Viewing Crime and Justice From a Collaborative Perspective: Plenary Papers of the 1998 Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation

NIJ

Research Forum

Cosponsored by

Office of Justice Programs — **OJP**

Bureau of Justice Assistance — **BJA**

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention — **OJJDP**

Viewing Crime and Justice From a Collaborative Perspective: Plenary Papers of the 1998 Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation

David Kennedy

J. Phillip Thompson

Lisbeth B. Schorr

Jeffrey L. Edleson and Andrea L. Bible

NIJ

Jeremy Travis
Director

John Thomas
Program Monitor

The Professional Conference Series of the National Institute of Justice supports a variety of live researcher-practitioner exchanges, such as conferences, workshops, and planning and development meetings, and provides similar support to the criminal justice field. Foremost among these forums is the Annual Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation. The Research Forum publication series was designed to share information from this and other forums with a larger audience.

Foreword

For those of us who attend the annual Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation on a regular basis, the theme for 1998 may have seemed unorthodox. We are more accustomed to conference topics that reflect research in either some aspect of the criminal justice system or a specific subject in criminal justice research. "Viewing Crime and Justice from a Collaborative Perspective" departed from that tradition, offering a perspective that cuts across all justice system components and all subject areas.

Whether it is called collaborative research, research partnerships, action research, participatory research, or cooperative inquiry or goes by another name, in disciplines outside criminology the approach has been used for some time. In criminal justice research, however, it is a new way of doing business, whose major feature is practitioners working on an equal footing with researchers in a collaborative manner. For the police chiefs or prosecutors or other agency heads who enter into these partnerships, the appeal is the opportunity to work on a problem they themselves have identified and the access they get to research-based knowledge they can then put to solving the problem. For researchers, the appeal is the opportunity to apply their knowledge in a real-world setting, where it can make a difference—maybe even an immediate difference. Each side of the partnership equation brings distinctive strengths and each lends new legitimacy to the other.

In choosing the conference theme, our intent was to explore the complexity of the approach as reflected in the way researchers and practitioners are relating to one another in communities throughout the Nation. The plenary session addresses reproduced here attest to both the challenges and the opportunities that partnerships entail. David Kennedy, who was involved in the Boston Gun Project—perhaps the most acclaimed partnership project to date—documented practitioners' increasing receptivity to designing and implementing these knowledge-based interventions. J. Phillip Thompson elaborated on communities as a key component of partnerships, reminding us of the need to understand their structure, interactions, histories, and dynamics as a prelude to investing in a collaborative project. Lisbeth Schorr cautioned that the critical attributes of effective partnerships involve much heavy lifting and go a long way to explain why it is hard to sustain and spread good programs. Jeffrey Edleson and Andrea Bible detailed the demands placed on researchers and practitioners and then, drawing on what they learned from several successful collaborations on domestic violence issues, presented ways to overcome the challenges.

The need to balance different perspectives, the varied expectations, the time commitment necessary to build trust, the imperative of defining common objectives—all these (and many more) attributes of collaborative research also are coming to light as a result of the investment in researcher-practitioner partnerships being made by the National Institute of Justice. We cut the ribbon in 1995 with locally initiated research partnerships for problem solving in policing and have since used the template in other areas, among them sentencing and corrections and domestic violence. Our intent was not only to provide the means

for solving specific, practitioner-defined research problems, but also to lay the groundwork for ongoing collaborations—partnerships that would outlast the initial project.

We recognize that partnerships are not yet a mainstay in the arsenals of researchers or practitioners; much remains to be done for that to happen. Yet as David Kennedy noted, the demand for them is real and will increase. The conference offered convincing proof that rapid strides are being made toward meeting that demand.

Those who would like to read more can find the abstracts of the conference sessions on the Web at *http://www.ilj.org*.

Jeremy Travis
Director
National Institute of Justice

Contents

Research for Problem Solving and the New Collaborations

David Kennedy, Ph.D., Harvard University

These are interesting times in criminal justice. Not long ago, I heard a U.S. Attorney discussing her intent to address a major crime problem in a large city in her jurisdiction. She explained the problem, why she was so concerned about it, and why it was important to the life of this city to do something about it. When asked what kind of help she needed, her answer was, "Data. We need the data, and we need a researcher to tell us what they mean."

This is a remarkable response: not more police officers or more prosecutors or tougher judges or stricter legislation or more prison space, but a researcher. It is more remarkable because others have said the same thing. There is a growing sense among practitioners (many of whom not long ago doubted that researchers were good for anything) that social scientists can play quite important roles. In cities across the country, teams of practitioners and researchers are working together to understand, prescribe solutions to, and evaluate interventions for serious public safety problems. The researchers in these collaborations work in close, day-to-day, problem-solving relationships with the practitioner partners. The demand for these collaborations will increase because there is a belief that these kinds of collaborations have helped deliver some signal successes, in such places as New York and Boston. Jurisdictions across the country want their own partnerships and their own victories. We will see how genuine their promise really is, and we will continue to sort out just how genuine the victories are. But the demand for the partnerships, at least, is real.

It is these new collaborations, and the role researchers might play in them, that this presentation addresses. Whatever form these collaborations may take, they exist because of, and remain firmly rooted in, the existing social science research tradition. The willingness of practitioners to engage in these problem-solving exercises is due in part to decades of research going back to the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment of the early 1970s—research that slowly and painstakingly built the case that policing and some other approaches in criminal justice were simply not working as well as we wished.[1] This view is widely accepted today. Along with that acceptance comes another long line of research suggesting we can do better: that hot spots can be policed,[2] disorder can be managed,[3] drug markets can be disrupted,[4] civil authority can be mobilized in the service of crime prevention,[5] cycles of neighborhood decline can be interrupted and reversed,[6] and fear can be reduced.[7]

Still another line of policy and management analysis has given us key community and problem-solving strategic frameworks for implementing and institutionalizing new approaches to crime control.[8] Rigorous social science evaluations have suggested that some community and problem-solving interventions have been effective and supported the larger idea that pursuing these strategic frameworks is a worthwhile endeavor.[9] As researchers and practitioners attempt to apply those strategic frameworks to particular crime problems, a wide variety of criminological findings and concepts are available to inform their thinking. These include criminal careers,[10] repeat victimization,[11] deterrence theory,[12] place and hot spot analysis,[13] gang research,[14] routine activity theory,[15] and situational crime prevention.[16] So although there is something new about the new collaborations, they remain a branch, or perhaps still a twig, on a fine old tree.

Basis in problem solving

Of all this, it appears that the basic idea of problem solving is most responsible for the new possibilities emerging for research and researchers. Practitioners are increasingly open to the idea of designing and implementing innovative, situation-specific, and knowledge-driven interventions to crime, fear, and public safety problems. With this openness

has come a fresh receptivity to researching these problems and to the operational implications of such research. If research and theory can in fact shed light on these problems, the new atmosphere of knowledge-driven interagency collaborations holds the prospect that very innovative, and sometimes very complex, interventions can be designed. Two years ago, at this conference, David Weisburd observed that social science had, for some time, been investing enormous amounts of time and energy rigorously evaluating interventions that initially were not very promising. Thus, one of the implications of the new collaborations is that they can bring researchers into the design of interventions as fully as they have been traditionally involved in the evaluation of interventions. Larry Sherman correctly pointed out in his work on mandatory arrest for domestic violence that this approach was worth examining because it was something police could, and hopefully would, do.[17] The range of strategies that police, prosecutors, probation officers, judges, and community groups are willing to use, and the sophistication of these strategies, is growing by leaps and bounds. With that comes the possibility of implementing far more original and intricate interventions and, again, a growing role for researchers in making the intellectual investments necessary to shape those interventions.

The new collaborations are, for the most part, simply problem-solving partnerships: groups of practitioners and researchers convened to "unpack" particular problems; craft solutions to them; and implement, adapt, and evaluate those solutions. This description raises more questions than it answers: What, exactly, is a problem? Who should sit at the table in such partnerships? How should the analytic unpacking proceed? How are solutions to be found and framed? What evaluation techniques are appropriate and in what contexts and circumstances? And what is it that researchers can and cannot, and should and should not, do in such partnerships?

It is clear that researchers can be extremely helpful in these exercises. Both quantitative and qualitative research can be of enormous practical value when applied to questions of central policy and operational importance. There are two secrets that lie behind this good news. One is the very small

investment practitioners have generally made in understanding the problems that are their responsibility. This has often been noted, and is one of the planks on which problem solving is built. The other, less-noted (but equally shocking) secret is the lack of investment academics themselves have made. Academics typically are responsible not for problems but for inquiries of various kinds. It is still remarkable that 15 years into the crack cocaine epidemic we do not have a single thorough analysis of, for example, the structure and functioning of crack markets on a national, city, or neighborhood basis.[18] It is equally remarkable, 40 years after the late Marvin Wolfgang's pioneering *Patterns in Criminal Homicide*,[19] how few have followed his lead and performed city studies on issues such as sexual assault, domestic violence, or child abuse.[20] Over and over again, when consulting the literature to address particular problems, one realizes that the most basic questions about these problems have not been answered in a way that is very useful for informing policy and shaping practice.

Understanding the problem, applying theory

The resulting vacuum is a real impediment to progress. It is a vacuum that often is easily and quickly filled, and at a relatively modest cost. The payoff can be considerable. For example, Mark Moore has commented that the methods used in the Boston Gun Project (a problem-solving project focused on serious youth violence) were no more complicated than long division. But in an environment in which there had been no real understanding across agencies about what was causing the city's youth violence—and with the candidate explanations ranging from drugs to rap music to welfare— it was important to sort out that the violence was a problem concentrated among chronic offenders acting out gang conflict. Likewise, in an examination of illicit gun markets, the conventional wisdom was that guns were from out of State and/or stolen. It was important to discover that many guns came from within Massachusetts and/or had been trafficked. The core research took approximately 6 months and was central to the intervention that emerged.[21] These two examples demonstrate a key point about the new collaborations: Researchers with a strong sense of what is important to know in a particular problem-solving exercise often will be

able to make valuable contributions in relatively short order.

Researchers also will be able to make real contributions by applying existing academic theory and analytic frameworks to thinking about both problems and interventions. Because researchers have not been in the business of designing interventions, much of what they know as a matter of course has not been employed in doing so. Thus, there is an enormous amount of off-the-shelf work available for immediate application. For example, an attempt to disrupt street drug markets might benefit considerably from thinking about them in terms of the economic factors of production,[22] what enhances and prevents market failure, how information moves along peer networks, and the displacement effects observed in crackdowns on drug hot spots.[23] The Operation Ceasefire intervention in Boston was shaped by research in the areas of fear as a driver of youth gun acquisition,[24] gang cohesion and the effects of gang enforcement,[25] deterrence,[26] announcement effects,[27] homicide and concentration of offending,[28] and network theory.[29] Such research and theory (and not just from criminology) is an enormous resource in this new context of customized responses to particular problems.

Tapping practitioners' knowledge

This is not a one-way street. Researchers have just as much to gain as practitioners in these partnerships. Practitioners, particularly those on the front line, can be invaluable sources of information and insight. These close working relationships between researchers and practitioners are fertile ground for generating hypotheses and new directions for research. Egon Bittner observed that, in effect, nobody knows a city as well as a good beat officer.[30] The same is true of good probation officers, social service workers, line prosecutors, and others whose day-to-day work brings them into close contact with substantive problems. During the first meeting with front-line practitioners involved in the Boston Gun Project, they told the researchers that youth homicide in the city was driven by a small core of chronic, gang-involved offenders who mostly hurt one another. This was not at all what most people in Boston or most students of youth violence thought. None of the Boston practitioners had read Marvin Wolfgang; rather, they *lived*

Marvin Wolfgang, and they knew what they were talking about. Our subsequent research both refined and amended this view, adding specificity and depth and pointing out some important ways in which it was sometimes inadequate. The guidance offered by the Boston practitioners set the direction for much of our research agenda and for the project as a whole.

I want to make a special plea for a powerful approach that deserves wider application: structured qualitative research using practitioners. I often say, "Practitioners know things, and we should pay attention," and because that is interpreted in various ways, I want to be clear about what I mean. When I ask a front-line police officer what is causing street violence and hear the response "a total lack of self-respect," I take that as an opinion, just as I would "drug markets," or "family breakdown." But when a research team presents a list of 100 homicides to a carefully selected group of practitioners (with supporting information about victims, offenders, locations, and weapons) and systematically debriefs them one incident at a time about what they know (about the individuals, the incidents, the gang or other group affiliations of the participants, the tensions between the groups, and the reasons for those tensions), what emerges can be as grounded—or better grounded—than the products of more traditional research methods. This approach is not without biases and limitations, but it can be very useful and has the advantage of being relatively quick and inexpensive.[31] The approach can be particularly useful for collaborations in the early stages of addressing a new problem or trying to sort out how a problem is presenting itself in a particular jurisdiction. Ed McGarrell, for example, has made good use of these techniques in examining the growing homicide problem in Indianapolis.

Practitioners also can be invaluable sources of leads for actual interventions. The hardest part of these collaborations, and indeed of any problem-solving exercise, is trying to figure out what to do about a problem. Researching a problem is child's play compared to sorting out how to take action against it. However, every agency is a repository of institutional memory about successes and failures and informed opinion about what worked and why (or what did not work and why). Most of this

information never makes it to paper, much less outside the agency; much of it is not even regarded as knowledge by agency personnel. Yet, some of it is enormously important. Once again, the Boston Ceasefire intervention is an example. The campaign was inspired by a type of operation the Boston Police Department's gang unit occasionally mounted against outbreaks of gang violence. While they focused interagency enforcement and prevention resources on the gangs in question, it was made clear to gang members that the pressure was a response to the violence and that a cessation of violence would reduce the pressure. This combination of a focus on violence, a broad use of interagency capacities, and continuing direct communication between the authorities and offenders is at the core of Ceasefire. The researchers and the large interagency group organized to respond used these ideas in ways more elaborate and far reaching than the gang officers had ever envisioned. But without the example of their past practice, it is quite possible no one involved would have thought to follow Ceasefire's path.[32]

Researchers' roles

We are leaving familiar academic territory. These new collaborations do, indeed, stretch us. Beyond their roles as researchers and analysts, academics can play helpful process roles as convenors, identifiers of existing (or nascent) best practices, and outsiders who can help shed light on matters practitioners may be unwilling to address or unable to notice. They also can, as previously noted, become the architects, in addition to being students, of actual interventions. Regardless of our skills and talents in these realms, these are the roles the practitioners who want these collaborations want us to take.

First and foremost, we, as researchers, have to acknowledge that we are trained to do none of this. We are not trained to convene and manage problem-solving or any other types of groups. We are not trained in the odd combination of diplomacy, ethnography, administration, and facilitation that is necessary to help such groups work well. There is no training, no literature, and very little shared wisdom about the process of total immersion in agency culture (itself a kind of ethnography) that it takes to identify and understand what a particular group of

partners might be willing and able to do, and to find the best practices that might hold clues to larger and more effective operations.

As researchers, we are not trained in policy analysis and design; that is, what to do about crime, fear, and other public safety problems. More than anything else, practitioners are looking for our help in telling them what they should do. But researchers are not in the "what to do" business. We are in the "what happened," "what is true," and "did this work" business. Clear leads for policy in the context of effective interventions rarely, if ever, come directly from understanding what happened or from the most robust descriptive research. Nor is the highest quality evaluation research the same as a clean-slate examination of what, from an infinite range of options, should be the response to a particular problem in a particular city building from a particular combination of partners, assets, and constraints. Those few who are trained in policy analysis and design are trained in a tradition that is somewhat removed from the messy, near-term, localized, and customized framework that seems to be the norm in the new collaborations.

It is a credit to the strength of the backgrounds both researchers and practitioners bring to these collaborations, and to the basic good sense of the collaborative framework itself, that these exercises seem worth undertaking despite the problems. But researchers and those who support the development of research would be well advised to face the facts and frame an agenda for addressing them. Practitioners, in like manner, need to understand what researchers can and cannot do. It appears that practitioners hold two views about researchers. One is that they are good for nothing; they invade, steal data, and say nothing useful, taking years to do it. The other is that they are magicians; if they are made welcome, given data, and left alone, they will magically cut through the most intractable problems. I hope the former is not true. I am quite sure the latter is not. Nor is it true that researchers will invariably be able to function as management consultants, effective convenors of group processes, effective administrators, designers of information systems, or any of the myriad other roles that seem to spring up in the course of these collaborations. Whether engaged in these collaborations or as observers of the process, researchers

need to think systematically about how to frame roles within the partnerships and how to tender technical assistance and other forms of facilitation.

