FEMINISM(S), POLITICS, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES IN SHIFTING THE DISCOURSE AND INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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by
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January 2014

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the creative responses of domestic violence advocates, activists, and other professionals working to address domestic violence in a South Atlantic U.S. state. Neoliberal political-economic policies have supported the development of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to address social ills that the state has increasingly relinquished responsibility for. While personal responsibility and the work of civil society is extolled as the best way to address social problems and offer social services to the public, state-level cuts of funding streams to NGOs have made it increasingly difficult for these entities to perform their missions. Moreover, reliance upon the state for funding leads to a slippery slope whereby missions shift and projects may be selected based on funding availability rather than what target communities could truly benefit from. Limited resources and time available to adequately conduct organizational missions within NGOs has helped promote new forms of community coalition building across agencies and systems. Based on ethnographic research within a quasi-state agency and multiple community coalitions, this dissertation examines the knowledge and practice of actors situated within these different sites and their relationships with the state.

I address the following questions: 1) how are actors affected by and then in turn respond to the socioeconomic affects of neoliberalism; 2) how do socially defined categories of difference shape knowledge and practice; and 3) what is the relationship between dominant and alternative discourses of domestic violence and the differentially positioned actors who adopt them. My research sheds light on the process of community

coalition building and activism in the context of a national financial crisis, which supports politically driven hostility towards domestic violence activist work. Through an in depth analysis of the early development of a community coalition to end domestic violence in the LGBTQQI community, I examine the ways actors heterogeneous social compositions and life experiences shape understandings of domestic violence, and receptiveness to alternative forms of knowledge and practice. Material constraints produced by neoliberal political-economic policies further hinder knowledge production and actors' capacity to contend with alternative frameworks for analyzing domestic violence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly moved by and indebted to the people fighting the steep uphill battle for systemic change within the antiviolence movement at my field site in the United States. They opened up their minds, hearts, and lives to me and without their willingness to participate in this research project the dissertation would not have been possible. Their work is a tremendous source of inspiration to me and I extend deep solidarity and respect for all that they do.

I am very thankful for the support from my committee members: Judith Goode, Sydney White, Mindie Lazarus-Black, and Patricia Melzer. First and foremost, I extend heartfelt gratitude to my advisor Judith Goode for her unwavering support since I entered graduate school. Her continuous faith in me and firm pushes to be more critical grounded my intellectual development and molded me into the anthropologist I am today. I am deeply grateful for her invaluable feedback throughout the entire process of writing my dissertation. I also feel deep gratitude for Sydney's support over the years. Sydney has been a strong presence throughout my time in graduate school and has helped shape my understandings of power, gender, and political action. I greatly appreciate Mindie's valuable insights and comments on earlier revisions of my dissertation. She provided additional clarity to the writing process and helped me make important connections. Through a women's studies course I took under Patricia, she provided me with important theoretical tools in order to develop a critical feminist analysis and offered an important lens as an external reader for which I am very grateful.

Participation in the Future Faculty Fellowship Program, awarded by the Temple University Graduate School, provided me with crucial financial support during my first four years of graduate school without which I could not have completed the doctoral program. I would also like to thank other past and present faculty within the Anthropology Department at Temple University who taught and mentored me. My fellow graduate students at Temple are also owed a thank you for their friendship and encouragement throughout key points in my program. In particular, I want to thank Gretchen Seuss whose passion and commitment to social justice became apparent as our friendship grew and shined during her defense. Her strength and dedication stayed with me for all of these years and I am very thankful for the exemplary example she bestowed upon me.

Finally, I need to thank my family and friends who have been tremendous sources of support throughout graduate school and prior to entering the doctoral program at Temple University. They have pushed me to keep moving forward and provided a crucial life support of love, laughs, conversations, and distractions. Alex Rios, thank you for having faith in me and being a fantastic brother, son, and father. Jennifer Harris, thank you for remaining a constant throughout life's ups and downs. Dora Alvarado, thank you for demonstrating an inspirational example of love and kindness for us all. Tiara Brooks, thank you for our long talks and your perfectly timed humor when I really needed it. Julie McEwen, Jennifer Walker, and Keesha Landers, thank you for believing in me and for the conversations, dancing, and movie nights that provided me with much needed breaks during these last few years of graduate school. I owe a special thanks to Gena Purifoy-Harrison who ignited serendipitous events that led me to shift my attention

to the antiviolence movement in the United States and select this arena as the site for my dissertation research. Moreover, she has been an important source of support in a number of ways, and I am very thankful to have her in my life.

A very, very deep thank you goes to my researcher-activist-mother extraordinaire, Angie Rios, someone who has instilled in me from a young age tolerance and the importance of fighting for social justice. She has been a fantastic source of support over the years throughout my own shifting feelings of faith, confidence, and trepidation. She has demonstrated strength, sacrifice, and perseverance, and I am the woman today because of her example.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS v

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION 1

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT:
   SHIFTING DISCOURSES, PRACTICES AND TENSIONS 21

3. FEMINIST VERSUS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ORIENTATIONS:
   AN INTERNAL EDUCATION PROJECT 66

4. SHIFTING MEANINGS AND PRACTICE
   IN COMMUNITY COALITION SUPPORT WORK 107

5. STRUGGLES FOR 'SUCCESS': TENSIONS AND UNEVENESS
   IN COMMUNITY COALITION PRACTICE 175

6. POLITICS OF COMMUNITY COALITON PRACTICE:
   POWER AND THE (DE)CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE 219

7. CONCLUSION 250

ENDNOTES 268

REFERENCES CITED 280

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

My dissertation examines a network of actors positioned within domestic violence advocacy and activist communities in a South Atlantic U.S. state who negotiate structural constraints dealing with state level politics and internal divisions based on different constructions of domestic violence.[1] The communities I examined were comprised of actors situated at multiple sites including a quasi state government agency, local community coalitions throughout diverse regions of the state, and a nascent non-profit organization addressing intimate partner violence in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, and Intersex (LGBTQQI) community. My research questions centered on the affects of macro level neoliberal political economic policies on domestic violence advocacy and activism, relationships between forms of knowledge produced and disseminated at my field sites, and the role heterogeneous social categories of race, sexuality, geography, and professional background represented at different localities played in informing understandings of domestic violence. I utilized a combination of participant-observation and semi-structured interviews, with key actors located at the field sites to collect my ethnographic data. My analyses are framed by the intersection of the anthropology of policy centered on neoliberalism and governmentality; the anthropology of NGOs, in particular the NGOization of social justice movements; and conflicting feminist and other critical theories of domestic violence.

Introducing The Field Sites

Why Domestic Violence?

While in graduate school, during the summer of 2008, I worked as an intern at the Governor's Commission on Family Violence (hereafter referred to as the Commission). Located in a South Atlantic U.S. state, the Commission is a quasi-state government agency that was legislatively created in the late 1980s to develop a statewide plan to end family violence and coordinate state and local domestic violence advocacy and activism.[2] During the internship I was exposed to dominant discourses and practices in advocacy and activism locally relevant to key issues within the antiviolence movement in the United States. This internship experience piqued my interest in the relationship between knowledge and practice within the context of domestic violence advocacy and activism in the U.S.

The Commission was charged with the duty to monitor and evaluate family violence laws, policies, legislation, and programs, and to coordinate local and state level domestic violence advocacy and activism throughout the state. Coordinating local and state practice was accomplished in part through the employment of a Statewide Community Coalition Liaison. This person was responsible for supporting the development of community coalitions to address family violence in each judicial circuit and acting as a liaison between local communities and the state. I was curious what interactions between the Commission and community coalitions actually looked like in practice. Did the relationship resemble authoritarian governance or was there actually a sharing of knowledge and collaborative practice? I intended to use ethnography to

provide a historicized analysis of advocacy and activism that identified the role shifting contextual variables played in the way policy operated on the ground and produced unintended consequences and outcomes.

A few months before my fieldwork commenced in January 2009 Jessie, the Statewide Community Coalition Liaison, cofounded a community coalition in the city's capitol to reduce the incidence of intimate partner violence within LGBTQQI community. Jessie's and the other cofounder's motivation for establishing the community coalition was the scarcity of resources available to LGBTQQI identified survivors and perpetrators of intimate partner violence in the state. Ultimately they achieved 501©3 status and took on the name United 4 Justice (U4J). The bulk of U4J's work was comprised of outreach and training to domestic violence service providers and members of other systems and agencies who come into contact with LGBTQQI identified persons affected by intimate partner violence. In addition, U4J established a crisis line for members of the LGBTQQI community to call when in need of resources or assistance.

U4J came to represent a key field site providing insights and new directions that were critical to my research. This development is not unusual in anthropological research where ethnographers enter the field with specific assumptions about what they will find, but encounter different realities in the field and are led in new directions by what their informants consider important. Jessie was chairperson of U4J throughout the entirety of my fieldwork. Her role with the group was very different compared to every other community coalition in the state with whom she held a supportive and advisory role.

Jessie's work offered an interesting vantage point to examine state-local relationships and interrogate the meaning of these categories for differently positioned actors.

Methodology

Ethnographic data for the dissertation was collected between January 2009 and October 2010 through a combination of tape recorded and non-tape recorded semi-structured interviews with fifty-three professionals working to address domestic violence in some capacity and participant observation at an array of sites of domestic violence advocacy and activism, such as meetings, trainings, and public awareness events. Special attention was directed to individuals with historical knowledge of domestic violence policy, advocacy, and activism in the state in order to examine those political processes through which pivotal laws and policies were created and implemented, and how contingent structural changes and shifts in knowledge about domestic violence played out at different sites. Primary research sites included the Commission, community coalitions, and U4J. The interviewees, which included some overlap with CC members, represented thirty-four CC members, six Commission staff, six U4J members, four Commission members, five LGBTQQI community activists, the head of the statewide coalition for domestic violence agencies, one member of the state legislature, and a state bureaucrat who was also a former Commission member.

My entry point into the field was the Commission whose staff granted me access to their day to day work and archival records providing me the official title of a graduate student intern. Through my official position as a Commission intern I spent the vast majority of my time working alongside Jessie as she performed her community coalition

support work, functioning as a quasi assistant. Through this role I not only gained access to community coalitions across the state but also diverse actors working with a multitude of agencies and systems. There were inherent limitations to utilizing the Commission and my relationship with Jessie as a gateway to access other groups and individuals. Despite the fact that I explained my role as a graduate student conducting my dissertation research and conducted the consent process, the first impression I presented to many people was as aligned with the Commission. This was clear in key moments where CC members asked me to pass along pertinent information or complaints to the Commission, or alternatively when I was asked specifically to not share something with the Commission.

I identified eleven community coalitions from which I selected two to four CC members to conduct semi-structured interviews with on their understandings of domestic violence and experiences working with community coalitions. The eleven community coalitions represented four high, four medium, and three low functioning groups according to Jessie's professional assessment. This determination was made with an assessment tool Jessie designed and using her own grounded knowledge of community coalitions' level of activity. I also considered geography and demographics when selecting community coalitions in order to try and obtain a diversity of experiences. The eleven community coalitions were intentionally selected within and outside the Morganville Metropolitan area from northern, southern, and central regions of the state with a mix of urban and rural as defined by the Census Bureau.

In terms of selecting the actual CC members whom I interviewed, I utilized my relationship with Jessie to initiate this process. Jessie initially put me in contact with the

community coalition chair person or another person of leadership that she had a working relationship with at that time. I worked with those individuals to identify other key CC members whom they felt would offer a helpful perspective. As a result most of the CC members I ended up interviewing represented official or informal leaders within their community coalition, but they also represented a wide array of professional experiences. The bulk of the CC members I interviewed either represented human service agencies or the criminal justice system, with each accounting for approximately one-third of the interviewees. One-sixth of the CC member interviewees intersected the human service and criminal justice system professions and the other one-sixth worked outside of these two major institutions.

Research Questions and Framing Literature

The Uneven, Contested, and Contradictory Nature of Policy Implementation

I start from an understanding of policy as a discourse, form of knowledge, and "political technology," a tool of governance in the Foucauldian sense, which has a significant impact on the way individuals understand themselves and others (Shore and Wright 1997: 3-5). Conceptions of governance, following theorists like Michel Foucault, Nikolas Rose and Colin Gordon, are used to describe the way policy shapes and influences the conduct of people, including those who are not necessarily under the direct command of specific policies (4-6). Foucault argued that "relations of power themselves cannot be established without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of

discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association" (1980: 93). This conceptualization of policy and power relations helps to illuminate why examining the development and implementation of policy, a discursive tool of governance, is useful epistemologically.

Shore and Wright (1997) argue that policy performs a variety of functions including obscuring of its fragmentary, political, and non-neutral nature, constructing itself as something coherent and legitimate (5-10), which aligns with Foucault's conceptualization of the productive nature of power/knowledge. Historically grounded accounts of social welfare policy (Abramovitz 1996; Goode 2002; Sapiro 1990; Solinger 1999) and family violence policy (Pleck 1987, Schechter 1982) help to expose the constructed, historically contingent nature of policy development and implementation. Through this important work we see that policy is neither an apolitical nor neutral process in its constructions of and effects on citizens.

The Commission offered an excellent site to examine policy implementation on the ground revealing the power infused processes that shaped and constrained their work. The relationship between divergent forms of knowledge and practice was a specific interest of mine as well as the ways in which socially defined categories of difference shaped knowledge and practice. While conducting field research, I developed research questions that focused on these key issues. How did varying social compositions of the Commission, community coalitions, and U4J affect embodied experiences and the internal heterogeneity (or homogeneity) of these groups? Also, what role did these variations play in the development of divergent understandings of and responses to domestic violence? Through my examination of the work and understandings of actors at

these sites, I uncovered a diverse range of membership compositions that often accounted for varying organizational structures and practices. Important social categories that influenced the development of domestic violence knowledge and practice between actors included race, gender and sexual orientation, socio-economic class, and professional background.

Understandings of social categories and social problems, such as poverty and domestic violence, shape and are shaped by the production of social policy; this is a political, power infused process in which historical events play an important role in shaping. In the U.S., for instance, popular perceptions of self-reliance and dependency as either a virtue or weakness have shifted historically dependent upon who were the subjects and objects of this gaze (Sapiro 1990; Solinger 1999). These ideological shifts are linked to the construction of categories of deserving and undeserving poor. Abramovitz (1996) illuminates this point through a historical analysis of U.S. social welfare policy starting with colonization in the 17th century and ending with the social welfare cutbacks in the late 20th century. She argues that not only has social welfare policy been shaped historically by a dominant belief in the importance of a "work ethic" but also argues there is a dominant ideological "family ethic" that designates women's work and role as in the family. The construction of "deserving" and "undeserving" recipients of social welfare assistance has been shaped by these two dominant ideological frameworks and has differentially designated women to either category in relation to socio-economic class, marital history and status, race, and ethnicity (1-10).

Deserving and undeserving categories also translate into social and legal conceptualizations of survivors of domestic violence (Allard 2005; Bograd 2005; Connell

1997; Lazarus-Black 2007; Mahoney 1994; Ptacek 1999). Dichotomous constructions of agency and victimization combined with preconceptions about race and gender lead to the uneven treatment and access to legal protections. For instance, legal scholar Allard (2005) highlights the way battered woman syndrome, often used as a defense in court cases where a woman killed her abuser, is made unavailable to black women when dominant representations and beliefs about black women do not match up with the characteristics of battered woman syndrome, such as fear, passivity, and helplessness. Allard argues that stereotypes about black women as angry and "stronger" than white women function to delegitimize black women's attempts to claim battered woman syndrome and learned helplessness as a defense. Bograd (2005) considers how the intersections of multiple oppressions shape institutional responses to domestic violence and impact both women's experiences of domestic violence and responses to the problem. She demonstrates victimization can be denied when certain categories of individuals are ignored or omitted (such as labeling victims "she" and perpetrators "he"), when stereotypes are invoked, and domestic violence among certain groups is defined as a cultural norm (30-31). This literature illuminates the repercussions of the policy implementation processes through which social categories are naturalized, the intersections of oppressions are ignored, and categories of deserving and undeserving survivors emerge.

These theoretical issues are important at my field site where actors grapple with everyday decisions regarding language use as they conduct advocacy, outreach, and training work. Issues regarding what constitutes agency and victimization are implicit in the struggles actors contend with through their work. U4J members wrestle with

divergent understandings of intimate partner violence and the degree of fluidity between survivor and perpetrator roles. Professional background and experiences emerge as key factors in determining alignment with dominant discourses in domestic violence advocacy. Moreover, U4J members' perceptions of the ideal practices and structures necessary to achieve "success" play a role in the development of resistance to alternative discourses and practices. These differences among U4J members lead to intra-agency conflict that had major ramifications for the membership composition of and work conducted by U4J.

Another important aspect of representations of domestic violence related to dichotomous understandings of victimization and agency is a preoccupation with leaving an abusive relationship. This was an important theme at my field site where I uncovered a preponderance of domestic violence advocacy and activism conducted across the state, including within the Commission, which demonstrated an emphasis on eliminating barriers to a survivor leaving an abusive relationship as the most desirable goal of intervening and key to defining a successful intervention.. Eliminating barriers to leaving an abusive relationship was a goal orientation that Jessie promoted through her support work with community coalitions and was often cited by CC members as a goal. While the elimination of structural barriers to leaving an abusive relationship is undoubtedly important, focusing on leaving at the pinnacle of success ignores other options survivors might choose and fails to support those different choices. Moreover this focus limits space for the discussion of the other ways survivors can enact agency and self-determination.

The NGOization of Social Movements

The proliferation of NGOs, described by some scholars and activists as the NGOization of social movements, has been supported by neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is a set of beliefs and practices, characterized by the shift from the Keynesian welfare state to market-based strategies to address social problems that has gained strength through the end of the 20th century and into the 21st. Public discourse lauding neoliberalism emphasizes personal responsibility and growth as the state retreats from the provision services as individual citizens and civil society organizations pick up the slack. The neoliberal push towards self-regulation and self-management supported a shift away from the welfare state and other government provided social services towards consumer "choice" among privatized options. However, the state's retreat from the allocation of services is not an absolute exit from governance all together. Instead the state is still firmly situated in position of influence and governance, through the increased surveillance and incarceration of the poor (Goode and Maskovsky 2001; Websdale 2001) and the promotion of self-governance and civil society entities who provide the services for which the state has renounced responsibility (Hyatt 2001; Rose 1990).

Madeline Adelman describes NGOization as "the transformation of social movement activities from protest politics to policy work through the development and institutionalization of social movement organizations (SMOs) – that is, NGOs that are tied politically and economically to the state" (Richland 2008: 512). The Commission represents a site of this transformation. The agency's legislative and policy advocacy project has always represented an essential part of its work. Interesting tensions emerge as the Commission fights for legislative and policy changes and sometimes decides to

forego a more radical agenda in order to make change happen. The Commission's quasi-state status is due to its formal position as a governor's commission and administrative attachments to various state bureaucracies historically. However, the agency is also comprised of individuals who resist identification with and governance from the state. Moreover, Commission staff and key members experience and perceive their work to be closely aligned with the feminist antiviolence movement and non-profit world. There are two levels of "state" governance visible examining the Commission's work: governance over the Commission by the governor and the state bureaucrats the Commission had to answer to *and* the Commission's own governing work over community coalitions. My dissertation contributes to the literature on governmentality by revealing the tensions and challenges Commission staff and members faced trying to weave a space for social and institutional change work amidst complex political and economic pressures. My findings demonstrate that processes of governmentality are not straightforward top-down processes but the product of complex power structures internal and external to organizations and institutions.

Critical examinations of the NGOization of social justice movements are rife in the literature produced by scholars and activists (Richland 2008; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Fischer 1997; Schechter 1982). While the term NGOization only came into popular use during the last decade, in the early 1980s Susan Schechter offered an examination of the outcomes related to the *processes* of NGOization specifically experienced within the antiviolence movement. Schechter, a long-time feminist activist in the movement, outlined in her pivotal book, *Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women's Movement,* the quest for increased funding among

service providers and activists within the movement that led to the professionalization and co-option of domestic violence advocacy by the state. She used women's experiences to vividly describe how advocacy within the movement gradually transformed from a volunteer position to a job women were paid to do. Advocates became increasingly more hesitant to challenge funders who required a focus on services and measurable outcomes over social change oriented goals.

The community coalitions I worked with experienced a host of struggles related to the professionalization and NGOization of the U.S.-based antiviolence movement. Diminished funding and high rates of turnover within non-profit domestic violence agencies further stressed heterogeneous community coalition memberships, who experienced uneven support from Jessie during the course of my fieldwork due to resource limitations. Some CC members I spoke with bemoaned these shifts. Domestic violence agency staff shared with me the ways professionalization and increased compartmentalization of the work produced and intensifies social hierarchies and people who "just" do their job.

While many scholars and activists have demonstrated the negative ramifications of professionalization and the increased interconnectedness and reliance upon the state by NGOs, others highlight benefits that have emerged from this shift. For example, Markowitz and Tice (2002) describe the ways in which professionalization has created space for marginalized voices in social justice movement within sites of political power. In spite of the benefits to professionalizing social justice and service work, macro-level neoliberal political-economic policies have led to the scarce and uneven distribution of resources to NGOs in the United States. So while NGOs have increasingly taken on the

former role of the state as provider of a socioeconomic safety net for marginalized populations, state allocation of resources to support this type of work has not been adequate. One way scholars and activists have responded is by building community-based coalitions of NGOs, universities, and community members to support and supplement the work NGOs are struggling to perform because of limited resources.

My research contributes to this literature by revealing the complexity of outcomes related to professionalization and job specialization. The Commission represented a setting where feminist identified Commission members and staff envisioned their formal position within state government and access to socially and politically powerful actors as an opportunity to insert marginalized voices into the public dialogue and policy making arena. For these actors, the Commission's work represented a meaningful opportunity for social change and to alter the ways the general public and actors within multiple systems thought about and responded to domestic violence. Unfortunately, the convergence of a national economic recession and a politically conservative governor who became progressively more controlling and vested in the Commission's work led to statewide political battles that increasingly constrained the Commission's ability to perform their work. These events reveal the risks of association with the state that the literature illuminates. An emergent research question became: how do actors cope with diminished resources that are a byproduct of the economic recession and political battles rooted in a conservative sociopolitical environment? My position within the Commission as an intern provided me access to formal and informal meetings of key actors within the Commission and the state-level sphere. This enabled me to observe the process by which

the Commission became politically deprioritized, and the strategies implemented by the Commission to combat legislative attacks.

Critical literature on the policy arena under neoliberalism problematizes the state's role in the surveillance and regulation of the poor and cooption of grassroots political organizing, but also demonstrates that the state is not solely responsible for these developments. Goode and Maskovsky (2001) argue, similarly to Alice O'Connor (2001) that social scientists are not exempt from culpability in regard to dominant ideologies that support paternalistic and dehumanizing policies and treatments of the poor. Early critiques of Oscar Lewis's "culture of poverty" through ethnographic research and more recent leftist critiques of "the underclass" argument both failed to challenge the crux of these arguments, that the poor occupy an apolitical, immoral position, isolated from mainstream society (10-15). In another direction, Cruikshank has argued that the promotion of self-esteem, "a technology of citizenship and self-government for evaluating and acting upon our selves so that the police, the guards and the doctors do not have to" (234), often develops out of social movements and with the support of social scientists and social service providers. Indeed CC members often spoke generally of the importance of boosting survivors' self-esteem and empowering survivors to make the best decisions for themselves. While a major part of how this was imagined to be accomplished was through structural and institutional change, a focus on individual change was also apparent.

While staff at many domestic violence agencies and batterer intervention programs had a broader analysis inclusive of the role patriarchy and sexism play in the incidence of domestic violence, their service work was tackled on an individual level.

The empowerment model of advocacy for survivors promotes the goal of providing women with support and information that will help to create space for them to make their own decisions to keep themselves and children safe. The primary work of Batterer's Intervention Programs (BIPs) is the individual reform and education of perpetrators so they may differently conceptualize gender roles and intimate relationships. There is no denying the importance of this work and the lives that have been positively impacted as a result, but a broad, institutionalized focus on individual change by domestic violence agencies and BIPs reduces space for more radical politics and social change geared towards challenging institutionalized sexism, racism, classism, ableism, and other routes to structural inequality.

Discourses On Gender Violence: What Is At Stake?

A significant body of domestic violence research evident through a cursory review of articles published in the leading *Violence Against Women* journal focus on what discursive constructions and representations of gender, the family, and violence can tell us about why gender violence is perpetrated and the processes that condone this behavior. The growing anthropological literature on gender violence has problematized scholarly and popular a priori assumptions of what constitutes violence, male or female, and domestic or public, and have emphasized the intra- and inter-cultural variability of meanings, explanations, and responses to these socially and culturally constructed categories (Hautzinger 2004; Moore 1994; Plesset 2006; Sørensen 1998). Anthropologists have examined the relationship between gender discourses and identity

and how this relationship shapes individual subjectivities and thus potentially explains why some people become violent towards their intimate partners.[3]

Beginning in the early 1980s, feminist activists began talking about intimate partner violence in the context of lesbian relationships. Since the first published book on the issue in 1986 (Lobel), there has been a proliferation of research on the issue, especially over the last ten years. Janice Ristock's (2002) research on lesbian intimate partner violence presents findings that challenge the dominant power and control theory of domestic violence, which constructs a rigid differentiation between survivors and batterers. Her research suggests complex and varying power dynamics between lesbian partners both across and within relationships, and argues for more flexible, context-specific analyses of intimate partner violence. She calls for the use of the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1994) to examine individuals' experiences of intimate partner violence through the intersecting role of: the multiple contexts in which people experience abuse; multiple and overlapping subject identities; and interweaving systems of power, privilege, and oppression. These literatures became relevant at my field site when U4J members were presented with these alternative theoretical frameworks.

A corollary research question that developed was: what is the relationship between varying forms of knowledge produced and disseminated at research sites? Also, what impact do varying understandings of domestic violence have on practice and relationships between domestic violence advocates and activists locally? U4J members' professional training and background played a key role in the development of divergent understandings of domestic violence, and organizational structure and practice. The expert knowledge Jessie relied on and reproduced through her community coalition

support work heavily informed her decisions about the development of U4J structure and goals as chairperson. The organizational development model that Jessie promoted to community coalitions mirrored the way this was implemented for U4J, due to Jessie's influence. For these reasons, her influential position at the intersection of local and state level domestic violence advocacy and activism merited a separate dissertation chapter to fully examine her position and the impact on this work in the local context.

A core group of U4J members, trained in the mainstream antiviolence movement, through serendipitous events were able to spend a significant amount of time with Jessie and heavily guided the direction of the organization. The primary work of U4J ultimately centered on training professionals within human service and criminal justice institutions. This occurred opposed to other goals, such as increasing general awareness and discussion about intimate partner violence among LGBTQQI identified person, which was a stated goal early in the development of the community coalition. This same core group resisted the incorporation of alternative understandings of domestic violence presented by other members that diverged from dominant discourses in the movement. Ultimately, U4J members presenting alternative ideas withdrew from the organization. These events bring bigger questions to the forefront regarding how activists and advocates working on the ground can work together for social change in spite of ideological differences and the ways in which the structures we elect to organize under may hamper our ability to work together.

Social science explanations for why gender violence occurs and best practices for intervention are still being sorted out and the strategies to address the problem within and across antiviolence movements across the world vary even while the construction of

gender violence as a human rights violation has expanded globally. For example, Sally Engle Merry's (2001a) research in Hilo, Hawaii examined three different groups' approaches to violence against women emphasizing rights, religion, and community that she initially believed to be locally produced. She argued however that despite differences between them, all three approaches incorporated technologies of the self and were connected to larger transnational movements. The term "colonization" is used to refer to the incorporation or translation of technologies of the self into the three distinct approaches, but she emphasizes that "the colonization is never complete: Its effect is not uniformity but similarities within distinct cultural spaces" (83). Sonja Plesset (2006) has also examined the variability of discourses on gender and family to explain incidences of intimate partner violence from the perspective of staff working at two different shelters for battered women in Northern Italy.[4] Plesset discusses the difficulties feminist scholars and feminist anthropologists have faced when theorizing gender in attempts to avoid constructing universalized understandings of gender; she advocates the "use [of] local formulations and understandings as much as possible and [to] allow our theoretical framework to grow out of the conceptualizations and logics of local actors" (37). Given the diversity of discourses and practices this literature has demonstrated it behooves scholars and practitioners alike to be inclusive of alternative theoretical frameworks for understanding and responding to intimate partner violence.

I explored ways people on the ground made sense of alternative discourses and approaches to domestic violence advocacy and activism. Well-intentioned U4J members cognizant of the way "mainstream" domestic violence agencies organizational structures could reproduce social hierarchies and fail to address some institutionalized inequalities,

desired to create an effort that was different. However, they inadvertently fell into the trap of focusing on the type of work for which they received funding. At the same time, U4J drew attention to the LGBTQQI identified persons experiences of intimate partner violence and tried to integrate changes into institutional response that improved the experiences of survivors and perpetrators interacting with human service agencies and the criminal justice system. This was an ambitious effort that resembled the Commission's approach to producing social and institutional change working through established systems.

Part of what I attempted to reveal in the dissertation are the complex conditions in which actors participating in this "through the system" work operate and the contradictory ways in which they think and act in response. Sandra Morgen's (2002) historicized analysis of the women's health movement in the U.S. offers helpful insights that inform my own work. She reflects on tensions felt by social movement organizations between upholding political ideals and values and doing what was necessary to survive hostile socio-political and economic climates. She asserts "what is important here is that processes such as routinization, bureaucratization, goal displacement did not simply occur to organizations. Rather, thinking, feeling political actors exerted agency over their lives and the political institutions they built and sustained" (119). Her words strongly resonated with me as I thought about the discursive tensions and struggles actors at my field site grappled with as they made their way and selected the best choices they could ascertain with the information in front of them.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: SHIFTING DISCOURSES, PRACTICES AND TENSIONS

Introduction

In this chapter, I trace key historical shifts in the work of staff and board members at the Commission. Incremental increases in funding and staff opened up space for new projects but also led to an increasingly hierarchical, bureaucratic organization structure that detracted from the community coalition support work that was at the heart of the central project of coordinating state and local domestic violence advocacy. In the midst of these internal transformations, the Commission also grappled with external politico-economic forces that produced additional pressures on shifting discourse and practice. While formally a Governor's commission, in practice the Commission operated independent of the Governor's Office and was successful in creating and supporting projects and legislation that advanced their changing goals up until a gubernatorial regime change in 2003. Commission board members and staff identified a shift from proactive to reactive legislative and policy advocacy work as a direct result of a politically conservative Governor whose office became increasingly more "hands on" across two terms that culminated in legislative efforts to eliminate the Commission during my fieldwork. These political attacks echo historical struggles for the Commission to remain in existence and raise bigger concerns about the NGOization of the U.S. antiviolence movement.

The Commission harnessed a dual identification as both of and below the state in order to fight for its continued existence. The Commission employed strategies to resist

elimination by claiming spatial and vertical authority due to their position as a state agency. However, they also strategically represented themselves as a community organization due to its board members representing sectors of the "community" across the state in order to claim greater expertise other state entities purportedly detached from the local. It was also clear that the Commission staff struggled with their role as representing the state. In fact, in certain contexts the Commission used specific strategies to present themselves as detached from state as the resistance strategies through identification as a community organization demonstrates. Later in the dissertation I will also demonstrate Jessie resisted identification with the state through her community coalition work in order to present herself in a non-dictatorial manner and produce better working relationships with CC members. The Commission staffs' discomfort with their roles as representing the state was rooted in their understanding of state's participation in sanctioning structural violence and the structural inequalities embedded in the criminal justice system. Ultimately this chapter is a story about the complex entanglements of Commission actors and keys others who shape shifting discourses and practices within the Commission.

Impetus for Coordinated State and Local Advocacy

The State Supreme Court at my field site created a Gender Bias Commission in 1989 that proved to be a key impetus for the creation of the Commission. Around the same historical moment there were nearly thirty other state commissions and task forces throughout the U.S. conducting similar investigations, so this local endeavor was part of a larger national effort. The Gender and Justice in the Courts (G&JC) Project emerged

from the Gender Bias Commission to investigate gender bias in the criminal justice system. Data for the study were collected over two years from judges, court personnel, and attorneys through focus groups, surveys, and ten public hearings in each of the ten judicial districts. Gender bias was ultimately identified as a major problem faced by survivors of domestic violence across the state interacting with the criminal justice system.[5] In 1991, the Gender Bias Commission filed a report presenting these findings to the State Supreme Court recommending the establishment of state Commission to develop a statewide plan to end family violence and address the uneven and at times absent enforcement of family violence statutes and gender discrimination within the criminal justice system. One year after the Gender Bias Commission's report was published the Commission was legislatively created in response to its recommendations.

The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP), or what is commonly referred to in domestic violence advocacy circles as the "Duluth Model," later became an important source of inspiration for the Commission's work, particularly the community coalition support work. Local, state, and federal interest in the establishment of coordinated community responses (CCRs) has grown since the first formal effort in Duluth, Minnesota in 1981.[6] The work of a CCR had a different meaning to the original members of the Duluth DAIP than what has emerged across the United States as CCRs have grown in popularity over the last thirty years. While CCRs developing in the early 1980s tended to focus on reforming the criminal justice system response to domestic violence, CCRs founded in later years approached institutional and systemic reform work more broadly (Shepard and Pence 1999: 9-13). This broad manifestation of the work CCRs perform is represented at my field site where different community coalitions work

to institute a diverse range of systemic and institutional change inclusive of and beyond the criminal justice system.

While the Duluth Model may not have been an explicit impetus for the Commission's creation, it is clearly at the ideological core of the Commission's past and contemporary work community coalition support work. This is evident after reviewing archival documents, the Commission's website where a definition of a coordinated community response is provided within the context of an explanation for the community coalition support work, and ethnographic data collected between 2009 and 2010. According to Meredith, a former, long-term Commission board member and project manager for the G&JC Project, the inspiration for creating a state Commission was modeled on a community coalition created in Ainsworth, a major city in the southwestern part of the state. The Ainsworth Community Coalition was created in response to the high incidence of domestic violence fatalities locally. Meredith felt the Ainsworth Community Coalition propelled the idea of having multiple systems represented on a body, such as a commission, task force, or community coalition, to improve coordination across the various systems and that interact with survivors and perpetrators. Meredith recalled:

> [Ainsworth] had been the murder capitol of the country. It was something like 80% of the murders were domestic violence related. So they put together a multi-faceted task force to look at what we need to do in Ainsworth to get off this dubious honor list. So that was our "aha" moment. It was like, look, we got judges, law enforcement, prosecution, county people, and the shelter – they're the ones that made the success. So we used that as our model.

While she did not recall the Duluth Model being referenced while writing the recommendations for the G&JC Report, she did talk about its use during planning and training after the Commission was already in existence.

Historically the Commission has had to continuously fight for its existence in one form or another up through my fieldwork between 2009 and 2010. Initially the Commission was set to "sunset" in six years. There was no operating budget in the beginning and no staff, just a board of appointed board members, which Meredith was part of for the first years. Meredith reflected that they knew six years was not enough time to end family violence and address all of the problems revealed by the Gender Bias Commission study. Therefore, an important part of their early legislative advocacy work was renewing the sunset. Renewing the sunset continued to be an important part of the legislative advocacy work throughout the agencies existence up until 2009 when the sunset provision was eliminated in the midst of a political struggle for the Commission's existence. The Commission's administrative attachments moved on multiple occasions throughout its history, which also reflected the tenuousness of its existence.[7]

Despite these struggles, the Commission has been successful in renewing the sunset every term, relocating administrative attachments when necessary, and securing more funding to hire on a gradually increasing number of staff. These important structural shifts allowed for an expansion of Commission projects and a broadening of the targets of reform and education work beyond a focus on the criminal justice system. In what follows I will trace out key shifts in practice within the Commission paralleling growth and expansion signaling a shift beyond a focus on criminal justice system reform to the "at risk" survivor. Finally, I will hone in on a time period, during which the last couple years coincided with my field work, of an increasingly hostile political climate converging with a national economic crisis that intensified the Commission's historic struggle to survive.

Development of Community Coalition Support: 1992-1998

Reflections on the Commission's early vision and work by Meredith offer important insights into the centrality of system education and reform work. Meredith highlighted changing understandings of domestic violence and promoting the conceptualization of domestic violence as a major social problem as a precursor to reforming institutional responses. Her understanding of problematic systemic responses as related to a lack of understanding of domestic violence echoed findings from the G&JC Report. Meredith reflected:

> One thing we were just trying to get out there was information on the cycle of violence and how that whole thing went, because that was not on anyone's template. I know we always hear, "why does she go back," so this whole dynamic and getting judges to understand that…while we had statutory authority for an advocate to work with the victim in court, we had judges who would just not let that advocate be there or speak if they were not an attorney. That was a bias that was very, very difficult to get past…those were two big pieces we were working really hard on.

Meredith's reflections also revealed dissonance between policy and practice within the criminal justice system responses, another key finding from the G&JC Report.

During the first six years of the Commission's existence between 1992 and 1998, reforming the criminal justice system was a central focus of the work. This is reflective of the conceptual impetus for the Commission linked to the Gender Bias Commission study and the emergent dominant criminalization model of intervention within the U.S. antiviolence movement.[8] The composition of the board membership was heavily weighted towards the criminal justice system reflecting this early goal. Three key strategies employed early on to achieve legal and criminal justice system reform were 1) legislative advocacy work; 2) the development and distribution of sample protocols for

the law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial response to domestic violence; and 3) overseeing local advocacy activities through community coalitions. Changing the processes by which individuals working within systems act upon survivors and perpetrators were the means through which systemic change was envisioned by early Commission board members.

Supporting the development of community coalitions on domestic violence in each judicial circuit was a complementary piece of the Commission's education and reform project as community coalitions were viewed as a vehicle for the distribution of protocols to members of their respective criminal justice systems. Furthermore, a key piece of the Commission's enabling legislation was the mandate to development community coalitions in each judicial circuit in the state. Two major goals for the first year established at the first formal meeting of Commission board members were to establish local community coalitions in each judicial circuit and to gather information from the circuits regarding the implementation of current laws and the accessibility and availability of services and local resources. This was a two pronged approach to coordinate state and local domestic violence advocacy and activism. Commission members aimed to promote advocacy and activism at the local level through community coalitions and use information they obtained through exchanges with local actors to address problems and promote positive change at the state level.

A key piece of the Commission's community coalition support work in the 1990s was the dissemination of sample protocols to community coalitions to modify and adopt to suit their own localities. By 1995 completed protocols included law enforcement,

prosecution, and judges, which clearly revealed this project as an important route to criminal justice system reform.

Several CC members I spoke with recalled the Commission providing sample protocols and encouraging them to create their own for their individual localities in the 1990s. For example, Grace, chair of the Foley County Community Coalition between 1996 and 1998, recalls the Commission pushing protocol development and identified protocol work as their primary focus while she was chair.[9] Implementation of protocols posed a dilemma for many CC members I spoke with, who attributed the failure to a host of factors ranging from turnover within agencies to defensiveness among agency representatives.[10]

The pivotal role of community coalition support work for the first Commission board members is apparent after reading through the agency's meeting minutes from the first six years of the its existence and conducting interviews with members and the first executive director from around that time. During the first couple of years of the Commission's existence without staff, community coalition support work was entirely performed by multiple board members through subcommittee work. Getting community coalitions up and running in each judicial circuit proved to be more difficult than originally anticipated. For this reason, board members also sought criminal and legal education and reform by placing domestic violence protocols into preexisting training curriculums for law enforcement and prosecutors and by offering new trainings of their own for judges.

The vision outlined in meeting minutes from 1993 during the Commission's first year of operation was for board members to offer support and detailed suggestions, but

leave the final decisions regarding how to run a community coalition up to individual localities. Past meeting minutes reveal board members felt they should not have a dictatorial relationship with community coalitions. Instead the idea was to offer support and specific suggestions but allow local groups to make final decisions regarding direction and action. The first community coalition subcommittee board members decided developing a handbook on how to create a community coalition to distribute to existing and potential community coalition members (CC members) was a first step to promoting the growth of community coalitions. This historic moment reveals one of many instances of tension between a desire for a non-dictatorial relationship with community coalitions and taking actions to promote particular discourses and practices. Two years after the Commission was established, a handbook on how to set up a community coalition was created that provided potential CC members with suggested structure and goals, including sample protocols for criminal justice agencies.

The decision to produce and distribute the handbook reveals another instance in which the Commission leverages power held by local actors to promote advocacy work. Commission members sent a letter to all chief judges, district attorneys, solicitors, and domestic violence shelter directors in the state that introduced the work of the Commission and the goal to develop community coalitions in every judicial circuit. The letter stated a handbook on how to create a community coalition was forthcoming. Letters written to chief judges also requested they coordinate the convening of their first community coalition meeting. In fact, several of the CC members I interviewed recalled such a letter making its way to their individual locality. Commission members

encouraged chief judges to lead community coalitions, if possible, but if not, at least to help determine which community leader may be in a promising position to do so.

Meredith's reflections on the Commission's early community coalition support work and vision undergirding practice highlighted the ways in which their plan to utilize community coalitions to reform institutionalized responses was actually much more difficult to implement in practice. When I asked her to contrast the Commission's vision for community coalitions with what actually happened in practice she shared the following revelation:

> I think we were too ideological…We thought we could cookie cutter that across. The idea was we had judges from each of those districts on the Commission and then we had these other members who could go back and spread the word. And everyone see this was a good idea and it would happen…there were things in place that all of us didn't really realize was gonna cause a problem…how do we convince this area where a judge thinks there's no domestic violence problem, and the only reason he thinks that is because the sheriff is telling them to go home and make up or whatever…It took more work going out and convincing and making people understand.

