YWCAs, and college campuses, combined with the emphasis on outcomes and evidence-based practice from the early 1990s onward, has led to a recent redoubling of antirape efforts around prevention education *within* institutions. Many RCCs have long-established partnerships with elementary and secondary schools and often provide prevention and education programming, ranging from good touch/bad touch programs to more sustained engagement with students focusing on building healthy relationships.

Since the 1970s, RCCs and antirape activism have been present on many college and university campuses. The attention paid to college students by researchers and the national media (often in the aftermath of tragedy or mishandling of assault allegations) has spotlighted this

population and generated a unique history of federal legislation. A 1985 study by Mary Koss and colleagues of a nationally representative study of over 6,000 college women from 32 different colleges and universities, for example, was the first to reveal that about 1 in 4 (27.5%) college-aged women had experienced rape or attempted rape since the age of 14 (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). Koss's research led to increased attention to the contextual factors that heightened the risk of sexual assault on campus and spurred the development of numerous prevention and intervention programs. After the 1986 murder of college student Jeanne Clery in her dorm room at Lehigh University, efforts to make crime information statistics publicly available led to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act, first passed in 1992, requiring higher education institutions to report information about crimes that occur on or around their campuses. RCCs and many student-led activist efforts on college campuses during the 1990s and early 2000s implemented educational and prevention programming and continued to cultivate student involvement in the issue. In 2011, the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights issued the "Dear Colleague" letter that reiterates Title IX's classification of sexual assault and rape as forms of sexual harassment that operate as barriers to equal access to education and clarifies the responsibilities of colleges and universities in handling cases of rape and sexual assault. In the years following, student activists on several college campuses led efforts to improve the way colleges and universities address sexual assault by drawing national media attention to incidents of assault they claim have been mishandled by their school administrators.

With the help of federal funding (including VAWA funding) and with unprecedented public encouragement from college leadership, campuses have renewed efforts to make their campuses safer for students vulnerable to sexual assault. Campus interventions have increasingly called upon public-health models, including campaigns informed by CDC antiviolence efforts

from the 1990s onward, to educate students, foster healthy relationships, and change campus norms regarding sexual assault (Dahlberg & Mercy, 2009). Although there are little data available on the long-term impact of these efforts on behavior change or altered social norms, colleges and universities remain central in the development of innovative approaches to the problem as it exists among one high-risk group (Banyard, 2014) and continue to produce new generations of activists.

Recently, too, a renewed focus on the U.S. military similarly emerged with activist efforts from within the institution itself. In 2011, 17 veterans (15 women and two men) of various branches of the military filed a class action lawsuit against the Pentagon and then defense secretary Robert Gates and former defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld, claiming that the Department of Defense "failed to provide an adequate judicial system as required by the Uniform Military Justice Act and failed to abide by Congressional deadlines to implement Congressionally-ordered institutional reforms to stop rapes and other sexual assaults" (*Cioca et al. v. Rumsfeld et al.*, 2011). The military has, of course, experienced similar public assault scandals throughout the last three decades, including sexual harassment at the U.S. Navy's Tailhook Convention in 1991, where dozens of female navy midshipmen were groped and assaulted, and the U.S. Army's Aberdeen Scandal in 1996, where 12 male officers were charged with assaulting their female trainees (Browne, 2007). The most recent class action lawsuit captured national media attention and reached the halls of Congress, where new rules were developed about how commanding officers should handle sexual-assault reports. While the more conservative of the two competing pieces of legislation proposed by senators McCaskill and Gillibrand was passed, at the time of this writing, there continue to be organized efforts to strengthen the policies by taking sexual-assault complaints out of the chain of command altogether and putting them in the hands of an independent body for investigation and adjudication.