Evaluation issues

Finally, no discussion would be complete without attention to evaluation issues. I see three sets of such issues. One set stems directly from these new collaborations and is concerned with the problems posed for researchers as a result of personal participation and special access in their evaluation efforts. The first and most obvious issue is bias in self-evaluation. This is real—but less meaningful than many fear. None of us is immune to wanting our own efforts to be fruitful. At the same time, there are clear standards for thinking about impact and the attribution of impact, and with a large community of researchers who will point out any errors in this regard.

When findings are negative

More significant are the problems faced by researchers who have to say that projects and interventions did not work well or at all. This may cause disruption of the collaboration and of others that follow. Preparatory conversations between researchers and practitioners will help minimize these disruptions, but some degree of difficulty is inevitable. It appears this is part of the necessary process of creating, in Herman Goldstein's delicately nuanced phrase, "the norm of truth telling" in policing and other criminal justice agencies.

Another special access issue, and one that may be more problematic, is that researchers often will end up knowing more than either they or their partners are comfortable with about the practices within, and relationships among, collaborating agencies. It is one thing to look at an intervention from the outside and say flatly that it was not fully implemented and therefore did not work. It is another thing to look at it from a privileged inside position and say that the intervention was not implemented because a particular manager was incompetent or because relations between the agencies were so poisoned that they could not work together. Researchers in these collaborations learn an enormous amount of what would otherwise be unavailable information about the actual workings

of partners. As collaborators, they owe their peers a certain degree of discretion. As academics and evaluators, they owe outsiders a certain degree of objectivity and transparency. Currently, we have no shared understanding of how to handle these conflicts. However, it would be worthwhile to begin addressing them.

Deciding what to evaluate

A second set of evaluation issues questions what exactly ought to be evaluated. The key concern is impact. None of this work is meaningful unless it delivers on its crime-control promise. Beyond that, researchers ought to address at least the core elements of the broader problem-solving process. The kind of collaborations under discussion are supposed to progress by identifying a particular problem, convening a group to address it, gathering information and generating a meaningful assessment of the problem, crafting an intervention that is different from business as usual, implementing that intervention (and perhaps modifying it), and finally evaluating it for impact. Each of these elements would be worth addressing individually in both process and impact terms: How did the collaboration in question address this step? Did it do so successfully? If researchers are to evaluate problem-solving processes in these ways, appropriate standards need to be developed: What is the test for a successful convening process? What does or does not constitute a meaningful assessment?

Deciding on method

The third set of issues raises questions about what types of impact evaluation are most appropriate for the different problem-solving processes. For many of the problem descriptions and interventions under discussion, classic random assignment designs simply will not be possible. Boston's Operation Ceasefire is one such intervention. The collaboration's assessment concluded that the proper point of intervention was with the self-sustaining cycle of gang violence, which was posited as both a product and driver of gang conflicts in the city. Although there were many gangs, and even more chronic offenders, there was only one underlying dynamic. Because it was the dynamic that needed addressing, it was impossible to create effective control groups. In other settings, such strong

experimental designs will be theoretically, but not actually, possible, given the legitimate needs of various practitioner partners, or the challenges of implementing complicated interventions. If such interventions are not to be dismissed simply on methodological grounds, researchers need a conversation about what methods are appropriate and what they will and will not tell us.

Beyond that, researchers need to think about the basic evaluation enterprise in an environment where highly customized and site-specific interventions are the norm. The strongest evaluation methodologies are designed to supply answers for well-defined interventions (based on the underlying and correct norm that before they are adopted we should be sure about them). But many of the newer products of problem-solving processes are not, in fact, well defined in this way. Even jurisdictions that take inspiration from interventions that have worked elsewhere will modify and adapt them to their own circumstances. If this is becoming the new norm, then we need to address evaluation methodologies that fit it: for instance, by being able to say with some authority that something is or is not worth trying elsewhere and by identifying the basic elements that are key to particular strategies.

A worthwhile investment

In closing, there are clashes of cultures to be bridged, pitfalls to be avoided or survived, standards and methods to be worked out. All this is well worth doing. These collaborations promise new knowledge and insights for researchers, new and powerful ways of doing business for practitioners, and progress on the crucial agenda of crime control for all. They are also, I will say on a personal note, incredibly good fun. I wish us all good luck.

Notes

1. See, for example, Kelling, G., et al., *The Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment: A Technical Report*, Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 1974; Spelman, W., and D. Brown, *Calling the Police: Citizen Reporting of Serious Crime*, Research Report, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1981 (NCJ 82276); and Greenwood, P., J. Chaiken, and J. Petersilia, *The Investigative Process*, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1977.

For examples of studies of selective incapacitation and the difficulty of predicting criminal offending of career criminals, see Blumstein, A., and J. Cohen, "Estimation of Individual Crime Rates from Arrest Records," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 70 (1979): 561–585; Elliott, D., F.W. Dunford, and D. Huizinga, "Identification and Prediction of Career Offenders Utilizing Self-Reported and Official Data," in *Prevention of Delinquent Behavior*, ed. J.D. Burchard and S.N. Burchard, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1987; and Gottfredson, S.D., and D.M. Gottfredson, *Classification, Prediction, and Criminal Justice Policy*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1990 (NCJ 126671).

For examples of studies of the limited impact of rehabilitative programs, see Martinson, R., "What Works? Questions and Answers About Prison Reform," *Public Interest* 35 (2) (1974): 22–54; and Martin, S.E., L.E. Sechrest, and R. Redner, eds., *New Directions in the Rehabilitation of Criminal Offenders*, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1981.

For examples of studies of the ineffectiveness of incapacitation, see Zimring, F., and G. Hawkins, *The Scale of Imprisonment*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991; and Irwin, J., and J. Austin, *It's About Time: America's Imprisonment Binge*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1994.

2. Sherman, L., and D. Weisburd, "General Deterrent Effects of Police Patrol in Crime Hot Spots: A Randomized Controlled Trial," *Justice Quarterly* 12 (4) (1995): 625–648; and Braga, A., et al., "Problem-Oriented Policing in Violent Crime Places," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, San Diego, CA, November 1997.

3. Kelling, G., and C. Coles, *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities*, New York: Free Press, 1996; and Wilson, J., and G. Kelling, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *Atlantic Monthly* (March 1982): 29–38.

4. Kleiman, M., "Crackdowns: The Effects of Intensive Enforcements on Retail Heroin Dealing," in *Street-Level Drug Enforcement: Examining the Issues*, ed. M. Chaiken, Issues and Practices, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1988 (NCJ 173155).

5. Kelling and Coles, *Fixing Broken Windows*; and Green, L., *Policing Place With Drug Problems*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996.

6. Skogan, W., *Disorder and Decline: Crime and the Spiral of Decay in American Neighborhoods*, New York: Free Press, 1990.

7. Pate, A., et al., *Reducing Fear of Crime in Houston and Newark: A Summary Report*, Washington, DC: Police Foundation, 1986.

8. Sparrow, M., M. Moore, and D. Kennedy, *Beyond 911: A New Era for Policing*, New York: Basic Books, 1990; Goldstein, H., "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach," *Crime and Delinquency* 25 (2) (1979): 236–258; and Goldstein, H., *Problem-Oriented Policing*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

9. Braga, A., et al., "Problem-Oriented Policing in Violent Crime Places."

10. See, for example, Blumstein, A., et al., eds., *Criminal Careers and Career Criminals*, vols. I and II, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1986.

11. See, for example, Farrell, G., "Preventing Repeat Victimization," in *Building a Safer Society: Strategic Approaches to Crime Prevention*, ed. M. Tonry and D. Farrington, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

12. See, for example, Zimring, F., and G. Hawkins, *Deterrence: The Legal Threat in Crime Control*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

13. See, for example, Eck, J.E., and D. Weisburd, "Crime Places in Crime Theory," in *Crime and Place*, ed. J. Eck and D. Weisburd, Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press, 1995: 1–33; and Sherman, L., P. Gartin, and M. Buerger, "Hot Spots of Predatory Crime: Routine Activities and the Criminology of Place," *Criminology* 27 (1) (February 1989): 27–55.

14. See, for example, Klein, M., *The American Street Gang*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995; and Spergel, I., *The Youth Gang Problem*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

15. See, for example, Felson, M., *Crime and Everyday Life*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1994; and Cohen, L.E., and M. Felson, "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach," *American Sociological Review* 44 (4) (August 1979): 588–608.

16. See, for example, Clarke, R.V., ed., *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies*, Albany, NY: Harrow and Heston, 1992.

17. Sherman, L., *Policing Domestic Violence*, New York: Free Press, 1992.

18. This is not to detract from the excellent work of Terry Williams. See, for example, his *Crack House: Notes from the End of the Line*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1992.

19. Wolfgang, M., *Patterns in Criminal Homicide*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958.

20. Richard Janikowski and his team in Memphis, Tennessee, in partnership with U.S. Attorney Veronica Coleman and others, currently are studying sexual assault.

21. Kennedy, D.M., A.M. Piehl, and A.A. Braga, "Youth Violence in Boston: Gun Markets, Serious Youth Offenders, and a Use-Reduction Strategy," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 59 (1) (Winter 1996): 147–196.

22. See Kleiman, M., and R. Young, "The Factors of Production in Retail Drug Dealing," *Urban Affairs Review* 30 (5) (May 1995): 730–748.

23. See Green, L., "Cleaning up Drug Hot Spots in Oakland, California: The Displacement and Diffusion Effects," *Justice Quarterly* 12 (4) (December 1995): 737–754; and Weisburd, D., and L. Green, "Policing Drug Hot Spots: The Jersey City DMA Experiment," *Justice Quarterly* 12 (4) (December 1995): 711–742.

24. Sheley, J., and J. Wright, *In the Line of Fire: Youth, Guns, and Violence in Urban America*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995; and Zimring and Hawkins, *Deterrence: The Legal Threat in Crime Control*.

25. Klein, M., "Attempting Gang Control by Suppression: The Misuse of Deterrence Principles," in *The Modern Gang Reader*, ed. M. Klein, C. Maxson, and J. Miller, Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing, 1995.

26. Zimring and Hawkins, *Deterrence: The Legal Threat in Crime Control*.

27. Pierce, G., and W. Bowers, "The Bartley-Fox Gun Law's Short-Term Impact on Crime in Boston," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 455 (May 1981): 120–137; and Cook, P., "Research in Criminal Deterrence: Laying the Groundwork for the Second Decade," in *Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research*, vol. 2, ed. N. Morris and M. Tonry, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980: 211–268.

28. Wolfgang, M., *Patterns in Criminal Homicide;* and Wolfgang, M., R. Figlio, and T. Sellin, *Delinquency in a Birth Cohort*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

29. Sparrow, M., "The Application of Network Analysis to Criminal Intelligence: An Assessment of the Prospects," *Social Networks* 13 (1991): 251–274.

30. Bittner, E., *The Functions of the Police in Modern Society*, Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Mental Health, 1970.

31. Kennedy, D.M., A.A. Braga, and A.M. Piehl, "The (Un)Known Universe: Mapping Gangs and Gang Violence in Boston," in *Crime Mapping and Crime Prevention*, ed. D. Weisburd and T. McEwen, Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press, 1998: 219–262.

32. Kennedy, D., "Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right," *National Institute of Justice Journal* 236 (July 1998): 2–8.

The Changing Role of the Researcher in Working With Communities

J. Phillip Thompson, Ph.D., Columbia University

To begin the discussion of the changing role of the researcher in working with communities, I will begin with a working definition of "community." A community, as defined here, is a place with its own set of rules and a capacity for self-organization. These two criteria could be assigned to any structure; I have added the word "place." A community is a place with a structure. Having said this, it is obvious that communities overlap. We are part of a world community, a nation-state community, and an urban community; we seek to understand inner-city communities embedded in urban communities. An inner-city community typically includes thousands of residents, plus dozens of public agencies: transportation systems, school systems, policing systems, public housing systems, and social services of various types; businesses, criminal justice systems, religious institutions, and media (external and internal); and a proliferation of groups, social circles, and individuals with varying connections to people and institutions outside the communities. Communities are places with complicated structures.

Communities are more than complicated, that is, involving many different components. They are *complex*, meaning that they embody intricate and constantly changing nonlinear interactions and recursive feedback loops that prohibit comprehensive study at any one time.[1] In fact, communities possess the characteristics of complex systems generally.[2] Following is a brief discussion of nine such characteristics that researchers need to keep in mind when working with communities:

1. Communities include many people—too many to study individually in any depth. The size of the community also limits the impact of one individual on the community as a whole.

2. Individuals in a community interact with one another in a rich way, both physically and discursively. This is not meant to suggest that everyone in a community talks to everyone else, but that dense interactions take place within the community.

3. Interactions in communities are short range. Little is known about how people in inner cities obtain information.[3] This is a major deficit in understanding communities. It is assumed that most information comes from immediate friends, family, and neighbors. This does not mean that the effects of interactions are not widespread: A murder, for example, can have widespread effects in a community; however, the effect of a murder on a community depends a great deal on the nature of the surrounding interactions in the community. Depending on factors such as press coverage, the nature of community leadership, community history, police-community relations, and the relation of the community to surrounding communities, residents could move away from the place of the interaction (avoidance) or could be galvanized into action (intervention).

4. Individuals and groups in communities are intelligent. They monitor the effects and consequences of their actions (on themselves and others) and their environment and modify their behavior accordingly. Behavior is not linear, unchanging, or unresponsive to interventions. Surprising developments should be expected, precisely because community residents may often seek to surprise or confuse.

5. Communities are open systems with fuzzy borders. They are in constant interaction with an ever-changing environment. Defining any problem as a "community" problem risks confusing what may be adaptive behavior—the self-organizing characteristics or rules (folkways) of communities—with external pressures that might be more properly considered causal. Moreover, it is difficult to trace and predict how external interventions affect communities.

6. Communities are constantly changing because of evolution and because of changing patterns of competition and cooperation within them.

7. Communities have histories, as do researchers. Each side typically holds deep prejudices and, not infrequently, differing instrumental interests and power dynamics.

8. Knowledge in communities is "distributed." No one in a community knows what everyone else in that community is doing, much less what is meant by each individual's actions. A single researcher cannot know all of that, either. For these reasons, studying individuals is insufficient to understanding communities. It is necessary to study the structure of interactions in a community. This is also why moving beyond the particular frames of any one discipline is important.

9. Communities differ from each other in their different histories, compositions, and environments.

Points 1, 2, and 9 are assumed to be noncontroversial. Point 3 may be controversial, but little research on inner-city networks is available. The following explains points 4 through 8 and provides examples of why these characteristics are difficult to understand and yet important to understand.

Point 4: Individuals and groups in communities are intelligent. They monitor the effects and consequences of their actions (on themselves and others) and their environment and modify their behavior accordingly. Behavior is not linear, unchanging, or unresponsive to outside interventions.

Arline Geronimus, a social epidemiologist at the University of Michigan, conducted a comparative study of teenage childbearing in African-American inner-city communities. She found that women were most likely to have borne children as teenagers if they lived in places where they, the children's fathers, or members of their extended families were likely to die or become sick before their children reached age 18 or where they were likely to be in poor health before their children reached age 18.

Geronimus argued, "Postponing childbearing increases the [teen-age mother's] chance that her young children compete with ailing elders for her energies and decreases the chance that their father will survive through much of their childhood. Her greatest chance of long-term labor force attachment will be if her children's pre-school years coincide with her years of peak access to social and practical support provided by relatively healthy kin. Her best chance of achieving her stated goals is by becoming a mother at a young age."[4]

Geronimus' empirical findings led her to construct an alternative rationality for inner-city communities that suggests a high degree of rationality in the behavior of inner-city youths. The rationality is based on conditions that many researchers may not consider. To them, teenage pregnancy is often simply a form of pathology.

Point 5: Communities are open systems with fuzzy borders. They are in constant interaction with an ever-changing environment.

Communities are subject to multiple interventions from the outside at any time. Each intervention is likely to have unintended spillover effects that, if unaccounted for, can easily misguide analysis. For example, a New York City housing program for the homeless provided a Section 8 housing certificate and a cash bonus of $2,500 per family member to landlords willing to house homeless families. This program inadvertently created an incentive for landlords to evict working poor families unable to pay as much rent as homeless families.[5] A researcher who is not careful, who does not pay attention to context, may conclude that the behavior of homeless families is driving the working poor out of certain buildings and communities.