Unforeseen barriers got in the way of creating "cookie cutter" community coalitions across the state. Convincing people that domestic violence was a problem, arguably something that needed to happen in order to successfully create and maintain community coalitions, was not easily achieved simply by board members pronouncing that this was an important social problem.

Another obstacle was the Commission's own lack of staffing to conduct the work. Upon stepping up as chair in 1994, Meredith focused much of her energy on hiring a staff person, and by the summer of 1995 they secured $40,000 through DHR to hire Shannon as the Commission's first Executive Director. Hiring Shannon was an important step as a full-time staff person to work on legislative advocacy work and supporting the creation of

community coalitions. Hiring Shannon also signaled the beginning of an eventual shift away from a board member led Commission to an organization with staff conducting the bulk of the day-to-day work and board members serving more of an advisory role. While Meredith was chair she worked with Shannon on attending start up meetings, conducting trainings for community coalitions, trying to rally excitement, and providing information on how to create and maintain a community coalition. Community coalition support work during this time was heavily focused on helping to launch community coalition meetings, explain why community coalitions were important, what kinds of work they could do, and helping people work through obstacles. However, as Meredith reflected above, promoting community coalition development was much easier said than done.

Judicial involvement in convening initial community coalition meetings and participation as regular members, as promoted by the Commission, was an issue of contention from the very beginning which hampered the Commission's efforts to promote community coalition development. Despite the official opinion of the Judicial Qualifications Commission (JGQ), a regulatory bureaucratic body over judicial conduct, authorizing judicial participation on community coalitions', judicial resistance against participation on community coalitions persisted.[11] The Commission issued a Community Coalition Progress Report in 1999, which included the results of a survey sent out to community coalitions on their level of activity, current projects, participatory and non-participatory agencies, and struggles experienced. Judge Casey, a superior court judge and chair of the Commission at that time, wrote an introduction for this report where he identified lack of judicial involvement on community coalitions as a major problem revealed by the survey data. In this statement, Judge Casey expressed concern that some

judges were still using the excuse that participation on a community coalition would be a violation of ethical obligations. Judge Casey quoted language from the revised 1995 JQC opinion demonstrating judicial participation on community coalitions was not a violation of ethical judicial conduct.

Uneven knowledge of the 1995 revised JQC opinion, or willful ignorance, seemed to persist in many localities, even up through my time in the field. For instance, according to a co-chair of the Coney County Community Coalition, a superior court judge who was once an active CC member dropped out of participation in the mid-1990s because of the JQC opinion and had not come back since then.[12] Of the eleven community coalitions from which I interviewed CC members, less than half had any judicial participation at meetings, which suggests judicial participation on community coalitions was still a problem today. Among the community coalitions that were lacking judicial participation at meetings, a few members identified being able to convince judges to support their work in other ways outside the context of the regular meeting space. This suggests judges may be more uncomfortable with attending meetings than supporting community coalition's work in other capacities. For example, Connie with the Marion Judicial Circuit Community Coalition explained she and the other member had not been able to convince any judges to attend meetings because judges felt participation would be a conflict of interest.[13] Even so, judges were willing to support their community coalition work in other ways, such as reviewing the judicial protocol they wrote and modifying the way they handled cases.[14]

When Shannon came on as the Commission's first executive director in 1995, she began taking on much of the community coalition support work. Her feelings about the

work mirror sentiments I heard from Jessie and other Commission actors during my fieldwork and thus represent a deep rooted system of belief about community coalitions embedded within Commission practice. Shannon imagined community coalitions as sites were representatives from multiple systems and agencies could come together in a meeting space and work together to address problems with systemic responses to domestic violence. Here are Shannon's words describing her vision for community coalition support work:

> A goal to bring as many folks from the various systems in communities together and facilitate collaboration. To convey the idea this is everyone's problem, not just the shelter's problem and to encourage the creation of a safe place where folks can share the issues in their community and then without judging figure out what went wrong and how to fix it. At that time I don't think there was as much awareness of the fact that everyone has a role to play in DV [domestic violence].

She envisioned her role as someone who offered support and guidance to community coalitions in working towards achieving these goals. Shannon attended regular community coalition meetings as a demonstration of solidarity and offered suggestions and ideas she thought might be helpful. If a community coalition communicated to the Commission they were struggling with something, Shannon would visit to conduct trainings where she covered topics including why community coalitions were important, suggested goals and organizational structure, and helped them work through obstacles they were experiencing. Shannon also found that sharing projects other community coalitions were working on was helpful for struggling community coalitions, and fortunately there were many active community coalitions while she was executive director that she could highlight to help generate ideas. Shannon's realization that CC members benefited from their own grounded knowledge resembles Jessie's emergent

insights, which suggests there was a long-standing work culture within the Commission that supported a non-dictatorial approach to community coalition support work.

Early community coalition support work moved very quickly due to the hard work of the board members and Shannon, and the Commission was arguably successful in promoting the growth of community coalitions. According to the handbook created by the Commission in 1995 on how to establish a community coalition, there were six community coalitions already in existence before the Commission was created, and by May 1997 forty community coalitions had been established. Also, several CC members I spoke with identified the Commission as an impetus for their creation. While I was unable to speak with representatives from every community coalition in the state, I felt the high frequency with which people remembered Commission members or staff visiting and providing guidance in the early years of community coalitions' existence demonstrates the Commission was an important impetus for the creation and sustaining of many.[15]

"Success," Growth, and Expansion: 1997-2006

Perceptions of success in developing community coalitions in the late 1990s led board members and staff to explore new long-term direction for the Commission. According to archival documents, by May 1997 the Commission had successfully increased the number of community coalitions from the six existing prior to the Commission's creation to forty. Board meeting minutes around this time reveal discussions about new goals and direction for the agency beyond community coalition support work in light of this accomplishment. Judge Clayton, Chair of the Commission

between 1996 and 2002, described his term as focused primarily on legislative issues, such as helping pass the bill that established a 24-hour centralized database for statewide protective orders (known as the Protective Order Registry) so that law enforcement could have on-going access to the status of protective orders. His perspective hints at shifting interest away from community coalition support work as other projects developed.

Growing interest in new projects led to an expansion of staff positions within the Commission. Between 1997 and 2006, the Commission gradually added four new full-time staff positions beyond the Executive Director that supported the maintenance of new permanent projects. The addition of more staff also allowed the Commission members to decrease their involvement in day-to-day work as the growing staff took on the responsibility. The Commission gradually developed a more hierarchical organization structure with an advisory board offering guidance and feedback, an executive director who managed the staff, and staff who performed the day-to-day work of the agency. The Commission worked on a number of large projects during this time period and added two major components to their work that new staff positions took on a managerial role over. The Commission hired a staff person to certify and monitor of Batter Intervention Programs in 2003 and a second person to assist with that work in 2006. In 2004 the Commission hired a staff person to co-coordinate a Fatality Review project funded by the federal Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) in collaboration with the Statewide Coalition of Domestic Violence Agencies (hereafter referred to as the Coalition).

Board members began discussing the need for a full-time staff person to work solely on community coalition support work after realizing that many community coalitions became stagnant after initially created. Missy, an advocate representative on

the Commission advisory board since the late 1990s, explained the original plan was for community coalitions to be "self-sustaining." She explained that after the Commission helped support the formation of community coalitions and locality specific protocols, many community coalitions felt unclear about what efforts to tackle next. While some community coalitions identified new projects to work on and remained active, others stagnated. Board members envisioned the role of this staff person would be to identify which community coalitions were stagnant, why, and determine effective ways to support them. The discussion of a funded staff position to coordinate community coalition support work shows up in meeting minutes around 2001, but at that time was identified as a long-desired goal. These archival records indicated a few attempts to gain funding for a staff position dedicated to community coalition support work. Finally, in 2002 the Commission secured funding for the first Community Coalition Liaison position to support the development of community coalitions and act as a liaison between local groups and the Commission. Since the creation of a Community Coalition Liaison staff position, the majority of the responsibility of this work lay with the one staff position. The devolvement of responsibilities solely to the staff in conjunction with the addition of the Community Coalition Liaison led to the decentralization of community coalition development work within the Commission.

Shifting Attention to the "At Risk" Survivor: 2004-2011

The Fatality review project emerged as a key moment in shifting attention towards the "at risk" survivor in order to identify new targets of education and reform. The Fatality Review project represented a collaboration between the Commission and the

Coalition that strived to reduce fatalities related to domestic violence through an in-depth review of domestic violence fatalities and near fatalities statewide. A staff person each from the Coalition and Commission worked together to lead several Fatality Review teams organized by judicial circuits throughout the state. Tiffany, the Fatality Review Project Coordinator at the Coalition, worked on the project since inception in 2004. Gary, the Commission staff person assigned to the project during my fieldwork, began working on the project in 2008. Review teams were largely comprised of individuals representing the criminal justice system due to their access to pertinent criminal justice system records, but also included social service professionals and others not professionally connected to either.[16] The goal of this work was to identify who had knowledge of the abuse and whom the survivors came into contact with in order to identify missed opportunities where support and resources could have been provided to survivors and where perpetrators could have been held accountable.

The completion of multiple Fatality Reviews over several years revealed important findings that shifted the overall direction of the Commission's projects to include a more structured focus on educating specific sectors of the general public. Tiffany and Greg found that a large percentage of survivors never came in contact with the criminal justice system or domestic violence shelters. This finding illuminated the need to think beyond education and reform work with the criminal justice system and social service providers in order to effectively impact the lives of people affected by domestic violence. Around the time I formally entered the field in January 2009, new emergent targets of reform and education included the media, faith-based institutions, and "friends and family" of survivors. Fatality Review findings consistently demonstrated

since 2004 that survivors' friends and family knew the most about the relationship and forms of abuse taking place compared to law enforcement, the courts, and service providers. Fatality Review findings have also shown that among all of the institutions survivors and perpetrators interact with, while law enforcement had the most contact, a significant number of individuals interacted with a religious institution, often more than a domestic violence shelter.

These new avenues for education and reform were very exciting for the staff, representing a broader shift within the Commission away from a focus on the criminal justice system. This reflects increasingly more commonplace conversations at the national level within the U.S. antiviolence movement as reflected in scholarly literature and public dialogue. Activists and scholars have increasingly come to question the heavy reliance on the criminal justice system within the movement. These critics assert relying on the criminal justice system as a way to hold perpetrators of domestic violence accountable has proven problematic for people of color and LGBTQQI persons who have historically been subject to control and regulation by the state (e.g. INCITE! 2006; Richie 2000) . The staff was very much aware of these broader issues within the movement, which regularly came up between staff in the context of staff meetings and informal conversations amongst themselves.

Gary, as the longest-standing staff person on the Commission during my fieldwork, offered a relevant perspective on shifts in the Commission's projects. Gary described the Commission as "less law enforcement-centric" overall since he first joined the staff in 2001, which he acknowledged may be reflective of the evolution of his own work. He explained that when he first started working with the Commission he was

largely focused on training people working within the criminal justice system. He felt training prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice system professional was the solution. Through his work on Fatality Review he eventually came to believe that more attention needed to be directed towards people outside of the criminal justice system and social service providers. Gary felt very passionately about his work on the Fatality Review project and was very excited by new developments in the Commission's work around implementing Fatality Review findings.

A New Gubernatorial Regime: 2003-2011

In this final section, I will first trace out key historical shifts in an increasingly volatile political climate and then detail two very different attempts to eradicate the Commission in 2009 and 2010 that propelled distinct modes of resistance. The first attack was through a legislative maneuver, to which the Commission responded in a very public manner calling on constituents to contact their legislators to "Save the Commission!" The second attack was employed through the Governor's proposed budget, which had no public fanfare. An examination of the Commission's practices on the ground can reveal much about how grassroots activism and the state are conceptualized by actors working to address domestic violence. An examination of strategies deployed by the Commission to resist elimination reveals a creative use of spatial and vertical imagery typically deployed by the state to assert its authority (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). The Commission simultaneously represented themselves as a community organization comprised of board members from across the state in order to claim greater expertise over other state entities less "grounded" in local communities.

Neoliberal ideologies lauding volunteerism were also invoked by highlighting the "free" volunteer labor the Commission leveraged in order to represent the Commission as the antithesis of big government. The Commission represented itself as a unique and valuable entity precisely because they reflect the best of both worlds: verticality and encompassment due to their position as a state agency and being composed of actors located "on the ground" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002).

Finally, I will consider the implications my findings have for theories on social change and social movements. In the context of these growing power struggles, the Commission staff increasingly questioned their potential for "doing good" (Fisher 1997). Political attacks on the Commission, while unsuccessful to a degree, severely constrained practice and redirected attention from its mission to fight to stay alive. The Commission staff grappled with their attachment to the state and increasingly questioned to what extent an opportunity to create structural change "within the system" was possible. Following scholars who have demonstrated the myriad ways the state is discursively constructed and argue a strict differentiation between state and civil society actors is a false dichotomy (Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Gupta 1995; Sharma 2006), an important analytical question that emerges is why this dichotomy persists in conceptualizations of political action and struggle on the ground. Herein I will demonstrate that at my field site these dichotomies served a meaningful purpose for key actors.

Ferguson and Gupta (2002) deal with the relationship between space and scale, focusing on the operation of governmentality in order to break free from the distinction between state and non-state entities. They make two important arguments. The first is that perceptions of state verticality and encompassment "help to secure their legitimacy,

to naturalize their authority, and to represent themselves as superior to, and encompassing of, other institutions and centers of power" (982). The state is able to generate and support images of verticality and encompassment through "a host of mundane rituals and procedures" of governance and surveillance (984). The second is that new forms of "transnational governmentality," recognizable in the practices of transnational NGOs, challenge state monopolized claims to spatial and vertical authority (991-994).[17] "The outsourcing of the functions of the state to NGOs and other ostensibly nonstate agencies" in the Africa context means that forms of government are not eroding, like some scholars on neoliberalism have described in the U.S. and other western nations, but that modes of government have transferred to different entities (990). Ferguson and Gupta call for an exploration of the processes through which actors situated within this ever increasing assortment of state, non-state, and quasi-state entities utilize claims of spatial and vertical authority as an instrument of governance. I utilize this theorization as a starting point to examine the Commission's use of discursive tactics to asserting spatial and vertical superiority over other state bureaucracies and resist political attacks on their existence.

The Commission staffs' interactions with legislators and state bureaucrats during two years of political attacks played an integral role in shaping their imaginings of the state and their own political subjectivity. Identity is created and strengthened through the construction of difference (Hall 1997; Said 1979) and participation in modes of resistance (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Thus, staffs' differentiation between the state and those actors working against or to change it is intimately connected to the formation of their own political subjectivities. The staff spent a lot of time considering their attachment to the state and passionately differentiating themselves from legislators and state

bureaucrats. In a way, staffs' assertions of difference from "the state" represented a small act of resistance in a context where struggling to survive meant claiming an identity separate from "the state" was very meaningful.

The Shifting Political Climate

Commission board members and staff identified a historical shift from proactive to reactive legislative advocacy work marked by Republican control over both legislative chambers and the Governor's Office in 2003. In fact, a review of Commission meeting minutes and statutory law between 1994 and 2001 reveals the Commission was actively involved in supporting the passage of legislation that instituted new programs (e.g. In 2001, the creation of the BIP Certification Program administered by the Commission) and amended and created new statutes pertaining to domestic violence. On multiple occasions during my fieldwork, Commission staff discussed hesitancy to propose new legislation because they were afraid "opening up" legislation may result in losing gains already made for survivor safety and perpetrator accountability, whereas in previous years the Commission regularly proposed legislation each legislative session. Missy, a Commission board member and advocate representative, broached the subject at a quarterly member meeting in December 2009 but her idea was shot down by Judge Harris, the Commission chair, due to the fiscal climate. A few months later during an interview Missy expressed frustration with what she perceived to be a hesitancy to propose proactive legislation because of the hostile political climate. Missy's suggestion was the first and last time I heard any Commission board member or staff person suggest proposing legislation during my fieldwork.

Another important factor impacting this shift was an influx of budget cut proposals by Governor Perry and legislation proposed by Republicans since 2005 that the Commission felt would negatively impact the safety and economic security of survivors. Shannon's position as the lobbyist for the Coalition and someone who worked closely with Kelly, the Commission's Executive Director during my fieldwork, on legislative issues offers an important perspective. Shannon's telling of history described a defensive mode regarding legislative advocacy work since the legislative session in 2005 when Republicans gained control of the legislature and the Governor's Office.

When I asked Shannon during an interview in the fall of 2010 why she felt the Commission struggled in recent years to pass proactive legislation, she argued the reason was "the Republicans taking over in '05. That's truly the only explanation." Kelly also underscored limitations on the Commission's practice as a result of Republican power over the executive and legislative branch of government. Kelly went further by linking the realities of the political-economic environment to an inability to explore the connections between domestic violence and other social justice issues, such as reproductive rights. Kelly believed the Commission staff and board members were aware of the reality that an explicitly feminist orientation was less possible under Governor Perry compared to previous administrations. She explained:

> When I was hired that orientation [a survivor-centered approach] was tempered by an awareness of a particular political climate because of who the governor was and because he had inserted himself into the hiring process is my understanding of how that happened and that had never happened before I came on board. He never interviewed the previous directors but all of a sudden he was interviewing me.

Interviewing Kelly was the first indicator of Governor Perry taking interest in having a more active involvement in the Commission's work, foreshadowing the tenuous nature of

their position attached to and dependent upon the state for funding. The Governor's surveillance is one example of the ways the state is able to produce and substantiate images of verticality and encompassment over other agencies (Ferguson and Gupta 2002).

By the time my fieldwork commenced, increasing levels of surveillance and regulation from the Governor's Office had transformed into attempts to eliminate the Commission entirely. The Commission's structural position as a Governor's commission administratively attached to the DOC transformed into a threat to the agency's existence. As I will demonstrate, the Commission's responded by invoking those same images of encompassment and verticality in order to assert the agency's value.

A Public Legislative Battle

Immediately upon my entrance into the field, language calling for the eradication of the Commission was uncovered within a bill over two hundred pages long restructuring the state DHR. Kelly described being kept in the dark about the elimination of the Commission and outlined suspicious events leading up to this important historical moment. The Commission operated under a sunset due to expire every six years, which was set to run out in 2010. Kelly attempted to propose legislation renewing the Commission's sunset in the fall of 2007 for the 2008 legislative session but was told by the Governor's Office that she was two months late to introduce legislation at that point. Kelly was told to wait until next year, so when the fall of 2008 came around she resubmitted the paperwork. Kelly inquired about her sunset legislation multiple times but was repeatedly dodged. Throughout the fall of 2008 Kelly and Jane, the Commission

Office Manager, were fed random questions from the Governor's staff and DOC related to their budget and the Commission's projects. Kelly became frustrated later when she began hearing rumors from legislators that the Commission had transparency issues with regard to their budget since they had answered all of the questions honestly and to the best of their ability. Ten days into the 2009 legislative session Kelly still had not heard about their sunset legislation and was beginning to question what was transpiring. Finally, she received a phone call from the Chief Operating Office within the Governor's Office after 5pm on a Friday that within the HB 200 restructuring DHR, which had been dropped earlier that day, language was included eliminating the Commission.

The move to eradicate the Commission was supported by the spread of inaccurate information about the agency, situated in a political-economic environment in which the economic crisis had allowed legislators to seek spending cuts. Assorted rumors flew throughout the legislature that most of the Commission's work was a duplication of services, that they received significantly more state funding and had more staff than was the reality, and were a "bunch of do nothing Democrats." Some instances of misinformation were clearly a product of fabrication while others may have simply been human error. In any case, the spread of false information about the Commission led legislators to become confused about the work performed by the Commission and question the necessity of the agency's existence. This vividly demonstrates the reality that providing correct or "true" information does not necessarily lead to "education" because power always has the capacity to interfere with the acknowledgement and acceptance of the information. This becomes relevant later when key actors at multiple sites attempt to educate others on best or new practices and discourses.

The Commission board members and staff I spoke with about the legislative battle had their suspicions regarding why this first move to eliminate the Commission was happening, but never received any straightforward explanation beyond being a cost saving measure for the state. Kelly and Judge Harris met with some of the Governor's staff soon after HB 200 was dropped to discuss the Commission's future. At this meeting the explanation the Governor's staff provided for eliminating the Commission was the need to save the state money and an argument that the Commission's work overlapped with DHR's, the latter of which was completely false[18]. The Governor's staff told Kelly and Judge Harris that the Commission duties would be transferred to DHR with the exception of their legislative advocacy work; however, no specific plan for implementing the shifts was provided. This was the only formal meeting between the Commission and the Governor's Office regarding the agency's elimination or sunset in 2009.

The Commission's response to this legislative threat was a very upfront and public approach. Kelly physically situated herself at the Capitol everyday throughout the entire 2009 legislative session, and for the most part only came into the office to provide the staff with updates on what was transpiring legislatively. A major hurdle the Commission faced was that many legislators lacked basic knowledge about the agency, which facilitated the spread of inaccurate information. Consequently, Kelly focused on correcting the inaccurate information that was circulating in the Capitol. Asking constituents to reach out to their legislators in support of the Commission was a key piece of this strategy. Commission staff and board members disseminated information via email and in person to legislators, CC members, advocates and other professionals across the state challenging the inaccurate information that was circulating throughout the

Capitol. Hundreds of people on the Commission's email list were asked to call or email their legislators to oppose HB 200 and support the continued existence of the Commission, including by attending a public hearing on HB 200 in February 2009 to speak on the agency's behalf. CC members, domestic violence activists, and other professionals across the state responded to these requests by reaching out to their legislators via email and telephone in the masses in support of the Commission.

The relationships Jessie fostered with CC members were an integral part of her day-to-day response to and experience of the political attacks and what helped to secure the Commission's continued existence. When Jessie visited community coalition meetings during the 2009 legislative session she regularly provided an update on what was happening legislatively and asked coalition members for their support. During a staff meeting in 2009 after the legislative session had come to a close, Gary commented that he felt the staff sometimes overlooked community coalitions as important entities and highlighted that the majority of people who lobbied on the behalf of the Commission, outside of Commission members, were CC members. Gary attributed this to Jennifer's excellent work building relationships with community coalitions and commented that he had not seen the same level of energy from CC members for several years since Melanie, a previous Community Coalition Coordinator, conducted regional trainings. This was a very meaningful show of praise for Jessie, who sometimes felt her community coalition support work was undervalued compared to the Commission's other projects.

The public hearing on HB 200 was a pivotal moment where the Commission publically asserted spatial and vertical hierarchy and simultaneously claimed community organization status in an attempt to stress why the agency should continue to existence.

The content of the brief speeches presented by eleven individuals at the hearing reveals a creative use of scale and spatial imagery to validate the Commission's existence.[19] Kelly and the board members strategized around what each of the board members would say at the hearing in order to ensure every argument they wanted to convey was thoroughly covered. At the hearing the Commission was described as a unique "state agency" with board member representatives from a wide range of institutions and agencies that granted a broad and comprehensive perspective rather than a system or institution specific specialty. Speakers praised the Commission's individual projects and legislative advocacy work. A white male speaker, who identified as a former perpetrator, referred to the Commission as a "watchdog of the state," emphasizing the Commission's surveillance of domestic violence policy and practices as well as demonstrating the agency's high reaching authority. The Commission was also presented as an important source of support for local communities as speakers from across the state pointed to specific ways the Commission staff assisted and supported them. Just as the state secures its authority and legitimacy through invoking and reproducing images of verticality and spatial encompassment (Ferguson and Gupta 2002), speakers at the public hearing reappropriate these powerful claims to produce a similar effect.

At the same time the Commission was also represented at the public hearing as a community organization in its own right because of the fact that board members were represented from localities across the state. A Latino woman, the Executive Director of a domestic violence advocacy organization for Latino communities, argued at the hearing that much of the Commission's work was performed by volunteers who represent "community members," which she proposed sent the message that "the community" was

responsible for the agency's work. She reasoned that moving the Commission's functions to DHR would convey the message that their work was the responsibility of state government, which in turn would lead to greater fiscal responsibilities for the state. This linguistic strategy of identifying the Commission as a community organization invoked neoliberal ideologies that laud civil participation and a reduction of big government (Goode and Maskovsky 2001, Hyatt 2001; Rose 1996). These claims allowed the Commission to represent itself as of and simultaneously below the state. The Commission's capacity to claim such bilocality reveals the constituted nature of the state and the community as sites of political action.

Another tactic Kelly deployed to demonstrate the agency's value was to highlight the Commission's capacity to leverage volunteer work, which connected to an overall focus on the bureaucratic procedure of demonstrating "measurable outcomes." The need for tangible or measurable outcomes is located throughout my field notes during the 2009 legislative session where Kelly asked for the staff's help with collecting these data in various ways. For instance, early in the 2009 legislative session Kelly asked Jessie to send a survey via email to all of the community coalition chairs to request the number of hours members spend collectively on their work. Kelly wanted to end up with a figure she could put a "price tag" on in order to illustrate all the "free" labor Jessie's one position was able to leverage. This bureaucratic procedure appealed to neoliberal ideologies promoting volunteerism and a smaller, more flexible work force. Kelly believed they needed to demonstrate the Commission's value to legislators and state bureaucrats quantitatively in order to garner support for its continued existence. I heard the Commission staff make sardonic jokes about this quest for measurable outcomes even

while they complied with Kelly's requests for them. What made these jokes funny was the staffs' belief that the "real" impact of a program or project cannot always be measured quantitatively and rarely conveys the significance of the work being done. Joking about bureaucratic procedures the staff was compelled to participate in represented an attempt to differentiate themselves from the bureaucrats who champion such practices.

Following scholars who caution what Abu-Lughod (1990) calls the "romance of resistance," I argue this ethnographic example reveals a reaction against relations of power that fails to challenge the status quo. The strategic use of demonstrating measurable outcomes legitimizes its value as an indicator of effectiveness and further contributes to legislators' and bureaucrats' lack of a nuanced understanding of the Commission's work.

Many anthropologists have dealt with the issue of resistance. Abu-Lughod (1990) poses important questions concerning how to theorize resistance without glorifying or de-emphasizing its value, acknowledge that people can resist systems of domination while also supporting them, and also allow for the possibility that resistance performed through power structures can lead to transformations in those structures (47). Abu-Lughod (1990) and Maddox (1997) both offer ethnographic examples where resisting certain systems of power and domination can simultaneously support others. When it came to the Commission's resistance against political attacks, Kelly chose to take actions that failed to challenge the status quo in order to save the Commission. Ultimately, the Commission was able to forestall elimination and eliminate the sunset allowing the Commission to last indefinitely. While HB 300, the proactive legislation eliminating the

Commission's sunset, died in the Senate Rules committee, Kelly was able to work with legislators to insert HB 300 language extending the life of the Commission into HB 200 and remove the language eliminating the Commission from HB 200. Unfortunately, this triumph was short lived and the following legislative session in 2010 revealed another attempt from the Governor's Office to eliminate the Commission, although the methods employed were different.

Elimination through Consolidation

During the 2010 legislative session the Commission faced another threat to their existence in the name of consolidation through a proposal to transfer all of the Commission's funding and four staff positions to another state agency.[20] This scheme was transcribed within Governor Perry's proposed budget for fiscal year 2011. The agency proposed to acquire the Commission's and DHR's duties was the Governor's Office for Child Welfare (GOCW). GOCW was created a few years earlier to coordinate child welfare services through supporting the entire "family unit" and promoting the unification of families. The Governor's proposed budget contained the most basic information about the move, not specifying which staff positions or functions would move to GOCW or what would happen to the Commission's advisory board. The Commission would still exist in name but without an operating budget and staff.

Judge Harris invited the Jane, the GOCW Executive Director, to a quarterly member meeting in February 2010 so the board members could have the opportunity to learn more about her vision for the move and develop a better understanding of what it would actually look like in practice. Early at the meeting before Jane arrived Judge

Harris expressed frustration with the fact that the Governor's Office did not consult the Commission prior to asserting this plan in his budget. Nevertheless, he expressed firmly to board members that the conversation with Jane should not be a debate, but rather a "fact finding session" to develop a better understanding of Jane's thoughts and plans for their work. Jane, a white woman appearing to be in her early 30s, spent an hour answering questions and responding to board members' concerns, appearing flustered at times. One line of questioning from Missy, a steadfast advocate representative on the Commission's advisory board, revealed an obvious lack of an understanding of domestic violence on Jane's part. This particular dialogue was an extremely tense moment characterized by Jane's dodging Missy's questions and Missy expressing her astonishment of Jane's limp responses. This scene demonstrated to staff and board members that Jane lacked a basic understanding of domestic violence, which was also reflected in her lack of professional experience working with domestic violence.[21]

Commission board members and staff were also concerned about the proposed move due to perceived ideological differences and the possibility that the Commission would lose its de facto independence from the Governor's Office. GOCW's family unification and child welfare focus was a concern for the Commission staff and board members. They feared that if the GOCW took over the Commission's work, a comprehensive focus on the unification of families and the welfare of children would reduce space for talking specifically about violence against women. They worried that such a focus could lead to the establishment of policies and programs grounded in an understanding that both parents are always 100% responsible for child maltreatment and abuse, even if one of the parents was themselves a victim of abuse.

Board members wanted continued freedom to critique legislation or institutional policies they felt compromised safety for domestic violence survivors or obstructed the criminal justice system response to perpetrators to hold them accountable. Despite Jane's insistence that various functions of the Commission would continue through her office, the board members and staff all agreed they did not trust this would actually happen without any safeguards besides her word, especially considering no one from the Commission was consulted about the suggested consolidation prior to the Governor releasing his budget. The Commission agreed by consensus at that meeting to oppose the consolidation.

The Commission's approach to fighting consolidation was very different in 2010 compared to the 2009 political battle for a few reasons. The threat of consolidation through a budget move was more complicated to rally the public around to contact their legislators than the first attack where there were specific bills people could call and email their legislators regarding. The Commission board members' and staffs' unease with Jane and the GOCW complicated matters further because public criticism of Jane and GOCW was not felt to be politically viable. Shannon and Kelly both believed the reason GOCW was offered up as the consolidating agency was because of a close relationship between Governor Perry and Jane. Kelly explained:

> Jane was trying to build her empire and had taken over the budgets of other organizations, and so I think the Governor, who was very unhappy with me personally at that point, because of the success we had the first time around I think he thought he could accomplish two things at once by eliminating our office and giving our money to his good friend Jane.

The majority of Shannon's and Kelly's work in 2010 was through discreet communication with legislators on a one on one basis. Kelly highlighted there were

legislators who were willing to help support the Commission but did not want to “be in the limelight about it.” No one wanted to publicize opposition to the Governor’s Office or GOCW.

In the end, the Commission was able to dodge being consumed by the GOCW by convincing the AOC to agree to administer the Commission’s budget, which released the Commission from the Governor’s economic control.[22] However, no legislation was changed so the Governor was still responsible for nominating Commission board members. After the Commission moved under the AOC, Governor Perry’s attention drew to overdue appointments on the Commission advisory board. He removed all Governor-appointed board members from their position on the board and replaced them with his own new appointments.

Kelly suspected the Governor’s Office was telling incoming board members the same false information that was circulating during the 2009 legislative session. In order to thwart the “bunch of do nothing Democrats” narrative, she and the outgoing board members worked together to reach out to the incoming board members and educate them about all of the Commission’s projects. They sent packets of information in the mail to incoming board members documenting their work and achievements. Outgoing board members also met with incoming board members to chat informally about their work on the Commission. Finally, at the quarterly meeting where incoming board members were sworn in, the outgoing board members also attended and provided informal speeches about the Commission’s work. The broad message conveyed during these speeches was that the incoming board members should listen to and learn from the knowledgeable staff and advocates on the advisory board. Kelly felt through this orchestration of activities

they were successful in demonstrating to the incoming board members that the Commission was productive in the sense that they were actively working on their legislatively required duties, not a “bunch of do nothing Democrats.”

Implications

Two years of legislative battles, while successful in maintaining the Commission’s existence, redirected much of the work performed at the Commission to fighting to remain in existence. For example, the Commission had to cancel the 2009 annual conference because so much time and energy had to be directed to fighting the legislative battle. High levels of stress experienced due to a perpetual lack of job security led staff to question whether long-term project planning was possible or even worthwhile considering the Commission’s precarious existence. Much of the staff’s time was allocated to dealing with the political attacks in some capacity. Not only did speculative conversations about why the Commission was under attack dominate day-to-day conversations between staff during the two legislative sessions, but everyday practices were infused with resistance tactics that kept the struggle at the forefront of peoples’ minds. For instance, when Jessie traveled to community coalition meetings during the legislative session, she consistently put in a plug about what was happening legislatively at the moment and how coalition members could help. If Kelly asked the staff to put together an email or flyer for distribution concerning the legislation battle, everyday work would be put on temporary hold so the task could be completed as soon as possible. There was a perceptible sense of urgency in these requests and the staff was clearly under an enormous amount of stress, not knowing if the Commission and their jobs along with

it would be eliminated. Ultimately, four of the staff, including Kelly left their position at the Commission by the end of 2010.

Kelly's legislative updates to the staff revealed much lobbying work was done through rumor and word of mouth, and the import of building relationships for being an effective lobbyist. Throughout my field notes covering Kelly's legislative updates are descriptions of successes in getting a bill passed based on knowing someone on a committee where a bill was being heard and the power committee chairs had to pass or kill a bill. Legislative updates Kelly provided to the staff were characterized by lots of ups and downs regarding the Commission's prospects for continuing to exist. Kelly would regularly share a hunch regarding the spread of false information or a strategy she was considering employing, but then backtrack and acknowledge much of what she was saying was speculation because she never knew with certainty who was saying or doing what exactly.

Kelly described hierarchy and power held by legislators as clearly marked in specific and discernible ways. During her legislative updates to staff, Kelly shared stories that demonstrated the amount of influence committee chairs held over the passage of bills. For example, the Chair of Senate Rules later declared while standing on the Senate floor that he was personally responsible for any bill that did not make it out of the Senate Rules Committee. HB 300, the Commission's proactive bill to eliminate the sunset, did not make it out of the Senate Rules Committee that day, which Kelly understood to be direct result of the chair's will.

Kelly identified a lack of representation from women and people of color among the legislative body that reflected the actual composition of the state population. Kelly

zeroed in on the fact that leadership within the legislature was predominately white men, which was problematic in a setting where chairs of committees have an enormous power over what bills get heard and do or do not emerge out of committee.[23] Kelly acknowledged that changing the gender, racial and ethnic composition of the legislature to reflect the state population would not magically eliminate inequality or guarantee representation, but she felt it would be a start. Kelly also identified sexual harassment as widespread and described interactions between male legislators and female lobbyists as disturbing. All of these realities were emotionally draining for Kelly to face on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, these realizations placed an inordinate amount of stress on her and the staff indirectly as they came to see that successful lobbying had nothing to do with logic and everything to do with who you knew.

I uncovered an assortment of speculation about why the Governor's Office was trying to eliminate the Commission. I suspect this uncertainty of motives coupled with the knowledge that power reigned through rumor and social capitol exacerbated staffs' feelings of lack of control over their future and stress induced by political attacks. Suspicions and rumor vacillated between arguments that the Commission was not effectively performing its duties and that key political actors were simply using the Commission as a pawn to accumulate political power. Kelly reflected during an interview several months after both legislative sessions had come to an end that she never had a clear understanding why the Commission was under attack. The best theory she could come up with was the Commission was viewed as unimportant by the Governor's Office.

The one legislator I was able to interview was Marla, a Democrat Senator who actually sat on the Commission advisory board in the early 1990s as a representative from

the Senate.[24] She identified attempts to eliminate the Commission as “budget driven” and “political power making” through an attempt to consolidate agencies. While she was not aware of any ideological differences informing the push, she did allude to hearing rumors of “management issues” in terms of the Commission’s capacity to perform their duties effectively, but she made it clear that this was unsubstantiated in her opinion. I was able to interview one bureaucrat about the events in 2009 and 2010 who offered another insight as someone not actively involved with the Commission. Meredith, a middle-aged white woman, was the current director of the AOC and had experience working with the Commission dating back to its inception as one of the first Commission board members. Also, Meredith was the Project Manager for the GJC Project that propelled the creation of the Commission, which she described as a key experience that concretized her interest in domestic violence. She shared hearing rumors from unspecified state actors that the Commission was too “advocate oriented.” This devaluing of the perspective of advocates contrasted with how the staff felt their work should be conducted and suggested something substantive motivating the elimination, but was also an unsubstantiated theory.

In the midst of struggles to demonstrate their value, staff increasingly questioned their attachments to the state and also recognized paradoxes in their position. The Commission was formerly a Governor’s Commission administratively attached to the DOC. The board members were elected by the Governor, Speaker of the House, and Senate President. So in a certain sense, state actors had a certain degree of authority over the Commission. However, Gary and Shannon’s historical perspective reveals the Commission operated independently of the Governor’s Office up until Governor Perry came into power and began interjecting more influence. Two years of political attacks on

the Commission's existence demonstrated the risks of any attachment to the state even as a quasi-state entity.

Staff had critical discussions about state sanctioned structural violence and structural inequalities embedded in the criminal justice system, which also led them to question their entanglements with state institutions. A key area of the Commission's work that staff struggled with was their regulatory work over BIPs and their embeddedness in the criminal justice system. For example, Amy, the BIP Coordinator, highlighted tension between her role monitoring BIPs and her awareness of the structural inequalities embedded within the criminal justice system response to perpetrators. Amy questioned whether social change was actually possible when working through oppressive structures, such as the DOC, that produce and exacerbate social and material inequalities.

Many scholars and activists have problematized the heavy reliance on a criminal justice system response to domestic violence with much attention has focused on mandatory arrest policies and no-drop prosecution (Coker 2001; Maguigan 2003; Schneider 2000). Sally Engle Merry's (2001b) ethnographic research demonstrated men sentenced to a batterer's intervention program in Hilo, Hawaii were a lower socio-economic status, less educated, and more likely to be unemployed than the rest of the local male population. Merry's findings also make problematic a reliance on BIPs as an avenue to achieving justice. While Amy problematized her participation in the surveillance of BIP providers and simultaneously her culpability in the regulation and surveillance of poor men, she felt constrained by her job that required following statutorily defined rules for BIP certification. On the other hand, Amy did believe that

she and the other staff did help to produce positive changes that helped improve safety for survivors and hold perpetrators accountable.

Even as the staff sorted through their feelings about their attachments to the state, they reasserted the spatialization of the state from above, highlighting the disconnectedness from the local and critiquing state actors' lack of knowledge of what is happening "on the ground". For example, after the bill with language eliminating the Commission was passed, a staff person cited this event as one of many examples of powerful state actors not paying attention to what happens on the ground, and making decisions without this understanding. This same person created a mantra about legislators describing them as individuals born into wealth and privilege, serving in positions of power over the rest of the general population.

The Commission staff reasserted the spatialization of the state in an effort to distinguish themselves from other state level structures. At a strategic planning session in the summer of 2009 after the legislative session came to a close, attendees broke into small groups to respond to a set of questions concerning the Commission's strengths, including specifically regarding its structure and board member composition, and future goals. This meeting revealed these same themes I identified through daily participant observation explicitly stated. The staff described themselves as having access to a wide range of systems and agencies through their advisory board members, which offers what Mary described as a "macro level view". Amy highlighted that direct service workers are "in the trenches" having to "put out fires," which inhibited a "big picture" view. Mary also highlighted that having board members representing localities from across the state offers an "on the ground" perspective that other state structures lack. Stuart Hall and

Edward Said have argued identity is created and strengthened through the construction of difference. Edward Said's discussion of Orientalism reveals European identity is created and strengthened through construction of difference from and superiority over the Orient (1978: 5-7). Stuart Hall's argues "the other" is essential to the creation of meaning in general and in the constitution of the self (1997: 234-238). The staff differentiates themselves ("us") from legislators and state bureaucrats ("them") who are a survivor of their verticality and lack of connectedness with people working "on the ground." As demonstrated at the public hearings on HB 200 and the 2009 strategic planning session, the Commission is imagined as more effective than other state structures because of the inclusion of community actors. In this constellation, verticality and encompassment are assets for the Commission largely because its board members are also grounded in the community.

Conclusion

A historical timeline of the Commission's expansion parallels broadening attention beyond education and reform work within the criminal justice system to new public and private sectors. This really meant looking beyond human services agencies and the criminal justice system, the original targets of and participants in the Commission's education and reform work, to other sectors of the broader general public. This reflects national shifts within the U.S. antiviolence movement as scholars and practitioners have increasingly questioned deep entanglements with the state and criminal justice system for intervention. At the same time, exciting new directions within the Commission's work simultaneously derailed attention away from the community

coalition support work. The agency's growth foreshadows later concerns addressed in the dissertation regarding the impact of its increasingly hierarchical and bureaucratic organizational structure on the community coalition support work. These shifts anticipated struggles the Community Coalition Liaison experienced working within a hierarchical structure with centralized project planning all the while pronouncing anti-state rhetoric that she was not there to monitor or dictate like other state entities.