DEVELOPMENTS IN COMMUNITY-ORGANIZING APPROACHES TO VIOLENCE

An account that describes the antirape and battered women's movements only in terms of longstanding mainstream efforts misses the tremendous impact and energy of a new generation of grassroots and community-based organizers who foreground an intersectional approach to gender violence and interrelated oppressions. These activists—many of whom emerged from communities of color and focus specifically on women who are disadvantaged because of their race, class, sexual orientation, or nationality—have altered the central focus of these movements since the late 1990s, shifting efforts away from established shelters and service delivery programs and toward grassroots and community-based organizations that try to end all forms of violence against women. They use a community-organizing rather than a criminal justice approach. Their activism is informed by their experiences of the multiple and intersecting forms of oppression that provide the underpinnings for violence against women. Their strategies look beyond the criminal justice system and other institutions and instead target change primarily at the community level, resisting the activist model that addresses a single issue (e.g., only battering or only rape) separate from other interlocking issues.

One notable example is INCITE!, which formed in direct response to the failure of anti-violence organizations to seriously address violence against women of color, on the one hand, and antiracist organizations to foreground the issue of violence against women, on the other. The organization emerged from a conference called "Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color" in 2000, which brought together scholars, activists, and community members to address core concerns about violence against women in communities of color (Smith, Richie, Sudbury, White, & the INCITE! Anthology Co-Editors, 2006). The issues raised at the conference highlighted not only interpersonal

violence but also the larger forms of structural violence and oppression that impact the public and private lives of women of color, such as the mass incarceration of people of color (Smith et al., 2006). INCITE! understands partner violence to be imbricated with larger structures of violence that need to be challenged in ways that do not rely on the criminal justice system. The group strenuously opposes mainstream efforts to work with the state because the state continues to perpetrate its own acts of violence against women of color (Smith et al., 2006). INCITE! also objects to efforts by communities of color to silence women's challenges to violence perpetrated by men of color, the practice of "advocating that women keep silent about sexual and domestic violence to maintain a united front against racism" (Smith et al., 2006, p. 1).

Another example of a community-organizing approach to ending violence against women of color is Queer Asian Women Services (QAWS). Started in 1998, QAWS programs came about after founders recognized that queer Asian women were not utilizing crisis lines or shelters in the San Francisco Bay Area (Chung & Lee, n.d.). QAWS points out that queer women are excluded from the heterosexist terminology that enables survivors to access services. QAWS advocates for a more complicated analysis of the experience of abuse than a gender analysis alone provides, noting that "the power that is abused and the control used in queer relationships are rarely based on the gender attributes of the women involved" (Chung & Lee, n.d., p. 5). In addition to providing holistic services for individual abuse survivors, QAWS promotes grassroots efforts to address community-defined needs in ending violence against women. For example, QAWS trains community members to build "social circles" to prevent or to intervene in violence and to promote community-based discussions about violence (Chung & Lee, n.d.). It also promotes the creation of safe spaces in the community, greater access to conventional services, and the support of community-defined methods of perpetrator accountability (Chung & Lee, n.d.).

Efforts like QAWS and INCITE!—and these are but two examples among many community-based efforts—aim to build the capacity of community members themselves as antioppression agents and advocates. Such activist groups situate the tools for intervention at the local level and adopt approaches that depart significantly from service-based perspectives that typically position professionalized advocates (most often not from the community being served) as experts.

QUESTIONS OF COMMUNITY-LEVEL RESPONSE

Over the past 40 years, the mainstream battered women's movement, in particular, has largely shifted its energies toward meeting the needs of individual women through a service provision approach using nonprofit organizations, including shelters, clinical services, transitional housing, and legal services and advocacy. Today, it is worth asking to what extent most nonprofit domestic violence agencies are truly community-based organizations. The provision of mental-health and interpersonal services, though increasingly evidence-based and even more survivor-centered than before, places much of the focus on responding to violence rather than preventing it and on responding to it largely on an individual—or, occasionally, on a small-group—level. While these organizations may have a community profile, many are not recognizably integrated into the fabric of particular communities; in fact, unlike most RCCs, many organizations that include emergency shelter or counseling are in confidential locations that are hidden from their communities. Indeed, one of the trade-offs of professionalization and institutionalization (in both domestic violence organizations and RCCs) that comes with mainstream recognition and funding streams has been greater emphasis on evidence-based interventions and clear outcome evaluation. These emphases do not easily lend themselves to sustained community-based prevention efforts or community organizing where