Historian Alice O'Conner emphasizes the role of external policies in creating the contemporary African-American ghetto, criticizing notions that "the contemporary ghetto is beset by a self-perpetuating cultural pathology bred by the extreme concentration of an unassimilated, socially isolated lower or under-class." Such analyses tend to minimize the effects of "organized violence, zoning regulations, racial covenants, mortgage

lending practices, and block-busting."[6] Such analyses also give too little weight to:

> [A] whole series of race-conscious decisions about urban development and infrastructure building over the years, whether seen in public housing, urban "renewal," public transportation, highway and road-building and, in most major cities, the construction of stadiums, urban shopping malls, and other major "public" spaces. . . . [Public policy,] ranging from health care and education to sanitation and recreational facilities [also] . . . reinforced the "undesirable" designation of minority neighborhoods and symbolized the relative absence of minority political clout. . . . But nowhere has the racial differentiation of city services been more visible and explosive than in local law enforcement, reflected in ongoing struggles over hiring and promotion practices, in the absence or inadequacy of police protection in many minority neighborhoods, or, especially, in the long history of selectively brutalizing police practices in minority neighborhoods—practices that have sparked well-known episodes of mass rebellion, but that more devastatingly have left a seemingly permanent legacy of anger and distrust.[7]

Clearly there have been changes in public policy, and especially law enforcement, in major American cities during the past two decades. These changes undoubtedly have effects in communities that need to be measured, particularly against the backdrop described above. Cultural theories of poverty ignore or minimize the effects of larger communities and structures on inner-city poverty and give too little weight to the effects of public policy.

Point 6: Communities are constantly changing because of evolution and because of changing patterns of competition and cooperation within them.

Community dynamics are so complex that it is often hard to pin down these dynamics conceptu-

ally. Similar difficulties hamper attempts to discuss class and race, both important concepts used in reference to communities.

Class. There are a variety of arguments about class with many nuances.[8] Three of the major class arguments can be distinguished in an extremely rough fashion to make a point. The different approaches all provide contrasting accounts of the motives for human action, as discussed below.

For Karl Marx, the primary human motivation is physical survival. Obtaining food, clothing, and water is a fundamental necessity for every society. No other human endeavor can substitute for this necessity, and all other human endeavors must build on top of it. Producing the means of survival is the primary imperative of every society. The primary relations in society are those people enter into to ensure production; otherwise, there can be no society. Throughout most of human history, the grueling labor of the many has been exploited to create greater freedom, leisure, and comfort for the few; this is the source of a class struggle that continues to evolve. Class analysis starts with a study of the mode of production. Different systems of production have their own logics that can be studied scientifically. Whether an exploiting class or an exploited class understands its place in the overall system of production is a separate issue.

Max Weber, more than Marx, focused on how people understand the world, make sense of their place in society, and act within it. Weber paid great attention to how the logic of the capitalist market emerged from religion and how the market affected the organization of the state and of business. Weber also recognized classes produced by the market, but he saw class more as an objective "situation" rather than a relationship of exploitation.[9] This does not mean that class situations cannot be seen as relationships of exploitation, but such understandings are contestable and far from transparent. Moreover, people's motivations for action are complex and not entirely rational. Weber used the term "status groups" to distinguish people's socially recognized and self-conscious understandings of their place in the world from their class situations. He suggested that people act out of four motives: (a) to achieve some rational end (formal rationality); (b) to realize their values (substantive rationality, which from a

formal standpoint may still be irrational); (c) from emotion, love, or hate; or (d) out of habit.[10] Humans act out of a combination of motives, never just for one reason.

Functionalists write from the perspective of a society in which the logic of the market has been extended throughout society (which is therefore differentiated, bureaucratized, and complex) and in which the key issues revolve around maintaining social cohesiveness. "Class," when used at all, refers to power conflicts in localized settings where roles are being defined and contested.[11] In this view, class also is an identity that is not particularly salient until an economic crisis looms. Generally, because people play many roles in complex societies, conflict in one arena tends to give way to cooperation in another. The prospect of overarching class struggle in the Marxist sense is remote.

These various meanings of class often are interchanged in interpreting modern society. All three class arguments are important for understanding contemporary society, and their boundaries are not always distinct. Dynamics within communities, as with society, are complex and changing. Trying to capture these dynamics in a single paradigm requires an extremely narrow framing of the issues. This is commonly reflected in a fuzzy usage of concepts such as class, which is tolerated precisely because of the difficulties—if not futility—of defining such a fluid target.

Race. Because much criminal justice research focuses on African-American communities, it is also useful to discuss the complexities and ambiguities of "race."

Perhaps the most influential view of racism is that it is an attitudinal legacy of the premodern political economy—the South before 1965. In this view, racism will disappear with the passing of generations, with education, and with growing economic interactions between African-Americans and whites. The liberal position on race holds that racial divisions are perpetuated by inadvertent, unintentional, or historically accidental effects of political-economic processes and by informational barriers and cultural isolation between groups remaining from previous eras.

A pluralist perspective on race, in its strongest form, can be identified with sociopsychological perspectives. Pluralists hold that African-Americans and whites are strongly competitive groups who are threatened by each other and who socialize their young into different life-worlds that are defined around racial identities and relative group position. An important component of the pluralist theory is that individual reason and rationality are not particularly individual; they are strongly affected (if not bounded) by the racial group. From this point of view, greater resource equality may not relieve racial tension but could increase racial competition and conflict.

From an institutional perspective, racial difference and biases have been embedded in American institutions over centuries and are, in large part, normative. The point has often been made that despite America's self-image as an open and free country, it is a highly ideological "liberal" society. This means that Americans tend to view individual outcomes in life as a result of individual decisions and effort. Making institutional changes sufficient to ameliorate racial inequality, however, may require fundamental change in institutions that Americans believe are virtuous (if not infallible). The liberal view contradicts centuries of African-American experience in racial discrimination and therefore is often considered as irrational by African-Americans. From the perspective of African-American history, views derived from the perspective of white historical experiences masquerade as universal wisdom applicable to all Americans. The generalization of white experiences has a blinding effect on whites as a group. This view of racism is more insidious than a conscious intention of whites to harm blacks; rather, it is the view that supporting dominant institutional practices and values do not already do harm.

To complicate racial matters even more, there is a substantial critique of race among scholars. Many African-American feminists argue that discourse about class led by white men, discussions about race led by black men, and discourse on gender led by white women have all excluded the concerns and issues of black women. African-American women are simultaneously affected by class, race, and gender discrimination in their interactions, and these interactions are not part of the discourse in social science or the law.

Again, the word "race" stands for a complex set of issues and interactions that are rarely sorted out. No single paradigm captures all of the issues and interactions necessary to understand race in the community context.

Point 7: Communities have histories, as do researchers. Each side typically holds deep prejudices and, not infrequently, differing instrumental interests and power dynamics.

This point is crucial but difficult to discuss. At one level the concern is simply to understand enough about community, racial groups, or family histories to provide a better context for the analysis of behavior. For example, a political scientist who studies public opinion discovered a "paradox" in African-American public opinion. It appears that middle-class African-Americans, despite earning more money than their working-class and poor African-American counterparts, are more cynical about the American dream. One author calls this "succeeding more and enjoying it less."[12] However, sociologists who studied not just African-American income but African-American wealth (which requires greater attention to historical issues) made some relevant points, noting that members of the black middle class on average have less than one-twelfth the wealth of those of the white middle class (as measured by income): They have less money to send their children to college, start their own businesses, purchase homes in neighborhoods with quality schools, and so forth.[13] They may not have achieved the American dream, despite their middle-class expectations, and they may therefore be angry. Moreover, the sociologists point out that African-Americans tend to have extended families and that their elders are far less likely to have pensions and substantial Social Security income than whites. The African-American middle-class person at middle age in the 1980s and 1990s—the most successful generation of African-Americans—is also confronted with the immediate effects of history in the form of family dependents. History is not dead, and it plays an important part in the attitudes and behavior of people in communities.

Additional insight into this issue comes from the field of public health. A social epidemiologist studying hypertension and related diseases among African-Americans first studied "normal" risk factors such as obesity, smoking, and drinking.[14] The researcher then asked what led to smoking, drinking, and obesity and discovered that his subjects lived under a great deal of economic stress. Further investigating whether cultural factors have led some African-Americans to cope with stress better than others, the researcher found that African-Americans who believe in the American dream— that anyone, including blacks, can "make it" in America if they work hard enough—are much more prone to hypertension, heart attack, and kidney failure than are African-Americans who believe that America is a racist society that does not reward their work. The conclusion, literally, is that, if you are black, believing in the American dream is bad for your health. The point is that there may be value in certain historically formed perspectives among people in communities that are counter-intuitive yet extremely useful for community residents. Researchers should be attuned to that possibility.

Issues on which researchers and inner-city African-American community residents are likely to encounter value conflicts are easily imagined. One is the notion that researchers and evaluators, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations and foundations are attempting to help communities rather than trying to exploit or supervise (dominate) them. Before rejecting such a critique, researchers should study African-American history. There are many examples, mostly before the civil rights movement, of Government agencies using unknowing African-Americans as subjects in experiments, such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, in which adequate treatment for syphilis was withheld from a group of poor African-Americans (and which resulted in a Presidential apology to the survivors). These stories are part of the folklore in black communities. Researchers also should consider that they are getting paid to work in communities where many people need jobs. The image of a paid researcher from outside the community walking around the area and "using" it for his or her job is enough to anger some people, who rail, "Why can't we get jobs like that? Why didn't we have opportunities to go to good schools?" Researchers also should consider the context of foundation work. Wealthy corporations and individuals are subsidized (through taxes) to create foundations

that spend a great deal of effort intervening in disadvantaged communities to pursue their own private notions of what communities need. In short, the practice of research and evaluation is not value-neutral and affects communities even before the first question is asked.

Programs that are being evaluated may have been developed on the basis of many naive assumptions about communities that render it difficult for residents to participate meaningfully or seriously in the program itself or the evaluation. Carol Weiss vividly demonstrated this when she elaborated on the assumptions embedded in job-training programs that are based on the theory that "youths do not get jobs because they lack the proper attitudes and habits for the world of work and they lack skills in a craft."[15] Designing a job-training program on the basis of this theory leads to program designs that include "micro-steps" that are in turn based on important assumptions. Weiss provided a list of these micro-assumptions:

- Training for attractive occupations is (or can be) provided in accessible locations.

- Information about its availability will reach the target audience.

- When young people hear of the program's availability, they will sign up for it.

- Participants will attend regularly.

- Where necessary, stipends (and perhaps child care) will be available to young people while they are in training.

- Trainers will offer quality training, and they will help young people to learn marketable skills.

- Trainers will provide helpful and supportive counsel.

- Young people will learn the lessons being taught about work habits and work skills.

- Young people will internalize the values and absorb the knowledge.

- Having attained the knowledge and skills, young people will seek jobs.

- Jobs with adequate pay will be available in areas in which training is provided.

- Employers will hire young people to fill the jobs.

- Young people will perform well.

- Employers will be supportive.

- Young people will remain on the job, and they will become regular workers with good earnings.[16]

Weiss' example brings to the surface many potential problems in a realistic community context and suggests that one of the first things a researcher or program designer should do is elaborate a theory of what the program is supposed to achieve and then describe in detail the assumptions embedded in each micro-step. The researcher should understand where his or her assumptions are wrong and then elaborate, at least from a formal standpoint, on the elements of a "community rationality"—a way to begin thinking about a particular community based on the community's conditions and history.

Point 8: Knowledge in communities is "distributed." No one in a community knows what everyone else in that community is doing, much less what is meant by each individual's actions. A single researcher cannot know all of that, either. For these reasons, studying individuals is insufficient to understanding communities. It is necessary to study the structure of interactions in a community.

This longstanding issue deserves revisiting. Communities—like society, human anatomy, and the ecology—are highly complex. The aspects of community that are chosen to be studied—our "frame"—is culturally determined. This does not mean that researchers are all simply relativists; this was pointed out by Weber long ago.[17] Within a given frame, patterns and trajectories can be perceived, and this is what a good deal of empirical science does. However, to understand causes—why this trajectory and not another—counterfactuals

must be constructed. Without this event or this particular variable acting in a certain way, the trajectory would likely be significantly different. More accurately, such a statement is limited to statistical probabilities: The trajectory has a higher or lower probability of being different. It should be acknowledged that there is a good deal of variation that is not understood. This is an important qualification, made especially necessary by the admitted cultural biases of scientific inquiries.

It follows from the above discussion that singular narratives such as Marx's unidirectional economic class analysis or Freudian unidirectional psychological theories are suspect when it comes to complex systems analysis, and that cross-disciplinary research is a necessity. Distributed knowledge in the community context means something more than and different from cross-disciplinary research (i.e., knowledge distributed among experts in different fields). It means that much knowledge about the community is likely to reside in the community, and it is unlikely to reside in any one place in the community. Because communities are complex, it is extremely difficult to generalize across communities. Rather than discover universally valid truths through deductive reasoning, investigators must spend their time simply getting a handle on community dynamics. On the one hand, this may appear to be a status demotion for researchers interested in making broad authoritative statements. On the other hand, researchers who make the effort to understand broad community dynamics have the advantage of making a good deal more sense.

Lastly, no single person in a community understands all the interactions in a community. In addition, because the effects of interactions and interventions in communities have indirect and unexpected effects, the researcher must search for knowledge from a broad array of potential sources.

Researchers should understand the social distance between themselves and the communities they study. They should form social bonds with the subjects of their research that allow for useful discourse and learning from community residents. They should understand that communities are complex and that knowledge about communities is necessarily distributed; they should therefore gather as much information about communities as they can. Researchers also should pursue knowledge

from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Because communities are changing and because community residents are intelligent, judgments made about communities should be revisited frequently.

Notes

1. For an introduction to the study of issues of complex systems, see Jervis, Robert, *Systems Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997; and Cilliers, Paul, *Complexity and Postmodernism,* New York: Routledge Press, 1998. These books offer many examples and are useful for novices.

2. See Cilliers, *Complexity and Postmodernism*, p. 4, for a general description of complex systems.

3. Michael X. Delli Carpini has noted that basic information on community information sources is lacking. We lack "an inventory of existing voluntary associations, neighborhood publications, local cable and broadcast television stations (including public access), local radio stations, computer/Internet availability of 'public spaces' for interpersonal exchanges such as community centers, libraries, coffee houses, parks, taverns, and so forth. Understanding the existing infrastructure for communications is the first, key step for revitalizing communities." See Delli Carpini, Michael X., "Race and Community Revitalization: Communications Theory and Practice," unpublished draft prepared for the Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives, June 1, 1998: 19.

4. Geronimus, Arline, "Teenage Childbearing and Personal Responsibility," *Political Science Quarterly* 112 (3) (1997): 425.

5. See Thompson, J. Phillip, "The Failure of Liberal Homeless Policy in the Koch and Dinkins Administrations," *Political Science Quarterly* 111 (4) (1996–97): 657.

6. O'Conner, Alice, "Historical Perspectives on Race and Community Revitalization," unpublished draft prepared for the Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives, June 1, 1998: 6.

7. Ibid., 6.

8. For a concise and useful overview, see McAll, Christopher, *Class, Ethnicity, and Social Inequality,* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990.

9. Ibid., 30.

10. Ibid., 21.

11. Ibid., 36.

12. See Hochschild, Jennifer, *Facing Up to the American Dream: Race, Class, and the Soul of the Nation,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995: 972.

13. See Oliver, Melvin, and Thomas Shapiro, *Black Wealth, White Wealth,* New York: Routledge, 1995.

14. See James, Sherman A., "John Henryism and the Health of African Americans," *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 18 (1994): 163–164.

15. Weiss, Carol Hirschon, "Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families," in *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives,* ed. James P. Connell, Anne C. Kubisch, Lisbeth Schorr, and Carol H. Weiss, Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute, 1995: 67.