Ferguson and Gupta (2002) and Gregory (1998) illustrate that a vertical imaginary of political entities functions to empower the state as an imagined entity characterized by vertical encompassment and disempower place-based activism as that which does not have the global breadth of knowledge and vision of those higher up entities. At my field site, Commission actors assert these same imaginings for themselves in order to demonstrate their value and resist state repression during Governor Perry's regime. Ferguson and Gupta (2002) call for an "ethnography of encompassment, an approach that would take as its central problem the understanding of processes through which governmentality (by state and nonstate actors) is both legitimized and undermined by reference to claims of superior spatial reach and vertical height" (995). My analysis represents an attempt to answer this call. Commission actors and supporters assert spatial and vertical authority strategically in order to undermine state actors attempts at governance and to demonstrate their own expertise and authority over other state bureaucracies. Commission actors imagine and present themselves as a unique quasi-state structure because they are also comprised of board members who represent a wide range of localities across the state. They claim spatial and vertical authority due to their positioning at the state level but simultaneously assert having an "on the ground"

perspective. Finally, they also invoke neoliberal ideologies lauding volunteerism to demonstrate their value.

Identity is constantly being worked and developed through the constitution of understandings of place and community that are always tied to processes of exclusion, inclusion, and power (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 12-17). Gupta and Ferguson (1997) use Foucault for much of their discussion of resistance, which they conceptualize "as an experience that constructs and reconstructs the identity of subjects" but not something that is possessed by an agentic subject nor something that is ever safe from developing into a strategy of power (19). This understanding of resistance makes clear how Commission actors' refutation of identification with "the state" was so important to them and entangled in the formation of their political subjectivities. And yet, the staff harnessed practices they despised that represent state bureaucracies, such as demonstrating measurable outcomes, in order to assert their value and resist state repression. This reveals "how opposition to one form of domination may involve complicity with or greater vulnerability to others" and leads Maddox to claim "there are few (if any) "pure" acts of resistance" (1997: 286).

Events during Governor Perry's reign reflect a long-standing requirement for the Commission to demonstrate its value and fight for its existence. Being legislatively established with a sunset ensured the Commission would consistently have to make an argument for why it should exist and why domestic violence was an issue people should care enough about that a state agency should exist to address the problem. The tenuousness of their position as a quasi-state entity calls into question the viability of social movement actors incorporated into formal institutions of power.

Authors in the Incite! Anthology, Color of Violence warn that, “the reliance on state funding to support antiviolence programs has increased the professionalization of the antiviolence movement and alienated it from its community organizing, social justice roots” (Critical Resistance and INCITE! 2006). While the Commission is not an NGO, its actors still experienced constraints on their work because of their formal attachment to the state and reliance on the state for funding. Commission board members and staff became increasingly hesitant to propose legislation under Governor Perry’s reign because they were afraid that doing so might open them up to lose past legislative successes. The problems posed by NGOization that Adelman (2008) eloquently describes hold true at this site as well. The Commission formally operated under the Governor’s rule for a decade before political attacks on the agency’s existence. The Commission’s position within and dependent upon the state did not become problematic until Governor Perry’s administration took control. While the motivation for eliminating the Commission was never exactly clear, it was apparent that the Governor’s Office was motivated to eradicate the Commission. During the 2009 legislative session, the Governor’s Office was clearly spreading inaccurate information about the Commission, which in conjunction with a national economic crisis provided excuses to eliminate the Commission. The following year another state agency with a clearly more conservative, family-oriented agenda that clashed with the Commission’s was offered up to consolidate domestic violence advocacy work in the state. Commission staff experienced large amounts of stress as their jobs were hanging on by a thread. While the Commission did not surrender to pressures of elimination and consolidation and ultimately survived two years of political attacks, the agency’s work was severely curtailed in the process. In the end they lost half

of the staff and the vast majority of long-standing board members were swapped out for new appointees.

CHAPTER 3:

FEMINIST VERSUS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ORIENTATIONS:

AN INTERNAL EDUCATION PROJECT

Introduction

Commission staff and board members saw their formal position within state government and access to socially and politically powerful people as an opportunity to increase awareness and knowledge of domestic violence among actors internal and external to the agency. Their aim was to produce new understandings that would lead to changes in policy and practice that enhanced survivor safety and perpetrator accountability. The Commission was legislatively created to have a diverse membership so that actors with divergent beliefs regarding best practices and domestic violence policy could have a space to discuss their differences. Education work is a formal duty delineated in the legislation establishing the Commission that in practice happened within a wide range of contexts and levels ranging from the very structured to the informal. Targets are both board members and non-board members who affect domestic violence policy and practice. Beyond the formal education work through the conference and other trainings, another important form of education work takes place through the informal exchange of information and ideas between the board members and staff. This informal education work will be the focus of this chapter.

Attention to state level politics and activisms within the Commission reveals tensions between a feminist, survivor-centered approach and an emphasis on the punishment of perpetrators. My analysis starts from an understanding that feminism has

different meanings for different people that may change over time. With that said, I define a feminist analysis of domestic violence in this particular context to take the identification of domestic violence within heterosexual relationships as a product of patriarchy as central. Patriarchy refers to the institutionalization of male authority over women and children within the organization of the family and society. The meaning staff and board members at my field site attribute to these categories informs the formation of their political subjectivities as they engage in dialogue and interact with one another. The ways key actors conceptualize the ideological frameworks guiding their practice and that of their colleagues is intricately connected to the development of everyday moments of knowledge production and internal education work. Specifically, key feminist identified staff and board members felt much of the membership possessed a criminal justice oriented perspective, and juxtaposed this against their own approach to the work. As follows, the education of board members was largely about the identification and contestation of divergent meanings and understandings of domestic violence. In practice the overall thrust of the informal education of board members was centered on bringing a feminist, survivor-centered perspective to the attention of those board members who lacked such a perspective. Discursive tensions within the Commission between a feminist, survivor-centered approach and a criminal justice perspective sometimes produced irreconcilable differences that reveal moments when a feminist, survivor-centered approach could not be successfully maintained.

In this chapter, I navigate these tensions and draw some conclusions about the "success" of the Commission's internal education project. I identify meetings as important sites for the negotiation and performance of power/knowledge in a Foucauldian

sense and examine discourse and practice within these spaces to make a contribution to our understanding of the relationship between the two. In the first section I consider the import of a feminist, survivor-centered approach to practice within the Commission and identify the staff as relatively homogenous in regards to the adoption of such a position. Then, I describe the composition of the Commission's advisory board and reveal significant imbalances in terms of race, gender, professional affiliation, and ideological frameworks guiding practice. The first section sets the stage for the second section where I examine the interactions and relationships between board members and staff. Here I identify the juxtaposition of a feminist and criminal justice perspective that informs everyday moments of knowledge production and internal education work within the Commission.

I explore how these discursive tensions are handled by staff and board members and consider to what extent the promotion of a feminist, survivor-centered approach within the Commission was successful. The phenomenon of silencing operates to discourage feminist identified Commission staff from publically voicing their concerns about certain issues that are important to them. The staffs' feelings of intimidation and knowledge of board members' relative power over them sometimes deterred them from speaking up. The power and knowledge imbalances the silencing indexed, supported by the bureaucratic structure of the Commission, proved to be a very important aspect of relationships between staff and board members.

Following practice theorists De Certeau (1984) and Ortner (1996), who argue actors operate both within a system and creatively *on* a system, I focus on the ways feminist identified staff and board members' respond to and manipulate the bureaucratic

organizational structure to achieve specific ends. Advocates on the advisory board represent important players in this education project as the saw themselves functioning as a proxy for the voices of domestic violence survivor within quarterly board member meetings. Important themes emerged around the politics of representation as a small number of advocates on the advisory board could not unproblematically speak for the multifarious perspectives and experiences of the advocates and survivors. Ultimately, I identify mixed results from the Commission's internal education project. In some cases board members' understanding of domestic violence clearly expanded as a result of their position on the Commission, at the same time important ideological fissures clearly remained as an example of an internal policy debate resultant in a stalemate demonstrates.

Social Composition of Staff and Board Members

From a historical standpoint, key actors with a feminist analysis of domestic violence have played an important role in guiding the direction of the Commission. While the use of the term *family violence* in the Commission's name minimizes the gendered aspects of abuse, the dominance of a feminist analysis within the Commission was clear to me after reading through past meeting minutes and other documents produced by the Commission and speaking with key informants. The use of the term *family violence* reflects a focus on all forms of abuse within the domestic sphere including elder abuse and child abuse. Commission meeting minutes from 1993 reveal a plan to focus on domestic violence the first two years of its existence, child and elder abuse the next three years, and use the sixth year to deal with unaddressed issues from the

previous years.[25] In actuality, domestic violence developed over time into the primary focus of the Commission's projects, as reflective in the staff positions and language used in agency documents throughout the duration of my fieldwork.

Two historical documents indicate the importance of two separate, but often interconnected feminist analyses of domestic violence within the Commission's early work that are a key part of the staffs' analytical repertoires today: patriarchy and power and control. The first document was meeting minutes from the Commission's second meeting in early 1993, and the second was a manual the Commission created in 1995 to support the development of community coalitions. The second meeting of board members included an educational component with individual speakers from three domestic violence agencies putting forth an analysis of domestic violence that focused on the way societal norms and expectations about the roles of men and women contribute to the oppression of women within and outside intimate, heterosexual relationships. Topics included why women stay in abusive relationships, why men batter, and the theory that "battering is reflective of a societal belief that it is natural and right that females be subordinate to men. This belief has led to the oppression of an entire class of people – women".[26] The inclusion of an educational component informing board members of an analysis of domestic violence as a product of patriarchy was significant as it helped establish a practice where advocate representatives educated other board members on a particularly feminist analysis.

In another example from 1995, the Commission created a manual for the creation of community coalitions that included a feminist, power and control analysis within a definition of *family violence*. While the gendered dimensions of abuse between intimate

partners is erased by the usage of this term as all forms abuse between family members are lumped under the rubric of family violence, the inclusion of a power and control analysis inserts a specifically feminist analysis into the definition. The power and control analysis asserts that perpetrators exert dominance and control over survivors through specific tactics, such as using male privilege, economic abuse, or coercion and threats.[27] The importance of a power and control analysis for Commission staff today is visible in educational and training materials as well as everyday conversations between staff. For instance, at a Fatality Review training Jessie expressed concern to Gary and I that one of the attendees failed to identify power and control as a cause of domestic violence. Instead this particular person cited alcohol or drugs, economics, and a third person involved (i.e. an affair), which was very troubling for Jessie demonstrating the importance of a power and control analysis for her.

All of the Commission staff self-identified as feminist and understood patriarchy to be a root cause of domestic violence within heterosexual relationships. Gender was an important category of analysis for staff who regularly attributed male privilege and sexism to inequalities observed in their day-to-day work. For instance, when Kelly returned from lobbying activities her updates to staff were filled with descriptions of sexism running rampant among legislators and lobbyists. The staff would utilize staff meetings to vent about “victim blaming” and sexist or homophobic jokes they heard in their day-to-day work and would ask their colleagues for advice on how to respond.

Everyday discussions between staff also revealed nuanced understandings of the intersections of all oppressions, including patriarchy, racism, classism, and heterosexism. A demonstration of this fact was the inception during my fieldwork of a semi-monthly

staff reading group where the article choice highlighted an interest in the intersectionality of oppressions and a broader interest in human rights and social justice issues. Jessie suggested the reading group idea to Kelly, who welcomed the idea hoping the exercise would offer a means to professional development during a time when all state agencies faced severe budget cuts hindering travel to conferences. Staff alternated selecting articles to read and met during regular work hours to discuss them. Article topics included problems around the prosecution of acquaintance rape, complexities of power and choice in the context of prostitution, and what acknowledging the "prison industrial complex" means for work around domestic violence. During reading groups, the staff used article choices to consider the implications for work within the U.S. antiviolence movement more broadly and also think critically about their own work. For example, the article on acquaintance rape described problematic court procedures and laws as contributing to the acquittal of the defendant as well as the women's actions being perceived as aberrant to the jury. The staff problematized the unequal expectations of survivors depending on the type of crime and identified sexism as an explanatory variable related to this variation. The article about the "prison industrial complex" by Incite! led staff to problematize the heavy reliance on criminalization within the U. S. antiviolence movement and consider approaches to intervention beyond the criminal justice system.

For the staff, the cornerstone of a feminist analysis and approach to domestic violence advocacy centered on adopting an empowerment, survivor-centered approach to the work. This meant prioritizing survivors' needs and interests, listening to and believing what they said, and trusting that they know their partners best and know the best way to stay safe for them. This represented a very important mode of practice for the staff that

they often spoke about as critical. Historically, a focus on survivors has dominated within the U.S. antiviolence movement with attention to safety through shelters and Temporary Protective Orders, while the punishment and reform of men has taken a strong grip within the criminal justice system.

In contrast to the staff who represented a more cohesive body in terms of a feminist, survivor-centered approach guiding their work, board members possessed varied political affiliations, ideological beliefs, knowledge of and motivation for working with domestic violence. The Commission's advisory board was legislatively designed to be diverse professionally. That was the point: to bring a together a heterogeneous group of professionals from the criminal justice system and human service agencies to create a statewide plan to end domestic violence. On the other hand, there were clear imbalances in terms of the professional affiliation, gender, and racial composition that as I will demonstrate in the next section that proved pertinent to the Commission's everyday, informal education of board members.

A closer look at the advisory board composition reveals professional affiliation imbalances both in the formal allocation of seats and in terms of who was actually present. Criminal justice system representative seats on the Commission advisory board comprise over half of those positions. In contrast, only one-quarter of the board membership is designated to human service agency representatives and others not attached to the judicial or legislative branch of government. This included three advocates, one "expert" each in child abuse and elder abuse, two leaders within state human service agencies, one domestic violence survivor, one representative from the academic community, and one representative from Men against Violence, a local

domestic violence advocacy non-profit organization.[28] Criminal justice system representatives officially included one judge from each judicial administrative district and representatives from public sector agencies that provide oversight and coordination of criminal justice agencies and systems across the state.

Among board members who regularly attended quarterly meetings, there were twice as many criminal justice system representatives as those who were not. This could be attributed to the fact that neither the advocate nor criminal justice system representatives were completely filled. Also, board members' terms had in some cases run over four times as long as officially permitted according to the legislation establishing the Commission. The reason for unfilled seats and overdue term lengths was twofold and contributes to our understanding of how bureaucratic structures produce dissonance between policy and practice. Filling Commission advisory board seats had not been addressed by Governor Perry for several years, which some informants interpreted as simply being forgotten in the midst of his other gubernatorial responsibilities. In addition, an increasingly hostile conservative political environment deterred board members and Kelly from bringing up the issue of appointments to Governor Perry as they did not trust him to appointment board members knowledgeable about and friendly towards domestic violence policies and practices. For that reason, the Commission took advantage of their overlooked position by Governor Perry with intentional silence until they came under Governor Perry's purview in 2009 with the onset of legislative attacks. The unintentional outcome was an unbalanced advisory board with the most significant disparity linked to advocate positions. Three paltry advocate positions, which were not filled consistently throughout the Commission's

history, stand in stark contrast to the racially, gendered, and regional diversity of judicial representatives on the Commission.

Racial and gender imbalances were also apparent but seemed to overlap professional affiliation. Criminal justice system representatives on the advisory board, largely comprised of white men, were chiefly on the receiving end of informal education work within the Commission. The four board members who offered an advocate voice, whether formally or informally. were all women. People of color were represented among the staff and board members, but the vast majority of staff and board members, active and inactive, were white.[29] The *active* board members were comprised of a fairly equal distribution of women and men; however, as a whole more men sat on the Commission advisory board than women. In addition, a higher percentage of women were located on staff, with two men and five women.[30] The clear pattern was that female staff and board members disproportionately adopted a feminist, survivor-centered perspective and took on the role of educating male board members representing the criminal justice system. This becomes important in the next section where I direct my attention to what I identify as the juxtaposition of a feminist and criminal justice perspective that shapes the political subjectivity of key actors as they engage in education work.

Juxtaposition of a Feminist and Criminal Justice Perspective

Feminist identified staff and board members juxtaposed a criminal justice perspective, which they believed many board members possessed, against their own approach to the work. This perspective informs the way key actors conceptualized their

practice and the everyday education work they engaged in towards other board members. Kelly offers a perspective below that directly sets a feminist analysis in opposition to a criminal justice perspective:

> I don't mean to paint it [the Commission] as like this feminist haven, you know what I mean? Right, because there were other people who were coming at it very much from a criminal justice perspective, you know what I mean? Which has to do with the way the Commission's set up. There were people coming at it from a good guys and bad guys approach and some of that sort of jived with a feminist approach and some of it didn't…So folks coming in the criminal justice system might be a little less oriented towards a feminist perspective…they're more like, "we wanna put the bad guys in jail."

Kelly described the criminal justice perspective held by some board members as primarily concerned about the punishment and prosecution of perpetrators. Sometimes this position complemented a feminist, survivor-centered approach and common ground could be reached, but other times these diametrically opposed frameworks created obstacles for the Commission's work.[31] Kelly's statement really gets at the heart of the struggle to manage and grapple with the host of differently positioned actors on the advisory board. Two other key actors, both working with the Commission for several years, presented a perspective similar to Kelly. Missy, a white female shelter director and advocate board member since the late 1990s explained:

> I'm not sure there are Commission [board] members that really understand what that [violence against women] is. You know they couldn't talk about patriarchal society. They could not. I don't know that they necessarily have analyzed male privilege and the effect that has on perpetrating violence and oppression of women and girls. I <u>just</u> don't think they think that way. So do they think it happens to women more than men? Yes. I don't think they think it is equal violence. Do they have a clear perspective on root causes of that? No, they don't.

Gary, a white male staff person since the early 2000s shared a similar sentiment:

> I definitely think there's different analysis to what extent is this patriarchy and to what extend is this a social justice issue. The staff probably leans more in that direction that this is about social norms and this is about patriarchy overall, and I

> think the Commission [board members] probably leans more towards this is a criminal justice issue…So there's probably a disconnect there.

Both Missy and Gary identified patriarchy as a key cause of domestic violence and felt most board members lacked this understanding. They conceptualized this to be an important difference between the staffs' and most board members' understanding of domestic violence. Gary's conceptualization of the board members as more aligned with an understanding of domestic violence as a "criminal justice issue" is something Kelly also addressed.

Emergent research questions for me pertained to how these tensions were handled in practice and the impact these had on the negotiation of staff and board member roles. A close examination of Commission practices, specifically the way actors conceptualize their work and their relationship to one another, demonstrates intentionality on the part of key actors to keep a feminist voice at the center of the Commission's work. What specific strategies were employed to promote the dominance of a feminist, survivor-centered approach for analysis and practice at the Commission? Furthermore, when were there are failures, and why?

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections where I attempt to address these questions. In the first section, I examine the negotiation of staff and board member roles, which reveals significant power and knowledge imbalances between both groups. While the division of staff and board members in terms of formal structure and everyday practice facilitated the staffs' ability to work independent of the board members and push a feminist, survivor-centered agenda, these imbalances were sometimes a significant source of frustration for staff. In the second section, I shift my attention to the informal education work between board members as a strategy to promote the authority

of a feminist, survivor-centered approach within the Commission board membership more broadly. A key piece of this education work was the inclusion of advocate representatives on the advisory board as a proxy for survivors' voices. This strategy was not only problematic regarding the politics of representation but also in light of the socially ascribed power imbalances between advocates and non-advocates. In the third section, I will examine a debate within the Commission about spousal privilege that reflects discursive tensions between a survivor-centered approach and what my informants described as a criminal justice orientation. I use this example to demonstrate the significance of these tensions for actors within the Commission and show that despite everyone's best efforts some differences could not be surmounted.

The negotiation of staff and board member roles

While in many ways staff and board members had clearly distinct roles, these roles were negotiated at key moments within formal meetings where interesting complexities in power dynamics were revealed. The bureaucratic organizational structure played a major role in the division of staff and board members, which was clearly demarcated in physical meeting spaces and everyday practices. This division of staff and board members allows staff to run the day-to-day work of the Commission and operate with a feminist, survivor-centered approach to their practice. At the same time, resultant power and knowledge imbalances were sometimes a source of frustration and anxiety for the staff. This was particularly poignant within the space of quarterly board member meetings as they marked real moments where members had the capacity to exert formal authority over the staff.

Meetings not only represented important sites for the exchange and production of knowledge, but also operated as sites for the negotiation and performance of social roles and hierarchy within organizations (Schwartzman 1987). Commission staff and board members attended many meetings where much of their actual work was planned, discussed, and conducted. Quarterly board member meetings represented the most formal meetings board members and staff attended through their role on the Commission. Issues covered at quarterly board member meetings included legislative and policy debates and updates, providing pertinent agency updates from board members, staff reports on their work, and other pressing issues. Beyond the formal quarterly board member meetings, which both staff and board members attend, and the less formal monthly staff meetings, a host of other meetings are held to discuss projects and updates on what is going on within the agency.

Formal structuring of talk within quarterly meetings demonstrated staffs' deferential position to board members as did physical demarcations of separateness. Standard procedure at quarterly board member meetings was for members to sit at a large conference table in the center of the room and staff to sit in freestanding chairs along the periphery of the room. The exception to this informal rule was that Kelly always sat beside the chair of the advisory board at the conference table.[32] Together these factors worked to effectively silence the staff within quarterly board member meetings until space was created for their input either at the end of meetings during formal staff reports or when their input was needed or requested regarding the topic up for discussion.

In practice, the staff was largely left alone to conduct their individual projects how they each saw fit, as determined in conjunction with Kelly. When reflecting on how

the role of staff and board members has changed since she was Executive Director, Shannon drew an analogy between the Commission and a "medium-sized non-profit where the board can be more advising and give feedback but not doing the nuts and bolts, hands on work." Her description matched my observations as the day to day work of the Commission was conducted by the staff, while the board members offered support on ad hoc issues and an advisory role, particularly on legislative matters. The board members only met on a quarterly basis while the staff interacted with one another in a shared office five days a week. The physical separation of staff and board members facilitated the staffs' ability to work independent of the board members and supported the maintenance of a survivor-centered approach as the staff only dealt with each other in their day to day work.

The Commission regularly collaborated with other agencies who shared similar analyses of domestic violence which also allowed a particularly feminist agenda to thrive within the Commission. They selected groups they knew to be allies and a source of support - "the usual suspects," in the words of Joanne, the Commission Office Manager, which allowed a survivor-centered approach to flourish. "The usual suspects" included the statewide domestic violence coalition for domestic violence agencies (the Coalition) and other NGOs located in Morganville. Joanne's purpose in using the expression "the usual suspects" was to argue that the Commission staff always collaborated with the same people, and she made a larger point that the staff could improve their public awareness work if the staff focused more attention on working with people outside of the usual collaborative agencies. The Coalition was their biggest collaborator through their joint work on Fatality Review, the annual conference, and a faith initiative most recently.

On the Coalition's website narrated under a description of their guiding principles and core values include a belief in a "survivor-centered response," which mirrors the centrality of keeping survivors' voices central for the staff. When ideas for the expansion and addition of the Commission projects came up for which the staff wanted collaborators, they often selected staff from the Coalition to meet with during the planning stages of a project. The staff's pattern in selecting people from specific agencies created support for a survivor-centered approach.

Important events happened around strategic planning meetings that illuminate important tensions and power imbalances between staff and board members. A clear indicator of the division between staff and board members was the fact that two separate strategic planning meetings were held, one only for the staff and a subsequent meeting for both staff and board members. At the joint board member and staff strategic planning meeting schisms are revealed around perceptions of actual and desired roles. Disagreements emerged around whether the Commission needed to work better at engaging board members (a belief espoused by the staff) or that the board members were already engaged and communication between staff and board members needed to be improved (a belief expressed by some of the board members). This demonstrated a clear disjuncture between staff and board member perceptions of what was actually happening within the Commission and is reflective of the division between the two positions in day-to-day practice. Kelly told the staff privately that regardless of the outcome of a strategic plan the board members created, the staff would still stick with the plans that Kelly worked on with them individually. Kelly was taking direct actions to maintain a division between staff and board members, conveying the message that the board members did not

have overt control over what the staff actually did. In practice, everyday decision making in the office as the staff worked on their individual projects did not involve the board members. Even so, staffs' participation in two separate strategic planning sessions was still frustrating as it reflected a structure where board members formally dictated direction while the staff conducted the bulk of the actual work.

Another ethnographic example of power imbalances was revealed at a quarterly board member meeting where the board members clearly dominated decision making. Five broad priorities emerged out of the joint strategic planning session, which were then discussed at the subsequent quarterly board member meeting to determine which of the duties should be staff versus board member functions. While staff did provide input, this conversation was largely dominated by board members with Kelly and Judge Harry leading. In the end the board members determined that the staff would be responsible for accomplishing all five priorities with targeted support from board members. While this decision did not really change anything in terms of day-to-day practice, as the staff was already performing the bulk of the work with board members lending support from time to time, the dialogue represented an overt negotiation of staff and board member that demonstrated the board members' ultimate authority over the staff.

A sense of importance attributed to quarterly meetings in conjunction with Kelly's prominent role in calling on the staff to speak, or in some cases representing their voices, supported the hierarchical nature of staff and board members roles. Kelly and the board members guided discussions within quarterly board member meetings, which were conducted in a very formal manner and represented performances of power in their own right. Meeting minutes from the previous meeting had to be approved by a show of

hands at the beginning of the meeting, and at the end meetings were formally adjourned by the chair. This formality helped produce a sense of importance attributed to the space as a site for the production and exchange of knowledge. Kelly inserted points strategically at the quarterly meetings, calling on staff to provide their input when board members asked questions or made statements relevant to a staff project. This routine performance signified Kelly's authority to identify when it was appropriate for the staff to provide input to the board members. At quarterly board member meetings, staff attended but generally remained quiet, unless to address a question, until the end of the meeting when each gave a report on their individual work. The staff did participate voluntarily sometimes offering input and providing answers to questions about policies and practices the board members did not know. However, their role was clearly secondary, as also demarcated by the staff reports always falling at the end of the meetings.

The division between staff and board members contributed to members' uneven knowledge of the Commission's projects, which came to light in revealing moments within meetings. Here we see evidence of the negative relationship between knowledge and power characteristic of bureaucracies (Graeber 2006). Some board members seemed to lack significant knowledge of domestic violence policy and practice both within and outside of the Commission. In contrast, other board members were not only knowledgeable of local and statewide domestic violence policies, practices, and procedures pertaining to their respective fields but were also well-informed about the staffs' individual projects. Nevertheless, the predominant uneven knowledge on the part of board members was frustrating for the staff as their compulsory deference to them in

quarterly meetings seemed unmerited in some cases. There were a few occasions where I observed long-standing board members ask questions about the Commission's work during quarterly board member meetings that were very rudimentary in view of the staffs' knowledge. When board members asked these sorts of questions in quarterly meetings, staff or more knowledgeable board members responded to the questions. However, I never saw a dedicated space given to address the highly variable levels of knowledge among the board members outside of these immediate contexts. Instead, conversations within quarterly board member meetings provided a space for the sharing of information and in turn the education of board members.

An important observation I made as I listened to staffs' conversations amongst themselves after each quarterly board member meeting was that they often seemed to tip toe around the issue of some board members' limited knowledge of domestic violence policy and practice. This silencing was most certainly related to the concurrent legislative attacks on the Commission that created a climate of fear and anxiety amongst the staff. For instance, Jessie shared frustration with me after a quarterly board member meeting where two board members, one a judge and the other the head of public sector criminal justice agency, asked for clarification on what Jessie exactly did in her position. What was striking to me about their questions was that both of the women had been on the advisory board for several years. These events revealed how uneven board members' knowledge of the Commission was in actuality. Jessie's frustration with their questioning largely stemmed from the fact she knew Kelly had to dedicate time specifically to proving the community coalition support work was important in the previous 2009 legislative session. Jessie felt that not only was the Commission's

existence under attack but suspected her specific work was under surveillance. Consequently, the two board members' questions put Jessie on the defensive. When I asked Jessie directly if she could share more detailed information about her work with those two board members, she seemed apprehensive and uncertain Kelly would allow it. I followed up a few times after that, but Jessie never shared with me bringing up the issue to Kelly.

Amy, the BIP Coordinator, presented a perspective on the role of staff versus board members that connects with Jessie's apprehension by revealing hesitancy to speak up at board member meetings. Amy expressed reverence toward the board members because of their power and positions outside of the Commission. She explained that she felt privileged to have the opportunity to hear and learn about their perspectives, and consequently felt comfortable sitting on the sidelines during quarterly board member meetings. She even acknowledged feeling somewhat intimidated about speaking up at the meetings. When I asked her why, she explained the reason was board members' education and status. Here are Amy's words:

> I think some of it is just intimidation a little bit just 'cause there's so many- I mean these people- the Commission members are such elite- not elite as in elitist but they're you know they're very educated. They have professions in which they are very revered and esteemed, I mean a lot of them are judges and they've been judges for years and years and years and there's a lot of credibility and expertise in that room. In many ways I feel almost like I should just be learning from them and listening.

A form of silencing through intimidation was operational deterring Amy from speaking because she felt Commission members possessed more knowledge, credibility and power compared to the staff.

Lazarus-Black (2007) demonstrates the ways a variety of what she defines as "court rites," such as intimidation and silencing, operate in the legal arena to "promote and protect prevailing class and gender hierarchies, as well as the pervasive belief that the state should not interfere in relationships between intimate partners" (98). Similar processes operated within the Commission to support broad social hierarchies when the Commission staff remained publically silent about issues or concerns that were important to them. One staff person did speak up about their frustration with the role staff played in relation to board members at quarterly board member meetings to Kelly who effectively told the staff that within those meetings their role was subordinate to the board members. This event occurred at a member meeting that was a precursor to the joint strategic planning meeting. The staff person was frustrated with board members' discussion of strategic planning without input from the staff and what he felt was the peripheral space staff occupied in quarterly meetings in general. Kelly responded that she had a clear understanding of staff's perspective on direction, goals, and struggles, so she wanted to hear more input from the board members. Kelly explained that she hoped the process of strategic planning would better engage the board members so that their role was more about simply attending the quarterly meetings. Holding a separate strategic planning meeting for board members was part of Kelly's broader effort to increase board member involvement. Kelly struggled with how to produce meaningful involvement from board members without asking what she thought would be too much of them, conscious of the fact that board members had full-time jobs on top of their duty on the advisory board. Kelly knew the board members' political connectedness offered an important source of

support to the Commission, which was especially important in the context of legislative attacks on the Commission.

Meetings operated as important sites for the negotiation of staff and board member roles and the performance of power. The aforementioned mixed feelings of frustration and reverence on the part of staff reveal the significance of these negotiations and performances. We can see here that at times some of the staff felt frustrated by what they felt was a lack of voice. This was compounded by some board members' limited knowledge of domestic violence that the staff did not feel entirely capable or empowered to address. The above examples demonstrate board members with political power sometimes lacked grounded contextual knowledge of what was happening within the Commission and more broadly in domestic violence policy and practice. At the same time, the division between the staff and board members allowed staff some independence to utilize a feminist, survivor-centered lens as the day-to-day work was still largely guided by the staff and Kelly. These power/knowledge imbalances were not merely an outcome of a fixed, inanimate structure but rather produced and reproduced through the direct actions of board members and staff (De Certeau 1984). Ortner's (1996) take on practice theory focuses on human agency and intentionality as well, without ignoring the embeddedness of subjects within larger social and cultural systems (8-12). Ortner argues for the conception of "structurally embedded agency" or "intention-filled structures" (12). A chief aim of such a framework is to include attention to human action without always assuming complete free agency or ignoring the impact social and cultural systems have on subjects. Kelly's actions provide an example of this. Her decision to defer to the board members within quarterly meetings but then bar board members' strategic plan

from influencing the direction of the staffs' projects helped to both reproduce power/knowledge imbalances and counteract their impact on the Commission's day-to-day work.

Board members "educating" board members

Another important level of relationships existed between board members. In this section I turn to board members' relationship with one another and highlight the informal education work taking place within board member meetings. While criminal justice system representatives on the advisory board outnumbered advocate representatives, the latter group played a pivotal role in educating the other. Having advocate representatives on the advisory board as a chief avenue to ensure survivors' voices remained at the center of the work was very important to the staff and key board members. Intentionality is important here as we see key actors working to bring forward advocate voices within board member meetings and lead board members to understand and adopt a feminist, survivor-centered perspective.

A history of executive directors with a feminist orientation to their analysis and practice had always been true according to my informants and was key to the intentional promotion of a feminist, survivor-centered perspective. When Karen was vying for the position at the Commission she felt it was apparent that the board members on the executive director hiring committee wanted someone with a survivor-centered orientation in the position. She explained, "they were very much about a victim-centered approach or survivor-centered approach, and…a very particular orientation to the work that started with having women at the center and moved out from there. Like women as experts in

their own experience." Shannon offered a useful perspective as the Commission's first Executive Director and current lobbyist for the Coalition who worked closely with the Commission on legislative issues over the years. When I asked her what philosophy or ideological frameworks she believed guided the work of the Commission, she pinpointed the need to undermine societal supports for the oppression of women as a requirement for addressing domestic violence. Shannon described all of the past executive directors as feminist and felt the women in this position have heavily guided the direction of the Commission historically. She argued:

> I think it [the Commission] has always been guided by a fairly strong feminist perspective that domestic violence results from sexism and society's view towards women. And that only by changing the social views on women do we have a chance of ending domestic violence. I think the Commission has always been fortunate to be led by women with a clear feminist ideology. That's not to say all the Commission members share that, but I think that since the tone is often led by the director, the attitudes of the director have allowed that philosophy to guide the work.

The importance of having advocate representatives on the Commission was a frequent topic during my interviews and conversations with staff and the board members who worked in domestic violence advocacy, reflecting the intentionality behind the promotion of a feminist, survivor-centered approach. When these same individuals spoke about the role board members played in educating one another, this was often in the context of bringing survivors' voices to the table. The inclusion of survivors' voices meant both actual former victims of domestic violence, which one member publically self-identified as, and advocates who spoke on the behalf of survivors.

Kelly's interpretation of the work to educate board members demonstrated intentionality behind the education of board members on a feminist, survivor-centered

analysis and also revealed an important strategy employed to accomplish this: the use of advocate representatives as a proxy for survivors' voices. Kelly explained:

> I think we had this intentional focus. That did not start with me. It was there when I got there and I continued it about keeping survivors experience central. So I don't know if this is answering your question or not but we always tried to make space for that in our meetings even when high powered people were inclined to override it or drown it out a bit. The voice of survivors and the voice of advocates as a proxy for survivors- making space for that in the meeting and in other venues and having that be part of the central learning piece. That was always helpful- we could count on advocates and survivors to help bring the issue and if they were getting drowned out we would just come back to them and say, "Well, Missy what do you think about this?" or "Ana, what do you think about this?"

Kelly described a reliance on specific board members, both survivors and advocates as a proxy for survivors' voices, whom she could literally call upon within Commission board meetings to provide a perspective that was chiefly concerned with understanding the experiences of domestic violence survivors in order to educate other board members. Orchestrating the insertion of advocates' perspectives was a key strategy she employed to maintain the centrality of survivors' voices.

The politics of speaking for someone and the fact that advocates were underrepresented on the advisory board posed problems for the reliance on advocate representatives to both bring a survivors' voice to the table and represent the diversity of advocate perspectives. As Kelly hinted at in the previous quote, advocates' voices could get "drowned out" in member board meetings as they were outnumbered in terms of sheer numbers, but Kelly felt strongly that strategically calling on advocates in meetings helped to counteract this imbalance. In fact, at all of the board member meetings I attended, board members with a feminist, survivor-centered perspective regularly contributed to discussions on policy and other pertinent issues within meetings. Advocate representatives appeared at ease voicing their opinions and non-advocate board

members seemed to actually listen in those spaces. Even so, I argue the uneven representation of advocates and non-advocates produced a heavy burden on the advocate representatives taking on an education role towards the rest of the members. Missy, a middle-aged white woman and longstanding board member, was the only formal advocate representative and lamented the uneven representation from judges and advocates stressing the need for more diverse advocate representation:

> "I know it's scary times with the Governor and appointments and all this stuff but we need more advocates. Not only more in number, which would be great, but we need a different perspective. Missy can't represent advocates in total. I mean I just can't.…getting some of the more rural perspectives or women of color [is essential]."

The "scary times" Missy was referring to were the legislative attacks on the Commission's existence that took place between 2009 and 2010. Missy was vividly aware of the fact that her perspective alone was insufficient and that she could not speak for all advocates but political realities deterred Kelly and the other board members from bringing up appointments to Governor Perry. As a result, the unfilled advocate seats on the Commission that Missy highlighted was an important issue that was never addressed while I was in the field.

During an interview with Gary, he also expressed concern regarding the vacant advocate representative positions on the Commission. His statement reveals the problems with the Commission's reliance on a small number of advocate representatives:

> There seems to be fewer and fewer advocate voices. Our advocate slots are unfilled- a lot of them. We rely on Missy…I think it's a priority for Kelly but I also think with the political reality she doesn't want to say, "hey, governor can you appoint a couple of other people," because there's no telling who he'll appoint so I worry about that voice a little bit.

While Missy was the only formal advocate representative on the Commission for the duration of my fieldwork, Gary acknowledged three other board members (Veronica, Ana, and Stacey) also offered a solid advocate's perspective. While Gary believed all three women possessed a strong understanding of domestic violence and the capability to bring survivors' voice to the table, the vacant formal advocate representative positions still worried him. He believed filling the advocate representatives was important to Kelly but felt a hostile political climate deterred her from taking action. Gary explained having the "right type" of advocates on the advisory board was important, which was code for someone whose understanding of domestic violence included a critical analysis of gender, power, and the relationships between multiple forms of oppressions. Gary expressed concern that if Kelly was fired and the board members who gave an advocate voice rotated off their position on the advisory board, he was unsure who would insist that advocate voices be represented. He also acknowledged that the Governor "might appoint an advocate who really wouldn't be somebody with an analysis of patriarchy or sexism. There are so many advocates out there who don't have that". Here Gary is acknowledging the diversity of perspectives held by advocates, as does Missy in the previous quote. This diversity indicates the problematic nature of relying on a small number of individuals to represent a diverse group.

Anthropologists and other social theorists have problematized the practice of speaking for others arguing that no positionality is neutral and the social positioning from where one speaks affects the lens through which you interpret and portray other subject-positions (Alcoff 1991, Hall 1997, Rosaldo 1993, Said 1978). The act of representing others is tied to relations of power and cannot be disentangled from social positioning of

the speaker. Following these scholars, I argue the few advocate representatives were first, incapable of *knowing* all survivors' and other advocates' diverse perspectives; and second, incapable of *portraying* those varied interests unproblematically. Some board members and staff shared this critical analysis but felt constrained to address the issue during my fieldwork due to the hostile political climate of attacks on the Commission's existence. Three (unfilled) advocate representative positions on the advisory board presented a clear deficiency as they clearly could not speak for the diversity of advocates.

The other problem with relying on advocate representatives was the relative weakness of advocates' voices because of their lower socially ascribed status compared to board members representing the criminal justice system. This represents another form of silencing of a feminist identified positionality. White (1985) makes a relevant argument in the context of a discussion on the phenomena of silencing in the court room. White argues the presumption of opportunity for participation at a court hearing "assumes that speakers all come to it with fundamentally equal power as social persons and fundamentally similar presumptive capacities for speech. Yet subordinating ideologies such as race and gender, and the realities of political, economic, and cultural domination that those ideologies sustain, undermine the liberal goals of hearing procedures" (46). Similarly, in the case of the Commission, advocate representatives raise feminist, survivor-centered analyses but do not hold the same level of power as criminal justice system professionals in the wider society. Therefore, they are the one who are in a constant position of trying to convince and persuade broader membership of their non-dominant standpoint. The fact that they are regularly succumbed to this work illuminates the relative weakness of their position.

Statements made by my informants reveal an explicit awareness of a hierarchy of professionals whose work touches the lives of survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence. Gary provides an illuminating example of this awareness during an interview in the context of a discussion about the Commission's past chairs. Gary surmises that all of the Commission's chairs after the first two have been judges because having a judge's support of the Commission's decisions offers credibility:

> You know when the Commission comes to a decision to have a judge be a chair there's just more weight behind it system-wise…So ideally you've got an agenda that's being heavily influenced by the director with a feminist tilt but then a judge kind of once a decision is made putting some institutional weight behind it. I think that's an advantage the Commission has that the Coalition doesn't have. Yeah, they [the Coalition] make a decision that's backed up by people society thinks is low on the totem pole in general like shelter directors and advocates.

Gary is making explicit the socially ascribed power judges hold in contrast to advocates and shelter directors. He believes the Commission occupies a privileged position over the Coalition because judges, who he felt society reveres, sat on the advisory board. His perspective gets at the crux of tensions around board member relationships.

A statement made by Missy during the last quarterly meeting I attended reflects the relative weakness of advocates' voices in contexts outside of the Commission. Missy identified the Commission as a place where she felt that her voice as an advocate was equal to judges, legislators, and other politically powerful individuals. In view of Missy's public assertion that her voice was equal, it could also be inferred that in other spaces her perspective was not considered as valuable. In fact, statements made by other informants indicated a clear social hierarchy of professionals working around domestic violence where advocates and other domestic violence social service professionals ranked at the bottom. Another informant expressed to me that one aim of educating powerful

judges and other board members is to be able to send these newly educated, powerful *white men* out into public and private places of influence to transmit a feminist, survivor-centered perspective. They believed having influential men from the criminal justice system speak about domestic violence conferred legitimacy to the issue. The unsaid assumption here is that the voices' of advocates do not offer sufficient support for the Commission and its work on their own.