outcomes are difficult to measure empirically. As a result, even mainstream organizations whose founding missions included "ending violence against women" find themselves less able to undertake primary prevention activities and are left to react to violence after it has already occurred in women's lives. When organizations *do* undertake prevention work, they often focus on schools and, in so doing, find themselves confronted with evidence suggesting that truly effective prevention requires repeated and integrated messaging that most schools are not equipped to sustain. Thus, largely because of funding structures that are simply not set up to provide ongoing resources to community-level prevention efforts, established organizations and agencies are much less likely to be at the forefront of community-level intervention.

In the socioecological model made popular by public-health discussions about interpersonal violence—a model that accounts for intrapersonal, interpersonal, community, institutional or organizational, and policy levels in its theories of health promotion and intervention—the community level has been the most neglected by mainstream antiviolence movements in recent years (Bograd, 1999; Heise, 1998). From this socioecological perspective, the organizations and coalitions that are most representative of the mainstream battered women's movement, in particular, have honed their approaches at the individual level (with feminist woman-centered advocacy models, professional clinicians, and the like), organizational level (with the availability of nonprofit agencies that offer specific services), and policy level (with continuous efforts of coalitions to lobby state and federal legislatures, such as the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the state-level Coalitions Against Domestic Violence). Still, certain shifts in the movement, such as increased professionalization, attention to mental health, and more effective survivor-centered interventions, have left a significant gap at the community level.

By contrast, groups like INCITE! and QAWS have revitalized the *community* activism that was so pivotal to the grassroots organizing of the early mainstream movement, breathing new life into the community-level focus missing from current mainstream efforts. As Smith (2008) puts it, this new generation of activists is reframing the question about how to stop violence against women from "What can *I* do?" to "What can *we* do?" (p. 421). This renewed focus on community-based organizing has taken a number of forms in practice, such as efforts to monitor violence against girls in the community (Sista II Sista in Brooklyn) and to expose police brutality in poor neighborhoods of color (Communities Against Rape and Abuse [CARA] in Seattle). In other instances, community-based organizing has meant forging links with activists and organizations in other communities of color (Korean American women in KAN-WIN) and mobilizing preexisting friendship networks in queer or lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered communities of color to hold abusers accountable (Friends Are Reaching Out [FAR Out] in Seattle) (Smith, 2008). In contrast to individualistic approaches, these efforts help to overcome the social isolation of victims, empower women collectively to take action to end violence, and serve as models for ways in which communities can collectively respond to violence.

None of these efforts, by itself, is a silver bullet that will end the problem of violence against women. For one thing, community-level organizing presupposes that a community exists that is capable of collective action in the first place. Activists have sometimes found that they must work to strengthen—or even create—communities at the same time that they develop a community-wide cultural understanding of violence against women that will prioritize victim safety and offender accountability (Smith, 2008). This is especially challenging given the sexism and homophobia that is deeply embedded in many communities. It also requires a sustained effort on the part of many in the community, especially volunteers. Many activists in the newer organizations are refusing to take external funding from government and other established sources for fear it will force them to adopt a social-service model (e.g., Sista II Sista, 2006).

However, these organizations are likely to confront problems of sustainability. Relying on an all-volunteer staff can easily lead to burnout and a lack of resources to maintain their organizations, especially in communities that are already resource poor. Nonetheless, there are considerable advantages to their community-level activism as a corrective to the often narrowly focused work of mainstream groups. The intersectionality theory that informs the most current work of these groups prevents them from retreating into specialized service niches. It also enables them to respond to changing community needs over time and to engage in community-level activism equipped with a holistic analysis that identifies violence against women as part of a larger system of related oppressions and social problems.