16. Ibid., 67–68.

17. See Ringer, Fritz, *Max Weber's Methodology: The Unification of the Cultural and Social Sciences,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Summary of Response by Henry L. Gardner

Managing Partner, Gardner, Underwood and Bacon

Many communities have talked about collaborating—gathering representatives of the police department, the school district, and neighborhood groups to talk about community problems. The communities of Oakland, Berkeley, and Richmond, California, tried a noble experiment—a true collaboration bringing together 21 cities, 19 school districts, and 2 counties—when the occurrence of 15 to 20 homicides in one weekend in Oakland, Berkeley, and Richmond sparked the realization among community members that "we can do more working together than we can do separately."

Trying to get communities as diverse as these three to collaborate—and then adding to that mix communities such as Fremont, Hayward, and Union City—was itself a challenge. Despite already fierce competition among local elected officials, State legislators and congressional representatives were also added to the collaborative mix. Yet all of this cooperation was needed to make things happen.

Professional practitioners—although experts in their fields—do not always realize how much knowledge they lack or how much research can help them define problems, develop strategies for dealing with them, and avoid repeating mistakes made by others. It can be frustrating to work with communities that are suspicious of their city managers, superintendents, the police department, and university researchers. Add to that the suspicion that the people who are studying their communities and telling residents what should be done do not understand the community or its issues. There is a lot of work to be done to convince communities that research has real value, that it can help in designing programs that work.

Summary of Response by Margaret Hamburg

Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Meaningful and enduring solutions to complex and challenging societal problems will be achieved only if a collaborative, multidisciplinary, and multifaceted approach is used. The tuberculosis (TB) epidemic in New York City is a case in point.

From the late 1970s through the 1980s, the number of TB cases was steadily increasing, and there was a dramatic increase in the incidence of drug-resistant TB. Although public health officials recognized the danger of this growing trend, policymakers were unwilling to invest in TB control. While the New York numbers were increasing, resources to combat TB were declining because national statistics showed an overall decline in tuberculosis. However, in communities such as Central Harlem and Bedford Stuyvesant, it was clear we had a serious epidemic. We had a crisis, but public health practitioners working in their communities were unable to impress upon policymakers and the public the importance of this concern. It required the New York City tabloid press—in particular, the *New York Post*, with headlines such as "Killer Tuberculosis on the Subway"—to help make the case.

The TB epidemic was not simply a medical problem: The drugs to treat and cure TB were available, as were the means to prevent it. With time and appropriate strategies, almost every case could be cured. Yet, literally hundreds of people were falling through the cracks. The challenge was to establish links to ensure their treatment and their cure. Our efforts to work with the criminal justice system as well as with homelessness and housing issues proved vitally important to our overall TB control program. In just a few years' time, health practitioners cut TB rates by almost 50 percent, and drug-resistant TB declined by about 85 percent.

Looking exclusively at overall statistics can distort the big picture, as witnessed in the early days of the resurgence of TB by the failure to invest earlier in reversing the epidemic. When the statistics were broken down, however, targets for intervention emerged. Through collaborative approaches—the marriage of research, policy, and practice—health care practitioners were able to make a real difference.

The other lesson learned from the New York TB epidemic was about complacency. By this I mean the danger that once you begin to make a difference, you think the problem is solved. In the desire to move to the next issue, resources are pulled from one problem to the other, and an ongoing crisis is created that requires continued cleanup. As the TB case illustrates, it often is necessary to invest far more dollars and use up many more human resources than might have been needed had we invested in a sensible, continued, and committed course of action.

Research and evaluation need to move forward. For this to happen, practitioners must try to generate the best possible data and educate leaders and the public about why this thing called "data" is the critical foundation for effective policy and practice in the social science arena. The effective marriage of research, policy, and practice is not easy:

It requires the following:

- Learning from practitioners what gaps in knowledge need to be filled.

- Educating policymakers and the public about the importance of research and evaluation.

- Investing in the quality research and evaluation needed.

- Improving strategies for rapidly translating research knowledge and advances into practice in both the biomedical and the social science fields.

Clearly, achieving these goals will require training people to have a multidisciplinary focus. In addition, the people involved in research and evaluation need to reflect the demographics and sensibilities of the communities where these problems exist.

The limits of evaluation need to be recognized, however. It would be foolish for anyone studying and evaluating complex social problems and social interventions to believe that a clear-cut answer will emerge. Research and evaluation should be geared toward targeting critical problems, designing the best possible studies, gaining more knowledge and information about what works, and creating a process that builds on that knowledge.

Replicating Complex Community Partnerships

Lisbeth B. Schorr, Director, Harvard Project on Effective Interventions

I am thrilled to be able to speak to this audience about what has been learned in a variety of domains about replicating complex, collaborative community initiatives. Not because I know all the answers, but because I think that finding the answers to the replication conundrum also has to be a collaborative process, and I hope the lessons that come out of other domains shed some light on your efforts to spread and sustain effective initiatives.

This subject is exciting because so much progress has been made on the first step, which is to identify effective interventions. In the crime and justice domain, quite a number of effective initiatives are worth spreading and sustaining. Boston's victory over gun-related youth violence is the most widely known of the many community-based successes that show how dramatic change can be brought about through thoughtful, systematic, collaborative action.

The good news is that it can be done. The bad news, or at least the complicating news, is that if it is to be done on a scale large enough to matter, it will not be accomplished overnight. That requires fundamental departures from tradition on many levels—in the way we think about how public agencies should work, about public-private partnerships, and about how systems actually go about the business of funding, regulating, and holding programs accountable.

My work of the past two decades has been an effort to take a fresh, hard look at what is and is not working to change the life trajectories of those most at risk, beginning at the level of individual programs, and then at the efforts to spread and scale up what works.

The clearest message that emerges from analyzing what is working is that as a result of massive societal changes during the past few decades, our helping systems must now find new ways to make personal connections with the individuals, families, and neighborhoods they hope to affect. (This was not as crucial in the period when most of these systems and institutions were designed.) This message comes out of the successes in schools and early childhood programs, in family support and child protection, and in welfare-to-work and community building. It is the lesson coming out of community policing, Weed and Seed initiatives, community courts demonstration projects, and communitywide collaborations among police, parole and probation officers, and faith-based and other neighborhood organizations.

Critical attributes of effective interventions

By and large, the interventions that change lives for children and families in high-risk circumstances share the following attributes:

- They are comprehensive, flexible, and responsive.

- They see children in the context of families, and families in the context of communities.

- They have a preventive, long-term orientation, knowing that many negative outcomes, such as teenage pregnancy, school failure, and juvenile violence have deep roots, and are unlikely to respond to quick-fix, contemporaneous interventions.

- They are managed and staffed by people who believe in what they are doing.

- They operate with intensity and perseverance to achieve a clear, coherent mission.

- They recognize the limits of a single strategy and of intervention in a single domain, and link up with other social change efforts, be they

school or service reforms, community building, or efforts to improve housing, public safety, or job readiness or to expand economic opportunity.

● They encourage staff to build strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect, often going well beyond the boundaries of their job descriptions.

These critical attributes of effective interventions seem to be key to understanding why so many good programs are difficult to spread and sustain, especially in the public sector, and what it is that causes these programs to be so easily undermined and destroyed beyond the pilot or demonstration stage.

President Clinton has called the challenge of sustaining and spreading what works "our enduring problem in American public life." The day before his first inauguration in 1993, he noted that his number one disappointment as Governor of Arkansas had been that it was so hard to "take something that works to the next level, and figure out a way to make the exception the rule."

The people who operate successful programs find it a constant struggle to swim upstream to run them. Some time ago, I was in Charlotte, North Carolina, giving a talk on the attributes of effective programs. I subsequently received a letter from the head of a local neighborhood health center, who wrote that the attributes I described reflected exactly what occurs at her health center every day, and that those attributes were the exact opposite of the policies and practices they were told to adopt by the hospital under whose auspices the center operates.

Challenges to scaling up and spreading what works

Typically, the people who run successful programs say they have to be willing to break or bend the rules to get the job done. They can bend the rules, they can do it by stealth, while they are running pilot programs that remain small and operate at the margins. Yet when they attempt to scale up, they are immediately confronted by rules, regulations, and mindsets that end up destroying or diluting the very attributes that made the original model successful.

Even with documented program success, what works turns out, too often, to be a round peg that cannot fit into the square hole provided by most large systems and institutions. The following contradictions are at the heart of the mystery of why it is so hard to scale up and spread what works:

● If relationships are a critical ingredient of effectiveness but the system does not allow staff to spend the time it takes to create and cultivate those relationships.

● If keeping children safe is the agency's purpose, but the auditor only counts whether the forms are filled out and the required documentation was filed on time.

● If front-line discretion is a critical ingredient of effectiveness but the regulators or evaluators require that the home visitor follow a prescribed protocol to teach parenting skills even if she finds that the family has just been evicted or the abusive boyfriend has returned.

● If local variation is another critical ingredient of effectiveness but the evaluators insist that, unless a standardized intervention is replicated in all sites, they cannot evaluate impact.

● If objectives cannot be achieved without the active involvement of more than a single system but the money flows in such a way that it cannot be pooled, and the reporting requirements designed to keep everyone's contribution identifiable threaten to defeat the effort.

If these contradictions are apparent, we should not be surprised if model programs get terrific results only while they are small and led by wizards who are willing to break all the rules because they are some combination of a Mother Teresa, a Machiavelli, and a certified public accountant. These contradictions require that we very carefully examine how the major systems that have been established to educate and protect our children, ensure their health, and keep all of us from harm can be made to work.

With that as the challenge, I set out to discover examples of people and places that have overcome the obstacles that have made it difficult to scale up from success. I determined as well to understand how these few exceptions were becoming the rule

by changing major systems and institutions to make them hospitable to what works. I found a number of common themes or strategies. Five strategies emerged as the most critical characteristics of effective scale-up efforts.

1. The successful, system-changing efforts focus unrelentingly on outcomes, such as how children and families are managing and whether the neighborhood is safer—not whether a detailed maze of rules is being followed. They focus on results as a way of taming bureaucracies. They acknowledge that we, as a body politic, have been so eager to eliminate the possibility that public servants will do anything wrong, that we have tied their hands at the front lines in ways that have made it virtually impossible for them to do anything right. The clear focus on results also drives both funders and program people to think more realistically about the connections between investments and outcomes, and reduces some of the longstanding confusion between the means and ends of social interventions. The fact that many individuals and agencies are participating in new neighborhood coalitions may be the product of a great deal of effort but is not necessarily evidence of progress toward stipulated outcomes.

There is a constant temptation to fall back on process measures as evidence of progress. Process measures become substitutes for outcome measures because they provide comforting evidence of activity—they demonstrate that something is happening. Funders often find it easier to move or remove the goalposts than to strengthen the players. The typical forget-about-the-goalposts conversation takes place a few months into the implementation phase, when the funder says to the grant recipient: "We gave you the grant in the hope that you would reduce teenage pregnancy and youth violence in this community, and now you say that was really an unrealistic expectation? You may be right. But we do need some hard evidence that our grant is making some sort of difference, so let's get an evaluator to design a survey that will show how many youngsters come to your meetings and classes."

The new outcomes focus exposes the sham of asking human service providers, educators, and community organizations to accomplish massive tasks with wholly inadequate resources and tools, and forces the question of whether to expect less from

limited investments or to invest more to achieve promised outcomes.

2. In their efforts to spread a proven model, successful programs do not clone; rather they replicate the essence of a successful intervention while allowing each new setting to adapt many of its components to their particular needs and strengths, and in response to experience. The programs and institutions that effectively serve depleted neighborhoods are deeply rooted in those neighborhoods and reflect their particular needs and strengths.

This seems to be one of the most difficult lessons for policymakers to learn—that most successful interventions cannot be imposed from without. There is no simple model that can just be "parachuted" in. Rather, successful programs are shaped locally to respond to the needs of local populations and to ensure that local communities have a genuine sense of ownership. At the same time, successful replication requires distilling the essence of an intervention and disseminating what is essential to the model's success.

3. Successful scale-up efforts create new kinds of partnerships between formal agencies and neighborhood groups, between local reformers and outside intermediaries, and between the grassroots people that bring local wisdom and outsiders who have access to the levers that can change the rules under which local programs operate.

The Boston youth violence reduction story (see "Research for Problem Solving and the New Collaborations," by David Kennedy, in this Research Forum) not only illustrates that important changes in outcomes can be brought about by systematic efforts but also serves as an illustration of what can be achieved when every element of the community—ministers, community residents, academics, police, probation officers, teachers, and youth workers—work in partnership.

In Los Angeles County, the child welfare agency has contracts with 21 neighborhood-based networks consisting of churches, child care centers, and family support programs to provide help for troubled families where they live. They have found that you cannot strengthen families and protect children without having a deep connection with the individuals and agencies that are in touch with what is going on in their neighborhood.

The Beacon schools in New York City have placed services and community activities in 37 schools that are now open afternoons, evenings, and weekends and that are the centers of revitalized communities. This was made possible by providing new funds to community-based organizations and by a public-private partnership between the city's Department of Youth Services and the Fund for the City of New York, which provided the sustenance and guidance needed by innovators and reformers entering uncharted waters. Such intermediaries often are found in the background of successful scale-up efforts offering a brain trust, savvy advocates, expertise, peer-to-peer support, professional development and training of key staff, legitimization, and clout.

In addition to the new horizontal partnerships being crafted to spread and sustain success, the need for new vertical alliances is becoming increasingly apparent. Many of the needed changes cannot be made by the people who run the local programs. Systems change cannot be left to program people acting alone. They do not have access to the levers that could change how money flows, how funding streams are put together, how programs are held accountable, and the rules they must observe.

Systems change must be firmly anchored in programmatic experience. It is futile for funders, public and private, to search for program people who will work smarter, more innovatively, and more collaboratively to come up with the money to sustain a program when the demonstration funds run out. They need powerful allies to convince the rulemakers to make the changes that can be made only from the outside.

This is why we need new vertical alliances between program people who know what needs to be done and the people who can influence policy because they have access to the levers of policy change.

4. Many of the newest community initiatives aim to transform entire neighborhoods, knowing that even the strongest families cannot achieve their goals for their children in neighborhoods characterized by long-term disinvestment and deepening isolation. These initiatives are based on knowledge that social disorganization undermines family formation, family resilience, and family success, and increases the chances of violence. They are based on the understanding that you cannot improve outcomes for large numbers of children without fostering more family-supportive environments, especially in the inner city.

Comprehensive community initiatives take a long-term view of change and recognize that success is based on employing multiple solutions to multiple problems. Their own efforts are linked to those of others, be they efforts to improve the justice system and increase public safety, improve services and schools, expand economic opportunities, or improve housing.

5. The comprehensiveness and complexity of these efforts highlight the need for new approaches to learning what works. Over the past 20 years, as social problems became more intractable and more complex, interventions that could respond effectively also became increasingly complex and therefore harder to assess.

The evaluation "industry" has exerted its influence over social policy through its promise to use scientific methods, such as random assignment of subjects into treatment and control groups, to provide data on what works. The trouble is that what has been regarded as scientific, because it is based on a biomedical model, is poorly positioned to assess today's most effective interventions. It is reasonable to determine the effectiveness of an antibiotic through controlled clinical trials. It makes no sense to use that method to determine the effectiveness of a community-building initiative, with its early childhood, youth development, family support, school reform, job training, housing, and public safety components and its continually evolving program design.

If interventions that change only one thing at a time fail because they change only one thing at a time, then traditional evaluation has excluded from consideration precisely those interventions most likely to have an impact on individuals, neighborhoods, institutions, and systems. If interventions that differ from one site to the next (and even from one day to the next because they are responding to particular diverse and changing community desires and conditions) are deemed "unevaluatable" by traditional evaluators, we are robbed of the most relevant and timely lessons about what is most likely to work.

The new evaluators

Many efforts are now under way to combine a variety of evaluation approaches to generate more usable information and greater understanding of complex interventions. It is not going to be easy to break with experimental designs using random assignment as the only source of reliable knowledge. Swarthmore College economics professor Robinson G. Hollister, a leading figure in the evaluation field since the mid-1960s, says that experimental designs are "like the nectar of the gods: once you've had a taste of the pure stuff it is hard to settle for the flawed alternatives."

These flawed alternatives may provide less certainty about what, exactly, caused the observed effects, but they do offer a broader range of information, possibly more useful in making judgments about what really matters. The new evaluators embrace both the old and the new in the belief that there is knowledge worth having and acting on even if it is not absolutely certain knowledge. They do not reject, on grounds of messiness or complexity, information that can shed light on real-world efforts that promise to improve outcomes. The new approaches to the evaluation of complex interventions:

- Are built on a strong theoretical and conceptual base linking activities to results.