Everyday moments of education within board member meetings seemed to be effective on the basic level that board members' awareness and knowledge of domestic violence policy and practice could and did improve as a result of their position on the advisory board. An illuminating example of such a board member educating board member moment was when the head of a major state-level criminal justice agency and board member asked how the Commission's domestic violence work compared to that of DHR. At the time, DHR certified and distributed state and federal funding to shelters, which was very different than the work performed by the Commission and thus indicated a significant lack of knowledge of domestic violence advocacy work in the state on the part of this board member. An advocate representative provided a detailed response to the question that served to educate everyone in the room. This and other examples like it reveal the importance of quarterly board member meetings as sites for the exchange and dissemination of information about domestic violence policy and practice.

When it comes to indicators of success in promoting a more nuanced understanding of complex policy issues and an alignment with a feminist, survivor-centered analysis among the diversity of board members on the advisory board, the results were less evident. At Commission meetings, the promotion of a feminist,

survivor-centered analysis might have meant an advocate representative explaining to a judge or prosecutor why a survivor might not want to testify in court against a perpetrator. It could also include an explanation for why a survivor might choose to stay in an abusive relationship and the importance of respecting their decision to do so. Public confessions by two criminal justice representatives of a transformation from ignorance to enlightenment as attributable to their position on the advisory board were noteworthy. Both acts demonstrated at least some board members believed their understanding of domestic violence policy and practice was improved by being on the receiving end of the Commission's education work. At a pivotal quarterly Commission meeting where new board members were being sworn in, an exiting judge and a sheriff on the Commission advisory board described themselves as "ignorant" about domestic violence when they first joined the Commission. Both board members praised the education on domestic violence they received and directed incoming board members to listen to and learn from the staff and advocate representatives whom they identified as very knowledgeable. This powerful moment where two white men in the criminal justice system deferred to the knowledge and experiences of advocates made visible the intentional work of educating non-advocate board members, but it also showed that board members felt there was a *need* to assert the value of advocates.

The timing and setting for the two board members' declarations of transformation and Missy's description of the Commission as a space where all board members' voices were equal was part of larger strategic move to counteract any negative characterizations Governor Perry may have produced and to demonstrate to incoming board members that the Commission performed important work. The assertion of the value of advocates'

voices as equal to other more politically powerful individuals established the Commission as a unique space of relative equality and directed incoming board members to hold their egos at the door and listen to the grounded experience and knowledge advocate representatives and staff had to offer. Exiting board members had worked together for several years and created a space on the advisory board where advocates and non-advocates engaged in actual dialogue about important policy and legislative issues. Even though consensus could not always be reached, the Commission did successfully take stances on many pieces of legislation and policy issues during and prior to my fieldwork.

Spousal Privilege

Next, I turn to an example of a failure to reach an agreement on a policy issue and attempt to draw some conclusions about why this happened. In what follows I describe a volatile debate surrounding the spousal privilege state law that vividly brings to life the crux of the discursive tensions between a feminist, survivor-centered and criminal justice orientation as understood and experienced by key informants. This example demonstrates that differences in vantage point sometimes led to irreconcilable disagreements that made taking certain policy stances difficult. The Commission ultimately decided to take a non-position on spousal privilege because a consensus could not be reached, representing an instance where a feminist, survivor-centered approach was silenced within the Commission.

Spousal privilege in state law permitted spouses to invoke the privilege and choose not to testify against one another in criminal proceedings, with the exception of

crimes against minor children. Until 2004, prosecutors were able to circumvent this privilege by admitting hearsay statements if the survivor invoked the privilege in order to avoid testifying. The 2004 Supreme Court decision in Crawford v. Washington ruled that the admission of hearsay statements requires the witness to be present in court to respond. This was very frustrating for prosecutors who felt they needed a survivor's testimony in order to successfully prosecute perpetrators of domestic violence. A group of district attorney's lobbied for the elimination of privilege or an exception to be extended to domestic violence cases. Before I entered the field, board members and staff learned about this prosecutorial effort and debated the issue in an effort to determine an official position. The significance of this debate was illuminated by the number of individuals I spoke with both within and outside the Commission that revealed this to be indicative of important ideological differences within the larger network of actors working to fight domestic violence.

While this was not a clear-cut advocate versus prosecutor debate as some advocates outside the Commission were in support of the revocation of the privilege, everyone I spoke with about the conflict within and outside the Commission framed the basis of the debate as rooted in these different positionalities. For example, a district attorney who was directly involved in the prosecutorial effort to eliminate spousal privilege identified the crux of the different positions to be rooted in the different positionalities of advocates and prosecutors that led to divergent priorities. He identified advocates as primarily concerned with helping survivors as a function of their professional role, whereas prosecutors' main concern is holding a perpetrator accountable. He felt advocates' work with survivors was critical but stressed the

necessity that perpetrators be held accountable, and viewed spousal privilege as creating barriers to successful prosecution. Shannon expressed a related perspective on the other side when she stated "they [opponents of spousal privilege] would say, "you would understand if you were in here prosecuting these cases and you were having to dismiss really egregious cases against someone because you couldn't make a case"". Both actors presented themselves as having a clear an understanding of the other side's position.

Divergent goals undergird this conflict as one side is focused on the empowerment and safety of survivors while the other is primarily concerned with the (possible) elimination of a threat through the prosecution of a perpetrator. Supporters for the preservation of spousal privilege felt survivor safety was paramount and forcing a survivor to testify in court against a perpetrator risked jeopardizing this. Their understanding was that survivors of domestic violence know their relationship best and must be able to choose to not testify if they feel to do so would jeopardize their safety. Instead, they believed the burden should be placed on prosecutors to gather sufficient evidence to prosecute without survivor testimony. Kelly's explanation of the different positions within the debate is useful here:

> That was a really interesting moment where things really broke down [within the Commission], and I think we ended up in kind of 50/50 split. And it was pretty intense conversations because there were people on our Commission who- particularly advocates that were saying you have to trust women's instincts on this and women know the most about how to stay safe and if part of her staying safe is she's choosing not to participate in the prosecution, as frustrating as that might be for us we have to respect that because that's…her safety is first priority. Winning this case is not- should not be the first priority, and that was tough for the prosecutors to swallow and some of the judges to swallow.

Kelly described the conflicting positions as rooted in a difference in goals linked to the role of advocates versus criminal justice system representatives. In her view the first

priority should be survivor safety, not the prosecution of perpetrators, and removing spousal privilege would jeopardize that. Those fighting for the elimination of spousal privilege felt to do so would lead to improved safety for survivors by removing threat through the prosecution of a perpetrator. This position disregards the survivor-centered, empowerment approach that survivors know best about when testifying is safe or not.

I suspect another contributing factor leading to the impasse was that supporters of spousal privilege were unable to locate "objective evidence" to support their knowledge claims which barred them from making a convincing argument. Supporters of spousal privilege were asserting the relevance of an empowerment approach using grounded knowledge based on the embodied experiences of advocates work with survivors. Spousal privilege opponents were also using their own grounded knowledge as prosecutors, but they also had examples of women being harmed after invoking spousal privilege to support their position. Shannon revealed an interesting conundrum around the debate that demonstrates the supremacy of objective evidence for politico-legal actors. She identified an inability on the part of spousal privilege proponents to collect evidence demonstrating a woman being harmed as a result of being compelled to testify against her partner. In contrast, prosecutors pushing for the elimination of spousal privilege had a slew of examples of women being murdered after invoking spousal privilege. Shannon indicated collecting "objective evidence" was necessary to build a convincing case for the preservation of spousal privilege, which they did not have:

> So the frustrating thing about that debate is we at the Coalition tried to find examples of women who had been compelled to testify who had been harmed as a result. Unmarried women don't have the privilege. We really beat the bushes to find an example, and so our position is not really strong in terms of any objective evidence. It's just that is what the DV [domestic violence] community generally nationally believes. If you have an empowerment model around domestic

> violence, that your goal is to empower the victim to make choices about her life even if those choices don't make sense to you.

Unmarried women, as individuals without access to spousal privilege, offered a potential source of evidence of the negative effects of compelling survivors to testify against abusive partners; however, supporters of spousal privilege could not find any examples of this. Even though the Coalition staff could not find such examples, the empowerment discourse still trumped the position put forth by the prosecutorial opposition. This demonstrates the authority of the empowerment discourse as a "regime of truth" within the U.S. antiviolence movement, which has the power to substantiate things, such as spousal privilege.[33] However, supporters of spousal privilege were unable to convince the prosecutorial side to recognize knowledge based on the embodied experiences of advocates and see the "truth" in the empowerment approach.

This case reveals the interconnectedness of power, discourse, and truth and contributes to our understanding of the valorization of objectivity and the power it ascribes. I argue that the supporters of spousal privilege failed to present objective evidence to support their knowledge claims designating their position to a form of "subjugated" (Foucault 1980) or "situated" knowledge (Haraway 1988). Foucault (1980) insists upon the incorporation of subjugated knowledges into social analysis and problematizes the valorization of "science" and the corollary nullification of alternative or subordinated forms of knowledge. He defines subjugated knowledges in two ways: one form is historical knowledge that has been ignored and excluded from the dominant bodies of knowledge, and the other form is "local popular knowledge" that is "low ranking," "unqualified," or "disqualified" (78-92). The latter definition correlates with the feminist scholar Donna Haraway's (1988) description of subjugated knowledge.

Haraway refers to subjugated knowledge as that possessed by the "less powerful" and from positions of "below" (583-584). She argues that subjugated knowledges are partial, located, situated knowledges but in fact these are the forms of knowledge that should be characterized as objective, since vision and translation are always partial, not those forms which are "unlocatable, and so irresponsible, knowledge claims" (583). Haraway understands this partial perspective as actually objective, so as such she is working to redefine objectivity as that which does not transcend everything as an absolute and unchanging knowledge.[34] In relation to Haraway's and Foucault's discussion, I argue that supporters of spousal privilege possessed subjugated knowledge because of their lower social ranking position within the network of professionals who work around domestic violence. The perspective of spousal privilege supporters was dismissed by opponents of the law because of their inability to provide objective evidence to support their knowledge claims.

Differently positioned actors with different embodied experiences held conflicting understandings of domestic violence policy and practice that contributed to the advisory board's inability to reach a consensus on the spousal privilege issue. The end result was the Commission formally took a non-stance on the policy issue. The juxtaposition of a feminist and criminal justice positionality was central to way supporters and opponents of spousal privilege framed the debate and understood each others' positions. Not only were the opposing sides operating with different priorities and goals, but the authority of objective evidence in a politico-legal setting could not be surmounted.

Significance

A key way staff and board members conceptualized differences between themselves was through the juxtaposition of an advocate and criminal justice positionality. The Commission's bureaucratic organizational structure contributes to clear power and knowledge imbalances between staff and board members that led to important tensions informing the everyday interactions between actors and the informal education of board members. At the same time, the structural separation of staff and board members allows the former to work independent of the latter allowing a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of domestic violence to reign through the staffs' work. Ferguson has argued that "a structure always reproduces itself through a process, and through a struggle" (1994:13). The staffs' mixed responses to board members' performances of authority in quarterly board member meetings reveal that process. Ortner (1996) has also highlighted relations of power, struggle and resistance when examining practice. Instead of only focusing on the way subjects create systems and how systems create subjects, Ortner encourages watching for breaks in this circle and moments where change is possible.

Ferguson and Ortner both underscored the importance of paying close attention to actual practices and problematized blaming a situation or effect solely on an abstract structure. In a similar vein, I have paid close attention to staff and board member responses to and conceptualizations of their role within the Commission. When staff expressed discontent about some board members' limited knowledge of their work or conceded to their subservient role in relationship to board members within quarterly meeting meetings, these illuminated moments where board member and staff roles were

being negotiated and could have been altered. However, these responses also must be considered in the context of legislative attacks on the Commission that created an overall climate of timidity, particularly for the staff whose jobs were under surveillance. The overall political climate during Governor Perry's two terms deterred the Commission from speaking up about missing board member appointments, which contributed to unfilled advocate representative seats on the advisory board. While a small number of advocate representative seats were a structural component of the Commission's membership board, consciously avoiding alerting the governor of unfilled seats was a strategic decision to avoid bringing in perspectives potentially detrimental to a feminist, survivor-centered orientation.

A Foucauldian notion of power/knowledge is significant throughout this chapter. More specifically, the politics of representation and the valorization of objectivity emerge as important theoretical issues. In practice the informal, everyday education of board members is largely concerned with encouraging board members to understand and align with a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of domestic violence policy and practice. The stalemate outcome from the spousal privilege debate shows this was not always achieved. The debate really gets at the crux of ideological differences and discursive tensions that pit a feminist, survivor-centered and empowerment approach against a criminal justice orientation. Obstacles to reaching a consensus on the policy issue related to the fact that both sides had different priorities, but I also suspect the weight that objective evidence carried over situated knowledge in its own right for politico-legal actors on the advisory board made a difference. Issues related to the politics of representation also complicated attempts to persuade board members towards a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of

domestic violence. The politics of speaking for someone, the reality that advocates were significantly outnumbered, and the relative weakness of their voices made problematic the practice of a few advocates representing the diversity of survivors' and advocates' perspectives.

Beyond the outcome of the spousal privilege debate, there was evidence of a different sort for consensus between board members and staff that relates to board members' general respect for and openness towards feminist-identified staff and board members. Board members had the formal power to exert their authority over staff, so theoretically there was always a "threat" of their capacity to leverage this power. The staffs' mixed feelings of frustration and reverence towards board members, who displayed highly uneven knowledge of domestic violence policy and practice, reflected an awareness of this power. However, in practice many board members exhibited respect for and deference towards the staff and advocate representatives' experience and knowledge, identifying these actors as critical to the Commission's work. The quarterly meeting where exiting and entering board members were together in one place was a glowing demonstration of the mutual respect and openness that had developed between key board members and staff over several years. Then again, I also saw examples where some long-standing board members unapologetically demonstrated a lack of basic knowledge of domestic violence policy and practice, reflecting the varying levels of board member engagement on the advisory board. These tensions reveal that the hierarchy, division, and power/knowledge imbalances were simultaneously contested and produced by actors within the Commission. The end result was uneven outcomes for the

promotion of a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of domestic violence within the Commission.

There was another route that a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of intimate partner violence was promoted by the Commission, which was through Jessie's community coalition support work. This is a theoretical orientation that Jessie clearly aligned with and promoted utilizing her position of influence over community coalitions. In the next chapter I will reveal evolving and at times contradictory discourses and practices that embodied Jessie's community coalition support work with a focus on Jessie's perspective. At the heart of my analysis of her work is a struggle between ideal and actual practice as she strives to make sense of her work and limitations imposed by a top-down, bureaucratic organizational structure.

CHAPTER 4

SHIFTING MEANINGS AND PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY COALITION SUPPORT WORK

Introducing Jessie And Her Support Work

The Commission occupies a complex position as quasi-state entity that works to support the development of community coalitions but without any formal power over them. While the Commission provides no funding to community coalitions, the Commission has monitored the development of community coalitions as demonstrated by the production of surveys and reports on community coalition progress historically. Therefore, the Commission functions as more than simply a resource or source of support for community coalitions. Historical tensions around the Commission staff and board members' intentional avoidance of dictating to community coalitions continue up through present day with Jessie's entry as Community Coalition Liaison. Interesting pressures emerge as Jessie attempts to navigate the space between authority over and autonomy for community coalitions through her support work. Jessie envisioned her Community Liaison position as an opportunity to create social change at the state and local level by supporting the development of community coalitions whose work could be coordinated with the Commission's projects. Jessie's early plan was to coordinate state and local activism in order to work towards unified goals, which undergirded the development of her social and technical support work for community coalitions.

Tracing the development of Jessie's community coalition support work over nearly two years illuminates a transition from top-down coordination in the form of

trainings and strategic planning to helping produce a horizontal, shared network of groups that share grounded knowledge. Jessie gradually came to see her role as a link between community coalitions in order to connect different members of CC members to one another, so people could share ideas and strategies with one another instead of Jessie dictating to them how to run a community coalition. At the same time, Jessie still had some clear agendas and goals she wanted to achieve based on her own personal interests in social change work and experience working in both the corporate and non-profit sector. In addition, there were obstacles impeding Jessie's ability to implement community coalition support work in a less dictatorial manner rooted in the Commission's top-down, bureaucratic organizational structure.

The transformation of Jessie's support work was in direct response to requests CC members made to her but also a by product of the Commission staffs' work culture. I use the term work culture to represent "the understandings and values about work and workplace social relations that co-workers share and reinforce among themselves" (Sacks 1988: 70). The anthropological literature on women and work demonstrates that work cultures emerge in relation to the work conditions in which they are presently operating, past work experiences, as well as gender and race (and sexual orientation) play an important role in shaping experiences on the job (Sacks 1988; Goode and Simon 1994; Lamphere 1985). The Commission staffs' work culture supported an iterative process for Jessie's support work that congealed with Jessie's openness to learning along the way.

This chapter is organized somewhat chronologically beginning with a description of Jessie's entrée into domestic violence work and then a brief examination of the early implementation of her community coalition support work prior to 2009. Jessie's early

work reveals important trends that remain relevant throughout the duration of my fieldwork and help contextualize the rest of my analysis in the chapter. Next, I examine Jessie's work between 2009 and 2010 focusing on tensions around her own conceptualizations of her role as Community Coalition Liaison and the kind of relationship she strived to have with CC members. Gupta (1995) has argued that what lower government officials do reveals much about everyday citizen's experiences of the state because it is through these interactions that images of the state are generated. Gupta argues "instead of attempting to search for the local-level or grassroots conception of the state as if it encapsulated its own reality and treating "the local" as an unproblematic and coherent spatial unit, we must pay attention to the "multiply mediated" contexts through which the state comes to be constructed" (377). Gupta uses a few different cases to demonstrate that no singular description of the interactions and relationships between officials and private citizens is possible. Following Gupta, I focused on a variety of sites of interaction between Jessie and a wide range of CC members.

Structural constraints and Jessie's decisions about how and with whom to communicate with contributed to CC members' uneven knowledge of and relationships with the Commission. Feelings of lack of voice and disconnection from state level policy and practice were strongly felt among CC members outside of the Morganville Metropolitan area. However, by aligning herself with CC members, being physically present at community coalition events and meetings, and pronouncing an anti-state rhetoric, in some ways Jessie was able to disassociate herself from popular conceptualizations of the state. Finally, I discuss obstacles Jessie faced entrenched within dominant discourses and bureaucratic practices within the Commission. Attention to the

political and socio-economic context in which Jessie acted reveals important factors that influenced the understandings and practices engendered through her support work. I explore the implications of entangled interests, motivations, and practices resultant in uneven relationships between Jessie and community coalitions.

Jessie's Entrée into Domestic Violence Advocacy Work

Jessie's entrée into the domestic violence professional community is linked to her employment with an internationally recognized pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturing company. She grew up in Calvin, a small, rural community of approximately 4,000 located in the northeastern county Hanson.[35] She attended a college located in a neighboring area where she studied sociology and psychology and met her long-time partner, Jeanette. After receiving her bachelor's degree in 2001, and once out of college, she entered into an internship program with a local manufacturing plant and over a few years worked her way up to a mid-level supervisor position. Jessie found the work to be very monotonous and for that reason she moved around to various positions which led her to master the assembly of all products produced by that plant. This knowledge helped her later on when she was promoted to a 3rd shift supervisor position.[36]

Jessie began to question her pursuit of upward mobility within the corporate world once she realized efficiency was not synonymous with humane business practices. Jessie was later promoted to a higher position as a project manager in which she was required to work with engineers on decreasing the number of manufacturing positions needed to perform certain tasks along the production process. As Jessie excelled in this downsizing work, advancing and earning higher income, the former colleagues she

worked with side by side on the manufacturing floor lost their jobs. Just as Goode and Simon (1994) found women supermarket workers struggled with promotions as they grappled with opportunities for advancement versus solidarity, Jessie was stressed by her hierarchical position over her former colleagues. This realization became increasingly difficult for her to accept and she attempted to go back to the 3rd shift supervisor position but was unsuccessful. Jessie learned that in the corporate world backtracking was not an option; either you moved up or out the door.

Jessie's mounting discontent with her work led her to explore other career opportunities. She learned about the non-profit civic engagement world as a result of her employer's promotion of "pro bono" volunteer work, which was required of all of managers and supervisors. She volunteered on the Hanson County United Way board to fulfill the volunteer requirement. Through that role she met the executive director of Hope Haven, the local domestic violence shelter that served Hanson County and two other neighboring counties.

Ultimately, Jessie decided to leave the manufacturing company because her participation in downsizing had become too difficult for her to bear emotionally. She learned that Hope Haven had a job opening for a child advocate and prevention specialist position and decided to apply. Jessie had some experience participating in fundraising work for the Hanson County United Way and met several people from various non-profit organizations in the area through that experience. The Executive Director of the Hanson County United Way even wrote Jessie a recommendation. Thanks to her support, Jessie landed the position at Hope Haven, marking her entrée into the domestic violence advocacy work.[37]

Jessie's initial involvement with community coalition volunteer work developed through her staff position at Hope Haven.[38] During her employment with Hope Haven, she was also a member of two separate community coalitions. Hope Haven served counties located in both of the neighboring Marion and Eagle Judicial Circuits and the executive director encouraged staff to attend community coalition meetings for both judicial circuits. She was a regular member of the Marion Circuit Community Coalition and served as the secretary of the Eagle Circuit Community Coalition. Her first hand experience working on community coalitions proved helpful later as Community Coalition Liaison by offering credibility as she was able to relay stories about her own personal experiences when working to assist and offer guidance to CC members.

Eventually Jessie and Julie decided they wanted to move south into the Morganville metropolitan area, and Jessie began searching for new employment again. She secured a position as a transitional housing coordinator at a larger domestic violence agency located in Grady County, a large county in the Morganville metropolitan area.[39] Ultimately, Jessie decided direct services work was too emotionally draining and not something that made her happy and again began looking for new employment. Jessie had been at the Grady County shelter for a year when she began looking around for another job, came across an ad for the Community Coalition Liaison position at the Commission, and decided to apply.

A story she shared about the interview process reveals the influence her corporate background still had on her approach to social change work at this time. Jessie interviewed with Kelly first, which she thought went extremely well; the two women immediately hit it off. For the second interview, Jessie was required to come into the

office and conduct a mock training for a community coalition with the staff. The importance of demonstrating the skill of conducting trainings for the Community Coalition Liaison position reflected a long-standing focus on training as a key aspect of the Commission's community coalition support work. Each staff person played a representative from various systems and agencies on a community coalition, such as judges, law enforcement, and domestic violence shelters. Jessie spent a significant amount of time preparing for the second interview and even brought in name tags and an agenda for everyone as if she were conducting a real training. Her approach to the mock training reflected a reliance on technocratic expertise that carried over into her approach to community coalition support work once in the position.

Early Implementation: The Role of Evaluation

Jessie began working for the Commission in the fall of 2007 and was not provided with any predefined structure for the implementation of community coalition support work. Instead she was responsible for setting up the parameters of her approach from scratch. She entered the position with very little information about existing community coalitions and was given little direction from her boss Kelly as to what her support work should look like. Rather than a hierarchical work culture in which Jessie was given set polices to follow to monitor and regulate community coalitions, Kelly's management style fostered more of an democratic power structure, at least when confined to the staff, with relaxed management over Jessie's work and the rest of the staffs'.[40] Relaxed supervision over Jessie's work left her largely to learn and hone her practice along the way.

Jessie decided her first task was to assess where community coalitions existed and what they were doing. The only database of information about community coalitions Jessie could locate when she entered into the position of Community Coalition Liaison was a filing cabinet filled with disorganized files and notes on some community coalitions that belonged to her predecessor, Cynthia. Jessie exclaimed:

> When I walked in [as Community Coalition Liaison] I had nothing. I mean the files were crazy. I had a hard time finding information on the computer, and so I basically just sat down and started reorganizing, filing things, and getting them in the way that made sense to me and then…I mean when I started doing this work I just tried to go out to [community coalition] meetings and meet as many people as I could.

Because Jessie had little information about existing community coalitions, she spent the first several months in the position attending community coalition meetings, developing relationships with members, and gaining a sense of members' experiences, both positive and negative. Jessie took the initiative to locate and read as much scholarly literature she could on CCRs and community coalition building, which largely focused on evaluating and improving the effectiveness of coordinated community responses (See for example: Allen 2005, 2006; Allen and Hagen 2003). Armed with new knowledge of this literature, Jessie decided to conduct her own evaluation of community coalitions. She hoped findings from an evaluation would help her to identify trends that could then guide future directions for her community coalition support work.

Here we see the beginning of Jessie's technocratic approach, for which variables were quantified for the evaluation process. She evaluated a total of nineteen community coalitions through attendance at one regular community coalition meeting as part of her normal visitation routine. She largely focused on process evaluation and identified fourteen categories of performance that she rated low, moderate, or high with numerical

score equivalents. The categories of performance she used derived from the scholarly literature she uncovered on evaluating the effectiveness of coordinating councils or coalitions.[41]

Jessie used the assessment tool to not only evaluate individual community coalitions but to define the parameters of what constitutes a successful community coalition. This early evaluation effort is significant since her findings helped framed her initial understandings of community coalitions' struggles and informed the development of a technocratic approach to her community coalition support work.   Jessie's definition of an effective community coalition was modeled on high scoring assessment tool categories that she created. [42] Jessie's assessment revealed twelve of the nineteen community coalitions were low functioning, and she used this finding as a launching point to assert ways community coalitions could improve their effectiveness. Jessie's convenience sample data was fraught with many limitations. She relied on written expertise from the social science literature that she transmitted onto a form to conduct evaluations universally across the state without tailoring her assessment to substantive differences across localities. Other limitations included the limited number of community coalition meetings assessed, lack of attention to other spaces to examine practices, and minimal emphasis on outcomes. However, the findings corroborated her informal assessment of the prevalence of participation problems through her day to day support work. [43] She viewed the findings as a starting point for developing and adapting her community coalition support work to the needs of CC members on the ground.

Beyond evaluation, Jessie utilized an array of other top-down, technocratic expertise and practices in her early attempts at the implementation of community

coalition support work. She used material documents and events bringing activists, domestic violence advocates, and other professionals together to promote certain practices. She widely distributed several worksheets of information on how to run an effective community coalition that were developed through her evaluation work and spent much of her time during her trainings reading off the worksheets giving structured advice to CC members.[44] Observations at a workshop for community coalition members at the Commission's Annual Conference in the fall of 2008 also revealed an effort to encourage community coalition members to work towards similar goals and organizational structures.[45] Jessie believed bridging activism and advocacy work between various localities and the state was the most effective means to create positive social change and improve the systemic response to domestic violence. She felt bringing community coalitions across the state to develop common activities, goals, and structure was a key piece of this strategy. This vision undergirded her strong passion for community coalition support work. She viewed the Commission's response to the 2009 legislative attack on their existence served as an example of the power of bringing local and state actors together to fight for a cause. When speaking with CC members, this was an example of political action she referred to as a demonstration of their capacity to make their voices heard in state government when banning together.

Jessie's presentation at the conference on what it means to be a community coalition as well as the content of what she presented demonstrated her authority as someone knowledgeable about community coalitions. Jessie presented the results of her evaluation of community coalitions at the 2008 conference workshop and offered specific suggestions for improving effectiveness learned from the social science literature. Jessie

demonstrated that she had access to community coalitions across the state and also asserted her authority as an expert by presenting herself as someone community coalition members should listen to if they wanted to enhance their effectiveness and be successful. Jessie gave out awards for the Community Coalition of the Year and Community Coalition Member of the Year for the first time at the 2008 conference. The presentation of the award at a statewide conference helped establish Jessie's authority to monitor and evaluate community coalitions. In fact, key members of two different community coalitions who won the award in the past identified the formal recognition as motivating for their membership.[46]

In addition to promoting certain practices, Jessie also advocated a focus on particular messages, specifically a feminist, survivor-centered approach and the importance of keeping survivors safe and holding perpetrators accountable. Enhancing safety for survivors and accountability for perpetrators reflects a hegemonic discourse in the U.S. movement against domestic violence that has been promoted by activists and advocates since the 1970s through legal reform, the establishment of BIPs for men, and domestic violence shelters for women and children (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Schechter 1982). Promoting this message was a clear priority for Jessie, as can been seen from a slide at the 2008 conference workshop emphasizing the importance of "institutionalizing practices and procedures which centralize victim safety and offender accountability."[47] A review of newsletters Jessie sent out to community coalition members via email in 2008 reflected her broad vision for connecting state and local activisms and also reflected the importance of creating survivor safety and perpetrator accountability for Jessie. Jessie began every newsletter with an introduction where she acknowledged community

coalition members' struggles and offered her support. For example, upfront in the first newsletter Jessie stated, "I am aware that many times it feels as if you are working alone to keep victims safe and hold batterers accountable" and followed by explaining that the goal of the newsletter is to help community coalition members feel more connected to one another. Jessie highlighted survivor safety and perpetrator accountability both in material documents and in her everyday interactions with CC members.

Providing guidelines for community coalition practices and messages reflected Jessie's desire for continuity across groups in regard to structure and goals. Her attempts to create standardized structures and processes for community coalitions to model and promote the hegemonic survivor/perpetrator binary discourse reveals how much she relied on a standardized, universal subject for the early implementation of her community coalition support work. Jessie approached the early implementation of her support work through the lens of expert knowledges supported by her formative professional experiences in the corporate world where clear and standardized goals, practices, and deadlines were the norm. Later in the chapter I will demonstrate that as she spent more time in the Community Coalition Liaison position, her approach gradually transformed into something less technocratic and more cognizant of differences within and across localities. These transformations in understanding led to an enhanced interest in the creation of spaces for community coalitions to share grounded knowledge laterally.

Jessie's Social and Technical Support Work

I have highlighted emergent themes through an examination of some of Jessie's specific projects before my fieldwork to set the stage for an analysis of her role and

relationship to community coalitions once my fieldwork commenced in early 2009. Here we have seen the early development of Jessie's vision and goals for community coalitions across the state and what her role was in supporting them. Jessie imagined her support of community coalitions as an avenue to link state and local advocacy and activism, which she strongly believed was essential to positively changing the systemic response to domestic violence.

Since its inception the Commission has promoted technocratic goals and practices for community coalitions as well as a committee organizational structure, which Jessie took on as a champion for when she came on as Community Coalition Liaison in 2007. Jessie's reliance on the promotion of trainings and protocols to address problems reflects a long-standing history within the Commission of a particular approach to social change work informed by technocratic principles. From the very first group of Commission board members, training and protocol development at the state and local level had been promoted as an important piece of the formation of a statewide plan to end domestic violence. At the same time, Jessie concurrently encouraged a particular type of social change work that went beyond the quotidian non-profit projects by stressing the importance of community coalitions doing what she called the "hard stuff." This meant going beyond public awareness work, such as holding candle light vigils and distributing purple ribbons during Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October, and working on systems change projects in order to identify and eliminate gaps and barriers to the systemic response to domestic violence.

What providing guidance and support meant to Jessie and actually looked like in practice changed between 2009 and 2010 as she gradually came to see her role as less

about training and educating CC members and more about connecting community coalitions to one another so they could learn from and support one another. Her work linking CC members to one another could be construed as a form of social relational work, even though the targets were not formal colleagues or coworkers.[48] Even though between 2009 and 2010 there was a clear shift in Jessie's work away from technocratic expertise as new projects were developed that focused on linking community coalitions to one another, she still relied on expert knowledge when providing social and technical support to community coalitions.

My ethnographic examination of Jessie's day-to-day practice illuminated the avenues through which her understandings of community coalitions developed outside of the expert knowledge she heavily relied on during the early implementation of her support work. Jessie dedicated most of her workweek during the first half of 2009 to attending community coalition meetings and actually spent more time out of the office than in it. Jessie and I spent countless hours in the car driving around the state from meeting to meeting. She tracked all of the community coalition meetings on a calendar and then planned her workweek around the meetings that were happening. Jessie sat in on community coalition meetings observing and taking notes on who was in attendance, the way meetings were run, and in progress or planned projects. Jessie kept her notes in a filling cabinet in her office organized into individual folders for each community coalition that she periodically returned to in order to refresh herself on the work of a community coalition and to keep track of tasks she promised to do for CC members, such as sharing resources or other information. While Jessie took notes at each meeting, training, and event, she accumulated an abundance of knowledge about relationships,

tensions, and personality characteristics of CC members none of which were written down anywhere. The complicated web of information Jessie collected reveals the difficulty in producing measurable outcomes from what she was learning and accomplishing. As previously discussed in the dissertation, measurable outcomes were an assignment Kelly asked of Jessie on a number of occasions in order to fight looming political attacks by demonstrating value, which was a source of frustration for Jessie who recognized most of what she did was not quantifiable.

Jessie's work resembled that of an ethnographer revealing an iterative process through which her awareness of the diversity of discourses and practices represented on community coalitions across different localities paralleled diminished use of technocratic practices.[49] Jessie's regular presence at community coalition meetings during this time led her to gain an enormous amount of knowledge about the way community coalitions across the state operated. It seemed that whenever a CC member mentioned an idea for a project, Jessie could share a resource or story about another community coalition that was working on or thinking about a similar project. Moreover, these experiences allowed Jessie to develop close relationships with many CC members. By sitting in and listening to regular community coalition meetings, Jessie learned firsthand about their experiences, both positive and negative. Jessie felt very passionately about her work and prospects for the work of community coalitions and it showed in her interactions with CC members.

Much of what Jessie was doing was offering a source of motivation to struggling community coalitions, and the social science literature that informed the early implementation of her work offered tangible solutions that she could offer to CC members universally. CC members regularly voiced struggles they were experiencing to

Jessie and looked to her for solutions.[50] While CC members expressed failure to achieve certain goals, Jessie also helped to solidify particular expectations and perceptions of ideal or even feasible practice through her support work. For instance, on more than one occasion CC members lamented a failure to achieve a particular goal they had set out to achieve, and Jessie would respond by suggesting they pare down goals from something broad, such as increasing involvement from faith organizations, to something smaller and more manageable, like reaching out to specific churches and other faith institutions. Jessie's support thus worked to shape the way CC members' perceived failure and success. This small, manageable goal idea was also something a number of CC members shared with me during interviews as a new strategy they were taking on compared to a previous approach, indicating that Jessie's suggestions might have been influential.

As it turns out, Jessie offered a wide variety of strategies that were at times contradictory. She advised CC members to "shame" people into volunteering their time with a community coalition but then espoused the importance of building positive relationships highlighting the positive impact informal exchanges can have. She promoted specific internal administrative and organization structures, such as bylaws and committees. However, when faced with a community coalition spending several months working on bylaws she became exasperated and told them to move on to projects that would actually help improve safety for survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. These contradictions reflect shifts in Jessie's own understandings of domestic violence and her approach to community coalition support work away from technocratic procedures to more nuanced understandings attentive to differences within and across

localities. In spite of Jessie's evolving approach to community coalition support work, she still tended to revert back to technocratic one size fits all advice.

Interesting tensions emerged around Jessie's authority over community coalitions and her uneven relationship with these entities as she engaged in her support work. Furthermore, as Jessie spent more time in her position she began to question the categories of success defined through her assessment tool but at the same time continued to utilize these parameters to set new directions for her support work. An important aspect of the Commission's work culture was that there was a very clear desire on the part of Jessie and the rest of the Commission staff to not present itself in a dictatorial manner over community coalitions.   During everyday conversations about community coalitions the Commission staff would bring up strategies or suggest ideas with the aim of making CC members feel included in decision making or not being told what to do. The frequency with which people brought up these strategies demonstrated the power of this idea for the Commission staff and reveals support for Jessie's transition away from a hierarchical approach to her work. Even so, Jessie also had clear while changing ideas about what constituted success and an effective community coalition that she expressed to CC members out of a drive to propel social change. While Jessie had no formal power over community coalitions, her influence was obvious. CC members saw her as an authority on community coalitions and Jessie substantiated her expertise through a variety of mechanisms. At the same time, Jessie used specific strategies to disrupt the characterization as dictatorial and resist identification as a an agent of the state governing local actors.

The remainder of this section is divided into two parts where I will first describe what I characterize as a push and pull between dictating and qualifying recommendations within Jessie's community coalition support work, an iterative process that culminated in shifting definitions of success and new visions for her role. I will trace out key shifts in Jessie's work during my fieldwork that reveals the complicated intricacies of tensions around her authority. I situate these tensions around Jessie's support work and the understandings and practices engendered through her position within a top-down, bureaucratic organizational structure in which a non-profit model of practice reigned. I will highlight a specific community coalition that was a personal favorite of Jessie's during the majority of my fieldwork as a pinnacle of "success" for which she gradually changed her perceptions of to demonstrate this point.

In the second part, I will focus on the ways CC members experienced and responded to Jessie's support work. CC members' clearly associated Jessie with the state, which had the effect of both hindering and supporting the goals she set out to achieve. CC members saw Jessie as a resource for ideas about securing funding, increasing member participation, and strategies for identifying and addressing gaps and barriers to victim safety and perpetrator accountability. Not every community coalition welcomed Jessie into their localities with an equal level of enthusiasm and there was clearly an uneven relationship between her and various community coalitions. Despite these differences, I found that a common thread across CC members' perceptions of Jessie and her support work was her association with the state.

Shifting definitions of success

A push and pull between structured advice and qualifying her recommendations was characteristic of Jessie's guidance to CC members. While consistencies across Jessie's recommendations were identifiable, her understandings of what constituted a "successful" community coalition by no means remained stagnant. Jessie kept her eyes open to everyday experiences that disproved the recommendations she was presenting and was amenable to redefining what was important. However, even as Jessie's understandings of community coalitions changed over time, she continued to hand out the same worksheets on how to develop and maintain a community coalition that she developed early in her position. Throughout the duration of my fieldwork Jessie consistently promoted a committee organizational structure and the development of protocols, a mission statement, goals and objectives, and other technocratic procedures prioritized in 2008. These consistencies in recommended administrative development and structure were certainly reflective of the fact that for a long time Jessie had clear ideas about what constituted and produced a "successful" community coalition informed by the CCR social science literature. There also seemed to be a certain level of organizational inertia in Jessie's tendency to hand out and read off the same worksheets even as her understandings were transforming.

Jessie's broader goal was to coordinate local and state level advocacy and activisms in order to effectively address gaps and barriers to the systemic response to domestic violence across the state. While Jessie believed variations across localities meant that problems and solutions to problems would necessarily look different, Jessie also had a clear agenda with certain directions she wanted to promote within community

coalitions. Jessie strongly believed in a feminist, survivor-centered approach to domestic violence advocacy work, which was obvious to me observing the frequency with which she pushed this agenda during her interactions with CC members. For instance, Jessie advised CC to provide domestic violence agency statistics at the beginning of community coalition meetings to remind people why they were there: to help support and keep survivors safe. In addition, encouraging community coalitions to focus on efforts that would produce accountability for perpetrators was also very important to Jessie. An outcome of the meeting between Jessie and Kelly in the fall of 2009 was the formal delineation of these goals into the following "personal mission statement" for Jessie: "to increase the effectiveness and capacity of [community coalitions] to promote victim safety and batter accountability and community awareness." Jessie also wrote out a broad goal she hoped to support community coalitions in achieving and that was "to increase survivor safety and to hold batterers accountable."

In spite of this clear agenda, Jessie worked very hard to frame her guidance to CC members as first and foremost advisory not dictatorial. She employed three key strategies through her interactions with CC members to resist a dictatorial image that included emphasizing heterogeneity across localities, joking about her role as a state actor, and asking for feedback from CC members on her support work. First, Jessie regularly prefaced her guidance with a declaration of the diversity of localities across the state, arguing that community coalition goals, organizational structure, and approaches to practice should be reflective of this diversity. At nearly every community coalition meeting I attended with Jessie, she stated something along the lines of: the following: "Every community is different and what works in one does not necessarily work in

another. You know you're community best and I'm not here to tell you what to do." Second, Jessie made jokes and other direct statements to CC members about her role as an actor of the state that functioned to overtly refuse her authority over community coalitions. For example, Jessie often signaled quotation marks with her fingers when identifying herself as a state employee to CC members followed with laughter and a statement that she was not there to tell people what to do like other state actors. At one regular community coalition meeting Jessie attended the chair of the group apologized for what he felt was the poor attendance at the meeting. Jessie responded to his apology by arguing that her position was not similar to BIP Manager and was not there to monitor community coalitions. Such examples demonstrate an explicit awareness on Jessie's part of the authority she conveyed as a state actor and an attempt to dilute perceptions of authority over community coalitions.

Jessie also regularly requested feedback from CC members on her trainings and other support work both verbally and more formally in the form of short surveys, which again demonstrated a reliance on technocratic procedures. At regular community coalition meetings Jessie often asked what she could do to better support community coalitions and generally supported CC members in the manner they requested as long as it was within the parameters of what she was interested in or capable of offering. Sometimes CC members asked Jessie to take on a more regulatory role, most often by asking Jessie if there was a way she hold CC members accountable who were not attending regular community coalition meetings. This was not only a role Jessie did not want to take on, but she also had no formal power over community coalitions in this manner.

As Jessie's new image as a link was forming, she sent out a survey in the fall of 2009 to all executive committee members on community coalitions to learn more about their opinion of her support work and their future goals.[51] Unfortunately, Jessie only received a few responses back from the survey. This represented one of multiple failed attempts to obtain written feedback on her support work from CC members. When I asked community coalition members about Jessie's requests for information, sometimes they indicated they never received the communication and other times they explained that they did receive them but were too busy to respond. While the inadequacy of polling and surveying to accurately represent public opinion has been addressed in the literature (See for example: Paley 2001: 130-139), I want to draw attention to Jessie's continued use of this strategy to collect data on CC members' understandings and experiences despite the fact that she continued to have a poor response. Her routine reliance on polling and surveying is another example of a technocratic approach to identifying patterns and measuring results and counteracted her attempts to not appear as a monitoring, dictatorial state actor.