NEW VOICES AND NEW DIRECTIONS IN ANTIVIOLENCE MOVEMENTS

The picture of anti-violence-against-women movements offered here is one whose nuances and complexity cannot adequately be captured by a single narrative (Arnold & Ake, 2013). This is illustrated by the battered women's and anti-rape movements, which have always comprised multiple configurations of activist cohorts with sometimes conflicting goals and strategies. This is as true for the first generation of movement activists in the 1970s and '80s as it has been for the second generation since the 1990s. Nonetheless, it is possible to discern patterns in the larger trajectory of the movements that take into account both the mainstream movement groups as well as the more intersectionality-oriented ones in both generations. It is also important to recognize that women of color and lesbian activists have *always* been a crucial and radical force in antiviolence movements in the United States. It is within this context that the newer, revitalized grassroots efforts, like INCITE! and QAWS, are again foregrounding the voices of minority women as they call for an activist and analytical lens that moves beyond a simple gender analysis to incorporate other forms of social domination

and structural violence in women's lives (see, e.g., Crenshaw, 1997).

The fact that many (though not all) second-generation activists choose to use the somewhat broader term *the movement to end violence against women* signals an expansion of their political analyses to include the web of social issues that affect women in minority communities. It also shows their roots and continued participation in multiple movements, including those working to end prison and police brutality, sexual violence, racism, and poverty and to promote LGBT and immigrants' rights. The broader structural perspective on violence against women these activists bring to the table, along with their successes in community organizing and cross-movement coalition building, may very well energize the efforts of a broad range of groups to end violence against women.

ENDNOTES

1. We use the term *anti-violence-against-women movements* to encompass all of the different threads of organized, extragovernmental efforts to end violence against women in the United States. Two of the most active have been the battered women's movement and the antirape movement, but there are others, including groups of activists that work on multiple issues. A coalition like INCITE!–Critical Resistance that targets state violence against communities of color, as well as violence against women, is one example.

2. Chief Justice Matthew Hale wrote further, "But the husband cannot be guilty of a rape committed by himself upon his lawful wife, for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto the husband which she cannot retract" (as quoted in Caringella, 2009, p. 20).

3. We use the term *wives* to include all women in intimate partnerships, regardless of their legal marital status, while recognizing that the definitions and labels of early efforts themselves tended to focus rhetorically on married women.

4. It is important to note, however, that not all American colonies legalized wife beating; both the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth colonies criminalized it (Pleck, 1983).

5. The exceptions were cases of "extreme cruelty," which could be cause for divorce, and cases of lower-class marital violence. Siegel (2006) adds that "a review of post-chastisement case law . . . suggests that judicial concerns about privacy were class-salient, invoked to protect propertied men from regulatory oversight in ways they were not invoked to protect the poor" (p. 2153).

6. Erin Pizzey's refuge, Chiswick Women's Aid, was the UK's first when it opened its doors in 1971. Pizzey had never aligned herself with a feminist movement or philosophy and has, in fact, become a controversial figure among feminist advocates for her claims that much domestic violence is reciprocal and that feminist understandings of domestic violence seek to demonize men (see, e.g., Schechter, 1982).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to recognize the role that women from marginalized social locations play in the movements to end violence against women?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking a predominantly criminal-justice-centered approach to ending gender-based violence?

3. What do anti-violence-against-women efforts look like in your community? Who works in them, and who is served by them, especially in terms of race, class, sexuality, and nationality? Where are they located, and how are they funded? How have they changed over time?

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Davies, J., Lyon, E., & Monti-Catania, D. (1998). *Safety planning with battered women: Complex lives/difficult choices*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Futures Without Violence website: www.futureswithoutviolence.org

INCITE! website: www.incite-national.org/home

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Biographical Statements

Jami Ake, PhD, MSW, is assistant dean in the College of Arts & Sciences and senior lecturer in the Interdisciplinary Project in the Humanities at Washington University in St. Louis. She has been directly involved in antiviolence advocacy with survivors of rape and intimate partner violence in the larger community and on the college campus, where she also teaches courses on gender-based violence. Currently, she is collaborating with a team at Washington University's Humanities Digital Workshop to construct the Gender Violence Database, an accessible and searchable tool designed for researchers, practitioners, and the general public.