- Emphasize shared interests rather than adversarial relationships between evaluators and program people.

- Employ multiple methods and perspectives.

- Offer both rigor and relevance in the belief that knowledge is worth having even it if is not absolutely certain knowledge.

The new, multipronged approaches to evaluation furnish tools to combat what the late Don Schoen of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology described as "epistemological nihilism in public affairs"—the view that nothing can be known because the certainty we demand is not attainable.

The thoughtful observer's informed understanding, based on a wide array of rigorous data on what happened and what might have happened under a different set of circumstances—especially when combined with understanding of similar interventions and events elsewhere—can ultimately build a strong and useful knowledge base. Although offering less certainty about causation, the new evaluators can bring to the table information that is not only rich but rigorously obtained and analyzed, and that can lead to effective action on urgent social problems.

In our efforts to expand the knowledge base, we have to welcome new roles for evaluators that allow them to demystify the evaluation process and build on the shared interests between program people and funders, with whom they collaborate in problem solving to improve outcomes.

The danger, of course, is that the evaluator who does not maintain his or her distance from an initiative will lose his or her objectivity and become a cheerleader for that initiative, regardless of its merits. This problem begins to recede as an outcomes orientation becomes the norm. When accountability is based on achievement of agreed-upon outcomes, the evaluator will no longer be the sole arbiter of the extent to which outcomes were realized. Evaluators will be free to focus more on *how* desired outcomes were achieved, as opposed to *whether* they were achieved. They can better position themselves to achieve an accurate and nuanced understanding of the nature of interventions and how they link to the desired outcomes. They can move toward an explicit posture of helping practitioners learn from their daily experience, thereby improving their interventions and practices. The new evaluator can provide feedback to practitioners for midcourse corrections, enhancing their capacity to reflect and to conduct on-the-spot experimentation. They can help practitioners think more carefully about both theory and practice.

We may want to try out a new image of the evaluator as the cheerleader. The evaluator would become a declared partisan, not of a particular initiative or intervention, but of solving the problem, fully legitimized as an engaged participant in the quest for better ways to improve outcomes.

The new evaluator does not offer the old evaluator's certainty about causation. He or she cannot prove that it was element A or element B that caused the change. But by understanding how interventions interacted and are logically related to

changed outcomes, program and policy people as well as funders will have a great deal more usable information than they did before.

The new evaluation approaches have the potential to move the whole field away from the oversimplified yes/no, success/failure judgments about what programs work, toward a richer, more complex compendium of strategies that are plausible, promising, or proven. Practitioners, program designers, and communities will be able to use the lessons learned from both research and experience to construct stronger theories and more effective interventions. This process involves, of course, a willingness to make judgment calls about the implications of data that accumulate to point in promising pathways, but does not lead to conclusions for which certainty can be claimed.

We must recognize the social value not only in innovation and creating new knowledge, but also in expanding our understanding by assembling and analyzing existing knowledge. The alternative is to remain mired in the categorical thinking and fragmented interventions and supports that cannot solve today's most serious problems.

Let me conclude by suggesting that we know a great deal more about what works than we have been acting on. By assembling, celebrating, and acting on what we now know, we could go far toward strengthening American families and rebuilding neighborhoods so that all Americans can feel safe in their homes without squandering the Nation's riches on building more prisons. By acting on what we now know, we could ensure that all our children will grow up with a stake in the American dream.

Question and Answer Session

Q: How can you have some of these more flexible approaches to evaluation when it is required that you state exactly how you are going to do the evaluation at the time you submit the original grant proposal?

Schorr: I think one of the reasons it is so hard to change evaluation methods and traditions is that there are so many variables that have to change at once. There is little overlap between what is valued by the funders and the academics who set the tone for what is a respectable evaluation and what is needed by the people who are designing and improving programs. If the actors in each of these domains fail to recognize the need for new approaches, then it is very difficult for one of the participants in this mix to make a change. So I think we have to push on many fronts at once for some of the newer approaches to become acceptable.

I cochair a group, the Aspen Institute's Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives, that is concerned with trying to remove some of the obstacles from community revitalization. One of the obstacles we have focused on is the difficulty in measuring community change and in measuring and documenting what a healthy community looks like. We are ready to publish some preliminary results, but it has been a long, hard struggle because so little work has been done on this. The importance of community contributions to all the outcomes we are trying to change is only beginning to be recognized. I think one of the things we agree on is that you have to have a "comprehensive" mindset. You do not have to do everything at once; however, you must be willing to look without blinders at what factors may be affecting the outcomes of what you are trying to change. Unless you are willing to look outside your professional domain to see what others can contribute—unless you are comprehensive in that sense—you are not going to be successful. That does not mean you cannot focus, for example, on reducing gun possession among youths in a particular neighborhood or that that is not a worthwhile thing to do. There is room for very focused efforts, and I think a number of successes have been achieved by very focused efforts.

Comprehensive Community Initiatives, particularly, has found that you cannot do everything at once. You cannot change someone's employment prospects, prepare people for employment, ensure public safety, and house everyone on day one. However, you can look at all of those domains and figure out what you want to focus on and be totally eclectic about the methods and tools you use to address that problem.

Forced Bonding or Community Collaboration? Partnerships Between Science and Practice in Research on Woman Battering*

Jeffrey L. Edleson, Ph.D., and Andrea L. Bible, M.S.W., Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse (MINCAVA), University of Minnesota

Social scientists and practitioners alike are familiar with the frantic search for letters of support as grant proposal deadlines approach. From the community perspective, calls and letters from academicians seeking their agency's last-minute research funding that often exceeds their agency budgets are met with a mixture of anger and fear. They are angry that they were not included in the design and development of the research questions or methods and fearful that the researchers will use tremendous staff resources to collect data and never be heard from again. Practitioners in the field of domestic violence may also fear that the published results of the research will compromise the safety of battered women and their children. Many social scientists also resent the expectation that community organizations will be partners in a research endeavor. It is sometimes viewed as an extra hurdle required by funders that impose tight deadlines. Such requirements are sometimes seen as compromising the independence of scientific inquiry or researchers' academic freedom and often are not taken seriously by the scientific community. These tensions have led one advocate to reframe collaboration as "forced bonding."[1]

The issues that arise when scientific and practice communities attempt to collaborate on research and evaluation projects have been the subject of discussion and publications for more than 50 years. One of the earliest and most frequently cited publications is Kurt Lewin's article describing action research.[2] Models expanding on his ideas have been proposed in a variety of disciplines over the intervening decades: participatory research, participatory action research, collaborative inquiry, cooperative inquiry, feminist research, and multicultural research.[3] These models tend to share several characteristics that make them unique in scientific inquiry. For example, they generally contain an explicit assumption that research is value based, not value free. They also promote research that serves social transformation and avoids harming those studied. Those being studied are believed to have extensive knowledge that requires their participation in the design, data collection and analysis, and use of research. Finally, the role of the researcher is also transformed in these models from one of detached expert to a partner, educator, and facilitator who works closely with those being studied. Similar calls have been heard for a movement toward a collaborative research model that serves battered women. A decade ago Hart outlined strategies for collaboration between researchers and advocates. Eisikovits and Peled and Dobash and Dobash have called for greater use of qualitative methods, which often reflect a collaborative stance. More recently Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell described a collaborative model of advocacy research in domestic violence.[4]

In this paper the term "collaborative research" is used to describe investigative partnerships between advocates, practitioners, social scientists,

community activists, and women who have been battered. These relationships are characterized by intensive consultation from the beginning to the end of the research endeavor and include collectively identifying research questions, designing data collection methods, constructing implementation strategies, interpreting findings, and writing and disseminating the results. The collaborative researcher seeks to share control of the research process with her or his collaborators.

The first part of this paper identifies potential challenges to research partnerships that partially explain the scarcity of these collaborative relationships. Following this, we explore four successful collaborations between practitioners and researchers who examine the impact of adult domestic violence and the effectiveness of services aimed at preventing it. We then highlight strategies for successfully navigating the challenges presented by collaborative partnerships and conclude by arguing that such partnerships between science and the practitioner communities strengthen rather than weaken the process of scientific inquiry and program development.

Advocates, practitioners, and researchers involved in four successful collaborative research and evaluation projects on woman battering were interviewed in preparation for writing this paper.[5] Participants were asked to describe the nature of their collaborative relationship and to discuss the basic guidelines or elements they believed made these collaborations work (for example, the partners' behaviors, the project design, and program elements). Participants were also asked to identify specific benefits resulting from their collaborations, as well as the challenges they encountered in collaborating and the strategies used to respond to them.

Challenges to collaborative research partnerships

Barriers invariably arise when attempts are made to conduct collaborative research, making such partnerships relatively rare. A number of authors and individuals interviewed identified several challenges, including those related to shared control of the research process, time and trust, differences among collaborative partners, and skills of the researcher.

Shared control of the research process

Perhaps the most common framework supporting interventions to prevent woman battering is one that sees power and control as the central driving forces behind violent behavior.[6] It is not surprising, therefore, that when researchers approach these programs with requests to engage in research, there is an expectation that control over the research process—from conceptualization to interpretation and dissemination—will be shared equally among researchers, practitioners, and, in some cases, the research subjects themselves.

Researchers may be concerned that this degree of collaboration will compromise the integrity of research designs if advocates and others do not understand the need for the experimental controls necessary to maintain scientific standards.[7] Similarly, some funding agencies have traditionally viewed close collaborative relationships unfavorably and question researchers' independence when they are actively involved with the program being evaluated. Some funders and researchers believe that such a close relationship will compromise the detached objectivity of the scientist by putting pressure on her or him to alter or even conceal results, especially when the results show unintended negative outcomes. In addition, some practitioners hesitate to collaborate on research projects out of fear that potentially negative evaluation results will harm their program's funding or reputation.[8]

The situation at funding agencies has begun to change in recent years as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), among others, have encouraged collaborative research projects. For example, in a recent NIJ research solicitation, practitioner-researcher collaborations in the area of violence against women were actively encouraged.[9]

Time and trust

One of the most commonly cited challenges of collaborative research is the intensive time commitment required by all involved.[10] Negotiating the research design, implementation procedures, interpretation, and publication of results is extremely time consuming in general, especially when the process is shared among collaborators

from different disciplines who often have different values. Further, differences in race, class, sexual orientation, gender, and professional experience require more time for building trust in relationships.[11]

Time is a tension-filled issue for both researchers employed in an academic setting and program staff. Researchers generally have more time than practitioners to devote to a research project because it is recognized and rewarded as part of their jobs. To be sure, although they have additional time, many researchers are expected to produce multiple products from their studies and to publish them as sole or first authors in academically respected journals. Practitioners, on the other hand, are seldom offered rewards for participating in research or publishing manuscripts and usually fit work on a research project into their already full days.[12]

Practitioners and researchers may be distrustful of each other's motives. Many domestic violence program staff have experienced or heard stories of researchers who came to programs to collect data and never contacted the program again after the data were in hand.[13] This causes program staff to feel exploited.[14] Practitioners' concerns about exploitation may also extend to the women or other family members studied. Advocates may worry that interview questions will unnecessarily reactivate emotional trauma about battering, appear to blame victims by focusing on women's behavior, or compromise women's safety.[15] Practitioners may also fear that the research protocol will substantially alter services, to the detriment of clients.[16] Finally, as stated earlier, researchers may not trust that practitioners will understand or be helpful in designing a sufficiently rigorous study.

Differences among collaborative partners

Practitioners and researchers bring different skills, training, and experience to the collaboration. This is both a source of strength and a potential point of conflict. Researchers, advocates, and battered women may have different views on the relative value of empirical and experiential knowledge.[17] Different perspectives, terminology, methods, interpretations, and concerns may lead to misunderstanding and perpetuate feelings of fear and

mistrust among collaborative partners if they remain unexplored.[18]

Further, the differences in race, class, gender, and sexual orientation mentioned earlier may add to differences in professional credentials among researchers, practitioners, and battered women and reinforce power in traditional ways.[19] These differences may fuel mistrust and miscommunication among collaborative partners if unacknowledged.

Skills of the researcher

The challenges identified above may well destroy attempts at collaborative research if left unresolved. Elden; Riger; Short et al.; Uehara et al.;[20] and others have all argued that truly collaborative research places many new demands on the researcher. The collaborative researcher's role is much different from that of the detached expert who designs a project and supervises its implementation by other research or agency personnel. The interpersonal skills required to negotiate and maintain collaborative relationships are not commonly taught in graduate research programs. Many researchers have excellent command of scientific methods but fail miserably in their ability to be an effective part of an interpersonal and interagency network of relationships.

Four case studies in research on woman battering

There are challenges in collaborative partnerships, yet many advocates, practitioners, battered women, and researchers have overcome them and been involved in highly successful research relationships. Researchers and practitioners involved with four successful collaborative research projects were interviewed, and brief summaries of each collaborative partnership are presented. Drawing from their experiences and those of other researchers, the underlying assumptions and research strategies that appear to promote successful research collaborations are identified.

The Community Advocacy Project: a Michigan battered women's shelter

The Community Advocacy Project (CAP) was a multiyear study that examined the effectiveness

of alternative interventions for women leaving abusive partners.[21] The project's co-principal investigator was Dr. Cris Sullivan, an associate professor of ecological psychology at Michigan State University. Abby Schwartz was the administrative coordinator of the collaborating shelter. The study involved a close partnership with the shelter and actively engaged shelter residents as collaborating partners in the research design.

Sullivan initiated the collaborative relationship as a volunteer with the shelter, where she facilitated support groups and came to know agency staff and other volunteers. She informed the staff and volunteers that she was a researcher interested in designing and evaluating an intervention project that would examine what women needed after leaving the shelter to increase their safety. She received permission from the shelter administration to speak with shelter residents about her research plan.

Sullivan's discussions with battered women led to the development of a 10-week advocacy program designed to aid women in identifying and accessing the necessary resources to increase their safety after leaving the shelter. The subsequent study randomly assigned battered women to experimental and control groups, teaming members of the experimental group with trained paraprofessionals for the 10-week program.[22]

The Domestic Abuse Project: a Minnesota multiservice agency on domestic violence

The Domestic Abuse Project (DAP) was 4 years old when Dr. Jeffrey Edleson first volunteered at the agency. A professor of social work at the University of Minnesota, Edleson co-led groups for men who batter and helped organize data collected for reporting to funding agencies. These data also were analyzed by several staff at the agency.[23] At the same time, Edleson assisted the agency in documenting its work and analyzing other datasets.[24]

With Edleson's facilitation, DAP's management and staff, led by executive director Carol Arthur, established research priorities based on their personal and clinical experiences. These priorities

resulted in a decade-long research program that experimentally examined group treatment programs for men who batter, surveyed the impact of coordinated interventions on battered women and their batterers, and investigated services to children who witnessed adult domestic violence.[25] The culmination was an extensive dissemination effort through an agency newsletter, *DAP Research & Training Update*, sent to approximately 9,000 individuals and organizations, and publication of several studies.[26]

The African American Task Force on Violence Against Women

The collaborative work of the African American Task Force on Violence Against Women is unique among the four case studies featured here because its collaborative research project was undertaken in support of a larger community initiative. The Task Force received funding from the Office of Justice Programs' Violence Against Women Office to bring together various community stakeholders in the Central Harlem community of New York City in response to violence against women. It comprised community residents and representatives from organizations working on behalf of children and families, job readiness programs, public assistance programs, Head Start, the Urban League, health care providers, religious organizations, law enforcement, and others. Gail Garfield, director of the Institute on Violence, Inc., in New York City managed the Task Force. Dr. Beth Richie, formerly of Hunter College of the City University of New York and now a professor in the Departments of Criminal Justice and Women's Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, is a senior research consultant with the Institute.

The goal of the Task Force was to develop a community-defined plan of action to address the complex issues of violence against women in Central Harlem. To accomplish this, a community involvement model developed by the Institute on Violence was implemented. As part of this model, a multiphased needs assessment was conducted that included a systematic survey of organizations in the community, gathering of descriptive information and data from community organizations and governmental agencies, and a series of focus group interviews with community residents and clients of

community services. To guide the implementation of the needs assessment, the Task Force established subcommittees composed of community members.

The focus group subcommittee identified appropriate questions to be asked and which community populations would participate, assisted Dr. Richie in facilitating the interviews, helped analyze the findings, and reported the results to the community in various forums. Overall, 11 focus group interviews were conducted during a 3-month period in 1997. The data from the needs assessment helped community members develop a plan of action to respond to violence against women.