In spite of Jessie's best attempts to resist the authoritarian image of a state actor, Jessie simultaneously presented herself as an expert on community coalitions through offering her support and guidance. CC members clearly viewed Jessie as an expert on and evaluator of community coalitions. In fact, Jessie was very knowledgeable about the work of various community coalitions through all of her visits and engagements that afforded her with the opportunity to learn about CC members' current work, plans for the future, and perceived successes and struggles. Jessie engendered an image as an expert through everyday conversations with CC members at regular community coalition

meetings and through her structured guidance and support work in the form of trainings and strategic planning sessions. While the exchanges I observed between Jessie and CC members were increasingly dialogical, Jessie used language that pushed CC members to follow her recommendations. For instance, she might say she was “concerned” about specific practices or procedures and then follow with a recommendation. In addition, Jessie regularly utilized the Commission’s most recent Fatality Review Report to garner support for the suggestions she provided. For example, Jessie highlighted the systems and agencies Fatality Review teams learned survivors frequently reached out to in order to make an argument about who should be represented on and involved with a community. Also, Jessie highlighted research findings related to statewide trends in order to offer suggestions on areas of focus for committee work. The Commission staff distributed free copies of the report in the masses to wide range of professionals and activists working around domestic violence. CC members lauded the report, shared it with their respective colleagues, and utilized it in their own local training and education work. Within the context of spaces where Jessie was offering support, CC members often explained that being able to refer to statewide data was very helpful and granted some legitimacy to their work. Therefore, Jessie’s use of the tool was an effective means of providing convincing support for many of her recommendations backed with the status of state level research.

Another interesting observation I made was that CC members often asked Jessie to rank them in comparison to others, which illustrated their perception of her as someone who had the knowledge to evaluate community coalitions. CC members often prodded Jessie to evaluate them by asking, “how are we doing compared to others?” and “who

else doing it right?" Jessie avoided explicitly ranking community coalitions against one another but was always willing to highlight community coalitions that were doing work she was impressed with and thus corroborated her authority to assess the work of community coalitions. Jessie's response to CC members' evaluation questions reflected what she understood to be constitutive of an "effective" community coalition and CC members generally appeared amenable to her suggestions and eager to follow her lead. For instance, Jessie encouraged many community coalitions to participate on the Commission's Fatality Review project but took extra care to promote the project at three community coalitions she personally favored for different reasons. Members from all three of these community coalitions attended a subsequent Fatality Review training in June 2009. While only one of the three followed through with participating in 2010, their presence at the training was undoubtedly related to Jessie's in-person encouragement.

Jessie's authority over community coalitions was also established through her physical movement across the state as she provided her support work. Travelling across a geographic area to assess, reward, and discipline helps to produce images of authority for state actors. Jessie literally drove around the state from meeting to meeting where she took notes on what community coalitions were doing, evaluated their work, and gave praise both verbally to other community coalitions and formally with the task force of the year award. While Jessie did not explicitly discipline or punish community coalitions, nor have the official power to do so, her visibility in assessing and rewarding community coalitions helped to establish her spatial and scalar authority over community coalitions as a representative from a state entity.

In spite of all of the time Jessie was spending providing guidance and support to CC members, she felt her work was scattered and lacked focus during much of 2009. In fact, Jessie was trying to support nearly fifty community coalitions across the state on a limited budget, which was an ambitious goal to say the least. These structural barriers were an influential factor in the shift in Jessie's vision for her support work. The statement below captures Jessie's frustration with the limited staffing and resources for her support work and connects this to her new directions in practice:

> "I can't support fifty [community coalitions] as one person with what I have to work with, which is no money. So what I can do is a newsletter. What I can do are the regional roundtables. So that there's this one person that kinda knows what folks are working on. You can plug people in [to one another]. Like [Grady] doing roll call training. The folks in [Clinton] wanna do roll call training. [So I suggested they] look at each others' curriculum.

Throughout the early part of 2009 Jessie regularly expressed frustration to me that she was spread too thin and desperately wanted Kelly to work with her on strategic planning. Unfortunately, this was not feasible for several months because the 2009 legislative battle kept Kelly out of the office the vast majority of the time. Consequently, for much of 2009 Jessie lacked feedback from Kelly on her work and the direction she was headed.

What providing guidance and support meant to Jessie changed as she learned more about CC members' actual experiences and also gained firsthand experience in establishing a new community coalition from the ground up.[52] Jessie's standard advice to CC members sometimes changed as she realized certain approaches were either not working or had unintended consequences that she did not foresee. For example, throughout 2009 Jessie strongly promoted that nascent community coalitions establish a structure and focus first as a small group and then focus on expanding membership. Later, Jessie recognized unforeseen negative outcomes from this approach through her

own personal experience developing a new community coalition that changed her mind on the matter.[53] Another increasingly relevant characteristic of Jessie's support work that leaned away from dictating was that she offered space for CC members to pick and choose their own goals and projects based on the needs and characteristics of their locality. Jessie applied what she learned from the CCR social science literature to her support work but increasingly incorporated what she learned through her experiences along the way.

Jessie gradually came to see herself as a "link" between community coalitions and began to believe one of the most meaningful things she could do to support community coalitions would be to help connect them to one another, rather than training or educating them on what she felt was the best organizational structure and practice. Jessie received feedback from CC members that more dialogue during trainings would be beneficial rather than reading off worksheets developed through her earlier evaluation work. Over time, Jessie changed her approach and the image of a link developed. Jessie gradually cut the number of worksheets she formally presented in trainings in order to allot more time for a dialogue to develop allowing the questions CC members asked to guide discussion. As Jessie spent more and more time talking with CC members she began to realize they were less interested in suggestions coming exclusively from her but were instead more interested in what other community coalitions were doing. Jessie often joked publically that the number one question she received from CC members was what other community coalitions were doing. However, even by the summer of 2010 Jessie still felt community coalitions needed "suggestions." However, the approach Jessie took

to ensuring CC members received this form of guidance changed over time. Here Jessie explains how her approach to support work changed in this regard:

> I still think [community coalitions] need suggestions, and I think the suggestions are now different than they were then [when Jessie first entered the position]. Now the suggestions are coming from other [community coalitions] about the work they're doing, so this [community coalition] can see, well this is achievable because they did it. This is not just [Jessie] telling me to do- you know that this is achievable. I see a [community coalition] actually achieving this.

Transformations in Jessie's understandings and practice were also impacted by my own presence as a researcher. Throughout the summer of 2009 I was conducting semi-structured interviews with CC members where I was learning that many of them viewed Jessie as someone who could connect them to other community coalitions. I found myself sharing these revelations with Jessie as she expressed dissatisfaction with not having feedback from Kelly on her work. I felt these sentiments emanating from CC members reflected a non-dictatorial direction in Jessie's support that Jessie had regularly expressed as important to her. Jessie and I spent several hours together most days of the week and I am certain our conversations and my impressions influenced shifts in her work. Jessie verbally acknowledged my influence during a June 2010 interview stating, "I mean you're work has been helpful in that by hearing what they said they needed was not for me to tell them what to do but to have them share information with each other and connect them with each other." I also believe a significant contributing factor in Jessie's shifts in practice had to do with the fact that her approach to her support work was so open to amending. Jessie's work supporting community coalitions could be characterized as an iterative process in which she was open to learning and changing along the way.

By the fall of 2009 after things had settled down politically, Jessie was able to sit down with Kelly in a private meeting to discuss her new vision for her work and receive

feedback in order to restructure her approach to supporting community coalitions. Kelly supported Jessie's interest in serving as a link and work on increasing communication and collaboration between community coalitions, but Kelly also wanted Jessie to narrow the focus of her targeted support work to a few community coalitions instead of trying to work with community coalitions across the state. Jessie welcomed the idea as she was feeling tired from spending so much time on the road and also believed narrowing her focus would help her to use her time more effectively.

The development of three new projects emerged out of the meeting between Kelly and Jessie: regional meetings, supporting the creation of one new community coalition, and supporting three community coalitions move from a moderate to high functioning level.[54] Jessie still attended regular community coalition meetings and other events after these new projects developed, but more of her time was directed to these new directions of support. Jessie had previously thought of the idea of organizing regional meetings for community coalitions, and her new found image of herself as a link made this idea feel like a perfect fit for a new project. The idea for the other two new projects focused on providing targeted support to four specific community coalitions stemmed from Jessie's feeling that her work was too scattered. Also, this new focus offered a means by which Jessie could potentially produce measurable outcomes from her work, which Kelly had been stressing was in need with the looming political attacks.

Intentionality behind the process of determining areas for the regional meetings was significant as the conversations between Kelly and Jessie revealed an awareness of regional tensions around lack of voice and strategic decisions to promote feelings of inclusion.[55] Jessie and Kelly sat down with a map of the state in front of them and talked

through the development of regional meeting areas. Geography, existing transportation routes, perceptions of which regions CC members would identify with, and "critical mass," to use Kelly's words, were the main variables considered while the two women decided on the regional spaces for meetings. Kelly and Jessie decided on five meeting regions but also decided to ask CC members to choose the region they would like to meet so as to not interfere with existing collaborations or let their own perceptions of regions dictate to CC members where they should meet. However, in practice most CC members selected the regional meetings according to the categories Kelly and Jessie created.[56] Jessie wanted to help plan the first regional meeting for each group, but then ultimately wanted to see each group to organize future meetings on their own. Her intent was not to lead discussion within regional meetings or come prepared with specific material to cover, but instead let CC members lead and determine content of the conversation. Kelly advised Jessie to explicitly state at the beginning of regional meetings, "this is your process, we're just trying to facilitate," in order to establish from the very beginning that this was not going to be a Commission-led meeting. When the regional meetings finally happened, I found that Jessie only took on a minor speaking role. CC members started with introductions and updates on what their individual community coalitions had been working on or struggling with that led to organic discussions where CC members asked questions, gave advice, and increased shared knowledge.

Beyond the regional meetings, another new avenue through which Jessie sought to function as a link between community coalitions was through the reinstatement of her newsletter. The aim of these two projects was to help increase communication and the sharing of knowledge and information between CC members and reflects an effort to be

less dictatorial. Jessie wanted CC members to learn from each other and hoped this would ultimately lead to more collaboration between community coalitions as they fostered closer relationships with one another. As discussed previously, Jessie had stopped sending out a newsletter for several months after not receiving any story submissions from CC members throughout 2008. However, in the fall of 2009 she was able to reinstate its production with a new and improved newsletter that included small articles written by community coalition leaders. Jessie's success in collecting article submissions from CC members was due to the fact that she emailed specific community coalition chairs, with whom she had developed close working relationships with, asking them directly for an article submission. After being in the Community Coalition Liaison position for nearly two years, Jessie had developed trusting relationships with many CC members across the state and her direct requests for article submissions were well-received after these relationships developed. Jessie used the newsletter to increase the flow of information between and across the state and local actors. She provided updates on state policy and legislation, important Commission events and shared resources and potentially helpful information, including what other community coalitions across the state were doing in their own words via CC member article submissions.

When I asked Jessie in the summer of 2010 to reflect on her understanding on what constituted a well-functioning community coalition she highlighted changes that focused on recent revelations regarding the Ravens County Community Coalition, which had been her personal favorite group to point to as a pinnacle of "success." Jessie previously viewed the Ravens County Community Coalition as a well-functioning community coalition because they had great multiple system representation, an elected

judge was chair indicating to Jessie that private citizens supported the community coalition, and most importantly the CC members were working on actual projects. Jessie highlighted that when the CC members decided on a task or project, they actually followed through with implementation, which excited Jessie. However, Jessie gradually began to link racial hierarchies to who did and did not have an influential voice within the Ravens County Community Coalition. Jessie explained, "what I've seen is that the people of color don't speak. They don't have a role of leadership in the [community coalition]. That it's white folks of power that have leadership roles in all the committees." Jessie pointed to an active CC member, a middle-age African-American female pastor, who helped the community coalition gain access to many churches for the community coalition to conduct trainings. Despite this CC members' contributions, out of all of the many meetings Jessie attended she never heard the CC member speak in a capacity beyond offering an announcement. This concerned Jessie because she strongly believed the inclusion of a wide variety of perspectives coming from differently positioned people, not just official presence on the CC member roster or attendance at meetings, was a key element of a well-functioning community coalition. Consequently, Jessie began to question her penchant for putting the Ravens County Community Coalition on a pedestal.

As Jessie reflected on her change of heart regarding the Ravens County Community Coalition as a pinnacle of "success," she went on to critically examine the nomination form she developed for the Community Coalition of the Year Award. Jessie asked rhetorically during a June 2010 interview:

> Am I asking the right questions? The questions are: What systems are represented? Do you know what are your goals and objectives? Have you

> achieved those? Maybe I need to ask different questions and I don't know what they are yet. I'm thinking about them.

Jessie's early conceptualizations of community coalitions and what constituted "success" was heavily informed by the social science literature on CCRs, particularly the work of community psychologist Nicole Allen. Now, a few years into the job, Jessie was questioning the relevancy of Allen's definitions of success that she adopted as scripture. Jessie's administration and infrastructure recommendations all stemmed from the social science literature on CCR as did much of her problem solving advice. Ultimately, Jessie began to wonder if there was more to defining success than what she had been considering. Here Jessie explains the challenge she was faced with:

> I chose my "what defines success" by [the] lady, you know Nicole Allen…That was all very helpful from her. You know when I started I just started looking for research on CCR you know I didn't know, and so I was just trying to learn as I went along. And I'm still not saying what she says is wrong, but I think there has to be other measures for success.

Shifts in Jessie's everyday practice provided her with the opportunity to take more time to really sit back, listen, and observe CC members. As she focused less on checking off a list of variables of success, such as the existence of clear goals and objectives or the number of systems on the CC member roster, she began to see problems and draw connections that she previously missed.

Lazarus-Black (2007) also takes on the issue of the "meaning of success" delineating the many ways success can be defined and measured through an examination of the on the ground implementation of Trinidad's 1991 Domestic Violence Act. She presented evidence that quantitative measures of success fall short of revealing key effects of the law. Her ethnographic research revealed positive changes in terms of the general public's awareness of the issue but also the ways in which the law failed to bring

certain types of domestic violence cases into the courtroom. These complex nuances in actual outcomes are exactly what ethnography is well suited to ascertain.

In my own work, I also examined divergent meanings of success through an analysis of Jessie's approach to and conceptualizations of her work. Jessie's initial understandings of what constituted a successful community coalition shifted away from expert knowledge based on the social science CCR literature towards her own grounded knowledge emergent through her day-to-day work. This transformation, aided by the Commission's work culture led her to reconsider her approach to community coalition support work and shift her attention to the intersections of power and social hierarchies and ways in which these shaped the work of community coalitions. This positive transformation led her to shift away from a hierarchical approach to community support work and in turn helped to forge strong, trusting relationships with several CC members who came to recognize that Jessie was not a dogmatic actor of the state.

Jessie's association with the state

Gupta (1995) has argued that interactions between lower level government officials and the citizens they purportedly serve reveal the sites where actual images of the state are constructed. In a similar vein, I argue interactions between Jessie and CC members illuminated a key site where perceptions of the state were forged. Here I want to draw attention to parallels between this association with the state and the ways CC members experienced and responded to Jessie's support work. Jessie was cognizant of the fact that she represented the state in the eyes of many CC members and rejected this identity, utilizing specific strategies to dilute the dictatorial tone of her suggestions to CC

members. In fact, there was a broad awareness across Commission board members and staff of local-state relationship tensions. This discussion adds to our understanding of the relationship between the state, civil society and new quasi-state entities emerging in the neoliberal era. These findings demonstrate that quasi-state actors have to contend with historical state-local tensions as well as regional tensions between the north and south as they implement community coalition support work, a practice marred with obstacles to the restructuring of support strategies.

For many CC members I interviewed, Jessie represented the only regular, personal contact they had with the Commission and therefore, Jessie effectively represented the state for many people. This explains why when answering my questions about their impressions of Jessie's work, CC members exhibited confusion about staff roles within the Commission and sometimes drifted into evaluations of the Commission's BIP certification work, which some felt was too dictatorial and lacking input from local actors. In another response to these same sorts of questions, some CC members launched into a discussion of the insufficient training offered by the Coalition for domestic violence shelter staff in order to maintain necessary continuing education credits. Initially this response suggested a lack of knowledge about the different projects of the Commission and the Coalition. While I did uncover highly uneven knowledge of the Commission by CC members, I also got the sense that these off responses to my questions about Jessie and the Commission revealed something more significant. What I came to recognize was that my questions provoked responses on CC members' impressions of multiple state-level entities and actors, which they sometimes conflated.

Half of the CC members I interviewed referenced regional issues such as feeling the majority of trainings were close to Morganville or the Commission standards for BIPs were not created or implemented democratically. At the root of CC members' negative evaluations of the BIP certification project, the insufficient training availability for domestic violence shelter staff, and other grievances related to state policy and practice were feelings of lack of voice and being disconnected from the state. A number of CC members highlighted that policy and laws operate differently throughout the state and argued an approach that works in Morganville might not work the same for every other locality. This was something they felt people from Morganville did not seem to understand when they promoted or impose certain standardized policies and practices. Another major issue CC members outside of the Morganville Metropolitan Area shared with me was that they felt like the majority of trainings, which usually represented required training hours required by DHR (for shelters) in order to receive state-based certifications and funding, were always located in or close to Morganville. These trainings were often difficult for rural CC members to reach who worked for shelters that were understaffed and had limited funding for travel. CC members wanted me to bring this information back to the powers that be, with whom I was aligned with in their eyes as a Commission intern, even though I was not technically affiliated with the Coalition, again demonstrating a conflation of state level structures.

Many CC members outside of the Morganville Metropolitan Area, particularly those working with community coalitions located in southern regions of the state, delineated the outcomes of being silenced. CC members shared that they felt detached from what happened in Morganville and felt like their voices were not being heard by

legislators or state agency heads. For example, a CC member from a southern county described feeling "disconnected from what was going on up north." These CC members passionately reiterated to me that what works in Morganville does not work everywhere and believed this was a concept many people working in Morganville did not always seem to understand. For instance, Nina, a former Community Liaison for the Commission and former member of two different community coalitions offered a useful perspective on this issue. Over and over again she heard from CC members that "people from Morganville think they are the only city in the state." Nina corroborated this sentiment when she shared that while working for the City of Morganville Police Department, she sometimes "forgot" that she was only working for one part of the larger county that included Morganville. She remarked tongue in cheek, that once she started conducting law enforcement training across the state she learned that the law is practiced differently all over the state.

Despite these widespread feelings of lack of voice, many CC members I spoke with consistently expressed a desire to have more communication with and support from the Commission. Many CC members explained that they saw the Commission as a potential link between themselves and other community coalitions. I suspect some of these sentiments were expressed to me because I made contact with most CC members through Jessie; however, within these same conversations CC members were not hesitant to be critical of the Commission in other ways. CC members expressed a desire to be heard by the state and in a way, I represented that, despite my attempts to stress the fact that I was a graduate student conducting my dissertation research and that I would not reveal their identity in what I wrote. CC members actually wanted me to share their

concerns and hopes regarding advocacy work with the Commission and the vast majority said they wanted increased communication with and guidance or support from the Commission and Jessie, so I was likely viewed as a potential vehicle to make this happen.

CC members' interest in Jessie's suggestions and openness to developing a relationship with her was not only related to the fact that Jessie offered tangible support on maintaining a community coalition but also because Jessie offered a connection to important structures at the state level. For instance, in response to Jessie's customary question to CC members how she could better support their work, she often received the response that her mere presence at regular community coalition meetings was meaningful to them. This was something I also heard echoed during my interviews with CC members. Why was this? What did she have to offer by being present? When I asked CC members why this was valuable their responses fit into two general categories: Jessie offered helpful, tangible advice on running a community coalition and Jessie could relay information about legislation, policy, and other events at the state level. In fact, when Jessie attended regular community coalition meetings she regularly provided updates on what was going on legislatively and in the broader policy arena around domestic violence. It was also clear that many CC members valued receiving recognition from the Commission. For instance, at a faith based training coordinated by the Ravens County Community Coalition an audience member asked what success they experienced. Judge Barry, the chair person, cited winning the Commission's Community Coalition of the Year Award as an example of one. During an interview with another CC member, she argued in response to a question about their relationship with the Commission that "I think it [the Commission] has validated the purpose of the [community coalition]." She

explained if anyone ever had questions about why the community coalition exists, they could point to the Commission and the enabling legislation establishing the agency and calling for the creation of community coalitions across the state. This was an excellent demonstration of the relatively more powerful position the Commission occupied over CC members.

Another significant trend I identified was that CC members often shared their discontent to Jessie with certain policies and practices emerging from both the state and local level. This indicated that for some CC members Jessie represented an ally. For example, at a community coalition meeting a CC member raised concern about the fact that there were no BIPs located in or near her county and highlighted an error on the Commission website about the existence of a BIP in a neighboring county. CC members shared their dissatisfaction with state policies and practices to Jessie because she had access to state structures through her position and thus represented the possibility for affecting changes at the state level. CC members believed due to Jessie's position within the Commission, she had the capacity to pass along information to other state actors and potentially affect change.

In fact, Jessie did regularly communicate to her colleagues about problems CC members brought to her attention and had the power to implement certain changes. Sometimes CC members brought up problems to Jessie that were easily fixable, such as the website error that Jessie could easily report back and address. However, at other times the problems were much more complex policy issues, such as the uneven distribution of BIPs across the state. In fact, Jessie lamented to me that she often got the impression that CC members felt because Jessie worked for the state she had more power

to affect change than she felt she actually did and highlighted the legislative attacks on the Commission as an example of their fragility as an agency. These are important findings as they reveal something about the degree of power or influence CC members perceived Jessie to possess, and I suspect compelled CC members readiness to accept Jessie into their spaces and listen to her suggestions.[57]

I also got the sense that there was a certain degree of "analytical venting" happening between Jessie and CC members about important issues in the domestic violence advocacy work. For instance, a CC member and domestic violence shelter director privately shared with Jessie that she had some issues with the DHR Advisory meetings (of which she was treasurer) and the Coalition meetings, noting she has stopped going to the latter. The CC member said she noticed that many women in her shelter had major mental health problems, which she realized may not be specific to her shelter because she knew other shelters screened who could enter shelter. She explained that at the Coalition meetings she faced resistance to discussion of this observation, explaining that there seemed to be resistance to any form of discussion of survivors that could make them "look bad." In response, Jessie agreed with what the CC member was saying and confessed that she sensed this as well among other domestic violence advocates. Jessie shared a story with the CC member about a pivotal moment in the development of her understanding of dominant discourses and practices in domestic violence advocacy work that illuminate these tensions. At a past Coalition meeting when Jessie worked at Hope Haven she raised the question publically of how to work with women staying in shelter who abuse their children. Jessie exclaimed that people responded to her question with shock and drew an analogy to her having eight heads to convey the severity of blunder

she had committed.[58] This was one of several examples where CC members expressed discontent with policies or practices and Jessie responded in a manner that aligned herself with CC members. By being someone CC members could vent to and have political discussions about policy and practice, Jessie tried to counter the silencing experienced by CC members.

While increased support and communication with the Commission was desired by many CC members, CC members clearly had conflicting opinions on the desired level of control the Commission should have over community coalitions, which was rooted in the divergent priorities and interests of those actors. Most CC members I spoke with preferred a delicate balance between local autonomy and a desire for concrete support and guidance from the Commission as a centralized, state agency. Motivations for leaning towards one way or another related to different experiences and conflicting goals across and within community coalitions. For instance, key members in leadership positions within the Scott County Community Coalition had different expectations from Jessie rooted in their different professional experiences with the Commission.[59] Two CC members worked with a BIP and experienced the Commission's BIP certification project as dictatorial and did not want that type of relationship for their community coalition. Another CC member said she agreed with the other two that she did not want a dictatorial, top-down relationship. At the same time, she desperately wanted more tangible guidance from Jessie and hinted that if Jessie exerted some authority and held CC members accountable for reaching certain goals this might help improve participation.

Several CC members believed the Commission should be careful to avoid dictating to community coalitions. Interestingly there were three CC members I spoke with whom provided an interesting juxtaposition to this perspective by arguing that the Commission could help community coalitions by enforcing participation in some way in order to hold individuals accountable.[60] For these individuals the desire for a more dictatorial relationship was rooted in frustration with participation and attendance problems they were experiencing within their community coalition. In another direction, another CC member from a northern region of the state wanted the Commission to leverage more authority and be more physically involved with community coalitions across the state. She cited a statewide Child Fatality Review Panel as an example of an ideal state-local relationship with centralized standards and regular contact through a monthly newsletter sent out to each locality and regular phone calls and other mailings. She acknowledged that the state was large but strongly felt that if the Commission made more effort to make contact with community coalitions it would be very helpful because people could become "lackadaisical" if not monitored. She was also linking problems around garnering participation to a lack of state-level monitoring.

There was a general awareness of the tensions Jessie and other Commission representatives faced around dictating to local groups as a state entity among Commission staff and board members alike. Contained within early Commission meeting minutes as far back as 1993 I found references to discussions about the importance of not "dictating" to CC members what to do or how to operate a community coalition. This was a recurrent theme throughout my fieldwork that a wide range of people brought up in a variety of contexts where state-local relationships were being

discussed. One Commission board member I spoke with described "bias outside Morganville against Morganville," explaining that this is a reality that individuals and groups from Morganville going out to other parts of the state had to be aware of and navigate. This interpretation paid no attention to the legitimate complaints of sparse availability of training required of shelters for continuing education credits and instead identified the problem as rooted in CC members' unfair bias against Morganville. While blatant demonstrations of blindness to resource inequities were not common, intermittent statements made by my informants indicated CC members' complaints about a Morganville focused policy development and implementation strategies were legitimate. Jessie was vividly aware of CC members' grievances and the fact that she represented the state to many CC members. As I've demonstrated she actually took steps to try and curtail negative reactions to her and sometimes even went so far as when speaking with CC members to contrast her community coalition support work with the monitoring and regulation imposed by other state structures, including the Commission's BIP certification project.

Obstacles To Coordinated State-Local Advocacy

While Jessie was genuinely excited about her changing vision for her support work and the new plans for regional meetings, she was also increasingly disenchanted with her capacity to work through a collaborative, non-dictatorial manner with community coalitions. One anecdote brings to life obstacles Jessie faced trying to link state and local advocacy work rooted in a top-down bureaucratic organizational structure. The story focuses on a new public awareness and outreach project the Commission

started during my fieldwork, a billboard campaign that disrupted Jessie's mounting interest in being more cognizant and inclusive of differences in discourse and practice across localities and desire to operate in a less top-down manner.

The Billboard Campaign

The development of a billboard campaign between 2009 and 2010 jarred with transformations in Jessie's approach to community coalition support work that increasingly demonstrated a desire to really listen to what CC members had to say and support them in the manner they wanted, rather than what she thought was best. My day-to-day participant observation at the Commission office ended after the billboards finally went up in February 2010, so I cannot speak to subsequent outcomes related to the billboard project. However, I can offer an analysis of the development of the project during the year leading up to this point. Ethnography reveals the contradictions between the Commission staffs' asserted aims of collaboration and actual practice and the modes of governance engendered through these practices. The billboard campaign was organized and implemented in a top-down manner with the Commission staff in control while local actors were only approached to "participate" after project design was complete. Despite the fact that the development of the campaign contradicted Jessie's hopes and aspirations for real "collaboration" between community coalitions and the Commission, Jessie did not take radical steps to challenge the top-down project design. In what follows, I will also attempt to draw some conclusions about Jessie's inaction in responding to the development of the billboard campaign.

The Commission staff began planning a public awareness campaign utilizing billboards in early 2009.[61] Educating citizens through mediated communication represents a form of political action that focuses on modifying individual behavior in order to address health problems rather than the government taking steps to improve infrastructure and social services (Paley 2001: 159). The billboard campaign represented such an education effort focusing on increasing the general public's knowledge of available social services to domestic violence survivors. The selection of localities to place the billboards included an identification of and exclusion of areas without a domestic violence shelter and active community coalition so that there was an actual resource people could turn to since there were many counties without either. In effect, the problem of lack of equitable support resources for survivors was ignored due to a label as a hindrance to outcomes. Another major goal of the billboard campaign was to produce a protocol for shelters on how to talk with friends and family of survivors. Here again we see technocratic procedures of standardization at work. Observations at formal meetings and informal conversations throughout the development of the billboard project demonstrated the ways intersecting processes of centralized state-level control of project management and structural constraints induced by funder requirements thwart "collaboration." What constitutes collaboration, participation, and representation is all related to conceptualizations of community, which is well-documented within the anthropological literature as imbued with uneven, power laden meanings (see Fisher 1997; Gregory 1998; Jones 1987). I use the term collaboration here in the sense that Jessie envisioned while working on the billboard campaign. In this context, collaboration meant local actors active involvement in decision making during the development of the

billboard project, not simply recipients of a project designed by the Commission. I use the term community in this section strategically to reflect the way my informants referred to specific localities to place the billboards. Commission staffs' unproblematized use of the term community erases their active role in determining who would represent the particular community for this project.

Mary, the Commission's research and communications manager, relied upon the Commission staff for assistance during in the early planning stages of the project, which she initially spearheaded, excluding local actors from early project development decision making. The Commission staff met in March 2009 to discuss a goal and target audience for the billboards. Mary explained to the staff that the billboard message needed an "action step," such as calling a hotline, in order to collect measurable outcome data. After throwing around ideas at this initial meeting, they decided on the goal "to encourage educated action," which reflected a conglomeration of ideas discussed. The staff imagined a two pronged approach. First, they wanted to help to "educate" bystanders, understood to be individuals in a survivor's or perpetrator's life who were aware of the abuse, by providing information about available services for survivors and increase their understanding of domestic violence. Second, the staff wanted bystanders to take action, which meant speaking up when they saw abusive behavior and sharing information with survivors about available resources. This was a simplified and homogenizing approach to problem solving and message development that erased the heterogeneity of contexts in which differently positioned people think, act, and make decisions. Furthermore, this approach falsely assumed that one message displayed on a

billboard would be interpreted with a clear and distinctive meaning for its diverse consumers: to encourage education action.

After the goal was selected, Mary led the staff to discuss a target audience, which signified a moment where Jessie tried to intercept the centralized, top-down project management. During this particular dialogue Jessie suggested inviting members of a community coalition or shelter staff into the discussion asserting this made sense since "they know their community best" and were most familiar with whom survivors reach out to within particular local contexts through their advocacy and activism experience. Jessie was proposing a different form of "participation" that included CC members' involvement in decision making, similar to the ways groups Julia Paley worked with reclaimed the word (2001). Mary rejected Jessie's idea with the explanation that they were not ready to select a "specific community" in which the billboard project would be based at that time, which derailed Jessie's broader point about involving local actors in decision making.[62] Deciding on a target audience for a message without having identified the locality where billboards would be placed ignores a host of important factors that could help guide the development of a message. Ultimately the staff determined without input from others outside the agency that "friends and family" would be the specific target audience, which reflected Fatality Review findings. This example reveals how the professionalization of organizations leads to standardized problem solving applied uncritically to diverse areas.

Top-down, centralized management of the Commission's projects was *modus operandi.* When discussing the broader goals of the Commission to me, all of the staff linked the Commission's position as a state-level entity with a "birds eye view" to an

ability to educate and coordinate multiple systems, agencies, and the general public. Ferguson and Gupta (2002) argue, "the force of metaphors of verticality and encompassment results both from the fact that they are embedded in the everyday practices of state institutions and from the fact that the routine operation of state institutions *produces* spatial and scalar hierarchies" (984; emphasis in original). The Commission's work with BIPs and community coalitions produced images of "verticality" and "encompassment" as they coordinated the regulation and management of BIPs, and offered social support to and operated as a liaison for community coalitions. Mary had only been working at the Commission for about half a year when she began working on the billboard campaign, which was enough time to normalize and legitimize the Commission's authority to coordinate projects, even though allowing "the community" to select the message was officially an intention. The Commission's position as the point agency for the billboard project also substantiated the centralization of the project in Mary's mind. Jessie's suggestion to insert local-level actors earlier in the decision-making process was unimaginable for Mary, who was sticking with a specific technocratic script. Markowitz and Tice (2002) argue that "professional hierarchies within the larger, better-funded NGOs, while conducive to efficient decision making, discourage participation of stakeholders in setting organization agendas and construct relationships that perpetuate class hierarchies and paternalism" (950). While the Commission was not an NGO, I argue a similar process was happening here. Participation in and observation of everyday Commission practices of top-down decision making and project management inculcated in Mary an inability to imagine going out of

step with top-down decision making and project management design and led Jessie to accept things as simply the way they were.

Once armed with a goal and target audience, the next step was to identify the community where the billboards would be located. What constituted the community was negotiated between the Commission staff within these early meetings about the billboard project. The Commission staff decided that working with an individual domestic violence shelter would be best in order to offer a place for the target audience to contact, in line with the billboard requirement that there be an "action step." Mary met with Jessie, who took a particular interest in the project, independently for subsequent months to further develop the direction of the project. The two women wrote a request for proposal that they emailed out to all domestic violence shelter executive directors in the state. Mary and Jessie reviewed submissions independently and both selected Safe Haven, a domestic violence shelter located northwest of the state capitol in the Grayson Judicial Circuit, largely in part based on a large estimated readership of billboards due the direction of work commutes. Veronica, the executive director of Safe Haven, also served as chair of the Grayson Community Coalition. Jessie was impressed with Veronica's "story," as a survivor of domestic violence and someone who formerly lived in a homeless shelter and thus understood what it was like to live in a shelter. She felt this was an understanding and experience that many shelter executive directors lacked. Jessie was also ecstatic about the fact that Safe Haven did not have a long list of rules for residents, which stood in contrast to every other shelter she was aware of in the state. While she insisted Veronica's application was the best, her intrigue with Veronica and Safe Haven undoubtedly influenced her selection of Safe Haven as the initial site for the

billboard project in addition to the knowledge that the location presented a high readership potential (read: measurable outcome potential in the form of increased calls to the local domestic violence shelter).

Jessie met with Safe Haven staff and Grayson Community Coalition members in July 2009 to create a message for the billboard, after the Commission had already determined a goal and target audience, but as it turned out this official display of inclusion was artificial. The end product from this initial meeting was: “Leaving, it’s not as easy as you think; let us help you understand domestic violence.” When Jessie brought the message back to Kelly, the Executive Director, Kelly wanted Jessie to return to Safe Haven and explain the Commission liked the message but not the wording. Kelly understood the larger point trying to be conveyed in the message - that leaving an abusive relationship was difficult, but felt the wording echoed what perpetrators regularly told survivors - you’re not strong enough to leave. Jessie was directed by Kelly to go to the billboard company for assistance around constructing a different message, and they created a revised message that Kelly approved: “It’s hard to leave. Your support will help.” This incident reveals the multiple meanings conveyed through mediated communication messages to differently positioned people. Kelly’s decision to effectively disregard the perspective of local actors represented a demonstration of her authority and was a slap in the face for Jessie who had been working tirelessly at counteracting a dictatorial image.

Buried within this conflict for both Commission staff and community coalition members was a focus on leaving an abusive relationship as demonstrative of successful intervention. The predominance of efforts at my field site to deter victim blaming by

demonstrating leaving an abusive relationship is not easy and often dangerous reflects a long-standing effort within the antiviolence movement in order to counter frustration and blame attributed to women for abuse experienced at the hands of their current and former partners.[63] However, in other ways leaving an abusive relationship still seemed to represent the pinnacle of successful intervention for many people at my field site. For instance, Jessie regularly asserted to community coalitions she visited that their main goal should be figuring out how to reduce the number of times a survivor goes back to an abusive partner, by identifying what makes a survivor go back and then eliminating those problems. This was always a well-received suggestion that prompted a discussion of barriers to leaving and ways community coalitions could intervene in a manner to eliminate them.

We see here that leaving an abusive relationship is imposed as the best decision for a survivor, which actually flies in the face of the empowerment approach to advocacy work. An abundant literature produced by legal scholars has revealed how representations and knowledge about domestic violence survivors centered on dichotomous understandings of victimization and agency get tied up with a preoccupation with leaving an abusive relationship as the only way to demonstrate agency (Connell 1997, Mahoney 1994, Schneider 1993). These constructs have been interrogated in the context of legal, policy, organizational, and popular discourse and practice to demonstrate the implications of this "false dichotomy"[64] are that it becomes difficult to imagine both as operative in the same person at a particular point in time. It then becomes imaginable how a woman returning to her abusive partner is blamed when he is physically violent because she acted as a free agent and chose to be with him, unless a psychological

explanation, such as pathological dependency or learned helplessness, can be attributed to her choice to go back.

By the time fall rolled around, another stumbling block that further frustrated Jessie related to lack of billboard availability. The billboard company would only donate space not already in use by paying customers, and the selected geographical area where Safe Haven was located did not have enough available open space. Consequently, the geographic area targeted had to be broadened to include five domestic violence shelters across the middle portion of the state. Jessie felt terrible and once again had to go to Safe Haven and the Grayson Community Coalition with bad news. Jessie continued to express aggravation with the project overall during this time, which she explained to me did not feel collaborative to her. In fact, the Commission staff had been making all of the major decisions up until that point. Later in the year, the Coalition decided they would like to work with the Commission on the project, which introduced a whole new set of schedules and interests to consider. The Coalition and Commission staff met a few times to catch the Coalition staff up with where they were in the planning process. Broadening the geographical area and including the Coalition staff further delayed the project as meeting with all five shelter executive directors plus Commission and Coalition staff proved difficult with busy schedules.

Finally in January 2010 Commission and Coalition staff met with five shelter executive directors and some of their staff for an information gathering session where shelter attendees shared current practices and procedures around communicating with friends and family of survivors. Shelter staff revealed they were already working with friends and family informally but no formal training or protocol on these forms of

communication was in place. The Commission and Coalition had already decided previously that a "friends and family protocol" was a desired outcome of the project, which they announced at the meeting. Jessie verbally proclaimed that what works for one community does not work for everyone and did not want protocol development to feel like a dictate from the state but instead wanted this to be a collaborative effort. However, this was merely lip service and overlooked the fact that the development of the project had been a centralized top-down process.

Jessie and Maggie met independently the next week to determine a long-term plan for moving the project forward that was still not inclusive of the shelters. The two women decided the first step was to distribute meeting minutes to Kelly and the Coalition staff, and ask them to respond back with common themes they saw emerging from the January 2010 meeting by March 1st. Next, they planned to wait a few months for feedback from shelters on their experiences responding to friends and family before creating a protocol so that it better incorporated local perspectives and practices. Jessie suggested they send sample protocols to shelter staff three or four times throughout the remainder of the year for feedback so that shelter executive directors had "buy-in." Jessie said she wanted shelter executive directors to feel more involved in the protocol development, but centralized control over the protocol development process continued to remain intact.

While Jessie asserted at the January 2010 meeting that the desired outcome was a collaborative effort, the development of the billboard project operated in a very top-down manner from day one. Numerous meetings during project development were held over a year between Mary and the Coalition and Commission staff as key decisions were made

about the direction of the project.   CC members were only involved in two of these meetings. At the first Commission staff meeting about the billboard project, Jessie suggested bringing local actors into the decision making process around determining a target audience, but Mary's assertion that it was not time to for such a discussion was accepted by Jessie in stride.

Why did Jessie not press the issue? Her suggestion to bring Grayson Judicial Circuit actors into the fold in the early 2009 billboard meeting demonstrated a challenge, but her later frustrations with relegated to conversations with me. I propose that Jessie's position within the Commission where centralized project coordination was the norm combined with a time of great job instability relegated her to verbal assertions of collaboration in the context of coordination of the billboard project. When it came down to specific moments where she could challenge top-down authority of decision making that was all she could imagine doing. Jessie expressed frustration to me at key points during the project where the lack of involvement in decision-making from Grayson Judicial Circuit actors was particularly apparent. First, when the product of the billboard message had to be changed because Kelly did not agree with what the wording connoted; and second, when the geographic area where billboards would be located needed to be broadened. Both of these instances required Jessie to go back to Safe Haven and the Grayson Community Coalition and retract an earlier decision, which vividly demonstrated they were not the decision makers on the project. Jessie did express her unease with Kelly's decision to change the billboard message, but Kelly asserted her authority as executive director and insisted that the wording be changed. Kelly was Jessie's boss and what she said was the final word.

Jessie was grappling with what she perceived to be covert attacks on her work while the Commission was simultaneously fighting legislative attacks between 2009 and 2010. These pressures placed an enormous amount of stress on her, and I argue contributed to her hesitancy to challenge Grayson Judicial Circuit actors lack of involvement in decision making on the billboard project. During the 2009 legislative attacks, Kelly needed to direct much energy to explaining why Jessie's work as Community Coalition Coordinator was important. Jessie was increasingly frustrated by the larger amounts of funding she felt was allocated to the Commission's criminal justice oriented projects,[65] which when combined with what Jessie felt to be the relative lack of support for her community coalition support work led her to interpret the imbalance to be a result of an internal broader devaluing of community coalitions. Together these objective realities engendered modes of practice and limited imaginings to those that would not truly challenge the status quo.

Outcomes: Uneven Relationships

Despite Jessie's best intentions there clearly was an uneven relationship between herself and the various community coalitions across the state whom she strived to support. CC members had drastically different levels of knowledge of Jessie's work and the work of the other Commission staff, which translated into uneven knowledge of the kinds of support they could receive. The CC members with the most limited knowledge of or communication with the Commission were located in rural areas over an hour away from Morganville. Not surprisingly, CC members I interviewed who described a longstanding, positive relationship with the Commission were members of two of the

community coalitions closest to Morganville. Some CC members I interviewed did not identify regular communication with the Commission recently beyond requests for information, and they were all members of community coalitions outside the Morganville Metropolitan area counties. Additionally, most of these CC members lacked significant knowledge of the Commission.