Gretchen Arnold, PhD, is an assistant professor of women's and gender studies at St. Louis University. She has participated in movements to end violence against women for nearly three decades, including as a legal advocate for battered women, board member and fundraiser, program consultant and evaluator, and teacher and advisor of students working to end rape and battering. She has published several articles analyzing the goals, strategies, and efficacy of the battered women's movement. Her current research examines the impact of nuisance property laws on battered women.

Coercive Control

Evan Stark

U.S. policy, law, interventions and most research on domestic violence continue to rely on a narrow *violence model* that equates partner abuse with discrete assaults. In the last decade, however, Europe and many other regions of the world have identified *violence against women* in relationships as a form of gender-based discrimination that violates human rights and broadened the definition to encompass *coercive control*, defined as a strategic course of conduct that consists of physical and sexual violence, stalking, and other forms of intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, economic violence, and control, illustrated by what are termed "arbitrary violations of liberty" (Council of Europe, 2011). Rather than gauging the seriousness of abuse by injury, the new model considers the degree to which coercive control has disabled a woman's capacity to effectively resist or escape abuse, a condition referred to as *entrapment*. The wrong here is subordination, depriving women of liberty, autonomy, dignity, and equality, and is identified with what men keep women from doing for themselves, as well as with the violence they do to women. Coercive control harms children because of their prolonged exposure to subjugation and inequality, as well as to violence, and because perpetrators subject children to coercive control by isolating, controlling, degrading, or hurting them alongside their mother and by using them to control their mother, a pattern termed *child abuse as tangential spouse abuse*. Coercive control has become part of common parlance among domestic violence researchers and service providers. But there are, as yet, no simple measurement tools for coercive control (as there are to measure violence), and federal and state governments in the United States have yet to identify coercive control as a specific offense (as it is England, for example) or to acknowledge to its significance.

The term *coercive control* has evolved from a description of the *psychological abuse* observed among POWs who were "brainwashed" to an account of how battered women are structurally subordinated when abusive partners complement their physical or sexual violence and intimidation with tactics that exploit and reinforce women's second-class status, deprive them of basic rights and resources, regulate their everyday lives, and degrade them into a condition of dependence that is independent of personality, familial, or cultural factors. Shifting the focus from ending violence to ending women's subjugation in personal life allows researchers to explore the full range of tactics used to achieve this end, even when no violence is involved.

Some coercive-control tactics are criminal offenses, such as violence and marital rape; some tactics, like stalking or taking money, are considered criminal among strangers; and some tactics only contribute to contribute to entrapment when they occur against a background of fear and deprivation, such as when women comply with a partner's "rules" about housework or dress out of fear, the "or else" proviso. The fact remains: Coercive control remains "invisible in plain sight" to U.S. lawmakers, regardless of the legal status of the tactics used.

Coercive control has identifiable temporal and spatial dimensions, typical dynamics, and predictable consequences. The tactical components of coercive control include those used to hurt, degrade, and intimidate victims (coercion) and those designed to isolate and control them (control) (Stark, 2007). Perpetrators adapt these tactics through trial and error based on their relative benefits and costs in a given relationship and the privileged knowledge of their

partner afforded by intimacy. Women also assault male partners in large numbers. But there is no evidence there is a "hidden" population of men suffering the pattern of violence, intimidation, isolation, and control evident among 60% to 80% of abused women.