Battered women as survivors: Texas battered women's shelters

The collaboration regarding battered women in Texas shelters began when Dr. Edward Gondolf, a professor of sociology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Ellen Fisher, then director of a Texas battered women's shelter, met at the Third International Institute on Victimology in 1985. Fisher approached Gondolf regarding statewide data the Texas Council on Family Violence and the Texas Department of Human Services had collected from battered women living in shelters. Fisher invited Gondolf to analyze intake and exit interviews of more than 6,000 women who used the services of 50 shelters during an 18-month period in 1984 and 1985. Gondolf and Fisher's analysis of these data is presented in their study, *Battered Women as Survivors: An Alternative to Treating Learned Helplessness*.[27]

Best practices in successful collaborations

A review of the strategies researchers and practitioners have outlined as keys to the success of their collaborative ventures points to a set of underlying assumptions and best practices. Individually, the identified assumptions and strategies may look rather mundane, but taken together they create a very different experience for both the social scientist and the practitioner. They are likely to significantly affect every aspect of the scientific inquiry, from the way initial problems and questions are formulated to the way results are presented and disseminated. Uehara et al. suggest that

research projects become truly collaborative when strategies such as these become organic to the entire research endeavor.[28]

Described below are three basic underlying assumptions that commonly appear in published accounts of collaborative research and were voiced by the individuals interviewed for this paper. These assumptions include using woman-centered advocacy as a metaphor for the research process, viewing researchers and those studied as equal partners in the research enterprise, and understanding that research is value based.

Assumptions in collaborative research

Women-centered advocacy as a metaphor for the research process. Davies et al. recently defined women-centered advocacy as giving women "the opportunity to make decisions . . . to guide the direction and define the advocacy . . . [because] she is the decision maker, the one who knows best, the one with power."[29] In both the literature on collaborative research and the interviews, a similar theme appeared. The successful collaborative researcher appears to spend a great deal of time being involved with a program or community, shares decisionmaking power with others in the collaborative partnership, and helps shape battered women's and practitioners' questions into research projects.

For example, a key element that contributed to the success of the CAP collaboration, according to interviews with both Sullivan and Schwartz, was that Sullivan became actively involved in the life of the shelter and its residents by volunteering as a support group facilitator and serving on the board of directors. According to Schwartz, the fact of Sullivan's involvement helped build trust because she was considered one of them. She spent a great deal of time listening to battered women, shaping a service response with them, and then evaluating it.

The skills of the collaborative researcher consist of many of those commonly outlined in the program evaluation literature[30] and include listening to the needs of practitioners and battered women, providing adequate information about the research project so collaborative partners can make informed decisions about their involvement, and going forward with what the community partners want. The researcher also enters into the

partnerships with an expectation that he or she is there to learn from women who have been battered, and views them, program staff and volunteers, and community members as equal partners.[31]

Blurring the line between researcher and those studied. If researchers adopt a woman-centered or practitioner-centered approach to research, the traditional line between the researcher and the client, advocate, or practitioner is often blurred. As Elden suggests:

> In participatory research compared to other types of research the researcher is more dependent on those from whom data come, has less unilateral control over the research process, and has more pressure to work from other people's definitions of the situation.[32]

The collaborative researchers interviewed for this paper and many others have, to varying degrees, practiced in a way similar to what Elden describes. They have given up unilateral control over the research process[33] and may be characterized as "advocate-researchers."[34] They make the questions, ideas, and strategies of advocates, battered women, and community members central to the research study. Further, such researchers are immersed in the advocacy community and function both as advocates and researchers, serving in volunteer or administrative positions, on boards of directors, or as activists in the larger community.

The active involvement of battered women, advocates, and community members greatly enhances a research project by bringing knowledge based in practical and direct experiences, as well as critical analyses crucial to the project. Their contributions to research design, implementation, and analysis are vital. When a project is fully collaborative, all those involved function as co-researchers.[35] Underlying the sense of participants as co-researchers is the notion of reciprocal learning. The researchers, advocates, and battered women both teach and learn from each other, with each partner bringing complementary and necessary skills to the project.[36] When a truly collaborative relationship is established, everyone's expertise and contributions are valued equally.

Fisher and Gondolf report that, although Gondolf was responsible for analyzing the data, they interpreted the analyses together. Fisher would provide feedback on the written responses, suggesting the addition of summary charts or other tools to make the text more helpful to practitioners. Working in separate States, the two visited each other as often as possible to devote uninterrupted time to the analysis. Their mutual commitment of time and energy to the process suggests that Fisher clearly functioned as a co-researcher.

A value-based science in service of social change. Many authors promoting models of collaborative research reject the traditional notion that research is value free, arguing that all researchers bring a specific set of values to the enterprise.[37] These values are viewed as playing a major role in every stage of the research process, affecting the selection of a problem and research question, design of the study, definition and measurement of variables, and interpretation and dissemination of results.[38] Collaborative research models call on researchers to make their value orientation explicit rather than assert they are value free.[39]

Uehara et al. argue that research objectives should be linked to community empowerment, social justice, and social transformation goals.[40] Advocacy research is intended to support the development of programs and public policies that improve the lives of battered women and their children.[41] As Small states, "If our research is to be more than an intellectual exercise, we need to seriously consider who we hope will benefit as well as who may be harmed by our work."[42]

The collaborative research partners we interviewed spoke of these values. Carol Arthur of DAP believes that one of the benefits of collaborative research is "creating a culture where we're constantly asking if what we're doing is effective."[43] In response to needs expressed by former clients in followup interviews, the agency developed an aftercare program for women and men who had completed DAP groups. In addition to improving agency services, DAP's research supports the organization's efforts for social change by providing it with data on the effectiveness of the criminal justice system's response to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

Strategies for successful collaboration

The three key assumptions lead to several concrete strategies for collaboration. They include providing equal access to funding; involving battered women and their advocates in research projects from the beginning; offering incentives for all parties involved; making research products useful; and establishing communication between research partners to better understand partners' roles, allow flexibility in problem solving, and spend time in each others' domains and in neutral settings.

Provide equal access to funding. Community agencies must be recognized by researchers and funders as equal partners in collaborative research. The organization that controls the budget often wields the greatest power in the relationship. Practitioners and their agencies should be compensated fairly for their contributions to research.[44] Collaborating partners should develop agreements in advance regarding funding allocations for operations, indirect costs, and strategies for fundraising.[45]

Involve survivors and practitioners from the beginning. Research that actively involves battered women in the conceptualization process will likely be enriched.[46] Involving battered women and their advocates in the collaborative research process will increase the likelihood that the research questions and the interventions designed to help them are relevant to the lives of battered women. Survivors and practitioners can identify potential safety risks in the research design and implementation, create effective strategies for improving response rates and minimizing attrition, identify outcome variables, and validate the interpretation of results.[47] Battered women and their advocates can also identify issues that are salient to survivors but may not be viewed initially as scientifically relevant.[48]

In the Texas collaboration, Gondolf and his colleagues conducted initial statistical analyses of the data and reached tentative conclusions, which shelter staff then tested with women in the shelter. In one case, this led the collaborators to modify the severity ranking of different kinds of threats. The researchers initially ranked threats to children as moderately low level, while shelter residents asserted that threats to children were the number-one risk.

In the CAP collaboration in Michigan, Sullivan spent considerable time talking informally with shelter residents and gathering information to help develop an experimental advocacy program and evaluation project. As she recounts, "I think I would never have designed an effective intervention if I hadn't listened to the women themselves, because everything I was reading at that point—the literature in the journals—would have led me in a completely different direction."[49] Sullivan's experience demonstrates the value of involving battered women as equal partners in research and investing significantly more time in consultation with battered women, advocates, and community members.

Offer incentives to all parties. Collaborative research on domestic violence should offer tangible benefits to all participants to help ensure the commitment of community programs and dispel feelings of mistrust or fear of exploitation.[50] Examples of benefits to domestic violence programs include scientifically sound data to use in grant applications, evaluation of programs to help improve services, sharing and interpreting new research information from journals and conference papers, donated services and materials, and a greater understanding of the experiences of battered women and their children.

Both Fisher in Texas and Arthur in Minnesota described a vested interest in the analysis of program data to demonstrate the need for additional financial support to funders. In addition, as researchers, Gondolf and Edleson each had a professional interest in publishing quality research. Further, all collaborators were motivated by the desire to learn more about the needs of battered women. According to Fisher, these incentives ensured that she remained responsive to requests from Gondolf.

The CAP collaboration provided several incentives to the shelter. First, residents assigned to the experimental group were provided advocacy services upon leaving the shelter. In addition, advocates solicited donations for the shelter as part of their training to become familiar with community resources. Participants in the research also were well paid for their time and their expertise. Finally, Sullivan was able to use the positive research findings to help the shelter write a grant proposal for

funding an advocacy coordinator position. This position has received additional funding and is now an integral part of the program.

Make research products useful. Small argues that research products must be available to and useful for research partners to truly fulfill the mission of collaborative research.[51] The African American Task Force on Violence Against Women used its research findings to support the development of community-generated strategies for responding to violence against women in Central Harlem. According to Gail Garfield, the Task Force collaboration also began to "lay a foundation for the community, however defined, to begin to take ownership of the issue."[52]

DAP disseminated the research findings in multiple formats to make the information more useful. Study results were used to shape the redesign of agency programs and were integrated into training manuals to assist other programs in implementing and refining services. The findings also were distributed widely in newsletters, press releases, community presentations, and a variety of lengthier publications as well as books. Funders, policymakers, and other practitioners have appreciated DAP's willingness to subject itself to evaluation and disseminate the findings, even when the results do not coincide with the agency's current program.

Establish ongoing communication. Effective and culturally relevant communication is possibly the most essential and complex element of successful collaborations. Effective communication begins with all parties exploring their objectives, assumptions, roles, limits, and concerns. The participants in the 1996 conference in Detroit, Michigan, on Creating Collaborations developed a helpful list of questions to guide dialogue among those considering collaboration.[53] Honest dialogue from the onset lays the foundation for establishing trust and alleviating fear.

As the research process evolves, collaborators must continue to build into it regular opportunities to discuss the process and express concerns. Turnover in personnel at nonprofit agencies is often frequent enough that even the clearest communication must be repeated many times to ensure that all collaborators continue to be adequately informed. Regular and repeated communication also will help ensure

that interventions and data collection methods are implemented as intended.[54] Schwartz, a staff member of the shelter that collaborated with Sullivan, cited ongoing communication as one essential element that contributed to the success of the collaboration, as did Arthur, who collaborated with Edleson.

The content of ongoing communication will depend on the particular setting in which a research project is conducted. The collaborators interviewed for this paper raised a number of communication issues, including role responsibilities, approaches to problem solving, and spending time together in each others' domains and in neutral settings. These are discussed below.

Be purposeful about roles in the research process. Several of the successful collaborators cited the benefit of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of each partner before engaging in research.[55] These collaborators identified the need to resolve decisionmaking strategies, lines of authority, authorship and publication, and timelines for task completion.[56] Collaborators also must decide whose interpretation of the data will prevail when researchers, advocates, or battered women disagree.[57] Gondolf and Fisher explained that in their collaborative project, agreeing upon an efficient division of labor, establishing practical steps and check-in points, clearly identifying goals, and setting a timeline were all factors that helped them complete the tasks in their collaboration.

In other cases, however, collaborations may benefit from allowing roles and responsibilities to overlap and develop organically. Richie noted that roles remaining undefined constituted a key element in the success of the Harlem initiative. Because Richie and Garfield were perceived as members of the community and not as outside researchers, the boundaries between researcher and community were blurred. This facilitated feelings of trust among collaborators. In either case it was helpful to be purposeful about the clarity or lack of clarity in collaborative roles.

Be flexible in problem solving. Regardless of whether or not collaborators find it useful to agree about roles and responsibilities, they must be willing to address conflicts together and renegotiate agreements as necessary. Fisher, Sullivan, and

Schwartz all described the tendency for outside researchers to label program staff uncooperative and cited this as an indication that the researchers were not willing to work with program staff to solve problems.

Schwartz recounted CAP's experience with one research team that wanted to conduct surveys among shelter residents using a questionnaire written in the vocabulary of college graduates. When shelter staff explained that the language was not appropriate for shelter residents, the researchers were not receptive to their feedback and did not change the questionnaire. Further, the research team would not pay women for the considerable time it would take to fill out the survey. When shelter staff cautioned the researchers that they were unlikely to obtain a high enough response rate, the researchers acted as if the shelter staff were not being cooperative. As Schwartz recalls:

> It was like they thought, "If you were really helpful, you'd talk them [shelter residents] into it." But it wouldn't help us; it could in fact hinder us in doing our work, because women might be put off by it, and we have to spend a lot of time building trust, so there was no give-and-take.[58]

The shelter's experience demonstrates not only the necessity of assuming an attitude of joint problem solving but also the benefits of recognizing the expertise of program staff.

Spend time together in each others' settings and in neutral settings. Advocates and researchers often work in very different environments. Some collaborators find that exposure to the other's workplace can increase understanding of the demands placed on each other's time and attention. Researchers may consider attending regularly scheduled staff meetings of community agencies to present and receive reports about the research project or obtain feedback from staff.[59] Using time in this way may be more efficient than scheduling additional meetings to discuss the research.[60] Collaborators may want to schedule some meetings at the research team's offices so that community partners can become familiar with researchers' environments as well.

Conversely, advocates and researchers often find it is helpful to schedule time away from their respective offices to devote their undivided attention to the research project. This could be called "the kitchen table factor," as several collaborators identified the kitchen table as the location where the best work was accomplished. Fisher, in particular, stressed that practitioners benefit by taking time away from the office to work on required tasks without the distractions of competing demands.

How is science enhanced through collaboration with practice?

Throughout this paper it has been argued that collaboration on research is beneficial. Although there is no guarantee that collaboration will generate the benefits described, we believe that more meaningful and useful research is generated by adhering to the assumptions and strategies outlined here. A number of benefits accruing from research in a partnership of scientists and practitioners have been identified in the literature and through our interviews. They include improvements in research questions, enhancements in research implementation, gains from complementary talents, increased legitimacy and utilization, more accountability to battered women and their advocates, and links to a larger social movement.

Improvements in research questions

One of the most significant benefits of collaborating in domestic violence research is that the inquiry is often made far more relevant to the lives of battered women. Numerous researchers have testified that working with battered women and their advocates led to the formulation of research questions that researchers would not have created on their own—questions grounded in the experiences of battered women. Gondolf asserts that "Without Ellen's [Fisher] involvement . . . I probably would have asked the wrong questions, because there are a lot of cases where, when you have all of this information in a database, you can start asking crazy questions."[61]

Adopting research questions generated from battered women and their advocates also sets a precedent of valuing the expertise that these collaborators bring to a research project, and this helps balance other possible power differentials. Further, collaboration is likely to generate multiple outcome measures that accurately reflect the complexity of battered women's lives.[62] Richie recounted how community members helped her view violence against African-American women in relation to larger issues facing the community, stating:

> It was very hard to stay on domestic violence in the narrowest sense. So while I was tempted scientifically to bring the group back, I didn't because I think it would have skewed what people were comfortable saying, and would've made them focus on something that wasn't a discrete concept to them.[63]

Enhancements in research implementation

Research projects designed collaboratively, particularly those that include battered women, often find that data collection methods are improved. Collaborative projects are more likely to obtain information in ways that do not compromise the safety or confidentiality of participants by paying attention to the timing, format, and location of interviews and surveys.[64] Battered women, their advocates, and community members can help develop survey instruments using language that is appropriate and inclusive of its audience.[65]

Collaborative projects may also lead to the creation of more effective strategies for retaining subjects in longitudinal studies by consulting with battered women on what incentives and contact methods are likely to work. The CAP staff interviewed women in the control and experimental groups every 6 months for 2 years. On the basis of feedback from women living at the shelter, Sullivan and others on the research team designed a three-phase retention protocol that payed women progressively larger amounts of money for their participation over time and, through their social networks, contacted women who had moved. This strategy enabled the study to maintain a 97-percent retention rate at the 24-month followup interviews.[66]

Gains from complementary talents

When professionals with different training and experience collectively direct their energies toward the same outcome, the process is often synergistic. Battered women and their advocates are experts in interpreting responses to abuse. They are therefore valuable interpreters and validators of research results. They also may be more aware of the effects of culture and ethnicity on those responses and can provide valuable insights on how to modify research instruments for various populations.[67] Researchers are trained in scientific methods and data analysis and can help link the real-life experiences of battered women to the theoretical research on violence against women.