These disparities were a result of structural barriers and the limited options Jessie had to choose from as one person working within a top-down, bureaucratic organizational structure. It was precisely because of the reliance on one person's presence or actions to forge relationships between structures that an uneven relationship emerged. Jessie's decisions to attend and organize this or that meeting, training, or other events was dependent on individual understandings and experiences, including personal comfort, and perceptions of need and potential for "success," and external variables, such as distance, time, and funding. Legislative threats between 2009 and 2010 further curtailed Jessie's ability to evenly support community coalitions.

CC members' uneven knowledge of Jessie and the Commission became clear as I conducted interviews with CC members across the state. When I asked CC members how either Jessie or the Commission more broadly could better support them, I sometimes received the response that they were not exactly sure even what types of support could be provided. The majority of the thirty-four CC members I interviewed had basic or better knowledge of the work the Commission performed. However, seven of these CC members lacked significant knowledge of the Commission at the time of our interview, which included one CC member who only learned the Commission existed a few months before our interview.[66] Significantly, three of these CC members were in positions of

leadership on their community coalition and all of them were members of community coalitions located outside the Morganville Metropolitan Area (four were south of the metropolitan area counties and two were north of the metropolitan area counties). While only one of the CC members had been involved with their community coalition for more than three years, five of them had dealt with domestic violence in their full-time jobs for five or more years and were thus active within the domestic violence advocacy community.

The obvious explanation to me for CC members' uneven knowledge of the Commission and Jessie's work was community coalitions' geographical distance away from Morganville. In fact, when I asked CC members to talk about factors they believed influenced their relationship with Jessie, distance away from Morganville was often perceived as a key explanatory factor. However, there were other findings that complicated this explanation. Thirteen of the CC members I interviewed were completely unaware of community coalition liaisons employed by the Commission prior to Jessie and had been involved with a community coalition during times when at least one other community coalition liaison was working at the Commission. These thirteen CC members were working on community coalitions across the state, not just outside the Morganville Metropolitan Area like those lacking considerable knowledge of the Commission overall. This finding indicated there was something more than geographical distance at work impacting CC members' relationships with Community Coalition Liaisons.

I learned that members of the same community coalition could have very different levels of knowledge and awareness of the Commission and Jessie's support work. The

reason for this was quite simple: Jessie's direct email or telephone communication with CC members was always directed to no more than a few individuals in positions of leadership on community coalitions.[67] Moreover, shifts in official leadership positions on community coalitions did not always adjust accordingly in relation to Jessie's communications with the group. The case of the Scott County Community Coalition located in a southern region of the state offers some important insights here. After the previous community coalition chair stepped down in 2006, Keesha, a staff person at the local domestic violence shelter, took over the position and worked to revitalize the waning group. Keesha remained chair until early 2009 when Deanne, the owner of a local BIP Program and long-time CC member successfully nominated her daughter's boyfriend and employee at her BIP Program to be chair. At this point in time Keesha became secretary but by the following summer she still remained in primary communication with Jessie via email, which included Keesha providing Jessie with their monthly meeting attendance lists and Jessie sharing any statewide news and updates. Keesha was insightful to recognize that being Jessie's primary contact meant she was more knowledgeable of the Commission and Jessie's work than her fellow CC members, even the chair. In fact, both Deanne and Jim indicated the Scott County Community Coalition did not receive much support from or communication with Jessie or the Commission in recent years.

I argue the establishment of a Community Coalition Liaison position and coterminous heavy reliance on one individual staff person to conduct community coalition support work led Jessie to select modes of practice that aligned with bureaucratic ideals of efficient and streamlined top-down communication. During an

informal conversation with Keesha in early 2009, she explained that when Jessie first came into the position she sent emails to the entire CC membership but they found multiple CC members would try to take action or respond to an email in a manner that created confusion. The solution Keesha and Jessie came up with was for Jessie to only email Keesha information or requests, and then Keesha would relay everything back to the other CC members. In hindsight, Keesha realized that this decision likely contributed to her fellow CC members' lack of awareness of the support Jessie had provided to her. I brought up the issue to Jessie but she too felt that sending emails to the entire CC membership would be too confusing and create disorganization. Jessie could not imagine any other way, so effectively chose efficiency over creating an equal opportunity for communication and information sharing.

On the most basic level, understaffing and insufficient funding for community coalition support work severely restricted Jessie's ability to support community coalitions equitably across the state. In fact, an average two year rate of turnover for the Commission's Community Coalition Liaison position suggests historically people had experienced difficulties or discontent working within the position.[68] Jessie regularly expressed discontent with her inability to offer the kind of financial support to community coalitions that she desired. For instance, Jessie could not extend mileage reimbursement or even cover the cost of lunch for regional meeting attendees, which was frustrating for her. With only one person employed to support nearly fifty community coalitions and a paltry budget to support the Community Coalition Liaison's travel, not surprisingly the community coalitions that Jessie had the closest relationships with tended to be located closest to her office in Morganville. Once travel to a community coalition

meeting took longer than a few hours to reach, Jessie would have to consider an overnight stay at a hotel, and there was not a large amount of funds for this in the Commission's available budget. In practice, this meant community coalitions located in the southern region of the state received far less frequent visits than community coalitions located in the northern half of the state.[69]

Jessie's own personal background and professional interests affected the level of comfort Jessie felt towards particular community coalitions. When Jessie did travel a distance to visit a community coalition or make overnight trips, she would gravitate towards groups that she felt were friendly towards her and that she believed wanted her support and guidance. When I asked Jessie about her own interpretation of her uneven relationship with community coalitions, she explained:

> I think it's two reasons. I'm sure there's a lot more, but the two I can think of right now. One reason is that the [community coalition] is willing to allow me to be there and be active and to have a relationship with them and they were inviting of me to be able to do that, and others were not [and] didn't really reach out to us and I didn't pursue those as hard as the others that really did. I think also from a personal level there are people who make me comfortable and there are people who don't make me comfortable and so (laughter) I think unfortunately that's played a piece of it as well.

Jessie's discomfort with community coalitions took a few different forms. First, Jessie was uncomfortable and less motivated to visit community coalitions in some southern parts of the state due to distance, "nothing going on there," meaning not very active community coalitions, and hotels being "dirty" or "scary" that made her feel uneasy. Jessie shared negative experiences with hotels in one southern county that consequently deterred her from visiting that particular community coalition during my fieldwork. I also noticed Jessie visited northern community coalitions more frequently than southern community coalitions. This was partially due to the fact that the longest drive to a

northern community coalition was only a few hours away and thus did not necessitate an overnight stay, unlike southern community coalitions. Also, Jessie was actually from a small town in the northeastern region of the state and consequently was more familiar with northern areas of the state. Jessie was less interested in visiting some community coalitions after bearing witness to homophobic remarks or jokes at meetings or events. I noticed that Jessie concealed the LGBTQQI focus of the work at United 4 Justice from CC members to varying degrees dependent on where she was. Jessie was very comfortable in larger, more diverse counties located near Morganville talking about LGBTQQI issue; however, in other areas more politically and socially conservative she was clearly hesitant to push the envelope. Altering how open Jessie was about this information demonstrates the influence social and political difference could have on the way she interacted with and supported community coalitions.

Convenience combined with Jessie's assessments of community coalitions and the localities they were located also impacted her decision making around who to support. The power Jessie held over community coalitions to make these decisions becomes explicit through an examination of the development of her new targeted support work in late 2009. Jessie's selection of the three community coalitions to move from medium to high functioning levels of practice was based on convenience and her individual perceptions of success and perceived need. By the time Jessie was able to sit down with Kelly and discuss the restructuring of her support work, she had already spent a significant amount of time meeting with the Clinton and Grady County CC members helping them work through leadership problems.[70] Consequently, Jessie selected these two for targeted support due to convenience. Moreover, since Jessie had already spent a

significant amount of time supporting these two community coalitions she felt they represented a positive opportunity for her to produce some measurable outcomes for Kelly. Here we also see the importance of CC members' desire and willingness to communicate with Jessie regularly in producing a closer relationship with Jessie. Key CC members from both the Clinton and Grady County Community Coalition were open to speaking with Jessie privately about problems they had with the way leadership was operating and thus Jessie offered them the more hands on support they desired.

Jessie selected the Scott County Community Coalition as a target to move from moderate to a high functioning level of practice for different reasons compared to the other two: she felt there was an urgent need for more support from her within this locality. Jessie had heard informally on multiple occasions from domestic violence advocates and other professionals from southern regions of the state that they felt ignored or forgotten by most state agencies. I also heard these same grievances during my interviews with CC members from the Scott County Community Coalition and the neighboring Adams Judicial Circuit Community Coalition. For instance, domestic violence shelters and BIPs are required to send their staff to trainings and education workshops in order to accumulate training hours annually as a requirement for state certification. Several domestic violence professionals I spoke with outside of Morganville, particularly in the southern regions of the state, complained that most training opportunities were located in Morganville. A round-trip drive from the south to Morganville could take up to eight hours round trip, which necessitated an overnight stay in order to attend a training or education event. Expensing this was not always feasible for shelters struggling with understaffing and stretched thin budgets. Shelter staff often

spearheaded the work of community coalitions in the state, so diminished resources to run the shelter could mean less time for volunteer work on a community coalition. Jessie was also very much aware of the socio-economic inequities in southern counties, and thus felt the grievances she heard around insufficient support were completely warranted.[71]

Jessie's inability to remain in regular contact with CC members at every community coalition was not an issue for every community coalition, as there were some groups that garnered support from multiple systems and agencies in their locality without any support from the Commission and overall seemed less concerned with receiving support from Jessie. In contrast, other community coalitions, such as those of Scott County and the Adams Judicial Circuit, struggled simply trying to get people to attend meetings and expressed a strong interest in increased support from Jessie. A telling proclamation from Keesha in the context of a discussion between her, Deanne, and Jim about the higher concentration of trainings near Morganville was the statement, "that's why I send the attendance list to [Jessie] every month. I do this to be sure we are heard up in [Morganville]." Keesha's sentiment provides a vivid example of the feelings of lack of voice and desire for more attention and support from state-level actors and entities.

Jessie's formal inclusion of the Scott County Community Coalition in her new targeted support work represented an intentional attempt to respond to the inequities specific to southern community coalitions. Jessie also made sure to include a short piece written by a Scott County Community Coalition member in her newsletter. Jessie highlighted receiving a phone call from Keesha once the newsletter went out enthusiastically thanking her for including the piece in the newsletter. Jessie focused on how great this response made her feel and shared it in the context of an explanation of

how important feeling like a community coalition was friendly towards her and wanted her support. This story also illuminated the level of value Keesha attributed to inclusion in the statewide newsletter and her desire for more of a voice and communication with the Commission.

Preexisting structural and economic barriers to the Jessie's work were exacerbated by the redirection of attention to two years of legislative battles in 2009 and 2010. Jessie had been in the Community Coalition Liaison's position for about a year when the legislative attacks on the Commission were first exposed. Her work with community coalitions by no means remained stagnant and her understandings of community coalitions and her role in supporting them did change during my fieldwork. However, the impact of limited funding and support for her work was only exacerbated by what was happening at the legislature and infringed on her ability to communicate with and support community coalitions in the manner in which she envisioned. For example, Jessie struggled to find the time to have Kelly sign off on her work and shifts in direction because Kelly spent so much time out of the office grappling with the legislative attacks. Also, Jessie was unable to convince Kelly to offer various forms of financial support to community coalitions because Kelly felt that every dollar spent needed to be justified while they were under increased surveillance from the Governor's Office. For example, the Coney Circuit Community Coalition planned a conference in 2009 and Jessie wanted to cover some of their expenses in a show of solidarity.[72] However, because of the political scrutiny they were under Kelly refused to permit the expenditure of something that was not a formal part of the Commission's mission.

Significance

To say that employing only one Community Coalition Liaison to support nearly fifty community coalitions and coordinate local and state advocacy work represented understaffing is an understatement. Despite this and other limitations, Jessie felt very passionately about her work and strongly believed in the capacity of community coalitions to make positive improvements to the systemic response to domestic violence. She crafted solutions to community coalition struggles from what she learned from the social science literature on coalitions but also integrated what she learned along the way from CC members as she provided support. Transformations in Jessie's understandings and approach to support work are illuminated in the specific advice she offered vacillating between universal, technocratic guidelines to homogenous community coalitions and moments where she recognized deficiencies in such approaches.

Jessie's story considered with the Commission's internal education reveals bureaucracy is not the antithesis of feminism that Ferguson (1984) suggested. Sandra Morgen (2002) draws on Claire Reinelt's (1995) work which argues "binarisms make it impossible to envision organizations that include both collective and hierarchical processes, participatory and bureaucratic elements, outside and inside political strategies, grassroots mobilization, and organizing within institutions" (117). The Commission was characterized by multiple elements that could be interpreted in such binaries. Hierarchy between members and staff was obvious and yet among the staff collective processes characterized some decision making. The Commission successfully mobilized CC members across the state to fight political attacks on its existence but also worked through dominant institutions in order to change discourses and practices.

While an ethnographic examination of her work on the ground reveals a push and pull between dictating structure and practice to community coalitions, during my fieldwork her approach did largely shift away from an authoritarian role as she spent more time in the position. The addition of regional meetings as a new site for guidance and support reflected important shifts in Jessie's practice as she began to see her role as less about training people on her preferred approach to community coalition work and more about acting as a link to connect community coalitions to one another so they could learn from one another's experiences. This represented an important form of social relational work that Jessie highly valued over an authoritarian rule. At the plethora of community coalition meetings and events I attended with Jessie she espoused an anti-state rhetoric reciting over and over again that she was not there to tell them what to do, they knew their community best, and acknowledged what works for one community may not work for another.

Jessie was very cognizant of the fact that she represented the state in the eyes of local actors. She understood that CC members sometimes felt silenced and aimed to avoid corroborating this image by being dictatorial. I used Gupta's (1995) analysis of the ways conceptualizations of the state are forged to examine Jessie's interactions with CC members and the diverse and uneven ways CC members perceive the Commission and Jessie specifically. Gupta points to the practices and physical location of the work of certain officials that blur the Western notion of the boundary between the state and civil society to argue perhaps these categories do not sufficiently describe the reality of peoples' lives. In fact, my findings present a glowing demonstration of this blurring of boundaries. Jessie was the statewide Community Coalition Liaison but was also a leader

within U4J, a community coalition she helped establish, so could not be located as simply a state or local actor. Many other CC members held similar dual roles which necessitated an examination of the impact these different roles had on understandings and practice.

With that said, Jessie was still operating within a top-down bureaucratic structure in which "bureaucratic procedure invariably means ignoring all the subtleties of real social existence and reducing everything to preconceived mechanical and statistical formulae" (Graeber 2003:9). To a certain extent Graeber's statement represents an extreme portrayal for the Commission because the Commission staff were not exactly mechanically following fixed rules and regulations of practices sent down from higher powers. Still, even as Jessie's understandings of community coalitions and the way she interpreted "success" became more complex, she continued to use the same technocratic procedures of training, strategic planning, and protocol development. If bureaucratic knowledge is centered on simplification and streamlining (Graeber 2003), it makes sense that Jessie's changing understandings of community coalitions that complicated her early conceptualizations could not reconciled by changing the documents that she distributed. The very nature of Jessie's support work that involved distributing and designing worksheets on how to develop and maintain a community coalition was predicated on the development of standards of practice and operation.

Events during the billboard campaign illuminated contradictions between Jessie's professed non-dictatorial approach to community coalition support work and the institutionalized top-down, centralized project design characteristic of the Commission's work. In the end, Jessie chose not push a challenge to the development of the project. The routinized operation of the Commission's projects combined with political and

economic pressures deterred her from critique. In other ways Jessie did not seem mindful of the power she held and leveraged over community coalitions deep rooted in her practice. Jessie's authority to make decisions regarding which community coalitions to focus her attention as she changed her approach to community coalition support work was an important manifestation of that power. It is important to highlight that by expressing the desire to not "dictate" to community coalitions, Jessie was really acknowledging the capacity she had to leverage power over community coalitions. However, this awareness was not enough and despite her best attempts to listen to CC members and not be dictatorial, by making decisions about which groups to target support she inadvertently identified groups "deserving" of her support. This account raises important questions about the capacity of actors working within bureaucratic entities structured to help and support from the top down to conduct projects in a manner that does not risk producing paternalistic practices.

The day-to-day examination of discourse and practice that ethnography offers revealed the processes through which a more nuanced analysis attentive to local differences emerged for Jessie. Contradictions within her practice reflect evolving understandings and approaches to her community coalition support work. Despite Jessie's shifts toward linking community coalitions and increasing shared knowledge between local actors, even toward the end of my fieldwork she sometimes slipped back into technocratic one size fits all procedures including the promotion of committee organizational structure and protocols and trainings as solutions to diverse struggles. In the next chapter I offer an examination of community coalition practice on the ground

that reveals that committees were not consistently functional and protocols and trainings often did not achieve goals CC members' set out to achieve.

CHAPTER 5:

STRUGGLES FOR 'SUCCESS':

TENSIONS AND UNEVENESS IN COMMUNITY COALITION PRACTICE

Introduction

Community coalitions were formed by top down, formal processes that helped generate some important commonalities across groups in terms of official structure, mission, and goals. The Commission's call for the establishment of community coalitions in each judicial circuit provided the impetus for the formation of most groups. While specific goals and practices of community coalitions varied, most groups performed a combination of work on: 1) public awareness, which included increasing awareness of and attention to the problem among members of the general public through symbolic events and presentations; 2) training and protocol development for formal systems including criminal justice, social services, faith based organizations, medical, and education institutions; and 3) systems change projects. Membership composition of community coalitions was highly variable but most often included local domestic violence shelter staff, criminal justice system professionals, and other human service professionals who work with domestic violence in some capacity.

CC members experienced an assortment of struggles while trying to perform their work and by no means had representation from the major systems and structures that dealt with domestic violence or those not working with domestic violence directly in their professional work. CC members from every community coalition identified some type of problem with participation. Such problems could include lack of involvement from a

specific system or agency, problems with a small core of people performing all or most of the work, or problems with not enough people involved in general. Community coalitions struggle with participation from multiple systems and agencies provides one more ethnographic illustration of the fact that "community" does not always indicate all voices are at the table. Moreover, formal membership on a community coalition or even the presence of particular representatives at meetings did not mean everyone within that particular agency or system supported the community coalition. The anthropological literature is replete with analyses demonstrating communities are not homogenous and those NGOs that claim to speak for a community rarely represent all the voices within a particular community (Gregory 1998; Fischer 1997; Jones 1987; Lundy 1999; Maskovsky 2001). These scholars demonstrate that the concepts community and participation have multiple meanings depending on the time, place, who is speaking, and what effect they intend to produce. Following Anthony Leeds, Delmos Jones (1987) convincingly argues for the use of the term *locality* rather than *community* to describe population subgroups since the latter incorrectly assumes a connectedness between members that forms a cohesive group, with similar beliefs and concerns. Therefore, I use this language to refer to geographic areas in where community coalitions formed.

Significant differences in how community coalitions operated existed due to a complex intersection of different structural features, including their sociopolitical makeup and geographic location, and members' divergent experiences and grievances regarding practice. CC members' complaints about participation problems and struggles achieving goals they set forth are nothing out of the ordinary for volunteer organizations. What I offer in this chapter is a critical examination of what CC members perceived as failures

and interpreted as causes, the strategies they selected to respond, and the implications of these perceptions and responses for our understanding of community coalition and other voluntary organization practice. I will demonstrate there were other "hidden" values emergent from community coalition practice that divert from technocratic practices that presented additional avenues to social change worth pursuing. This is particularly relevant in light of the significant attention to community coalitions, task forces, and other collaborations in the social science literature and on evaluations of their effectiveness (Allen 2005; Allen et al 2008; Allen and Hagan 2003; Berkowitz 2001; Clark et al. 1996; Morris 2011; Shepard 1999).

Trainings And Protocols: Rejecting The Technocratic One Size Fits All

Numerous CC members identified trainings and protocol development as a project previously completed or a future goal for their community coalition. To a certain extent CC members considered their ability to conduct training or produce a protocol signed by agency heads an example of successful goal implementation for the community coalition. However, they did not blindly implement trainings and protocols and in fact demonstrated multiple feelings of uncertainty regarding the effects of the practices and capacity to produce systems change. For protocols, I even uncovered a general lack of certainty to what extent existing protocols within CC members' own agencies and systems were being implemented in practice. While protocols and trainings do result in some positive outcomes connected with community coalition goals that CC members could point to and felt positively about, often it seemed that these technocratic

approaches fell short when it came to actually changing systemic responses to domestic violence.

The dominance of trainings and protocols was particularly interesting as a technocratic procedure to convey knowledge and information about domestic violence across different systems and agencies that was well-grounded in community coalition practice. Most CC members I spoke with cited as a goal for their community coalition to increase awareness and knowledge about domestic violence among professionals working within the systems and agencies that interact with perpetrators and survivors. It was clear that trainings were perceived by CC members across the state as an avenue to educate and increase awareness of domestic violence. When problems with the systemic response to domestic violence were brought up during community coalition meetings, CC members frequently thought of trainings and protocols as a solution. CC members also looked to these procedures for the education and reform of other institutions outside of the criminal justice and social service sector. For instance, a number of community coalitions organized trainings for faith organizations and health care professionals. Therefore, formalized training was a technocratic practice employed at a wide variety of public and private sector structures.

CC members regularly selected trainings and protocols as a key strategy to address gaps and barriers to survivor safety and perpetrator accountability in order to improve the systemic response to domestic violence, in part because of Jessie's influence. Jessie spent a significant amount time with CC members helping them problem solve around struggles experienced related to local issues, particularly around engaging in systems change work. Jessie's common response to CC members' grievances about

problematic systems responses to domestic violence was to encourage trainings and protocol development. As demonstrated earlier, the promotion of these technocratic approaches to systems change work reflected a dominant practice within the Commission's community coalition support work historically.

This focus on trainings within the diverse network of professionals, advocates, and activists working with domestic violence did not come out of thin air but was supported by state level structures. Attending a plethora of trainings to complete continuing education unit (CEU) requirements are an integral part of the state oversight of mental health professionals, social workers, criminal justice system employees, and other social service professionals in the United States. Jessie and the Commission staff recommended trainings to CC members as an approach to systems change work and heavily relied on trainings for their own work which supported and normalized the practice. The normalization of the use of trainings by the Commission staff is significant as actors who hold a position of informal influence over community coalitions. At times Jessie effectively selected formal training as a means to increase understanding and knowledge of domestic violence over the informal information sharing and knowledge production that happens when people from different agencies sit at the same table to discuss common interests and problems. For example, one group of CC members shared struggles in early 2009 getting members of faith organizations to attend community coalition meetings, a goal that came out of Fatality Review findings that survivors often interact with these structures. Jessie advised CC members to offer trainings for faith organizations in lieu of having individuals participating in the work of a community coalition. Jessie recognized the struggle many CC members experienced trying to get

people to community coalition meetings so felt technocratic strategies to increase understandings and knowledge of domestic violence among those targets might be a more attainable alternative. In this scenario Jessie selected a technocratic solution that sidestepped the actual problem: failure to gain participation in everyday community coalition practice from members of faith organizations.

Despite the widespread use of these technocratic practices, CC members cited structural features of targeted agencies and systems as barriers to successful implementation and effective systems change. Turnover within agencies was cited by CC members across the state as a significant barrier to effective training, particularly among law enforcement officers and protocol development and implementation. All of the hard work developing relationships with agency and system representatives during protocol development and implementation felt futile the moment those representatives left positions and CC members were back at square one building relationships with new people. CC members expressed frustration with having to constantly train on the same issues over and over again as people leaved and arrived at new positions.

CC members in larger counties added that their large population and corresponding large quantity of public sector agencies further hindered training and protocol development and implementation. Having a large number of agencies not only made getting representatives from each on a training or protocol development committee difficult, but also made implementation complicated. For example, Grace and Cassandra, longtime members of the Foley County Community Coalition, identified the creation of criminal justice system protocols for law enforcement, BIPs, prosecutors, and the judicial system. However, both women described not knowing whether or not the protocols were

actually followed after disseminated to all of the various agencies. Grace, a former law enforcement officer in Foley county and statewide domestic violence trainer for criminal justice agencies, sat on the law enforcement protocol committee, which she said was comprised of five or six people total representing the police department and sheriff's office in the largest city in the county. Grace described disseminating the completed protocols to all of the law enforcement agencies in the county but had no clue whether the protocols were ever implemented. Cassandra, the Foley county Solicitor-General, shared a similar perspective, attributing the county's large size and agencies to this failure to make an impact on agency procedures and ideologies undergirding practice, particularly considering the fact that the people attending community coalition meetings varied. Cassandra felt the protocols functioned more like suggestions at best and argued there was no way of knowing if they were followed because of the size of the county and agencies.

CC members across the state also cited defensiveness and territorialism as a culprit when it came to getting people to attend trainings and acknowledge protocols signed by agency leaders indicating an awareness of power differentials. This was frequently a complaint regarding law enforcement and other criminal justice system professionals. CC members offered interesting theories on the root of the problem reflecting tensions between domestic violence advocates and criminal justice professionals. John, the co-chair of the Coney Community Coalition, a BIP provider and counselor, identified rigidity among professionals working solely with perpetrators or survivors as having more rigid ideological positions that produced defensiveness when it came to accepting protocols or hearing information in trainings that contradicted their

beliefs. Other CC members identified feelings of not wanting to be told what to do or how to perform their job rooted in historical tensions between the criminal justice system and domestic violence advocates. One community coalition chair, a chief magistrate judge working in the judicial system since the 1980s, described domestic violence advocates as "overbearing" between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s and felt they were overly harsh on judges during this time. Another CC member, former chair of a community coalition and founder and executive director of a domestic violence agency, offered a similar sentiment about domestic violence advocates early in the U. S. movement against domestic violence. She describe an early "take no prisoners mentality" that was harmful in some ways by producing defensiveness among law enforcement and other criminal justice system professionals. As a result she felt that working to build trust between their local domestic violence shelter and criminal justice system took many years.

A major underlying issue here is that a technocratic one size fits all approach to solving problems ignored differences in interests, experience, and power among differently positioned actors and assumed these procedures would magically work uniformly on these actors who would absorb the information unfiltered without any preconceptions. Moreover, presumptions of effective outcomes from the universal implementation of protocols and trainings failed to recognize long-standing tensions between criminal justice professionals and domestic violence advocates in the U.S..

Protocols and trainings as a problem solving strategy to address problematic responses to domestic violence were not always a good fit with what CC members were communicating to Jessie and elided over power differences. For instance, at a strategic

planning session Jessie was leading CC members brought up problems getting judges to attend meetings and sensed an overall show of defensiveness towards their community coalition. One CC member revealed that the chief judge once told her that he did not want to tell judges how to run their courtroom. While power differences between judges and CC members were clearly at work, Jessie responded by suggesting that the community coalition ask the chief judge to develop a protocol himself, which ignored the issue of power and did not consider the chief judge's deference toward other judges. In fact, there is a history of judicial hesitancy to create or follow protocols as the Judicial Qualification Commission issue discussed earlier in the dissertation demonstrates. Jessie's frequent selection of trainings and protocols as a solution to variety of problems reveals a tendency to fall back on technocratic approaches even as her understandings of domestic violence policy and practice became more nuanced and she shifted her approach to support work to be more respecting of and inclusive of different knowledges and practices.

Many of Jessie's suggestions for enhancing technocratic procedures were just as formulaic. For instance, Jessie regularly advised CC members experiencing problems with achieving buy-in for protocols to have representatives from target agencies on protocol development committees. However, this was easier said than done and was no guarantee of success. For instance, CC members of a community coalition located in a major, urban city shared at a meeting Jessie attended that they developed protocols but no agency leaders were willing to sign them. It turns out the community coalition did have representatives from the systems targeted for protocol development on the protocol development committees but this did not adequately address the problem and Jessie did

not have another solution. A CC member reflecting on their work on protocols thoughtful expressed the opinion that it was “naïve” to believe that just because there was a representative present to help develop a protocol, when that protocol was finally presented to an entire agency no one else would feel defensive. This CC member recognized the diversity of positions of individuals working within a single agency or system leads to defensiveness and creates barriers to protocol implementation. Aiming for assistance with protocol development from universal representatives or stakeholders ignores diversity of interests and experiences that inevitably play an important role in the level of influence possible or even of interest of key actors within agencies.

Having buy-in from agency leadership, a solution Jessie and CC members reflecting on their struggles with protocols often brought up, was no guarantee either. The criminal justice committee for the Ravens County Community Coalition was a very active group compared to others with nearly ten people at each meeting. At a criminal justice committee meeting it was revealed that the local Police Lieutenant was oblivious of the law enforcement protocol the committee created and had signed by the Chief of Police months beforehand. The Ravens County Community Coalition had previously cited the development of a law enforcement protocol and signing by the Chief of Police as a success, but this scenario clearly demonstrated that leadership buy-in is no guarantee that information will be disseminated down the ranks.

There was a complex web of structural factors and power dynamics that shaped practice and the way information was heard and disseminated. Providing information in training did not guarantee that information would be heard or interpreted evenly across differentially positioned actors with diverse interests and motivations for participation in

training. Connie, a litigation paralegal for a non-profit legal services agency and longtime, active member of the Nelson Circuit Community Coalition lamented a problem with law enforcement response to domestic violence crimes that was illuminating. She highlighted problems with law enforcement not collecting sufficient evidence at crime scenes, a high number of cases being dropped or dismissed in state court, and a struggle having to retrain law enforcement multiple times on a new temporary protective order misdemeanor law.[73] She explained that despite the fact that they trained law enforcement on the law change multiple times, officers continued to express shock that particular laws were in place. She was frustrated overall with the lag between laws being passed and actually implemented on the ground and it seemed that the trainings they conducted did little to counteract this problem.

Uneven implementation of the law is well-documented in the anthropological literature (Hirsch and Lazarus-Black 1994; Lazarus-Black 2007; Merry 1986). For instance, Mindie Lazarus-Black (2007) illuminates the uneven implementation of the Domestic violence Act in Trinidad demonstrating that in practice not all domestic violence survivors end up in the courts gaining access to the application process for protection orders nor are successful in obtaining the legal protection. She reveals particular types of survivors are perceived as deserving of protection under the law rooted in a "new consensus" linked to images of the state as modern centered on what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior in familial relationships. Her findings illuminate why laws and policy rarely lead to even implementation on the ground because power differences and divergent understandings and beliefs always get in the way.

In the same vein, trainings on legal and policy change always filter through differentially positioned actors' experiences, motivations, and belief systems. Connie, reflecting on training difficulties, suspected that law enforcement officers did not want to make an effort at crime scenes if they were convinced most cases would not go through the court system successfully anyway. She did try an informal, non-technocratic strategy of meeting with the county solicitor about the problems who explained to her that if a survivor does not show up to court, the cases are always dropped. She tried to offer reasons why a survivor might not show up to court but reflected "I don't know if he heard me. He may have, but he doesn't have the time or resources to do what he needs to do." The time and resource issue related to the fact that judges and solicitors in the county were only part-time which may have either provided a real barrier or provided an excuse for not directing adequate time and resources to address problematic responses. High turnover among first responding officers could have also explained why repeated trainings resulted in little improvements in knowledge of new laws as well as law enforcement officers preconceptions of domestic violence survivors and perpetrators that influence the manner in which they treat and interact with both.

A major issue with the training approach was the assumption that trainings were an effective avenue to increasing knowledge and understanding of a complex issue such as domestic violence and that information could absorbed evenly without any preconceptions. The most common type of training community coalitions conducted were "DV 101," which largely focused on explaining the behavior of perpetrators and survivors and addressing myths about domestic violence, such as the belief it was a problem primarily experienced by the poor or people of color or that if someone really

wanted to, they could leave an abusive relationship. A major goal was usually to address biases and inferences that could interfere with someone's ability to effectively support a survivor or hold a perpetrator accountable. Complexities in definitions and understandings of domestic violence can be elided in trainings, particularly in "DV 101" trainings where some people argued that issues needed to be explained as simplistically and non-contentiously as possible. This was reflective of a broader, common preemptive strategy to prevent resistance to information being presented on domestic violence by actors working within the movement.[74]

It could be construed as a straw man argument that "DV 101" trainings leave out much of the complexity of the way domestic violence actually operates. People who attend these trainings are invariably learning something, right? These same people can and do share information learned with their colleagues and this might lead to positive systemic change. In fact, at the community coalition meetings I attended CC members sometimes shared information with the group that they learned from a recently attended training. Positive examples of small policy changes, information sharing, and knowledge production as a result of attending trainings did occur and were meaningful. Therefore, I do not deny these types of positive outcomes can and do emerge from trainings on domestic violence for various individuals who interact with survivors and perpetrators through their professional work. The question is how much impact is being made with the amount of effort and time being put into trainings conducted by community coalitions and other domestic violence advocates and activists.

What was of particular interest to me was the fact that so many CC members identified persistent problems with training and protocol development and

implementation but then continued to express them as important goals of their community coalition. Why did CC members continue to cite these technocratic procedures as a goal if there was such uncertainty of their value? I got the sense that many people believed in protocols and trainings as an abstract concept that offered a straightforward solution to gaps and barriers to the systemic response to domestic violence. Jessie regularly promoted these practices to community coalitions and cited these as projects many other groups were working on across the state. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, Jessie held an influential role over CC members and CC members were interested in what other community coalitions were doing so her encouragement also promoted the technocratic practice. Moreover, protocols represented a technocratic procedure normalized through CC members' professional experiences working within public and private sector agencies alike. However, when it came to actual implementation they also recognized this was much more complicated than their idealized plans.

Power Differentials and the Value of Informal Relationship Building

Tensions within community coalition discourse and practice reveal awareness of the value of informal procedures but at the same time CC members still rely on and revert back to technocratic procedures similarly to Jessie. My point is not that trainings and protocols are pointless but to suggest additional value should be recognized in the informal and indirect mechanisms for information sharing and knowledge production through attendance at community coalition meetings. Recognizing the value of less technocratic projects and procedures could help CC members think 'outside the box' and

reframe the way they think about their work and how scholars evaluate the effectiveness of coalitions, councils, and other collaborative projects.

My research demonstrated that Jessie and many CC members recognized the value of community coalition practice outside of technocratic projects, such as trainings and protocols. For instance, Jessie encouraged community coalitions to get involved with the Commission's Fatality Review project. Case studies using qualitative interviews to determine how a fatality could have been prevented reveal an innovative approach to the identification of gaps and barriers to the systemic response to domestic violence. However, the community coalitions that moved forward with implementing Fatality Review recommendations often selected familiar approaches from their repertoire of strategies for increasing awareness of and understanding of domestic violence. For instance, many fatality review teams found survivors often turned to their faith community for support over the local domestic violence shelter. One CC member on a community coalition who consequently decided to focus on the faith community, put bookmarks in church programs listing domestic violence advocacy resources and spoke with a local reverend about conducting a "DV 101" training. Other community coalitions also conducted trainings and held educational events targeting diverse faith institutions. When CC members asked Jessie how other community coalitions targeted faith communities, Jessie regularly cited distributing media, such as flyers or brochures, within faith institutions, and conducting trainings or other educational events. Therefore, in practice Fatality Review offered a means to identify new targets for established strategies to address gaps and barriers and increase awareness and understanding of domestic violence.

There was a clear tension among CC members between counting heads at a training and using informal means to assess its impact. Counting the number of people in attendance is a limited measurement which does not show what actually happened in training, how information was presented, or how people responded to and used information. Selective skimming over a discussion of domestic violence as a gendered phenomena or meaningful discussion about sensitive issues is invisible with a head count alone. I often observed a sort of compulsory praise emanating from diverse actors in response to the announcement at a community coalition meeting that training was merely conducted. A "success" was frequently defined as a training being conducted with a quantifiable number of attendees present. A goal was set and achieved: the training happened. However, what about evaluating its impact? Did attendees' attitudes and understandings actually change? Moreover, could changed attitudes and understandings be transferred into reformed policy and practice?

Little space seemed available to formally evaluate trainings, which was understandable given that CC members had full-time jobs on top of their volunteer work with a community coalition and accomplishing goals was a task in itself much less evaluating their outcomes. Instead CC members relied on their instincts and observations of the way attendees responded to trainings. When CC members reported back on their impression of trainings during regular community coalition meetings, they presented their perceptions of how well they felt information was received, the degree of dialogue that occurred, and the extent to which attendees asked questions. Some CC members also watched for changes over time in attitudes and practice discernible through their day-to-day work, such as a CC member who reported her shelter received more referrals and

questions from police officers after she and her husband conducted law enforcement training. The chair of another community coalition successful in holding law enforcement training and local Assistant District Attorney also focused on the ways they have changed their trainings that he felt resulted in an improved engagement during trainings. He acknowledged that changing the attitudes of police officers was not going to happen from just a few hours of training but he felt that attending training could lead to small changes in perspective. Here we see CC members also utilizing informal measures of effectiveness to assess outcomes from the trainings they conduct, going beyond simply counting the number of people in attendance at training.

The strategies some CC members utilized in attempt to enhance effectiveness of protocols and trainings reveal interest in informal strategies for relationship building attentive to power differentials to supplement formal technocratic procedures. The same CC member who identified the lack of cost for attending training as the key reason people showed up, was also optimistic about a new approach to the training implemented the year I interviewed her. She and her husband conducted the training through a "tag team" approach in which she focused on explaining survivors' motivations and behaviors while her husband covered the laws, how to thoroughly collect evidence, and other issues related to the criminal justice system. She described their training as validating the law enforcement perspective by having her husband, a sheriff's deputy, lead a portion of it. She felt the training had a positive effect because since the training there was an increase in referrals at the local domestic violence shelter and she felt police officers seemed more willing to call with questions. The decision to harness male, law enforcement authority within training and the apparent success of this approach to break down walls and

diminish defensiveness from law enforcement reveals gender and professional hierarchy between criminal justice professionals and the advocacy community reflecting the lower social ranking of domestic violence advocates

Many CC members emphasized the importance of chairs being persons with political power in their locality, which consistently signified someone within the criminal justice system as opposed to someone working in advocacy services. Some CC members explicitly identified power wielding as helpful when it came to getting people to attend meetings and participate with a community coalition, particularly in reference to the political power of judges.[75] For example, the Ravens County Coalition had Judge Barry, a state court judge as chair, which was something I observed their paid coordinator leverage regularly. For instance, if a CC member was experiencing difficulty getting a response from someone he advised that they send another email with the judge CC'ed. The chair and paid coordinator for the Ravens County Community Coalition acknowledged when discussing their success in gaining participation from a number of people that having a judge as chair put more weight behind requests for participation. Ravens County had a smaller number of public and private sector agencies and systems compared to larger counties in the state. This allowed residents' lives to more easily intersect through and outside of their professional work, such as through the schools their children attended. Through these intersections CC members were provided with opportunities to prompt people to participate or respond to community coalition requests. At the same time, it seemed Judge Barry's influence within Ravens County was most substantial with criminal justice system representatives demonstrating the effect of this strategy is limited to the professional networks in which the powerful person is

positioned. The Ravens County Community Coalition typically had between five and ten participants at each criminal justice committee meeting, met regularly and accomplished a number of goals. However, the education and medical committees had significantly less active participants.

Allen et al. (2008)[76] offer the important insight that "councils are not necessarily empowered to implement community change (Gray 1996; Yin and Kaftarian 1997); instead, their influence may manifest indirectly as they raise issues and engage the right "players" to address needed changes, create new relationships, increase awareness of issues, etc. (72)." This nuanced point resonates with what a co-chair of the Coney Community Coalition shared with me when reflecting on accomplishments of his community coalition. He echoed the belief of many other CC members that networking through the community coalition was very productive but added the additional insight that the most meaningful outcomes were not something "tangible" he could point to as evidence of success. The point here was that that networking through community coalition meetings can and did lead to increased understanding of different perspectives and important issues related to domestic violence policy and practice. However, this was not a measurable outcome CC members could point to in the way that they could cite the number of people in attendance at a training. Another example relates to reflections of success around public awareness from Ravens County Community Coalition member who argued winning a grant to train health care professionals also served as an awareness moment because the people sitting on the board did not realize how serious of a problem domestic violence.

Almost half of the CC members I interviewed highlighted the value of the community coalition meetings as a place to network, build relationships, and learn about the understandings and perspectives of individuals working in agencies and systems different than their own. Cassandra, a previous chair and longtime member of the Foley County Community Coalition, reflected on her past experiences with the community coalition and shared she believed in the past CC members had been critical of different systems without a thorough understanding of systems procedures and the context in which they worked. She argued this was exactly why the community coalition was important: because it brought together differently positioned people with different beliefs and perspectives. She identified community coalition meetings as important sites where people from different systems and agencies could come together and increase communication and understanding between one another. Several CC members also argued that the networking and relationship building that goes on between their fellow CC members helped them to perform their individual jobs better.