Coercion entails the use of physical and sexual violence, stalking, and other intimidation tactics to cause pain, exact punishment, instill fear, compel or dispel a particular response, and secure privileges. A high proportion of abusive relationships include episodes of severe injury. However, well over 95% of partner violence is noninjurious and is missed when police, courts, or health services wait for injury to get involved. In fact, the significance of the violence used in coercive control derives from the cumulative effects of frequent but generally low-level physical abuse extending for a period of 5.5 to 7.2 years on average. Thirty-five percent of abused women in the general population report being "beaten" 11 to 50 times (21%) or more than 50 times (18%); 42% report being "slapped, pushed or shoved" in similar proportions (Black et al., 2011). Repeated sexual assaults and other forms of sexual coercion accompany frequent physical abuse in 43% to 55% of cases (Wingood, DiClemente, & Raj, 2000), with the result that partners account for the majority of all reported rapes (Black et al., 2011). Among women in shelters, 27% reported they had been forced to have sex against their will "often" or "all the time" (Rees, Agnew-Davies, & Barkham, 2006). Sexual assault falls on a continuum of sexual coercion that extends from forced anal sex to forced pregnancies or abortions, sabotage of birth control, sexual inspection, sex trafficking, exposure to pornography, and what Stark calls "rape as routine," where women comply with their partner's demands because they are afraid to refuse.

Intimidation tactics are used to instill fear, dependence, compliance, loyalty, and shame primarily in four ways: threats, deprivation, surveillance, and degradation. Threats run the gamut from threats to kill a partner, friends, or family members to threats that are only understood by the victim and may seem caring to outsiders, such as confining a woman to the home to "protect" her from the dangers lurking outside. Stalking is the most prevalent and devastating of surveillance tactics, and it includes cyberstalking, monitoring, and internal stalking (where the abuser tracks a victim's behavior in the home) and is closely linked to physical and sexual violence. Many perpetrators establish their omnipotence through "search-and-destroy" missions to find and close "safety zones" women carve out to consider their options. Degradation involves targeting a woman's sources of personal esteem or shame, such as her weight, intelligence, parenting, personal hygiene, or achievements at work.

Control tactics extend abuse through social space by isolating victims from sources of support, depriving them of basic rights and resources, and micromanaging their behavior within and outside the home through implied to explicit "rules" that remain in play even when the perpetrator is absent. Isolation may encompass all of the moorings of a victim's identity and extend from literal prohibitions against contacts with significant others and denying women the means needed to communicate or be with others to "harassment through the network," where the abusive partner "enters" and "poisons" his partner's social world.

Control tactics include depriving women of basic necessities, taking their money (54%), and monitoring their time and movement (85%), and these tactics extend to rules about how they enact their default gender roles as wives, mothers, and homemakers.

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Coercive Control   (Continued)

Alongside the empirical rationale for adapting the coercive-control model is its practical rationale: the failure of legal, criminal justice, and other intervention strategies wedded to the violence definition to improve the long-term prospects of battered women and their children. A conservative estimate is that more than 8.7 million women in the United States are being subjected to coercive control. Yet only 2 or 3 of every 100 perpetrators reported to police are sent to jail, an attrition rate of 98% (Finklehor & Turner, 2015). The 50th offense is treated no more seriously than the first. Identifying coercive control, broadening the definition of domestic violence accordingly, criminalizing coercive control, and recognizing the historical and multifaceted nature of partner abuse in family and juvenile court proceedings would be first steps to closing the gap between the current approach and the oppression women are actually experiencing in their personal lives.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe the basic components of coercive control, and give examples of each.
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of adapting a coercive-control model of partner abuse over the prevailing model that emphasizes physical violence?
3. How do you think the use of control tactics might affect children? Can you give some examples?

Resources for Further Study

Bancroft, L. (2002). *Why does he do that? Inside the minds of angry and controlling men*. New York: Berkley Books.

Fontes, L. (2015). *Invisible chains. Overcoming coercive control in intimate relationships*. Guilford, CT: Guilford Press.

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Author Biography

Evan Stark is a sociologist and forensic social worker with an international reputation for his research, writing, and advocacy. A founder of an early battered woman's shelter in the United States and codirector of the Yale Trauma Studies, pathbreaking research on domestic violence and women's health. He is the author of the prize winning *Coercive Control: How Men Entrap Women in Personal Life* (Oxford University Press, 2007). He is professor emeritus at Rutgers University's School of Public Affairs, School of Public Health, and Department of Women and Gender Studies.