When researchers, practitioners, and battered women apply their complementary talents in tandem, their collective efforts often can reach underserved populations in more effective ways than if they had worked independently. The diverse talents of the African American Task Force on Violence Against Women ensured that the data collected in, and the community intervention strategies developed from, its initiative were relevant to and inclusive of the Central Harlem community in which it was based.

Increased legitimacy and utilization

Entering into a collaborative relationship with practitioners and their associated programs often provides increased legitimacy for researchers. Associations with domestic violence programs often afford researchers access to data that they would not otherwise have. After agreeing to collaborate, Fisher and Gondolf met with the Texas Department of Human Services to secure access to its data. Gondolf recalled that the shelter's involvement in the project was a major source of legitimacy; without that involvement, he would have been less likely to have received access to the data.

Practitioners also may benefit from the credibility that researchers contribute to a project through careful attention to the scientific rigor of the research design, data collection, and interpretation. Fisher, Gondolf, Sullivan, and Arthur all identified the benefit of using scientifically sound data that express clients' needs, demonstrate the effectiveness of an intervention, or support the assertions of battered women and their advocates.

More accountability to battered women and their advocates

Truly collaborative research that involves battered women and their advocates in the design, implementation, and interpretation of research increases the accountability of the research to them. It is also more likely to enhance their ongoing efforts to effect social change to end violence against women.[68] When collaborators share power in the research process, it may reflect a commitment to social change. The results of research are more likely to be trusted and used by advocates and other practitioners to make battered women safer and hold perpetrators accountable.

Researchers who are active in advocacy or the larger community find an added incentive to ensure that the research will make a difference in the lives of battered women and other community members. As Richie reports, "I was a part of the community, not an outsider. And I didn't want to feel that I couldn't go back to a community meeting and have people say, 'Whatever happened to that project that you did?' I didn't want to be faced with that."[69]

Links to a larger social movement

Practitioners may find that collaborating on a research project can lead to increased exposure to the national battered women's movement and can expand advocates' understanding of issues concerning battered women and their children. Fisher described working with Gondolf as a "life-transforming experience" that broadened her thinking and analysis beyond the local or State level to a national analysis of how to make a difference in the lives of battered women.

Researchers also may benefit from connection to the larger movement to end violence against women as a result of collaborating with battered women and their advocates. Gondolf asserted that his collaboration with Fisher grounded him in the relevant political issues and pointed him toward research that affected public policy issues. Further, the dialogue with Fisher and others matured his understanding of the field because real-life issues were involved.

Conclusion—toward a new research culture

We have attempted to describe elements of a collaborative research model that is grounded in the experiences of researchers, practitioners, and battered women. Many research partnerships and program evaluations use elements of this model, but given the challenges outlined, it is rare that most or all of these elements are applied in a single project. Interestingly, there are few studies of collaborative research models themselves.

Taken together, the assumptions and strategies of collaborative partnerships create a research environment with a culture very different from that of more traditional research projects. Research conducted collaboratively has the potential to transform both the researcher and community partners because control of the research process is shared. Researchers may learn to shape studies around questions important to those in the field, reaping great benefits from the input of practitioners and battered women who have direct experience. Practitioners may increasingly value the opportunity to find answers to their specific questions, becoming more motivated to use research findings to shape practice and to participate in future studies. Collaborative research partnerships offer a potential path for helping to create more useful research and improved services for battered women, their families, and their communities.

Notes

1. Thanks to Sarah O'Shea, executive director of the Nebraska Coalition Against Domestic Violence, for her humorous contributions at many meetings, including coining the term "forced bonding."

2. Lewin, K., "Action Research and Minority Problems," *Journal of Social Issues* 2 (1946): 34–46.

3. Park, P., M. Brydon-Miller, B. Hall, and T. Jackson, eds., *Voices of Change: Participatory Research in the United States and Canada*, Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1993: 157–176; Kondrat, M.E., and M. Julia, "Participatory Action Research: Self-reliant Research Strategies for Human Social Development," *Social Development Issues* 19 (1) (1997): 32–49; Mies, M., "Liberating Women, Liberating Knowledge: Reflections on Two Decades of Feminist Action Research," *Atlantis* 21 (1) (1996): 10–24; Torbert, W.R., "Why Educational

Research Has Been So Uneducational: The Case for a New Model of Social Science Based on Collaborative Inquiry," in *Human Inquiry*, ed. P. Reason and J. Rowan, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 1981: 141–151; Reason, P., "Three Approaches to Participative Inquiry," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994: 324–339; Gergen, M.M., "Toward a Feminist Metatheory and Methodology in the Social Sciences," in *Feminist Thought and the Structure of Knowledge*, ed. M.M. Gergen, New York: New York University Press, 1988: 87–104; Reinharz, S., *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992; and Uehara, E.S., S.S.L. Sohng, R.L. Bending, S. Seygried, C.A. Richey, P. Morelli, M. Spencer, D. Ortega, L. Keenan, and V. Kanuha, "Toward a Values-based Approach to Multicultural Social Work Research," *Social Work* 41 (6) (1996): 613–621.

4. Hart, B., "Collaboration for Change," paper presented at seminar of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington, DC, March 21–23, 1988; Eisikovits, Z., and E. Peled, "Qualitative Research on Spouse Abuse," in *Family Violence: Research and Public Policy Issues*, ed. D.J. Besharov, Washington, DC: The AEI Press, 1990: 1–12; Dobash, R.P., and R.E. Dobash, "How Research Makes a Difference to Policy and Practice," in *Family Violence: Research and Public Policy Issues*, ed. D.J. Besharov, Washington, DC: The AEI Press, 1990; and Gondolf, E.W., K. Yllo, and J. Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates," in *Out of the Darkness: Contemporary Perspectives on Family Violence*, ed. G. Kaufman Kantor and J.L. Jasinski, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997: 255–267.

5. The authors thank the following individuals for their willingness to be interviewed for this paper: Carol Arthur, Ellen Fisher, Bob Foster, Gail Garfield, Edward Gondolf, Beth Richie, Abby Schwartz, and Cris Sullivan.

6. Pence, E., and M. Paymar, *Education Groups for Men Who Batter: The Duluth Model*, New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 1993.

7. Galinsky, M.J., J.E. Turnbull, D.E. Meglin, and M.E. Wilner, "Confronting the Reality of Collaborative Practice Research: Issues of Practice, Design, Measurement, and Team Development," *Social Work* 38 (4) (1993): 440–449; and Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates."

8. Ford, D.A., "Conducting Family Violence Research: Thoughts on Guiding Principles," paper presented to the Violence Against Women Research Strategic Planning

Workshop, Washington, DC, March 31, 1995; Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates"; Myers, T., and J. Daly, "View and Commentary from the Trenches: A Battering Intervention Project's Reaction to Participation as a Site in Program Evaluation," paper presented to the Fifth International Family Violence Research Conference, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH, June 30, 1997; and Riger, S., "Challenges in Collaborative Research: Trust, Time and Talent," paper presented to the Conference on Collaboration Between Researchers and Activists on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, University of Illinois at Chicago, March 28, 1997.

9. National Institute of Justice, *Research and Evaluation on Violence Against Women*, Solicitation, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 1998. NIJ encourages practitioner-researcher collaboration in other areas as well.

10. Fisher, E., and E.W. Gondolf, personal communication with authors, June 17, 1998; Myers and Daly, "View and Commentary from the Trenches"; Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research"; Sullivan, C., personal communication with author, June 17, 1998; and Uehara et al., "Toward a Values-based Approach to Multicultural Social Work Research."

11. Hart, "Collaboration for Change"; and Renzetti, C., "Confessions of a Reformed Positivist: Feminist Participatory Research as Good Social Science," in *Researching Sexual Violence Against Women: Methodological and Personal Perspectives*, ed. M.D. Schwartz, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997: 131–143.

12. Fisher, personal communication with author, June 17, 1998; Miedema, B., "Building a Research Team: The Struggle to Link the Community and the Academy," *Atlantis* 21 (1) (1996): 89–93; and Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research."

13. Schwartz, A., personal communication with author, June 26, 1998.

14. Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research."

15. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates"; Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research"; and Schwartz, personal communication with author, June 26, 1998.

16. Galinsky et al., "Confronting the Reality of Collaborative Practice Research"; and Arthur, C., personal communication with author, July 2, 1998.

17. Hart, "Collaboration for Change."

18. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates"; and Hart, "Collaboration for Change."

19. Hart, "Collaboration for Change."

20. Elden, M., "Sharing the Research Work: Participative Research and Its Role Demands," in *Human Inquiry*, ed. P. Reason and J. Rowan, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 1981: 253–266; Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research"; Short, L., M. Hennessy, and J. Campbell, "Tracking the Work," in *Family Violence: Building a Coordinated Community Response*, ed. M. Witwer, Chicago: American Medical Association, 1998: 59–72; and Uehara et al., "Toward a Values-based Approach to Multicultural Social Work Research."

21. Sullivan, C.M., "The Provision of Advocacy Services to Women Leaving Abusive Partners: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 6 (1) (1991): 41–54; and Sullivan, C.M., and D.I. Bybee, "Community-based Advocacy for Women with Abusive Partners: Promising Findings," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 67 (1) (1999): 43–63.

22. Sullivan, "The Provision of Advocacy Services to Women Leaving Abusive Partners."

23. Grusznski, R.J., and T.P. Carrillo, "Who Completes Batterers' Treatment Groups? An Empirical Investigation," *Journal of Family Violence* 3 (4) (1988): 141–150.

24. Brygger, M.P., and J.L. Edleson, "The Domestic Abuse Project: A Multi-systems Intervention in Woman Battering," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 2 (3) (1987): 324–336; Edleson, J.L., and M.P. Brygger, "Gender Differences in Self-reporting of Battering Incidents: The Impact of Treatment Upon Report Reliability One Year Later," *Family Relations* 35 (3) (1986): 377–382; Edleson, J.L., and R. Grusznski, "Treating Men Who Batter: Four Years of Outcome Data from the Domestic Abuse Project," *Journal of Social Service Research* 12 (1–2) (1988): 3–22; and Grusznski, R.J., J.C. Brink, and J.L. Edleson, "Support and Education Groups for Children of Battered Women," *Child Welfare* 67 (5) (1988): 431–444.

25. Edleson, J.L., and M. Syers, "The Relative Effectiveness of Group Treatments for Men Who Batter," *Social Work Research & Abstracts* 26 (2) (1990): 10–17; Edleson, J.L., and M. Syers, "The Effects of Group Treatment for Men Who Batter: An 18-month Follow-up Study," *Research in Social Work Practice* 1 (3) (1991): 227–243; Gamache, D.J., J.L. Edleson, and M.D. Schock, "Coordinated Police, Judicial and Social Service Response to Woman Battering: A Multiple-baseline Evaluation Across Three Communities," in *Coping with Family Violence: Research and Policy Perspectives*, ed. G.T. Hotaling et al., Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988: 193–209; Syers, M., and J.L. Edleson, "The Combined Effects of Coordinated Intervention in Woman Abuse," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 7 (4) (1992): 490–502; Peled, E., and J.L. Edleson, "Multiple Perspectives on Groupwork with Children of Battered Women," *Violence and Victims* 7 (4) (1992): 327–346; Peled E., and J.L. Edleson, "Process and Outcome in Small Groups for Children of Battered Women," in *Ending the Cycle of Violence: Community Responses to Children of Battered Women*, ed. E. Peled, P.G. Jaffe, and J.L. Edleson, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1995: 77–96; Peled, E., and J.L. Edleson, "Predicting Children's Domestic Violence Service Participation and Completion," *Research in Social Work Practice* 8 (6) (1998): 698–712; and Peled, E., and J.L. Edleson, "Barriers to Children's Domestic Violence Counseling: A Qualitative Study," *Families in Society*, in press.

26. Peled, E., P.G. Jaffe, and J.L. Edleson, eds., *Ending the Cycle of Violence: Community Responses to Children of Battered Women*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1995; Peled, E., and D. Davis, *Groupwork with Children of Battered Women*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995; and Edleson, J.L., with C. Frick, *Evaluating Domestic Violence Programs*, Minneapolis, MN: Domestic Abuse Project, 1997.

27. Gondolf, E.W., and E. Fisher, *Battered Women as Survivors: An Alternative to Treating Learned Helplessness*, New York: Lexington Books, 1988.

28. Uehara et al., "Toward a Values-based Approach to Multicultural Social Work Research."

29. Davies, J., E. Lyon, and D. Monti-Catania, *Safety Planning with Battered Women: Complex Lives, Difficult Choices*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998: 3–4.

30. See, for example, Posavac, E.J., and R.G. Carey, *Program Evaluation: Methods and Case Studies*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1997.

31. Hall, B.L., "Participatory Research, Popular Knowledge, and Power: A Personal Reflection," *Convergence* 14 (3) (1981): 6–17; and Kondrat and Julia, "Participatory Action Research."

32. Elden, "Sharing the Research Work," 261.

33. Torbert, "Why Educational Research Has Been So Uneducational."

34. As described by Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates."

35. Kondrat and Julia, "Participatory Action Research"; and Reason, "Three Approaches to Participative Inquiry."

36. Maguire, P., *Doing Participatory Research: A Feminist Approach*, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Center for International Education, 1987; and Renzetti, "Confessions of a Reformed Positivist."

37. Kondrat and Julia, "Participatory Action Research"; and Meis, "Liberating Women, Liberating Knowledge."

38. Dobash and Dobash, "How Research Makes a Difference to Policy and Practice"; and Eisikovits and Peled, "Qualitative Research on Spouse Abuse."

39. Small, S.A., "Action-Oriented Research: Models and Methods," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 57 (4) (1995): 941–955.

40. Uehara et al., "Toward a Values-based Approach to Multicultural Social Work Research."

41. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates."

42. Small, "Action-Oriented Research."

43. Arthur, personal communication with author, July 2, 1998.

44. Fisher and Gondolf, personal communication with authors, June 17, 1998; and Miedema, "Building a Research Team."

45. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates."

46. Short, Hennessy, and Campbell, "Tracking the Work."

47. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates"; and Short, Hennessy, and Campbell, "Tracking the Work."

48. Renzetti, "Confessions of a Reformed Positivist."

49. Sullivan, personal communication with author, June 17, 1998.

50. McGee, S., "Commentary on Domestic Violence Research," 1997 [Cited May 15, 1998]. Available from *http://www.ssw.umich.edu/trapped/commentary.html*.

51. Small, "Action-Oriented Research."

52. Garfield, personal communication, 1998.

53. Creating Collaborations, "Guidelines for Creating Collaborations between Researchers and Community Organizations for Research," 1996 [Cited May 15, 1998]. Available from *http://www.ssw.umich.edu/trapped/irwg.html*.

54. Galinsky et al., "Confronting the Reality of Collaborative Practice Research."

55. Gondolf and Fisher, personal communication with authors, June 17, 1998; Arthur, personal communication with author, July 2, 1998; and Edleson, with Frick, *Evaluating Domestic Violence Programs*.

56. Galinksy et al., "Confronting the Reality of Collaborative Practice Research"; Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates"; and Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research."

57. Gondolf, personal communication with author, June 17, 1998; and Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research."

58. Schwartz, personal communication with author, June 26, 1998.

59. Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research"; and Schwartz, personal communication with author, June 26, 1998.

60. Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research."

61. Gondolf, personal communication with author, June 17, 1998.

62. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates."

63. Richie, B., personal communication with author, July 3, 1998.

64. Gondolf, Yllo, and Campbell, "Collaboration Between Researchers and Advocates."

65. Renzetti, "Confessions of a Reformed Positivist."

66. Sullivan, C.M., M.H. Rumptz, R. Campbell, K.K. Eby, and W.S. Davidson, "Retaining Participants in Longitudinal Community Research: A Comprehensive Protocol," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 32 (3) (1996): 262–276.