Important information sharing and knowledge production occurred through the networking and relationships developed through community coalitions that sometimes led to improvements to address gaps and barriers in policy and practice. For example, a law enforcement officer notified CC members of one community coalition that he brought his personal camera to the scene of domestic violence incidents to collect evidence since his own county did not provide the resource. After learning this information, CC members decided to use community coalition funds to buy cameras for all law enforcement officers in their county in order to address what they viewed as a barrier to thorough evidence collection. CC members also aimed to educate people

through their attendance at regular community coalition meetings. Many CC members also brought in guest speakers at community coalition meetings as a strategy to promote attendance at meetings by offering something of value, which they also felt led to improvements in awareness and understanding of domestic violence. For example, one CC member shared a positive outcome resultant from a guest speaker they brought in speaking on the connection between pet abuse and domestic violence. Law enforcement officers present for the speaker expressed appreciation for the presentation and said they saw both in their day-to-day work but had not really made the connection between the two until the presentation.

The reality was participation in training did not necessarily say much about a community coalition's ability to alter relationships between agencies and systems where there weer long standing tensions and conflict. Particular community coalitions' relationships with law enforcement offered helpful cases to illuminate this point. Out of the eleven community coalitions of which I interviewed CC members, only two were successful in actually conducting trainings for front line law enforcement officers during my fieldwork. However, CC members from both of these groups reported a lack of law enforcement participation with the community coalition outside of the training, which was important to the CC members. When I asked CC members for their understanding of why this difference existed, they pointed to positive reinforcements that encouraged attendance at trainings without producing a level of interest in the issue that would lead to other types of participation and involvement with the community coalition. The underlying assumption here was that law enforcement would not be interested in learning more about domestic violence if it were not for a system of rewards that encouraged their

participation in training. One of the community coalitions had the local Assistant District Attorney as chair who was able to help leverage his power through that position to get broad law enforcement participation in the training. The other community coalitions offered the training free of charge. Another CC member who worked for the local domestic violence shelter as a legal advocate believed was this was the reason law enforcement agency leadership ordered their officers to attend their trainings, not necessarily because they viewed it as valuable. She explained that law enforcement leadership themselves did not attend their trainings, which was problematic when it came to the implementation of the changes encouraged through the trainings. She reflected that an officer might gain a different understanding and be amenable to a new approach or strategy, but if their captain or lieutenant did not go through a similar change or did not support changed practice the effort was moot. These CC members' perceptions reflect tensions between law enforcement and domestic violence advocates and an overall disbelief in systemic law enforcement change without power wielding or positive reinforcements. This also speaks to tension within CC member discourse and practice between participation motivated by passion and personal commitment versus rational choice decisions.

In addition, not having formal protocols signed by particular system and agency leadership did not necessarily indicate a lack of collaboration between them and the local community coalition. A community coalition located in Dacota County within the Morganville Metropolitan area coordinated the creation of a Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) that created a critical link to advocacy and support resources for persons affected by domestic violence that result in law enforcement arriving at the

scene. The DVRT system included law enforcement writing a report at a scene, regardless of whether an arrest was made, providing the report to the DVRT team, and then the DVRT team contacted survivors to inform them of resources offered by DVRT and the local domestic violence shelter. While participating law enforcement agencies were cooperative in this manner, they were unwilling to sign a protocol delineating their response to domestic violence incidents. Betsy, the paid coordinator for the Dacota County Community Coalition, explained to me that law enforcement felt if they wrote something down they would be held accountable to it, which they did not want to happen since each case is different.

A key point I want to make here is that law enforcements' unwillingness to sign an official protocol may not represent what was most meaningful to the actual lived experiences of people affected by domestic violence. Betsy described the development of DVRT as a gradually improving process. It took time to build trust and strong relationships with participating law enforcement agencies to the point in late 2009 that she could communicate to leadership about problematic police reports they received and have a productive conversation about problems.[77] Betsy attributed her lengthy past professional experience as a patrol officer as key to the community coalition achieving active cooperation from law enforcement on DVRT. She explained, "there was an automatic trust; it would've taken *years* (emphasis hers) to develop that."

This case offers a great example of the benefits of informal strategies to build relationships and trust across legal, criminal justice, and social service institutions, something that the mere development of a protocol did not guarantee. The DVRT team represented an incredible level of collaboration between law enforcement and a

community coalition. The vast majority of community coalitions I was familiar with exhibited struggles gaining law enforcement participation on community coalitions through simply attending meetings much less collaborating through other projects. No other community coalition in the state was providing direct services to survivors and none had a comparable level of communication and collaboration with law enforcement to my knowledge.

Passion and Personal Commitment versus Rational Choice

The impetus for coalition formation varies for different organizational forms ranging from grant impetus to being rooted in a history of community organizing in a particular locality (Butterfoss 2007; Morris 2011; Wies 2011). The motivation undergirding participation with a particular coalition also varies as a result. Understanding the motivation for coalition practice, nuances in practice, anthropologists are well-suited to ascertain, offer an important contribution to our understanding coalition practice.

There was a clear tension in community coalition discourse and practice between perceptions of motivation for community coalition participation guided by personal interest and passion versus rational choice with rewards and punishment. These tensions led to contradictory theories on and strategies to promote participation among CC members. Passion and personal commitment to working to address domestic violence was something almost half of the CC members I interviewed identified as what active CC members had in common. For example, one CC member, a criminal investigator, shared, "I guess we've [referring to herself and other active CC members in the past] all been

touched by it and that's where the passion comes from." Wies's (2011) study of anti-domestic violence coalition practice in Kentucky demonstrated coalition members' identities were attached to their coalition practice as they saw their work as part of a larger feminist, social movement which offered a key source of motivation for them. For many CC members at my field site community coalition participation was similarly an extension of their identity as someone passionate and with a personal commitment to domestic violence work. However, most did not explicitly connect this to a broader feminist, social movement they were working within.[78]

When I asked CC members currently or previously in leadership positions on community coalitions to explain how they got involved with domestic violence work all either cited an important personal experience or explained they learned about domestic violence through their professional work. Either a professional or personal experience could peak someone's interest and lead to their involvement with a community coalition. Most of those CC members citing their professional experience as the impetus for their involvement with the community coalition worked in areas where domestic violence was an integral part of their jobs, specifically the criminal justice system, BIPs, or advocacy services. For many of these individuals work with a domestic violence shelter was the professional experience that provided the entry point to community coalition work. A personal experience usually indicated themselves, a close friend or family member victimized by domestic violence but some people also cited a special experience through their professional work that changed their understanding of domestic violence. One CC member and superior court judge recalled a case in the late 1980s where a couple came into his courtroom holding hands and the woman asked to drop the TPO. He told her he

did not think it was a good idea but he women insisted and he did. Then, about a week later the woman was murdered by her partner. He explained this experience made a strong impact on him and he believes increased his interest in domestic violence. Another CC member shared an important experience at the Commission's annual conference in the early 1990s where the chair of the Commission spoke angrily about the way the media was portraying a recent domestic violence murder. The chair asked the question to the audience: why don't you ask why he's abusing her? Why do we always ask why she doesn't leave? The CC member shared "that hit me with a sledgehammer." He explained the speech helped him think differently about domestic violence and raised his interest in the issue. These experiences changed CC members' understandings of domestic violence, pushing them away from a 'blame the victim' analysis indicating an internal source of motivation for community coalition participation.

Some people juxtaposed the passion and personal commitment analysis with the argument that it's not always a lack of passion or interest in the work that keeps people from getting involved, but a lack of time and the economic recession could also have a negative impact on participation. Almost half of the CC members cited busy schedules and lack of time, or budget cuts and furloughs as making it even more difficult for people to stay involved with their community coalitions. Other CC members recognized that the most active CC members were those who dealt with domestic violence in their professional work. The unsaid assumption here is that those who deal with domestic violence in their day to day work are most interested or compelled to participation in community coalition practice, perhaps because such work has the capacity to help them to effectively performing their jobs.

Personal and professional networks also provide an entry point to participation with community coalitions. Morris (2011) examined the motivation behind coalition participation and contrasted the desire for diverse participation with the actual realities among members of five public health coalitions with a grant based impetus for creation. Notably, all of the coalition members Morris spoke with who remembered how they got involved were asked to join by a social services sector representative, most often a coalition leader. While these findings suggest the first requirement of coalition participation is knowledge of its existence and being asked, Morris identified barriers to this happening related to the tendency among coalition members representing more dominant agencies on coalitions to be ineffective at obtaining input from agencies less well represented and outside of their professional networks. He argued in order to achieve diverse participation people must spread the word throughout "multiple discourse communities and occupational cultures" and go beyond existing professional networks (59). This is relevant at my field site where most active CC members worked with agencies or systems that regularly dealt with domestic violence and interacted with one another on a professional level: the criminal justice system as well as human services professionals working with survivors and perpetrators. This helps to explain why community coalitions experienced such difficulty gaining participation from institutions outside of the key players, such as faith organizations involved.

Reliance on one or a few passionate, energetic people to lead the work of a community coalition often led to feelings of burnout or fatigue among participating CC members. A number of CC members identified a trend in which people leading a community coalition who were initially very passionate about the work eventually

become frustrated or felt burnt out when they are incapable of getting more people actively involved and a small number of people perform all of the work. For example, one CC member with leadership experience on a few different community coalitions identified high turnover among past chair persons. When reflecting on this trend and her experience leading the work of community coalitions she shared, "I wonder if some of us are not burnt out. I know I feel burnt out." She described multiple failed efforts to encourage a broader number of CC members to become active participants and take on the role of leading committees and ultimately gave up trying.

When CC members faced feelings of burnout themselves and discussed ways to get more people involved to help take pressure off themselves, instead of appealing to justice and political action they often looked to rewards and punishment to encourage participation. This was a strategy Jessie also condoned through her support work and advised to CC members. Jessie spent some time with CC members discussing approaches to running a meeting that she felt would entice people to come back and keep people engaged. For example, she consistently advised CC members to avoid meeting over lunch as eating is a distraction for people and highlighted the importance of starting and ending a meeting on time as scheduled in order to be respectful of peoples' schedules. However, not all of her suggestions were feasible for each community coalition demonstrating universal strategies do not work equitably on diverse groups. For instance, some community coalitions met over lunch because that was the only time representatives from particular agency or system could attend. Another popular idea Jessie suggested was for CC members to offer something of value to CC members attending meetings, which was an idea many CC members seemed to like. CC members

practiced this by bringing in guest speakers at meetings or had agency representatives speak about the services their agency provided so as to help increase CC members' awareness of valuable resources, which would arguably help people perform their jobs or bring in revenue. Jessie also advised against practices that she felt could limit participation, such as having annual membership fees, but then promoted other "shaming" and negative reinforcement strategies. For instance, Jessie suggested putting people on the spot and holding committee chairs accountable for providing an update on progress by denoting on meeting agendas sent out prior to meetings that each committee will have a report.

One negative reinforcement strategy that many CC members discussed was work-based requirements. Some CC members viewed work-based participation requirements positively and even went as far as to ask Jessie if there was anyway she could mandate people to attend community coalitions. In contrast, other CC members felt concerned work-based requirements would bring people without passion and personal commitment to the cause. I found that unease about work-based requirements mirrored general feelings of apprehension about the professionalization and NGOization of the U. S. movement against domestic violence. CC members I interviewed who worked in the movement for twenty or more years lamented the professionalization of the movement and the compartmentalization of the advocacy work into specific jobs within NGOs and government agencies. One CC member said she felt like domestic violence advocacy work had become "just a job" for some people. Another CC member explained that she resigned from a shelter she helped create from the ground up, because as they increased in size all of the work began to revolve around securing money, increasing staff, and

making sure staff was doing their outlined jobs. She did not feel connected to the advocacy aspect of the work anymore, so decided to leave. In terms of participation problems, CC members found they were constantly dealing with turnover as administrations changed or people simply left one position for another. I heard from CC members over and over again that the moment someone left a position within an agency they would stop participating with the community coalition. High rates of turnover, particularly among frontline law enforcement officers, not only created a "hamster wheel effect" in which CC members are constantly training and retraining people working within particular agencies and systems but inhibited the ability to gain and maintain consistent CC member participation. CC members recognized mandates connected to professional position did not necessarily produce dedicated, passionate CC members.

Examining the level of involvement from BIPs is illuminating because they are the only agencies mandated by state level actors to participate with their local community coalition through the Commission's BIP standards. Some CC members reported problems with BIP providers attending community coalition meetings presumably with the sole purpose of filling in their name on the meeting sign-in sheet rather than truly engage with the work. These incidences suggest formal mandates do not produce the level of commitment that develops through serendipitous life events leading to personal commitment and passion for the cause. At the same time, many CC members identified BIPs as some of the most active CC members and in fact a number of community coalitions were heavily led by such actors. However, even those community coalitions led by a BIP provider experienced struggles getting *different* BIP providers involved with the community coalition. The BIP providers leading community coalition work who I

spoke with expressed similar passion and personal commitment as other leaders and thus had motivations for participation outside of mandates. Therefore, BIP providers' participation and involvement in leading community coalitions was not a function of a work-based requirement but their personal interest and commitment.

The Erasure of Difference and Avoiding the 'Political'

While many CC members were clearly aware of power differentials and sometimes leveraged this to advance their own goals, contentious issues were also avoided within community coalitions. Critical axes of difference like race, sexual orientation, gender, and class are not spoken of because they are deemed too 'political'. A noticeable silence about oppression in general permeated dialogue as many people I spoke with and interviewed never brought up these categories of difference. I heard about a few different rumors of conflict based on race in the past, but no one knew the full story or was not willing to disclose it to me. Sexual orientation was discussed the most frequently in an upfront manner, but was a major source of contention.

In Ptacek's (1999) important work on representations of women in the context of domestic violence cases heard in court he argues that among the general public common misunderstandings of domestic violence are on opposite ends of a spectrum in which axes of difference do and do not matter. The opposing myths he identified are either the idea that domestic violence is limited to working class and the poor *or* the belief that all women are equally susceptible to domestic violence (20-23). At my field site, the idea that everyone is equally at risk of experiencing domestic violence was a powerful idea in circulation within community coalitions. Within the local network of domestic violence

activists, advocates, and other professionals, the erasure of difference happened through use of the label "political" and an argument that all survivors' experiences are the same couched in "discourses of equality". The ways race, gender, sexual orientation, and class differentially impacts the experiences of survivors and perpetrators were deemed irrelevant and furthermore, too "political." These processes functioned to thwart a nuanced analysis and discussion of domestic violence at multiple sites.

One tactic for avoiding a discussion of sexual orientation or other categories of difference was through demarcating such issues as "political". Two members of the Ravens Community Coalition in leadership roles explained to me on numerous occasions that they did not want the coalition to be viewed as "political." Judge Bonnie, a state court judge, was the chair and David, a domestic violence training consultant, a paid coordinator and trainer for the community coalition. Judge Bonnie explained they did not want to be seen as aligned with a particular political party or "having an agenda" whether that was feminist, liberal, or something else. They both believed framing domestic violence as a crime that happens to everyone, both men and women, would accomplish this. Their goal was to frame domestic violence as a public safety issue that affects everyone in a community, rather than focusing on women as survivors because they felt to do so might alienate some people. Field notes from a conversation I had with David and Judge Bonnie in the fall of 2009 further clarify their position. David shared that back in the early 1990s many domestic violence shelters wanted to "get away" from the Coalition because it became a "woman's group," as demonstrated by their growing involvement with NOW. David described emails the Coalition began sending out regarding their involvement with women's political organization as alienating for men

and pointed out that their local domestic violence shelter even dropped out of the Coalition membership at that time because the shelter's executive director was tired of those emails from the Coalition. Judge Bonnie remarked that anytime you bring "politics" in you risk pushing people away, which was why she and David decided in the very beginning to not be "political."

This case demonstrates that for David and Judge Bonnie, framing domestic violence as a gendered issue and aligning with a feminist movement jeopardized participation in community coalition work, and the historical anecdote corroborated this apprehension. They wanted every sector of the community involved or supportive of their work, which they felt was necessary in order to effectively address gaps in services and policy implementation so they could positively affect change. An examination of the way the Ravens Coalition actually spoke about domestic violence publically reveals not an omission of gender entirely but an exclusion of gender as a relevant category of analysis to explain why domestic violence happens. I attended two trainings by the Ravens Community Coalition for local churches in 2009; David led both but Judge Bonnie also briefly spoke at one of them. David gave nearly homogenous presentations about gender at these two trainings. At both trainings he denounced the myth that women and men were equally violent, and explained while most perpetrators are men and most victims are women, there are scenarios where this is not the case. Yet he only discussed these issues superficially; he did not address why these patterns exist and did not address the relationship between gender inequality and power. David described the abuse perpetrators exert as an attempt to gain and maintain control over their partners, which is supported by a personal belief they have the right to use force; however, David stopped

short of identifying the gender of the parties involved as meaningful to an understanding of why this happens. Not addressing why it is mostly men who perpetrate violence against their intimate partners and women who represent the majority of survivors leaves out the gendered dimensions of the problem

An interview with Gary, the Commission's Fatality Review Manager, reveals another incident where the label "political" is leveraged to thwart a discussion of the relevance of categories of difference. Gary recalled this experience during preparations for an inter-faith training. At this meeting, an undisclosed Commission member verbally expressed an unwillingness to work with faith leaders through the training on building tolerance towards the LGBTQQI community. The reason the Commission member provided was that they were there to talk about domestic violence not anything "political," such as LGBTQQI issues. Greg recounts the incident:

> [The woman argued] we're here to talk about domestic violence. You know we're not there to talk about gay and lesbian issues. That's political. And this person did the you know- I don't care if the victim is black, brown, green or purple, they're still just a victim and we're trying to take care of the victim. So why even bring up gay and lesbian issues… It's not a gender issue. My god women beat the hell out of men. You know and it's not a race issue- I'm color blind. People are saying stuff to get credibility. (GL 350:2)

Refusing to talk about LGBTQQI issues by arguing all survivors were the same derailed a discussion about the way a survivors' sexual orientation can shape both their experience of domestic violence and the institutional responses they are subjected to. For this Commission board member, there was no need to differentiate survivors based on sexual orientation or any other identity. Arguing that all survivors are the same allows the erasure of race, sexuality, gender, and class, depoliticizing the issue.

These examples of avoiding a discussion of axes of difference illuminate two major points. First, denying a gendered analysis of domestic violence framed as 'political' is related to a desire to avoid an affiliation with the feminist movement. Second, the reason for this hesitancy is the presumption that aligning with a feminist agenda will threaten men who represent potential powerful allies in the movement. The desire to include men as allies leads to the inclusive, equalizing notion that domestic violence happens across all social groups which makes the issue less contentious.

Other scholars have addressed the dangers of claiming equality as a political strategy. Sociologist and African American Studies scholar Beth Richie (2000) has dealt with the prominent expression in public outreach and education work in the U. S. movement against domestic violence, "it can happen to anyone," which represented an effort by activists working in the movement to deter the individualization of the problem among the general public. Richie argues the popularity of this truism, which was an arguably altruistic attempt to affirm it can happen to anyone, led to the erasure of race and class as meaningful analytic categories. The newly constituted message was this happens to white, middle-class women, "deserving" victims, not just poor women of color, and consequently is a problem deserving of attention. Sociologists Minaker and Snider (2006) have examined the growth of public and scholarly attention in Canada to husbands as domestic violence victims. Gender neutral analyses of domestic violence, an outgrowth of this trend, have become the new "common sense" (755). This common sense is substantiated by "discourses of equality," namely the socio-political preoccupation with declaring equality between men and women, which functions to conceal real inequalities.

Following Minaker and Snider, I identify “discourses of equality” as another tool for erasing difference and depoliticizing the issue of domestic violence. Amy, the Commission’s BIP Coordinator, understood these claims to be a function of the way sexism operates in society. She believes people strategically highlight men are victims in order to not only gain credibility but make the issue more “palatable.” The logic went, if men are victims too, then we do not have to talk about domestic violence as a gender issue and we will not be viewed as “man haters”. Amy shared:

> You’ll hear people will say, “well, you know this certainly this happens to women mostly but don’t forget it happens to men too. Men are abused too.” There’s always this lingering- we need to make sure people understand this happens to men as a way I think because of the dynamics in sexism, because of sexism in our society I think that’s a way to first of all, make it more palatable and secondly, make it more credible.

Amy’s use of the word palatable here invokes important nuances about the way I heard domestic violence activists, advocates, and other professionals reference gender and sexuality. Through my attendance at public awareness events, trainings, and various meetings across the state I heard women make homophobic jokes, underscore their heterosexuality, reject feminism, and argue women are as violent as men. I came to see these practices as strategies to gain credibility. During a community coalition meeting a CC member confessed publically to being accused of being a “man hater” because of her domestic violence activism and offered seriously that she had to get married to prove she wasn’t a lesbian. Another community coalition member disclosed in a meeting that she did not respond to a local news story about violence against men being underreported because she did not want to appear like a “rabid feminist.” All of these actions served a particular purpose. Both women were aware of hostile perceptions of feminism or domestic violence activists and took steps to avoid being affiliated with such an image.

In the first example, the woman was reclaiming her heterosexuality publically, which was at risk because of her domestic violence activist work. In the second example, the woman was aware of hostile perceptions of feminism and chose not to respond to a problematic news story to avoid association with that image.

Having men involved on community coalitions was an important part of gaining credibility. Judge Bonnie believed a coalition without any men involved could invoke defensiveness from men who may perceive a group of women speaking out against domestic violence as antagonistic against men. The inclusion of men in activism work as a strategy to gain legitimacy was a strategy I heard from other CC members. For instance, one CC member, a woman employed with a non-profit free legal services agency, shared that their most recent nominating committee aimed to get men and law enforcement into officer positions because they thought having more men in leadership would improve participation and attendance.

In order to contextualize my analysis, a brief history of homophobia among domestic violence advocacy groups and shelters locally is warranted to explain a persistent schism. The statewide Coalition opened its doors in the early 1980s as a volunteer feminist organization, responsible for providing training, resources, and other forms of support to domestic violence shelters and also dispersed state family violence funds to shelters. The legislature moved all responsibility for the distribution of state and federal family violence funds to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) in late 1980s, and around the same time the Coalition split off into two separate groups. All of the people I interviewed with knowledge of the split, either through firsthand experience or by word of mouth, identified homophobia as the cause of the

split. One woman I spoke with was a shelter executive director at that time where she worked for nearly thirty years and shared a detailed recounting of the story with me. She explained that before the split some shelters were discriminating against lesbians by not allowing them entry into shelter because they were concerned the women would make sexual advances at the other women in shelter. Coalition members disagreed about how to handle these discriminatory practices. Some Coalition members wanted to require shelters to stop while other members felt to do so would be dictatorial. The Coalition's policy at the time was to only allocate state funding to members, so there was money at stake as well. The oppositional Coalition members had strong connections at the legislature and managed to remove the Coalition's authority to allocate state funds and striped the original Coalition of its own state funding. Finally, the oppositional group created their own entity. Both groups operated for several years until the original group closed its doors in the early 2000s. The oppositional group remained in existence and after a few name changes developed into the Coalition in existence today. This tumultuous history foreshadows an enduring tension within domestic violence practice locally around sexual orientation.

Even though many activists I spoke with were never overtly homophobic or sexist, an illuminating incident during the 2010 legislative session demonstrates the veracity of these tensions. The executive director of a government agency fighting for political and economic power manipulated these tensions to produce divisions within the domestic violence shelter community. During legislative efforts to eliminate the Commission in 2010, they faced a threat through consolidation into another government agency, the Governor's Office for Child Welfare (GOCW). The GOCW staff was also

making plays to gain control over the allocation of FVPSA money, which was performed by DHR at the time. Jane, the GOCW Executive Director, met with shelter directors lobbying to gain their support, and a key strategy she used was to say she would not force shelters to address race, LGBT issues, or other volatile issues such as abortion. Instead, she explained the only focus would be domestic violence – a depoliticized approach to the work. This was a successful strategy and some shelters interests were peaked. Gary describes her strategy here:

> I think a lot of this has to do with Jane saying I'm not going to talk about pro-choice stuff, I'm not gonna talk about racism. We're just gonna talk about victims- helping victims. We're not gonna talk about any oppressions and all these lesbians coming around…everybody's the same- we're not gonna talk about pro-abortion or any of that stuff…So I think a lot of that was motivated by racism, sexism, and homophobia.

Jane took advantage of the fact that some people were resistant to talking about gender, race, and sexuality to create a division. Ultimately, this was not enough to sway most executive directors but this did compel some executive directors to relinquish their membership at the Coalition, which was perceived by some to be a radical, feminist organization representing the opposite of what Jane was promising.

All of these strategies to gain credibility demonstrate an apprehension or unease with being labeled feminist, a lesbian, or a woman's group. I found this was felt so strongly that some domestic violence activists, advocates, and other professionals were strategically silent about gender and other categories of difference. Homophobia and sexism are undeniably at work here; however, what is really at stake? Is it prejudice alone what makes the identification of men as survivors make the issue of domestic violence more agreeable or safe to talk about? Similarly, what processes explain why male involvement on a community coalition makes the work feel more legitimate? The

actors employing these strategies were not all malicious. For instance, David and Judge Bonnie felt strongly that gender neutrality would lead to a broader involvement and support from institutions and systems across the board.

Another way to think about these decisions is to look at who *is* willing to talk about domestic violence as a social problem in which constructions of gender play an important role. From a historical standpoint, many scholars of domestic violence have highlighted research that demonstrates most survivors are women. Dobash and Dobash (1983) titled their early pioneering work Violence Against Wives specifically because of the fact that the primary victim of domestic violence are women. Work by scholars from an array of disciplines start from this position. The title of the federal law the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 also reveals a broader public awareness that women are the primary victims of domestic violence. Moreover, many of the local activists and advocates I spoke with were well aware of this reality. Therefore, it is significant that there were individuals publically in disagreement with this analysis of domestic violence.

I argue that more broadly these actors were reconstituting their political subjectivities through the rejection of a gendered analysis of domestic violence. Engendered subjects and notions of the self are produced and reproduced through discourses and symbolic categories of gender, and engendered subjects in turn produce self-representations of themselves (Moore 1994: 138-140).[79] I want to extend Moore's insight with the argument that the rejection of a gendered analysis of domestic violence represents an effort to produce new political subjectivities. Actors were reconstituting themselves as apolitical subjects taking action to address domestic violence. This

represented a different form of political action that was "for everyone" and did not necessitate an analysis of social inequality or difference.

Significance

Scholars have highlighted an increase in the popularity of coalitions since the 1980s that are now commonly called upon to address vast array of social problems and public health concerns (Berkowitz 2001; Butterfoss 2007; Clark et al. 1996; Wies 2011). Much of the research evaluating the effectiveness of coalitions to achieve desired outcomes is ambiguous at best. Allen et al. (2008) suggest the value of coalitions is not that they themselves are implementers of change but the actors they engage as issues are discussed leads to possibility for change, then this might nullify or at least raise important concerns about much of the evaluation literature citing coalitions as failures for not achieving particular outcomes. Berkowitz makes a similar argument suggesting traditional evaluation may not be the best tool for assessing the nuances of coalition outcomes and proposes the possibility that "coalitions and collaborations are simply too complicated to be adequately evaluated by the scientific methodology that is now available" (2001: 224).

An increasing number of anthropologists have begun to make contributions to the investigation of the arena of coalition practice. In their introduction to a special issue of the Annals of Anthropological Practice, Morris and Luque (2011) suggest that "coalition effectiveness is not static—the coalition is perhaps more rightly considered a "process" than an "organization"" (3). This conceptualization complicates any attempts to evaluate coalitions for specific measurable outcomes and reveals the contribution ethnography

offers with attention to the historically contingent shifts in discourse and practice revealed through up close examinations of day to day life on the ground. Perhaps instead of looking for specific outcomes that are a direct product of community coalition efforts scholars and practitioners should think creatively about how to shift our attention to the opportunities these spaces create for possibilities for change as Allen et al. (2008) suggested.

The networking and relationship building aspect of bringing differently positioned people together to talk about social problems may indicate such a space. Participation with a community coalition offered valuable informal and indirect routes to information sharing and knowledge production outside of formal trainings and protocol development. CC members were able to talk about their understandings of domestic violence and the systemic responses to address it. I understand the availability of this space for dialogue and increased understanding as a measure of "success" not easily quantified. Everyday conversations through community coalition practice could and did lead to new understandings which helped to bridge differences. On another more tangible level merely being present at a community coalition meeting led to increased awareness of existing and emergent services and policies. This information could help people better perform their individual jobs and address identified gaps and barriers to system responses to domestic violence.

CC members also found that harnessing particular professional backgrounds and political clout could help make things happen. There were key instances where CC members found that a criminal justice background helped to produce and strengthen that particular systems engagement with community coalitions. This could be in the form of

participation as a CC member or involvement with a community coalition project such as an engaged training attendee. Power wielding was also a strategy I saw employed in order to persuade people into action, again either directly as a CC member or a participant with community coalition work in another manner.

Overall, a major source of distress for CC members (and Jessie) was the level of control they had over the success and failure to achieve particular goals and outcomes, which I suggest produced tensions in discourse and practice between technocratic procedures and non-universalizing responses attentive to difference. CC members' were conflicted about technocratic practices and even as they powered forward with trainings and protocols they simultaneously questioned their efficacy. CC members were clearly aware of power differences within and across social categories and professional networks, which they sometimes strategically used to their advantage. At the same time, when it came to incorporating an analysis inclusive of critical axes of difference in community coalition discourse and practice many CC members dodged the issue ostensibly to make advocacy work more palatable. The broader state context in which actors were situated was not only socially and politically conservative but repressive and sometimes hostile to non-white, male, heterosexual persons particularly in areas outside the diverse, urban Morganville metropolitan area with the exception of state government. This reality surely provoked CC members to 'choose' to not see the way intersections of oppression differentially affect peoples' experience of domestic violence and systems responses to the problem.

Within feminist circles, another area of tension concerns disagreement about the causes of domestic violence and priorities for corrective interventions. The next chapter

will explore the experiences of one community coalition working to address domestic violence in the LGBTQQI community as it formed and attempted to perform official goals while grappling with divergent understandings of the manner in which power operates within lesbian relationships where assumptions of a universality of the survivor-perpetrator binary were challenged. This conflict in meaning, alongside structural constraints on organizational development and participation will provide a case study of the constraints on the community coalition model.

CHAPTER 6

POLITICS OF COMMUNITY COALITON PRACTICE:

POWER AND THE (DE)CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

As feminist-identified activists strive to establish United 4 Justice (U4J), a community coalition to address intimate partner violence experienced by LGBTQQI identified persons,[80] they grapple with what to make of alternative theories on intimate partner violence that are antithetical to dominant discourses in the U. S. movement against domestic violence. Significant debates arise between U4J members as they come to experience a challenge in which dichotomous categories of "survivors" and "perpetrators" are challenged by more fluid, varied, and context-specific analyses of intimate partner violence. Well-intentioned actors who received their formative education and training in the U. S. movement against domestic violence struggle greatly with what to make of alternative understandings of survivors and perpetrators. Resistance to alternative discourses persisted even while activists were challenging other dominant binaries in the violence against women that associate men/masculinity with power and dominance as perpetrators of abuse, and women/femininity with powerlessness and vulnerability to perpetration of abuse as survivors. These discursive tensions did not exist within a vacuum but instead operated within an environment where activists navigated overt and institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism, and parallel systematic inequalities operated together to deter activists from challenging dominant discourses.

The sine qua non of the U. S. movement against domestic violence has been to "keep survivors safe and hold perpetrators accountable." The rigid differentiation between survivors and perpetrators is a key component of this argument and is situated within a larger system of binaries utilized in feminist theories of intimate partner violence that construct a dichotomy between men as the primary perpetrators of abuse and women as the primary survivors. The gendered survivor/perpetrator binary was an effective political strategy for shifting blame off survivors for the abuse they experienced and convincing the broader public to view violence against women as a serious crime (Merry 2009: 16-18; Ristock 2005: 65-66). More recently, scholars studying intimate partner violence in lesbian relationships have critically examined the survivor/perpetrator binary and argued for more flexible understandings of intimate partner violence. Research on lesbian intimate partner violence by Women's Studies scholar Janice Ristock (2002) shows more fluidity in the power dynamics between partners both across and within relationships and provides an important lens to critically examine dominant discourses about intimate partner violence.

My attention to the complex ways in which U4J members participated in the production of and resistance against dominant constructions of domestic violence was guided by Sherry Ornter's subaltern practice theory. Ortner (1996) asserts that one of the most important contributions that practice theory has to offer is the theorization of human agency as both constructed by social and cultural structures and also a producer of these structures, with the capacity to transform them as well (1-7). She instead argues for the conception of "structurally embedded agency" or "intention-filled structures" and uses the term "serious games" to describe this system or situation (12). A chief aim of such a

framework is to include attention to and a discussion of human action without assuming complete free agency or ignoring the impact social and cultural systems have on subjects. Additionally, the goal is to highlight relations of power, struggle and resistance so instead of only focusing on the way subjects create systems and how systems create subjects, Ortner encourages watching for breaks in this circle and moments where change is possible. Sites of U4J practice represent such a moment and constitute what I would qualify as a "success;" however, in other ways U4J "failed" when key members withdrew on the basis of ideological differences and different visions for U4J's future.

Historical and Political Context of Domestic Violence Knowledge Production

Dominant feminist theorizations of intimate partner violence in the U.S. argue that abuse towards an intimate partner is a systematic attempt to gain power and control over them and is rooted within a larger system of patriarchy all women operate within on a daily basis (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Schechter 1982). Broad societal resistance to acknowledging violence against women as a systemic problem and survivor blaming in response to women's reports of abuse is also understood to be a product of patriarchy and sexism. A woman's experience of violence at the hands of her intimate partner is understood to not just be an individual or family problem, but part of a larger social problem of patriarchy that all women are survivors of, even if not in an abusive relationship at a particular moment. So if patriarchy is real and men do have more power than women in society as a whole, it follows that men can more easily leverage power in heterosexual intimate relationships which leads to an increased likelihood that men will perpetrate abuse and women will be survivors of male abuse.

Another key component of the power and control theorization of abuse is that one person is always the perpetrator and the other person is a survivor; there is no fluidity between these roles. Dominant feminist theories on intimate partner violence identify men as the primary perpetrators and women the primary survivors. The rigid differentiation between survivors and perpetrators does still provide space to examine women's use of violence but maintains that while victimization may lead to resistance, a survivor never uses power and control in the same manner a perpetrator does (Miller 2001). For example, if a woman uses violence against her partner or other controlling behavior, she is resorting to these tactics in order to keep herself safe. There is a big difference between being violent or performing controlling behaviors to protect your self and create safety, as opposed to a means to systematically gain power and control over a partner.

The consistent response to this social problem from domestic violence advocates and activists has been an emphasis on keeping survivors safe through policy reform, resource development, and holding perpetrators accountable through the criminal justice system and the broader community change as a whole (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Schechter 1982). The significance of this focus was evident throughout my fieldwork through which I attended countless meetings, trainings, and outreach events in which this message was strongly and consistently presented. Activists are inundated with the survivor/perpetrator binary and corresponding message to "keep survivors safe and hold perpetrators accountable" through organizational education and outreach materials and the mission statements of domestic violence shelters across the county. Mary, a long-standing U4J member, remarked during a discussion about this binary at a meeting that

she had not been working in the U. S. movement against domestic violence very long, but the dichotomy already felt "ingrained" in her. A cursory examination of websites for national and state level agencies in the U.S. working to reduce the incidence of intimate partner violence illuminates this emphasis as well. Much research demonstrates that a gendered survivor/perpetrator binary accurately reflects the experiences of many persons experiencing intimate partner violence in heterosexual relationships; however, a growing body of research has demonstrated the need for multiple theories on intimate partner violence that account for the diverse experiences of persons experiencing it.

Beginning in the early 1980s, feminist activists began talking publically about intimate partner violence in the context of lesbian relationships and research began to emerge demonstrating important differences across non-heterosexual and heterosexual abuse. Since the first published book on lesbian intimate partner violence in 1986 (Lobel) there has been a growth in research on the issue, especially over the last ten years. Janice Ristock's (2002) important research on lesbian intimate partner violence presents findings that challenged the dominant power and control theory and disrupted the survivor/perpetrator binary. Her research suggests complex and varying power dynamics between lesbian partners both across and within relationships and argues for more flexible, context-specific analyses of intimate partner violence. She called for the use of the concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1994) to examine individuals' experiences of intimate partner violence through the intersecting role of: the multiple contexts in which people experience abuse; multiple and overlapping subject identities; and interweaving systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Her research illuminates the need for new theoretical models to understand intimate partner violence within

lesbian relationships that go beyond patriarchy and power and control. She argued that the power and control theory on intimate partner violence is a normative discourse that assumes we will find patterns of fear and intimidation on the part of survivors in response to the systematic power and control perpetrators exert. Assuming all survivors' experiences are the same erases any varied experiences that do not match this paradigm and leads to organizational practices that exclude those who do not fit.[81] Ristock used Foucault's analysis on subjugated knowledge expressing concern about the way hegemonic discourses in the U. S. movement against domestic violence produce regimes of truth that lead to the subjugation of alternative knowledge and truth claims. She interviewed service providers who saw through their advocacy work that the experiences of lesbian women varied but they still continued to rely on a power and control analysis despite the fact that it did not always support what they observed on the ground.

Research by sociologist Michael Johnson (2005) proposes that divergent theories on intimate partner violence are a result of different methodological approaches. He identified three types of intimate partner violence: intimate terrorism, violent resistance, and situational couple violence. He explains the type commonly thought as intimate partner violence is what he defines as intimate terrorism, which is definitely gendered and primarily male perpetuated where there is a clear perpetrator who terrorizes his partner through coercive power and control tactics. Situational couple violence is a different form in which an argument escalates into violence, and is almost as likely to be perpetuated by women as men. Johnson's typology offers an explanation for contradictory findings by feminist and family violence researchers. The former use domestic violence shelter and criminal justice system data heavily skewed toward

intimate terrorism, and the latter use large surveys dominated by situational couple violence. Consequently, Johnson believes contradictory theoretical models on abuse are due to a failure to distinguish types of intimate partner violence being analyzed. He argues a gender-based analysis makes sense when examining intimate terrorism, but does not always hold up when analyzing situational couple violence.

While these two researchers were talking about different communities experiencing intimate partner violence, both were challenging hegemonic discourses in domestic violence advocacy work. Some researchers have identified reticence on the part of various actors to talk about women's use of violence or to consider alternative theoretical models to explain intimate partner violence for fear that such information will harm the cause or jeopardize gains made within the U. S. movement against domestic violence. Eaton (1994) identified hesitancy to acknowledge intimate partner violence in lesbian communities because this disrupted the idea of a "lesbian utopia" and also because of a fear that this information would be misused (217). Ristock identified hesitancy to challenge the dominant gendered analysis which has offered an effective analysis for activists and practitioners faced with a decades long fight against discourses blaming women for their experiences of abuse and policies that compromised the safety of women and their children, while simultaneously fighting for research funding, legislative reform, outreach, and resource development to address the problem. Here are Ristock's words:

> "Preserving a gender-based analysis has been a central concern of the women's movement as we have tried to confront the overwhelming level of male violence against women…The primacy of a gender-based analysis in feminism does not mean we are selectively keeping secrets, as the title of this volume might suggest, but it has meant we can be reticent about revealing things that disrupt our efforts to create seamless, unitary understandings of violence" (2002: 4).

Ristock's argument resonates with what I heard in the field from key actors working at the state level. For instance, at a panel on women's use of violence during the Commission's annual conference in 2010 a long-time activist in state-level politics and executive director of a large Morganville intimate partner violence advocacy organization spoke up during the dinner portion regarding positive shifts in the degree to which women's use of violence has being discussed among activists and practitioners. She recalled a past tendency within the movement to avoid talking about the issue out of fear it would counter the patriarchy theoretical framework as the root cause of abuse against intimate partners. During an interview with Mary she identified a major struggle within the movement around the identification of causes. She reflected on how her own understandings of intimate partner violence have changed and become more complex beyond just seeing patriarchy as the sole root cause of the problem but recognizing experiences of abuse are variable for different people. She identified a tendency to align with single causes or answers due to multiple pressures related to being a marginalized advocacy group. The following reflection Mary offered is illuminating:

> I think it's easier to point at single answers or single causes or single reasons because it makes it more manageable for us doing this work but I think if you look at peoples' actual lives that's not how it plays out…it'd be easier if we had one thing and we could avoid that. I think that's a general theme in our movement and it think there's in a way an unwillingness to change and I think a lot of that comes from us being a marginalized group working against this and that we also have so many forces fighting our minimal change that if we stop back and say, "hey, this is more complicated than we first thought" or "we have more to consider" than its almost like we're putting ourselves up for more attacks.

This fear is not baseless as there has been significant backlash against the U. S. movement against domestic violence by men's rights activists who have used research that challenges gendered theories on abuse to present a gender symmetry analysis and

argue women are equally as violent as men (For example, see Minaker and Snider 2006 and Ristock 2002 for discussion). My research offers a case study on the divisive impact having these conversations can have on a community coalition. In what remains, I will examine resistance to alternative understandings of intimate partner violence on the ground, and consider what we can learn from coalition members' response.

Resistance to Alternative Knowledge

The lens aforementioned research provided to critically examine discourses about intimate partner violence dominant in the mainstream movement against domestic vioelnce became important during my fieldwork when some U4J members presented alternative theories on intimate partner violence to the rest of the membership. They presented Ristock's research on lesbian abuse that challenged dichotomous understandings of survivor and perpetrator, pushing to change the language used to talk about intimate partner violence through the coalition's education and outreach work. Core U4J members demonstrated strong resistance to the information and ultimately refused to abandon the dominant theories that formed the foundation of their practice. These core U4J members, unfamiliar with this literature, struggled greatly with how to process the new information and if so, how the information should be integrated into the work of U4J.