When Victims of Battering Are Charged With Crimes

Sue Osthoff

She sat quietly looking down at her hands, which were clasped and resting on her lap. I waited because I sensed she had something she wanted to say. She slowly looked up and gazed directly into my eyes and said, "No one would do what I did if they didn't have to," and tears began to roll down each of her cheeks. Angela and I were sitting in jail, where she had been for the last two days after being arrested for the shooting death of her husband. She continued, "My husband was very cruel to me. But two days ago, he tried to kill me." And she rocked and cried. I couldn't believe Angela was in jail for defending her life, so alone and so afraid. I knew I had to do all I could to help Angela—and other women like her—to find justice.

I met Angela in 1984 when I was working at Women Against Abuse, an anti-domestic-violence organization in Philadelphia. I was the first full-time coordinator of the Self-Defense Project, a program that was being developed to provide support to victims of battering who were charged with homicide or assault as a result of defending themselves. It was the only (or one of a very few) programs working with victims of battering facing criminal charges in the country.

Already by the mid-1980s, battered women's advocates had done a lot of work to get police and prosecutors to respond aggressively to batterers and to help protect victims. But once arrested, Angela was no longer seen as a victim. It was as if her experiences of being battered had disappeared completely. The same police we (advocates) had trained to be tough on batterers were the ones who arrested Angela; the same prosecutors we had trained to aggressively prosecute batterers were now putting Angela on trial. So many resources were being used to prosecute Angela once she defended herself. But where were all those resources when she was being tortured by her husband?

How could I best help Angela? I didn't have a road map on how to proceed because so few advocates were doing defense-based advocacy. I knew I had to reach out to the defense bar with which my organization had little or no connections. I knew building these relationships would take some time and a lot of savvy work. I also knew that judges and juries were going to need a lot of education about the realities of victims' lives, and I started looking for possible expert witnesses who could come to court and talk about the experiences of the women on trial, as well as of other victims of battering. I understood that judges and juries were going to need information on how to understand what might seem like "puzzling" behaviors by the women now facing charges (like why they didn't "just" leave the person who hurt them).

After three years working directly with victims of battering facing charges for killing or assaulting their abusive partners, it was time to move on from Women Against Abuse. I had learned so much during those remarkable years, and my passion for the work grew by leaps

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When Victims of Battering Are Charged With Crimes   (Continued)

and bounds. I was fired up to do something, but I didn't know what. Barbara J. Hart, then legal director of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, suggested we start an organization to help victims of battering and their defense teams. In 1987, not long before my 30th birthday, Barbara Hart and I founded the National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women. Our first office was in my bedroom. We had no money at all, and raising money for women who killed men certainly wasn't the easiest thing! While there were many financially sparse times over the years, I am pleased to report that we always had a wealth of amazing colleagues, supporters, and other allies who helped us mightily along the way. And now we are approaching our 30th anniversary.

Since we opened our doors back in 1987, the numbers of advocates, researchers, criminal justice practitioners, and others who have come to recognize that our nation's jails and prisons are filled with victims of battering have grown tremendously. Additionally, people across the political spectrum are coming together to work to reduce our nation's overreliance on incarceration, to increase resources for indigent defense, and to address the many direct and collateral consequences that people with criminal convictions face. I am extremely encouraged by these developments.

Unfortunately, even today, many victims of battering facing criminal charges never get identified as being battered and go through the criminal legal process on their own. Some still do not get properly interviewed by their attorneys, and many do not get evaluated. While there are a lot of great defense attorneys out there (many in public defender offices), many still need information about battering and how that might be related to a defense theory or legal defense. Currently, there are not enough experts on battering and its effects with forensic experience, and those who have that experience are unable to work for little or no fees all the time. Even today, not all advocacy programs work with victim defendants, and when these programs experience budget cuts, working with victims in jail or prison is often the first work to get cut.

We opened the National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women to help victims of battering charged with crimes—women like Angela—to get fair trials with proper legal representation and support. We still have our work cut out for us. But I am so pleased to have an ever-growing number of allies in our work. The deep desire for justice that fueled the beginning of this organization continues to fuel me today—as does being surrounded by so many justice-loving allies!