67. Riger, "Challenges in Collaborative Research."

68. Hart, "Collaboration for Change."

69. Richie, personal communication with author, July 3, 1998.

Summary of Response by Howard Black

Detective, Domestic Violence Unit, Colorado Springs Police Department

Each year, the police in Colorado Springs, Colorado, respond to 15,000 to 20,000 domestic violence calls and make about 5,000 arrests in a metropolitan area of approximately 500,000 people. To shoulder the caseload, the city created DVERT, the Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team. Because we are trying to take a "seamless systems" approach to domestic violence, DVERT includes 21 people from different disciplines working under the same roof. Among them are detectives, police officers, prosecutors, caseworkers who deal with children, and advocates who deal with domestic violence victims. One of our 22 partners, the University of Colorado, lends a new discipline—11 research projects—to the collaboration.

DVERT currently is developing nine in-house research projects and inviting representatives from other universities and research fields to join the collaboration. While it is a challenge, pooling resources has made a big difference in how we deal with the victims of domestic violence.

My first experience with research was in the mid- to late-1980s in Colorado Springs with the Spousal Assault Replication Project (SARP), which replicated the Minneapolis project. I served as law enforcement liaison and had very little input in the project's design. Obtaining buy-in from law enforcement officers was difficult because they did not understand the project or its terminology. Discussions about randomization, for example, which was more than a voice coming from the communications center assigning a particular call and modality, confused officers. As a result, an overall lack of sample cases temporarily stopped the project in midstream. During the interim, approximately 500 police officers were trained in the project's goals. When the project resumed, officer understanding

was greater, and 1,666 cases were brought into the sample. The training revealed errors we had made, both as an agency and as designers of research.

DVERT recently received more than $1 million for its next funding cycle, and the police department is evaluating its collaboration efforts, specifically in the area of program development. Current programs incorporate information from all disciplines, and researchers work out of law enforcement and prosecutors' offices. We have set up databases to help everyone involved handle domestic violence cases.

Open project development meetings invite staff involvement. Further, each individual staff member is assigned to one research project as a liaison to the principal investigator to share information and outcomes.

National Institute of Justice research funds are being used to establish a database on stalking and to evaluate local Level 1 cases, which represent the most dangerous perpetrators in the metropolitan area (the Colorado Springs Police Department covers some smaller cities and unincorporated areas). The department attributes low Level 1 recidivism rates to perpetrator confinement, which sends a strong deterrent message—one that is echoed throughout the system.

Additional arrests have been made in the area of civil orders as well, including violations of restraining orders. Most recently, the department has been holding perpetrators accountable through DNN or civil actions on children. In such cases, judges have ordered, for example, that the perpetrator may have no contact with his children or wife. Since those violators are charged criminally, more arrests are being made in previously unresearched areas.

Summary of Response by Alana Bowman

Supervising Deputy City Attorney, Domestic Violence Prevention Unit, Los Angeles City Attorney's Office

Among prosecutors, research reliability depends on collaboration because it proves to them that investigators were familiar with both the subject matter studied and prosecutors' everyday challenges. Without practitioner input, research often lacks essential information.

The Los Angeles City Attorney's Office has had two previous research project experiences. The first dates to the Law Enforcement Administration Act grants of the 1970s, and the second stemmed from a 1985 Bureau of Justice Assistance grant. Each experience was something of a "drop in," in that, after we received funding, a researcher dropped in to see what was happening and then disappeared. Although interesting and nerve-racking, little seemed to come of the experiences. Currently, however, from the moment we receive a grant, we in the city attorney's office work with researchers to develop the project.

In my more than 25 years of working on the issue of domestic violence—including 13 years as a prosecutor and in conducting my own informal research—I have frequently asked prosecutors if they use published research studies. I usually receive one of two answers: Either they say, "If it meets our criteria, then we definitely use it," or "We use the research if we think it is reliable and relevant." The underlying message is that prosecutors do not trust research studies. They look at them, critique them, and then put them aside.

To change that, I offer these thoughts for making studies trustworthy. First, consider the reality of prosecutors' offices. Understand their everyday problems and goals, as well as the politics in their office—for example, who is elected and where is that person in the election cycle? What is the level of the prosecutor you are dealing with, and what political power can he or she bring? Realize that statistics can lie and that prosecutors can hide their win-loss records.

Second, clearly explain the methodology used. What is the number of cases in the study? Is the sample large enough? Were only "yes" or "no" offered as forced choices in the instrument? Is the percentage reported based on a significantly large study group? In one study the total studied was less than 50 people; the difference between one group and the other was three people. That doesn't mean very much to presenters, but it didn't matter to us if you have a final sample size of 50, when you begin with a study of about 400 people, but at the end of the longitudinal study, you only have 50 people with a difference in results of 26 people with one result and 24 people with another result. This particular piece of information, that at the end only 50 were studied, was contained in the last 2 pages of a 40-page report. When information of that nature is revealed, it is difficult to trust the next two or three reports that come across our desks.

Third, specifically define who or what is being studied. For example, is domestic violence defined by the State statute, or is it defined by researchers for the study? If the issue is child abuse, describe the injuries in question—burns, slaps, broken bones, and so forth. Identification of the perpetrator is also critical information to prosecutors.

Fourth, be open about both the race and social class of the researchers, as well as of the class of subjects studied. These factors can produce deep, personal presumptions about the group studied, and to ignore them may cause prosecutors to conclude that the results are unreliable or irrelevant. Along these same lines, provide context describing the cooperating agencies. Is there a strong advocacy community? A strong police presence? Are judges involved?

Fifth, clearly identify the essential elements of what worked and what did not. If a procedure works for one group of crime victims but not another, state this so that prosecutors are not just providing "blanket" recommendations that may not be helpful to all victims. Include the essential

elements for success, such as the level of the staff necessary or the need for computer tracking of cases or victims. Prosecutors need to know whether to support arrest or not. They want to know, "Should I do that? Will it work here?"

Research projects are strengthened by the checks and balances of multiple-agency involvement. For example, the police department knows how prosecutors could hide statistics in the prosecutor's office. Involving the police department would mean they could explain how to discover information the prosecutor might try to conceal.

Jeffrey Edleson's paper is a good road map for collaboration. Both researchers and practitioners would benefit if uniform standards and a research template were established for all research in domestic violence prosecutions. This would allow any prosecutor to identify criteria he or she is using and then quickly review and evaluate that specific research.

To improve overall quality, compensate the people involved in the study for their time. This is one of the key incentives to keep people involved and to maintain a reliable end sample size.

Also, respond to feedback. When a practitioner says something will not work, it usually will not. I have heard more than once a story about a researcher who tore up a research instrument after various shelter directors she consulted with said the instrument was terrible. Practitioners now want to work with that researcher because she listened to them. By starting over with the evaluation instrument, she gained credibility with the field.

Finally, I urge you to conduct research beyond just "what works," toward a goal of perpetuating justice. As a prosecutor, I want to know more than what makes an efficient prosecuting agency. I want to know how to stop mangling people in the legal process and how to work toward a social goal.

The year 2000 strategic challenge, developed by the National Institute of Justice under Jeremy Travis, emphasizes this, urging research and practice toward creating just communities—and understanding the nexus of crime and the social context.

Summary of Response by Barbara J. Hart

Legal Director, Legal Office, Battered Women's Justice Project

When researchers and cooperating agencies consider themselves equal partners in a project, collaborative research offers benefits beyond those of traditional studies, including expanded definitions of methods and outcomes, earlier insight into findings, and expanded subject pools.

A recent investigation by researchers Daniel Nagin and Laura Dugan may provide a model for such work. From the outset, they involved practitioners in their study of advocacy programs for battered women and the programs' effect on domestic homicide rates. They first visited the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence to present their ideas and forge a research partnership. Together, the parties spent a considerable amount of time identifying the best evaluation techniques.

The Women's Center analyzed domestic violence policies and practices in the Nation's 50 largest cities over the past 20 years. The Coalition studied the evolution of civil protection order laws in these jurisdictions for the same period. Nagin and Dugan examined data sources on firearms, the status of women, and the socioeconomic and demographic profiles of the selected communities. Information from all sources will combine to address the question, "Does advocacy affect the domestic homicide rates of women?"

This arrangement worked because the researchers acknowledged that they were not experts on domestic violence or its laws and practices. They looked instead to practitioners for this information—a situation quite different from typical evaluation tactics. Researchers should approach the

advocacy community with genuine curiosity and a willingness to work together. To ensure ongoing cooperation, they must keep open minds about any investigation's design. The advocacy community is less interested in finding out whether programs work than in knowing how it can more effectively engage battered women, effect social change, and improve individual and systemic outcomes. Well-designed collaborative studies offer a number of benefits:

- Collaboration expands the definition of research. The Philadelphia Women's Death Review is a team made up of representatives from the medical examiner's office, police and probation departments, legal aid and health care groups, the prosecutor's office, shelters, counseling agencies, child protective services, public schools, and research institutions that each year reviews all premature deaths of women in the city with an eye to identifying links to domestic violence. By investigating the full context of these deaths, the team hopes to identify precipitating factors and potential points for intervention and prevention. Few would call this research by the traditional definition, yet the results have immediate uses to practitioners.

- Collaboration changes the research process. The Philadelphia project is jointly sponsored by the District Attorney's Office, the Philadelphia Health Management Corporation, and the medical examiner's office. Participants furnish comprehensive data about victims on each month's list of the prematurely deceased. This includes individuals' histories of domestic violence, specific reasons the victims sought each agency's services, agency interventions, victims' family contacts, agency service outcomes, and other relevant information.

- Collaboration periodically provides policy briefings to field professionals, allowing them to apply emerging findings. One finding was that many of the Philadelphia women who died prematurely were prostitutes. Evidence revealed that some were victims of both domestic and other violence but that they were not well served by community agencies. Though not surprising, these findings brought sharpened focus to the problems faced by women living in abject pov-

erty and made that condition a clear risk marker. On the basis of this finding, providers began asking how they could assist women living at the economic margin. Ideas included providing information and services to women at needle-exchange programs and taking legal assistance and advocacy into the community.

- Collaboration helps researchers understand practitioners' work. Although they need not be experts, researchers need a fundamental understanding of practitioner work to evaluate it. Advocacy, for example, employs practices, philosophies, and goals very different from those of victim assistance provided by government agencies. Because many criminal justice researchers lack appreciation of the sharp differences between case-based assistance offered by victim assistance specialists and advocacy provided by domestic violence programs, they may approach research in these different areas in uninformed ways. Collaboration fosters informed investigation and analysis.

- Collaboration may expand the pool of human subjects as well as individual privacy, therapeutic, and safety interests of victims. Tracking, contacting, and communicating with batterers poses risks because many batterers will blame their partners for research intrusions and may seek to control their responses by threatening retaliation. Inappropriate investigation and analysis—stemming from lack of researcher-practitioner communication—may result in intervention strategies that compromise the safety of battered women.

- Collaboration changes outcome measurement, as measures of success expand and become more complex. The work of researchers Ed Gondolf and Susan Keilitz, collaborating with advocates, investigated quality-of-life standards for battered women—not merely batterer recidivism, the extent of compliance with protection orders, or safety during legal proceedings. Keilitz's protection order study found that, although protection orders worked in reducing recidivism, women were significantly less stable financially 6 months after protection orders were entered. Outcomes need to focus on the autonomy, safety, well-being, and restoration of battered women

and their children, as well as to identify whether batterers meet their financial obligations, give up involvement in and control over the lives of battered women, and undertake responsible parenting.

- Collaboration alters researchers' ideas about context. When constructing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded study of batterers' programs, Gondolf and various practitioners sought ways to look beyond batterers' education and treatment programs to examine what bearing, if any, context had on outcomes. Gondolf studied the demographics of each program's location, shelter services, and criminal justice practices because intervention programs operate within that context. In fact, without evaluation of context, results will likely be misleading. Though it is difficult to design research tools that capture context data, practitioners with context knowledge are better able to identify whether internal program design or external system design and practice require change.

- Collaboration limits research that jeopardizes victims. Research must not create barriers between battered women and services and safety. Recently, researchers at a local university seeking to examine the sexual experiences of battered women placed significant political pressure on battered women's programs. They sought to impose their investigation on shelter residents despite advocates' concerns about the study's effect on victims' willingness to seek services. Advocates feared the research would shift residents' focus from strategic planning—protecting their children, securing new housing, acquiring or retaining employment, and obtaining protection orders—to an examination of their predators' sexual practices and their own sexual histories. They feared that participation might appear as a quid pro quo agreement for advocacy services—thus creating a barrier to services and advocacy. Some programs concluded that sexual violence research might be a postcrisis project to be pursued after implementation of safety strategies.

Summary of Response by Lawrence Hauser

Judge, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Superior Court

Judges who choose not to take advantage of research for fear of compromising their impartiality should realize that there is a fundamental difference between educating an independent judiciary and influencing an independent judiciary.

I am a judge. As such, my presence on this panel may be suspect to the researcher audience. Yet you cannot leave the judges behind, despite books such as *Out of Order*, which propose that the number one problem in this country is not too much government, too little government, overzealousness, or too many lawyers, but rather, judges. Unless judges buy in and become an informed judiciary, research may slow to a substantial degree.

I propose that most judges are competent, independent, and want to do the right thing. They simply do not have the research knowledge necessary to do a better job. Having this information will not diminish neutrality. Rather, it facilitates sound, well-reasoned decisions.

Collaboration is not easy. Researchers must be willing to compromise, examine old beliefs, and take some chances for partnerships to bear fruit. We know intuitively that collaboration works. About 5 years ago, the first intermediate sanctions team was established in Connecticut, which later became the basis for 15 to 20 other protocols in the State. People with different thoughts, beliefs, agendas, and "turf" issues developed a set of protocols and a menu of options.

Also recently, without Federal funding, the greater Bridgeport area of six communities, its citizens, health care providers, schools, family and child service groups, courts, and police, joined to coordinate a community response to domestic violence. The court subcommittee of that collaborative effort produced a dedicated domestic violence docket, which handles 98 percent of all felony and misdemeanor domestic violence cases in the six-town area.

Summary of Response

Researcher involvement occurred at different times in each of the above collaborations. In the intermediate sanctions partnership, the researchers did not join until the end of the project, making it more difficult to analyze its results and progress. Researchers were part of the domestic violence docket project from the beginning. They attended meetings every 2 weeks to exchange ideas and information.

I believe the results of the second collaboration will be superior to those of previous research projects.

It may not be easy for these relationships to work; it may well be difficult. The results you will gather, however, will be worth your efforts if dedicated partnerships can be worked out between all the players.

About the National Institute of Justice

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), a component of the Office of Justice Programs, is the research agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. Created by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended, NIJ is authorized to support research, evaluation, and demonstration programs, development of technology, and both national and international information dissemination. Specific mandates of the Act direct NIJ to:

- Sponsor special projects and research and development programs that will improve and strengthen the criminal justice system and reduce or prevent crime.

- Conduct national demonstration projects that employ innovative or promising approaches for improving criminal justice.

- Develop new technologies to fight crime and improve criminal justice.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of criminal justice programs and identify programs that promise to be successful if continued or repeated.

- Recommend actions that can be taken by Federal, State, and local governments as well as by private organizations to improve criminal justice.

- Carry out research on criminal behavior.

- Develop new methods of crime prevention and reduction of crime and delinquency.

In recent years, NIJ has greatly expanded its initiatives, the result of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (the Crime Act), partnerships with other Federal agencies and private foundations, advances in technology, and a new international focus. Some examples of these new initiatives:

- Exploring key issues in community policing, violence against women, violence within the family, sentencing reforms, and specialized courts such as drug courts.

- Developing dual-use technologies to support national defense and local law enforcement needs.

- Establishing four regional National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Centers and a Border Research and Technology Center.

- Strengthening NIJ's links with the international community through participation in the United Nations network of criminological institutes, the U.N. Criminal Justice Information Network, UNOJUST (United Nations Online Justice Clearinghouse), and the NIJ International Center.

- Improving the online capability of NIJ's criminal justice information clearinghouse.

- Establishing the ADAM (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring) program—formerly the Drug Use Forecasting (DUF) program—to increase the number of drug-testing sites and study drug-related crime.

The Institute Director establishes the Institute's objectives, guided by the priorities of the Office of Justice Programs, the Department of Justice, and the needs of the criminal justice field. The Institute actively solicits the views of criminal justice professionals and researchers in the continuing search for answers that inform public policymaking in crime and justice.

To find out more information about the National Institute of Justice,
please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849–6000
800–851–3420
e-mail: *askncjrs@ncjrs.org*

To obtain an electronic version of this document, access the NIJ Web site
(*http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij*).

If you have questions, call or e-mail NCJRS.