An emerging research question for me was: why were core U4J members so invested in the survivor/perpetrator binary and resistant to alternative understandings of intimate partner violence? I gradually came to see a few processes operating together to produce this investment; however, this investment was neither neat nor clear-cut, instead

there were moments when members questioned and challenged other dominant discourses. This resistance was produced by: real ideological differences; an organizational structure that excluded diverse perspectives early on, inhibited dialogue, and led to unequal access to decision making; overt and institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism; and scarce resources for the LGBTQQI identified persons that created a fear of challenging dominant discourses. U4J members were very much aware of the fissure these discursive tensions produced and made attempts to address them, but these efforts were unsuccessful and ultimately the members presenting alternative knowledge left the coalition.

The Influential Role of Core U4J Members

The influential role of actors working in mainstream domestic violence advocacy work cannot be understated as the discursive norms and practices they brought to the table heavily shaped the infrastructural development of U4J. The dozen or so individuals who came together early in the development of U4J represented a number of different agencies, but most of them worked in domestic violence advocacy work. Moreover, three women representing the group of core U4J members that by and large propelled and sustained its development were all employed with agencies working to address domestic violence and received their formative education and training through the mainstream U. S. movement against domestic violence. These three women included Jessie, the Commission's Community Coalition Liaison; Lisa, a Prevention and Outreach Director for a Morganville domestic violence shelter; and Tracy, a Development Director for another Morganville domestic violence agency. Later as the formal structure of U4J was

being established, in part through the attainment of 501©3 status, these women came to comprise two-thirds of the first formal executive committee and sat as chairs of two of the three active U4J committees. Jessie was elected as chair and Tracy as co-chair of U4J. Since Tracy performed development work in her full-time job outside of U4J, she stepped up as chair of the development committee in charge of identifying and applying for grant funding. Lisa was the chair of the training and outreach committee, also a position that reflected the work she performed in her full-time job.[82]

Serendipitous events led two of the core U4J members, Jessie and Lisa, to attend the same workshop at a National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Conference that sparked their interest in working together on the issue. At the workshop, two organizations from a northeastern state shared their experiences building partnerships to address all forms of abuse experienced by LGBTQQI identified persons, including but not limited to hate crimes and intimate partner violence. Even though Jessie and Lisa were only acquaintances prior to meeting at the conference, they were both inspired by the presentation and met afterwards to chat over drinks. They realized nothing like this was being done in their state and decided they wanted to create a similar effort back home. Upon their return, Jessie and Lisa were introduced to Tracy through a colleague who believed Tracy would also have an interest in getting involved. After yet another informal conversation, the three women decided they would create a community coalition following the model Jessie was familiar with and reached out to other individuals whom they thought would be interested in organizing around the issue. These events signaled the development of U4J.

Jessie, Tracy, and Lisa were in a position to spend a significant amount of time working with U4J because each of their bosses at their respective agencies allowed them to allocate time and resources from their full-time job to U4J. Their defensive response to suggestions for alternative direction resulted in part from the strong feelings of ownership that emerged from the substantial amount of time they dedicated to working with U4J. During an interview with Tracy, she said she believed the support they received from their bosses was crucial to them being able to get so much accomplished in U4J's first year of existence. This statement reflects Tracey's perception of the three women performing much of the work of U4J, which was definitely beneficial in regard to getting U4J up and running. However, this also resulted in the three women largely guided the direction and work of U4J early on since other U4J members with different experiences and perspectives were not able to dedicate as much time to the work.

The three women quickly developed a close relationship because of all the time they spent working together and their friendship led to informal socializing during which conversations about the direction of U4J and decision making took place without the inclusion of the entire U4J membership. Many of my field notes about U4J are marked with questions posed by other members regarding projects underway that illustrate the resultant uneven knowledge about U4J projects. During an interview with Amanda, one of the earliest members, she remarked not always knowing what was "going on" or what decisions were being made:

> "I know there were some feelings about things that were going on, decisions that were being made might not have been as <u>transparent</u> as we might've liked, 'cause there were grants being applied, things- decisions being made that maybe <u>everyone</u> didn't always know everything <u>about</u>. I think sometimes that's just the nature of not everyone being able to go to the [community coalition] all the time and sometimes information gets left out and it's hard to keep everyone updated on

> everything, so I think that that plays a role…I had moments where I kinda felt like that too where I needed to ask questions a lot, so I don't- I didn't remember things happening or decisions being made. So you know I think- I think that's just kind of a tendency with most- a lot of [community coalitions]."

I often felt that I knew more about various U4J projects because of my position conducting participant observation at the Commission because Jessie was employed there. I had countless informal conversations with Jessie in which I was updated on U4J projects and learned information that I would have otherwise had no knowledge of until the next bimonthly community coalition meeting, unless I asked. The organization of U4J into committees also created structural constraints that led to unequal knowledge between members about what projects were being taken on and what decisions were being made. There were many moments when members missed a committee meeting and had to ask clarifying questions at the general community coalition meeting about projects and decisions being made. When members brought up concerns about not knowing information, Jessie, Tracey, and Lisa would frequently respond that anyone can attend the meetings that decisions were being made at – the voices' of those individuals incapable of allocating as much time to attend meetings were rendered less influential by nature of the way the community coalition was structured.

These three women represented core U4J members who ultimately held influential leadership roles within U4J and by and large propelled its development. This was significant insofar as their knowledge and experience from the mainstream movement heavily informed the structural development of and decisions concerning the direction of the coalition. All three invested in the discursive survivor/perpetrator binary which represented a hegemonic discourse within the mainstream movement. This investment combined with other factors related to organizational structure, scare

resources for LGBTQQI identified persons experiencing intimate partner violence, and overt and institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism paved the way for their resistance to alternative discourses and practices.

Structural Constraints: The Exclusion and Separation of Dissent

The core U4J members' resistance stemmed from an early structural exclusion of diverse perspectives and the fact that new theories challenged dominant understandings held by members who possessed strong feelings of ownership over the coalition. The early processes and procedures employed during the establishment of U4J comprised of first meeting as a small group to determine direction, goals, and structure, and later inviting the involvement of a larger group. This strategy prevented diverse representation of voices at the table during the early planning stages. Strong feelings of ownership on the part of the core U4J members developed as they spent a disproportionate amount of time conducting the work of U4J compared to other U4J members.

The knowledge Jessie attained through her community coalition support efforts, and reviews of the literature on effective coalition building strongly influenced her early vision for U4J infrastructure. In fact, the early processes and procedures employed during the establishment of U4J mirrored the recommendations Jessie provided to community coalitions throughout the state. Jessie occupied a unique position within the local network of actors addressing domestic violence, first as Community Coalition Liaison, and later as chair of U4J. Jessie's position at the Commission afforded her a significant amount of time to conduct the work and influence the infrastructural development of U4J. Jessie envisioned a coalition working to reduce the incidence of

intimate partner violence by LGBTQQI identified persons organized similarly to the community coalitions she supported in her full-time job.

As Community Coalition Liaison, Jessie advised CC members trying to start a community coalition, to first meet as a small group to determine a mission statement, goals, committees, and structure. After laying down this foundation, she then advised reaching out to a larger group of people to invite and become involved. Jessie identified the effectiveness of this strategy with an understanding that people dislike attending meetings in which there is no structure dreading sitting around a table talking about what they would like to accomplish but goals are never set or reached. Jessie believed that by first establishing broad goals and committees as a small group, and then inviting more people after the foundation of the community coalition is established, they could ensure new people were walking into a meeting with established goals and committees. New CC members could then plug into an activity they wanted to be involved with, and feel productive.

The announcement for the official launch party for U4J represented the first of multiple events where a small group made key decisions that the remainder of U4J members were asked to sign onto rather than truly inclusive in the decision making process. During the first few months of the development of U4J, half a dozen or so individuals met every couple of weeks to discuss what they envisioned for the coalition and developed a mission statement, purpose and goals, and committees for the first year. After a few months of meeting, the group reached out to an even larger group of people whom they invited to a launch party for the community coalition. In addition to information about the event, the flyer for the launch event provided the established

mission, purpose and goals, and committees for 2009: executive committee, research and evaluation committee, training and outreach committee, and shelter services committee. The flyer also provided an abbreviated description of the months of planning leading up to the launch event and stated, “the goal of this event will be to share with you how this organization was formed and the work that we are preparing to do.” The flyer communicated the message that the group had already decided on a committee organizational structure and the general direction of goals and was inviting more people to join this established structure. Committees themselves were given the opportunity to produce specific goals and projects but the broad objectives of U4J were delineated through the prior establishment of four specific committees.

Announcements by core U4J members at the first official U4J meeting presented a committee organizational structure as a mode of practice that was predetermined and seeking out 501©3 as a common sense next step in the organizational development process. All of the committees with the exception of the executive committee were listed on a sign up sheet for launch party attendees to select from for participation. The four committees announced at the launch event included: development, outreach and training, research and evaluation, and shelter services. The core U4J members also announced that an executive committee would need to be elected soon as well as establishing a name before 501©3 status could be sought out. Subsequent topics brought up by the core U4J members at meetings dealt with the logistics of making this happen, such as asking U4J members for feedback on the bylaw development process, but major decisions were made through informal communication between core U4J members the bi-monthly U4J meetings leading to uneven knowledge of information and exclusive participation in

decision making. For instance, the next time 501©3 status was brought up to the entire membership after the first meeting was at the third meeting where revising the bylaws was discussed. Many small decisions had been made during the interim that most U4J members had no involvement in making.

While four committees were announced at the launch event, the core U4J members only directed their energy to some of these projects, which ended up flourishing while the others either never materialized or ultimately dissolved. None of the core U4J members decided to take a lead on the shelter committee and neither did anyone else, so this work never materialized as attention was directed to other three committees. Tracy solely spearheaded the development committee putting in a significant amount of time to apply for a number of corporate and government grants. Early informal conversations between Tracy and Jessie prior to the first official U4J meeting reveal a focus on securing funding for training and outreach work. Ultimately, all of the grants secured funded training and outreach projects which supported core U4J members' attention to this work. A small group of non-core U4J members took the lead on research and evaluation committee work; however, ideological differences revealed between the core U4J members and research committee members pertaining to the survivor/perpetrator binary combined with structural pressures produced fractures ultimately resulting in the research committee members leaving the organization and the research committee dissolving.

The organization of the coalition into committees created structural constraints leading to unequal knowledge of projects and decision making, and also hindered dialogue between members. By the time the summer of 2009 rolled around, U4J members on the research committee revealed not feeling included in the decision to go

for 501©3 as well as other important decisions regarding direction and goals. The research committee, whose members introduced the new research challenging dominant discourses, was comprised of different individuals than the outreach and training committee. The two committees met and worked separately, which created a false separation between theory and practice in the eyes of the core U4J members. Coalition members decided as a group that the research committee would conduct a needs assessment that would inform the outreach and training projects. However, the needs assessment took several months to complete, and the core U4J members became frustrated by the slow pace of research and felt an urgency to begin outreach and training, so moved forward with working on projects months before the needs assessment was complete. Conducting outreach and training became more important to core U4J members than conducting research to assess who should be the targets of training, what the content of training should be, and whether training should be considered as an actual goal.

The discursive and physical separation of theory and practice, essentially research and outreach and training projects, provided core U4J members with the space to regard ideological considerations as disconnected from practice. A clear demonstration of this was the development of a reading group in response to the presentation of relevant scholarly research by some U4J members. The reading group was scheduled separate from the regular coalition meeting where new research on intimate partner violence would be discussed. However, the reading group was poorly attended and only met a few times before dissolving. Attendance was primarily comprised of the research committee and only one of the core U4J members, Jessie, attended. This sent a clear message that

research or theory was disconnected from and less important than the regular work or practice of the coalition. One core U4J member explained when speaking more broadly about U4J's work that there was such a dearth of good information and resources for the LBGTQ community that she didn't believe they had the time to pause and think theoretically about their work. She viewed theoretical considerations and coalition practice as separate, and prioritize the latter.

Jessie expressed doubt almost a year and a half later after the launch event that the small group first strategy was an organizational development model for community coalitions. She realized important perspectives were not included during the early U4J planning months that should have been and problematized the universal, widespread use of this strategy. However, real ideological differences between U4J members and feelings of working in a "crisis mode" entangled with structural constraints deterred core U4J members from being proactive about correcting the lack of diverse perspectives.

Ideological Differences and the Interplay with "Crisis Mode"

Core U4J members were strongly invested in using the survivor/perpetrator language and argued that when it came to service delivery, using the language was crucial to supporting and empowering survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. Tracy, a core U4J member in a leadership position, made the argument that using the word "survivor" was critical when providing crisis advocacy to individuals experiencing abuse and situated this in the empowerment model of service delivery dominant in the mainstream movement. She believed using this language was less crucial when working

on the issue outside the immediate context of service delivery, such as working on primary prevention. Tracy explained:

> "If I'm talking to somebody in crisis, I will use the term survivor because that's going to be an empowering word for them. I will not use the word victim. I will not. I will not. You know, there's just very real reasons why we use the language we use and it's always to empower the survivor and to ask people who deal with survivors in crisis to step away from those empowering languages, I'm like it'll never happen...When we're dealing with someone in crisis this is how we're gonna work it. When we're talking about the larger dynamic across the community- if you want me to go out and do primary prevention and not use "perpetrator" and "survivor" [language], no problem."

When Tracy argued that "survivor" was empowering language for someone experiencing abuse, she was validating the experiences of women who identify with the term but failing to recognize the experiences of other women who may not identify as a "survivor."

Sarah, a key U4J member supportive of the core U4J members' position, presented a parallel argument that naming what a person has had to do to survive an abusive relationship is an essential part of holding perpetrators accountable:

> "I never grew up naming things and being able to name something has been very important for me. I'm still in the process of naming a lot of things for myself and when I can say, you know this person is a survivor and name what this person has done in order to put up with this thing you know…so she has figured out a way to take care of herself, take care of her child, and survive…So names are important for me…you name it, and you say she's a survivor, and then you hold somebody accountable, and you say, you perpetrated that person's integrity. You perpetrated that person's space, and so- so I do like the names and again like earlier we talked about what if this person had been a survivor in another relationship and a survivor um perpetrator in this relationship, then it's for us [advocates] to like move the lens over to this next relationship and then name it and say yes, you were a survivor in that relationship, and yes, you know you are a perpetrator in this relationship."

Sarah felt using these labels would not be problematic if there were shifting roles from survivor to perpetrator across different relationships because an advocate could determine

in each relationship which person was the survivor and perpetrator and apply the appropriate label. Still, she and Tracy were starting from the assumption that within a singular relationship there is always a primary perpetrator and primary survivor who can be identified.

A key event held one year after the launch event demonstrated the degree to which ideological differences between research committee members and core U4J members had intensified revealing core U4J members' defensiveness and resistance to alternative knowledge and practice. At this time a separate meeting was held to develop value statements and to discuss direction and goals for U4J. What everyone hoped to achieve from the meeting varied, but the key impetus for the meeting was a concern held by research committee members that everyone was not on the same page regarding direction of the community coalition. At that meeting the executive committee demonstrated the belief that the values and mission should not change over time as new people join the community coalition and showed frustration when U4J members tried to propose changes to the direction of the coalition. Sarah, a long time U4J member, shared that she wanted everyone to agree on value statements that move the community coalition in the same direction and reach a real consensus, and then not allow new people approaching U4J in the future to hold them back by asking to readdress the values and mission statement all over again. Tanni, a relatively new U4J member, made the argument that continually reassessing direction and goals is important for organizations and suggested that, "sometimes you have to go slow before you go fast." Lisa thanked Tanni for her point and acknowledged that before she came into the meeting that day she felt like "we did this already," which echoed Sarah's sentiment. An interview with Tracy

in which we were discussing other members' suggestions for alternative directions vividly illuminates a strong degree of defensiveness against critique. Tracy remarked:

> "I appreciate people pointing out to us..."why aren't we doing more primary prevention?" because they're absolutely right. We should be doing primary prevention, but they're saying that to people who have given countless hours in the previous two months they haven't been able to give because of they're own commitments. They're saying this to people who are dog tired and beat and given their blood, sweat and tears to what has been accomplished and that just doesn't sit well. You're like, really, could you be less critical and more helpful, is how it's felt."

An imbalance in the level of work U4J members were able to commit was of significant importance to Sarah, a long-term member, who identified these imbalances as deterring core U4J members being more reflexive and having open conversations about alternative directions. She also highlighted an urgency to do as much as they could to help LGBTQQI identified survivors while the resources were available. Sarah explained:

> "If we don't do these things [trainings for advocates, law enforcement, etc] right now with the resources we have, we are putting LGBT survivors in danger, right. There is such a dearth of good information and good resources that if we took all this time to sit back and think about how can we do this better. I feel like we don't have that luxury right now to do it and so we have to be in that go, go, go mode, and- and we have been and we've been successful. And I think for the group like you know who has been working on this and you know just putting all their energy into it, to be challenged the way you know the challenge was brought to us, and then also, to see that the people who are challenging us are not doing their fair share of you know um…work. I think those are the two things that has affected us in being able to have a more you know introspective conversation about this."

Several of my informants across the state defined this urgency to do as much work as possible as being in a "crisis mode." The dominant survivor/perpetrator binary discourse is very powerful and supported the crisis mode response. Feelings of urgency to keep survivors safe and hold perpetrators accountable develop when persons experiencing abuse and dealing with real crises ask for help. Serving a survivor in crisis

becomes a priority and overrides everything else. During an interview Tracy explained that serving survivors was a relatively easy task for U4J to develop because of all the experience doing this work that already existed among U4J members. In the following quote, she talks about the urgency around serving survivors:

> "If you have somebody calling your crisis line who is- you know, who needs emergency financial assistance and transportation, crisis counseling and access to therapy…<u>you really gotta do it</u>. You gotta do it right then. You don't have the <u>luxury</u> of sayin', well, what should this look like? How should we make this look? Crisis gets served before anything else gets served."

There's an urgency to serve survivors in crisis as quickly as possible, and there's no "luxury" to step back and assess what is being done because there is an immediate crisis that needs to be dealt with. Therefore, part of the core U4J members' resistance to even hearing alternative understandings and practices stemmed from the urgency to serve survivors in crisis. The crisis mode mentality led to resistance to slowing down to reflect and think about what was being done and the theoretical frameworks guiding the work.

This urgency was not unfounded because there is a very real lack of resources and support for LGBTQQI identified persons experiencing intimate partner violence in the U.S..[83]

However, reflection on practice and theoretical frameworks guiding work creates space for growth when new perspectives and strategies are available that can help to improve the work being done. If alternative theories on intimate partner violence show more heterogeneity in survivors' experiences, creating more space to talk about and consider these alternative understandings makes sense in terms of potentially improving interventions for LGBTQQI identified persons.

A discussion of pressures on U4J members to do work quickly would be incomplete without a discussion of the impact homophobia had on U4J members personally and on the work they do. During an interview, Jessie discussed the impact she believed homophobia had on her and other U4J members personally and by extension U4J as an organization:

> "We can't look at an individual without looking at the social context around that individual, so we can't look at an organization without looking at the social context around that organization. So we can't look at United 4 Justice in an isolated thing. It's part of a larger system. It's part of a larger society. This larger society is homophobic. And so that affects our organization…[so when I am] sitting with other executive directors [at a meeting] who may not uh outwardly say homophobic statements but are homophobic that personally affects me. I bring that back to United 4 Justice…Has it silenced me in some way? Has it changed how I advocate? Has it changed the way I fight? Am I wanting to be less involved [with United 4 Justice] now because I'm hearing homophobic stuff?"

U4J members regularly dealt with homophobia in the form of overt jokes and more subtle, but pervasive structural exclusions within domestic violence advocacy work but also challenged resistance to talking about LGBTQQI identified persons that was embedded in the systems and agencies in which they operated on a daily basis.

Fear figures prominently, on an individual and larger systemic level, regarding the investment in the survivor/perpetrator binary and resistance against alternative frameworks for understanding intimate partner violence. Jessie explained during an interview how being presented with research on lesbian intimate partner violence that shows fluidity between the survivor and perpetrator role across relationships affected her on a personal level because of her own identification as a survivor:

> "It was hard for me to hear those conversations…that in same sex relationships if you're a- if you're a survivor the likelihood of you being a perpetrator is really high. <u>Personally</u> that affected me and that affected me <u>personally</u> because once I was able to identify myself much later in life as being a survivor then that made

> me question have I ever been a perpetrator in any of my relationships…so that affected me and it probably did not allow me to have very open thoughts about that conversation."

Jessie explained to me during informal conversations that not only was fluidity between the survivor and perpetrator role across relationships an intimidating concept for her personally, but she was also reticent to present some of these more complex theories when conducting trainings, especially considering the relatively small amount of time available to present information during trainings. She explained in the following interview excerpt why she thought the content of U4J's advocate training was appropriate for advocates:

> "I think the content is good for the group that we're training. I think it fits with the group that we're training um I think we can't be too radical with what we're training or folks won't hear us, and what I mean by that is bringing in this uh- and we have to be aware of the time we have to train someone and you can't- you know like talking about this language between perpetrator and survivor."

She was presenting the argument that when training advocates working in mainstream intimate partner violence agencies, U4J can't present information that is too radical and different from advocates' understandings of intimate partner violence, especially considering time limitations, or they will not be heard. I understood this fear of being too radical as being informed by individuals' experiences of homophobia in the form of overt homophobic jokes and the systematic devaluing of LGBTQQI identified persons in the ways that cultural competency training is positioned in separate, smaller spaces in mainstream intimate partner violence agencies manuals and trainings.

In spite of all of this, U4J members did fight to create spaces to talk about the LGBTQQI specific issues within a diverse range of systems that responded to intimate partner violence, no matter how seemingly small. Examples of small, tangible but

imperfect changes include convincing the Coalition to add a dozen page section addressing LGBTQQI specific experiences of intimate partner violence written by U4J members in the agency's 100 plus page training manual for new advocates.[84] Getting twelve pages into an advocate training manual represented a small but important success. This manual was used in the required statewide basic training for domestic violence advocates across the state and thus represented an opportunity to shape understandings of LGBTQQI persons' experiences of intimate partner violence and hopefully improve service provision by increasing advocates' understandings. Adding a section specific to LGTQQI identified persons was an improvement on the previous smaller section which to the horror of U4J members conflated the barriers sexual orientation and immigrant status produced for survivors. In addition, U4J was able to present for fifteen minutes during an hour and a half long cultural competency panel that covered information on *all* minority groups – a very small amount of time considering the panel was part of a three-day Coalition training for new advocates. Sometimes U4J successes appeared minuscule when considering the broader context and how much more work needed to be done. Even without getting into a critical discussion of the problems with this compartmentalized approach to cultural competency (see Adelman 2004), the smaller, separate spaces created for discussion of LGBTQQI issues sends the message that the experiences of LGBTQQI identified survivors are less important than the experiences of the heterosexual community.

Then again at other times the positive effects of their work reverberated in unanticipated ways revealing incremental change due to their efforts. As U4J members' understandings of LGBTQQI issues increased and they took this to their respective

agencies positive changes emerged. For example, Lisa was able to convince the major domestic violence shelter she worked for to participate in an "advocate appreciation day." The event was designed to create space for advocates to discuss struggles they experienced working with LGBTQQI survivors (self identified or "identified' by staff) and for U4J to learn what material would be beneficial in trainings. Lisa believed the day was really useful for the staff in terms of increasing awareness of LGBTQQI persons' experiences of intimate partner violence. She also felt after that day the staff had been better allies at creating change within the agency. They revamped their mission statement to be gender-neutral and used the term intimate partner violence instead of domestic violence. Also, the agency also later held a workplace conference that included a skit depicting a lesbian couple, which also represented a step in a positive direction in terms of increasing dialogue about LGBTQQI issues.

The aforementioned processes laid the foundation for and informed both the structural development of U4J and relationships and forms of communication between members. This in turn informed the way members perceived and experienced any challenges to the direction of the community coalition and knowledge about intimate partner violence guiding their work. U4J members were not blindly following all dominant binaries about intimate partner violence contained within dominant domestic violence advocacy discourses. They did challenge the gendered way that the dominant survivor/perpetrator binary is constructed in the mainstream movement. A key concept in the U4J training curriculum on providing cultural competent services and determining the primary aggressor in same-sex relationships, is that the more masculine or more butch partner is not always the perpetrator, and the more feminine or more petite partner is not

always the survivor. However, U4J members were still presenting the argument that there is always a primary aggressor and thus preserved the dominant survivor/perpetrator binary.

I found Sherry Ortner's *subaltern practice theory* (1996) useful for examining the way U4J members grappled with what to make of dominant and alternative discourses on intimate partner violence, including which discourses they believed in and which they were willing to present during trainings. When doing practice analysis, Ortner calls for stepping away from the "loop" in which structures produce subjects and practices, and the subjects and practices reproduce structures, and "look for the slippages in reproduction, the erosions of long-standing practices, the moments of disorder and outright "resistance" (Ortner 1996:17). U4J members challenged the use of the gendered survivor/perpetrator binary, marking "slippages in reproduction" and "moments of disorder," even while simultaneously preserving the dichotomous survivor/perpetrator categories during trainings. Members were simultaneously reproducing and challenging dominant discourses, consciously making a determination to do one or the other based on, in part, their experiences of homophobia and heterosexism that influenced their willingness to be radical.

Significance

Real ideological differences did exist between U4J members evident in some of the explanations for the preservation of the survivor/perpetrator binary provided by members even while challenging its gendered construction in the U. S. movement against domestic violence. However, U4J members' knowledge and practice were shaped and

constrained by their experiences of overt and institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism, and parallel systematic inequalities. U4J members' response to the scarcity of resources and support for LGBTQQI identified persons experiencing intimate partner violence was characterized by a sense of urgency to do as much as they could while they had the resources to do it, and not take the time to pause and critically assess what they were doing. Feelings of fear also undergirded members' hesitancy to present information within trainings that was too different from the dominant frameworks for understanding intimate partner violence in the mainstream movement for fear of not being heard and losing the opportunity to provide education and training on working with LGBTQQI identified persons sensitively.

Many scholars have problematized the ways hegemonic discourses within the U. S. movement against domestic violence, such as the survivor/perpetrator binary and the criminalization model, have led to the subjugation and erasure of alternative discourses and practice. Janice Ristock identified through interviews and focus groups with feminist service providers, both reproduction of and resistance against dominant discourses that construct the dichotomous survivor/perpetrator categories. She understood the motivation of feminist activists to preserve these gendered dichotomous constructions to partly be informed by a well-founded fear of a backlash against the U. S. movement against domestic violence (Ristock 2002: 5-8; 134-139; For discussion of this backlash also see Brush 2005: 871). The implications of this reticence to talk about and consider alternative conceptualizations of intimate partner violence are that "normative assumptions are asserted through categories that include the experiences of some women and exclude the experiences of others" (Ristock 2002: 138). When a U4J member asserts

that the term "survivor" is empowering, and she will not deviate away from using that term, she is asserting the experiences of some women and excluding the experiences of other women. Similarly, promoting the survivor/perpetrator binary at a training for advocates eliminates space for acknowledging the varied ways power operates within intimate relationships.

When individuals experiencing intimate partner violence do not fit into these neat, compartmentalized binaries, they may not receive appropriate support and resources. As scholars, activists, and practitioners working in the movement, we need to move towards a more nuanced analyses and discussions of intimate partner violence that are situated in the actual experiences of the individuals with which we work and not subscribe to dominant discourses that may be politically expedient but not be analytically useful or accurate. U4J members were taking steps in this direction but pressures originating from overt and institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism, and parallel systematic inequalities did not make this an easy task.

The U4J case study might be characterized as both a "success" and a "failure." U4J members were successful in producing some valuable changes that had the capacity to affect the systemic response to intimate partner violence for LGBTQQI identified persons. Successes were an overt outcome of U4J work, such as conducting trainings and getting twelve pages into the Coalitions' advocate training manual, and less clearly a result, such as the domestic violence agency Lisa worked for changing their mission statement and becoming better advocates for the inclusion of LGBTQQI specific issues into their work. At the same time U4J members failed to create space for certain

alternative discourses and practices that could have enriched their work and led key members to withdraw from the organization.

This case study illuminates the power inscribed through hegemonic discourses that preclude people from considering alternative discourses and practices. The core U4J members were unwilling to seriously consider alternative theories on intimate partner violence that challenged hegemonic discourses in the mainstream movement in which they were trained. The production and dissemination of knowledge and truth claims about intimate partner violence is intricately connected to relations of power; not just anyone can place a claim on which information is presented as truth or even which information can be put open for discussion. Relations of power are further produced and verified through the presentation of knowledge and truth claims (Foucault 1980). Core U4J members were in a position of power over dissenting U4J members as leaders with extensive time and resources to dedicate to the work and exerted their authority over dissenting U4J members through the structural exclusion and separation of those actors work from their own. These structural effects were the unintended consequences of Jessie's community coalition organizational development model but also a byproduct of core U4J members' resistance to alternative knowledge claims.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This dissertation reveals the insights offered by ethnographic accounts of the human response to social problems through an examination of policy implementation on the ground. Goode and Maskovsky posit "ethnographically informed analyses of the contradictory conditions in which the poor find themselves and the often contradictory ways in which they respond to those conditions" are one way to address dominant negative representations of the poor (2001: 3). In a similar vein, I argue ethnography offers valuable insights into the experiences of persons working in complex entanglements of socio-political networks to address domestic violence. The paradoxical conditions produced under neoliberalism through which domestic violence advocates, activists, and other professionals operate reveals the complexities around choices they are left to make. Examining the implementation of policy on the ground not only reveals its uneven impact and how certain aspects of social categories are constituted as normal but also how sites of political action are conceptualized by differentially positioned actors. Differentially positioned domestic violence advocates, activists, and other professionals at my field site held varied understandings of domestic violence and worked under multiple constraints that differentially informed their practice, created conflict, and sometimes produced responses that contradicted one another. In the dissertation I have not only described motivation and intent behind actors' creative responses to social, political, and economic pressures but actual outcomes related to the impact of these choices.

Practices that appeared to be contradictory to proclaimed values and missions sometimes signified actions that my informants felt contributed to some positive changes and even constituted a "success." At the same time, people sometimes participated in the reproduction of simplistic understandings of domestic violence that did not mark sites of resistance but rather arenas for the reproduction of hegemonic knowledge and practice. An important question that emerged was what were the actual possibilities for social change within these complex entanglements? How was success defined by actors and to what ends were they willing to go to achieve particular outcomes?

Governance, surveillance, and regulation: are all forms under neoliberalism created equal?

Neoliberalism, lauding personal responsibility and freedom, has signaled a broad shift away from government provided social services to self-regulation, self-management and free market strategies. Neoliberal ideology promotes a call to volunteerism through which everyday citizens are called upon to fill the gaps left from the departure of state resources. Anthropologists and other scholars have critically examined the processes of neoliberalism revealing that the state is still a strong presence in the lives of many citizens, in spite of the popular "less government" rhetoric espoused by neoliberal proponents. Through the criminal justice system the state has increased surveillance and regulation of the poor all the while cutting crucial public services (Goode and Maskovsky 2001: 6-8; Webdale 2001). Sociologist Neil Websdale (2001), through his historical and ethnographic analysis of community policing in Nashville, Tennessee, identifies the policing of the poor as a historical tradition and draws analogies between techniques of

control and regulation of slaves, freed women and men during the 19th century, and the current emphasis on the surveillance and incorporation of the poor, especially blacks, into the "criminal justice juggernaut" (14-35). His point is similar to that made by Foucault (1977) who argued that prison, police, and delinquency work together in a nefarious circle. "Police surveillance provided the prison with offenders, which the prison transforms into delinquents, the targets and auxiliaries of police supervisions, which regularly send back a certain number of them to prison" (Foucault 1977: 282).

Scholars raising these issues reveal the workings of structural violence. If, following Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2005), we understand that all forms of violence are on a continuum we can see how structural violence supports and leads to violence within intimate relationships. This analysis directly relates to the case of intervention into acts of domestic violence. Criminalization has emerged as a dominant model of intervention that has been extensively criticized by scholars and activists who argue the emphasis on criminalization is highly problematic considering the impact of state violence in the lives of the poor and marginalized and the racism, sexism, and heterosexism rampant in the criminal justice system. (Adelman 2004; Bumiller 2010; Richie 2000; Smith 2007; Sokoloff and Dupont 2005). The 1994 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) represents a significant commitment by state government to keep survivors of domestic violence safe since the social problem has historically been deemed a "private" matter in which the state should not intervene. However, VAWA has also contributed to condoning the broad criminalization approach to intervening into a wide array of social problems (Adelman 2004). Adelman demonstrates the analytical limitations imposed by a criminal justice focus, which "reflects and refracts the emphasis

on individualism permeating US society" (48). This focus redirects attention away from the political in favor of psychological explanations for the incidence of domestic violence. Moreover, tackling the problem through the reform of and safety for individuals leads to a focus on institutionalized services. Even if inclusive of a consideration of structural variables, a focus on services redirects attention from political action that tackles hegemonic discourses on gender, the family, and violence that support abuse between intimate partners.

Beyond the outright surveillance and regulation of citizens, the cooption of grassroots political organizing in the United States has also been documented as a less overt form of governance. There is an extensive literature that problematizes the professionalization of domestic violence advocacy work and reveals alarming evidence to suggest in some cases this has come to represent a form of state cooption of political dissent (Kendrick 1998; Markowitz and Tice 2002; Schechter 1982; Smith 2007). Susan Schechter (1982) offered an important early examination of the quest for increased funding among service providers and activists within the antiviolence movement that led to the professionalization and co-option of domestic violence advocacy work by the state. As advocacy within the movement gradually transformed from a volunteer position to a job women were paid to do, advocates became increasingly more hesitant to challenge funders who required a focus on services and measurable outcomes over social change oriented goals.

At the same time, the literature also demonstrates the state management and cooption of grassroots political action is more ambiguous than totalizing conceptualizations of neoliberalism make the process out to be. For example, Sandra

Morgen (1990) has illustrated that the outcomes of state attempts at management and control of grassroots organizing are not always clear-cut and presents a case that illustrates the state often has contradictory effects on its targets of control. Through participant-observation, she describes how a grassroots women's center faced regulatory practices through the use of state funding. Ultimately, the state's funding enabled new individuals to enter the organization, which eventually led to a resurgence of feminist ideology and goals. Morgen argues the fact that "state resources underwrote the efforts of women to revitalize and redefine feminism in this community demonstrates that the impact of state policies on gender practice and ideology cannot be assumed but must be investigated" (181).

Similarly, at my field site the Commission's presence as a regulatory institution over community coalitions and a determination of the effect this had on the ground could not be assumed, but needed to be investigated. In the dissertation I address the important issues this literature raises. I start from a position that while there is a false dichotomy between "grassroots" or "community" and "the state" that is revealed through on the ground ethnographic accounts of policy implementation and political mobilization, these concepts have significant meaning for actors who operate within complex networks of agencies and systems to conduct this work. These are not empty social constructs without any practical impact on lived experiences. Jessie is the Community Coalition Liaison for the state and in many ways participates in the monitoring of CC members despite her many efforts to refute a dictatorial approach to her support work. However, Jessie also views herself as a community activist who helped found a community coalition working to challenge particular dominant understandings of gender, sexual

orientation, and intimate partner violence. The Commission is formerly a governor's commission and relies upon state funding to survive which confers the state some power over their work. The Commission staff resists identification as an entity of the state, which they associate with institutions of power that participate in the governance of its citizens. Even so they harness certain conceptualizations of the state to achieve particular goals.

In an attempt to resist political attacks, Commission staff and members claimed images of verticality and encompassment due to their positioning at the state level in order to demonstrate value to the broader public and key political actors. At the same time they also made a discursive move identifying as a community organization to distinguish themselves from other state bureaucracies detached from "on the ground" community work. Here we not only see that what constitutes "the state" and "community" is socially defined but particular conceptualizations of each can be strategically employed to achieve certain goals. This reveals the socially constructed nature of these social categories and sites of political action and the salience of understanding their different discursive manifestations.

Upon first glance, the Commission's long-standing community coalition support work might have appeared to represent a form of state regulation and control over community organizing and activism. While the Commission was not exactly an entity of state government, historically the Commission staff and members had taken actions to monitor, support, and direct CC members towards specific practices and understandings of domestic violence. Moreover, the Commission did occupy a monitoring and regulatory position over BIPs and this work was sometimes conflated with the

community coalition support work in eyes of CC members. These acts of monitoring and regulating represented significant forms of surveillance that both CC members and the Commission staff and members were cognizant of and reacted against in particular ways. While the aim of this work was ostensibly to help develop and sustain community-based political action in the form of community coalitions, the Commission's surveillance of these groups verified CC members' feeling of being under the watchful eye of the state even if guided by amicable intentions.

There was a long-standing hesitancy to act in a dictatorial manner towards community coalitions vocalized on the part of Commission staff and members that indicated an awareness of their capacity to leverage power over CC members. In the dissertation I demonstrate that Jessie was vividly aware of perceived and real power differences between state and local actors and resisted identification with the state through her interactions with CC members. Despite her efforts, through her monitoring and support efforts she inadvertently represented herself as an actor of the state in the eyes of many CC members.

Frances Fox Piven (1990) presents ideas that are salient when examining discourse and practice at my field site and opens space for the discussion of the possibility for positive outcomes related to work of governing subjects. Piven argues against scholarly critiques of the state which emphasize its role in the social control of women and highlights the creation of the welfare state was not completely imposed by the state from above but largely because of political activism from below (257-258). Piven suggests women's involvement with (as staff) and dependence on (as clients) the welfare state might be a key route for achieving power. She does not deny injustices and

inequalities between those controlling and those utilizing welfare but argues that there is more room here for collaboration than has largely been determined (260-261).

Westlund (1999) raises a related issue when asking if there is potential for positive outcomes from the work of disciplinary institutions. Westlund argues disciplinary practice is not problematic inherently. In spite of problems with modern disciplinary institutions, domestic violence shelters can and do provide important safety for survivors, participate in political action through legal reform and community education, and represent important sites of resistance against dominant social norms that help to perpetuate multiple manifestations of violence and control over women. Westlund poignantly argues, "Foucault's unmasking of the sinister side of disciplinary practice should lead not to denial of the usefulness of the law and the "helping professions" for battered women generally but, rather, to recognition of the need to become both more proficient at diagnosing the ways of these institutions do fail women and better able to imagine forms of local resistance and transformation" (1046).

When examining the Jessie case, it is clear that structural limitations prevented her from providing significant support to all community coalitions equitably so she was forced to limit the groups she supported. The authority she leveraged to decide which community coalitions she would and would not focus her support efforts on granted her the power to decide who should receive her support. The actual implementation of community coalition support work was imbricated with Jessie's own biases and opinions regarding not only who needed support but also who was most open to her assistance. I demonstrated these combined factors led to uneven relationships between the Commission and community coalitions and contributed to mixed perceptions of the state

by local actors. Here we see the way bureaucratic structures push well-intentioned actors into making decisions regarding whom is "deserving" of support.

This case study raises legitimate concerns regarding the capacity of actors working within structures with a top-down approach to support services to not fall into the trap of reproducing hierarchical power structures. At the same time, it is important to highlight that what Jessie's support work looked like in practice changed over time as her understanding of what constituted a successful community coalition became more complex and she gradually came to see her work as less about promoting specific practices and understandings but to help increase shared, grounded knowledge between CC members. Her CC support work became increasingly less disciplinary over time as she absorbed more information through her day-to-day practice rather than relying on technocratic, expert discourse. Jessie was not exactly trapped by the structure in which she operated but did slip back into technocratic one size fits all approaches to support work even as her understandings were transforming. Practice theorists De Certeau (1984) and Ortner (1996) both draw attention to processes outside of the coherence of the loop of subjects producing structures and structures producing subjects. Examining shifts in Jessie's support work and interactions with CC members reveal complex entanglements of relations of power, struggle, and resistance characterized by both supporting, resisting, and transforming power structures.

Success and social change work

The matter of "success" is an important theme throughout the dissertation. If not to produce social change, how exactly was "success" conceptualized by actors?

Understanding the drive to produce "success" was imperative to making sense of the strategies people chose to employ. In many contexts there was a tension between the constitution of success as promoting specific understandings of domestic violence and best approaches to advocacy work and foregoing an ideologically grounded agenda in order to achieve broad support. For instance, in response to political attacks the Commission utilized quantitative measurements they knew did not convey the full value of their work in order to convince a broader public of the agency's worth. Even key members of U4J, whose work in many ways represented a site of resistance against dominant constructions of gender, sexuality, and violence, also reproduced dominant binary representations of perpetrators and survivors through trainings. This practice was rooted in actual binary conceptualizations of intimate partner violence, but was also, in part, a strategy used to increase the chances of reaching a wide audience.

Morgen's (2002) examination of patterns of organizational change in feminist health clinics in the 1970s and 1980s engages with the idea that organizations often struggle between ideology and political ideals versus the need to sustain themselves in socio-political and economic climates hostile to feminist agendas. She reflects on the work of Max Weber (1978) and Robert Michels (1959), who argued routinization and goal displacement were inevitable processes of organizational change (116), and Kathy Ferguson (1984) who identified feminism as the antithesis of bureaucracy. She ultimately aligned herself with Claire Reinelt (1995) who critiqued the binary interpretation of organizational structure and practice. Reinelt argued opposing feminist, grassroots entities with collective decision making and patriarchal, professionalized entities with hierarchal decision making was inaccurate and eliminated space to consider

the complex, contradictory structures and practices that characterize actual organizations. In fact, an ethnographic analysis of the Commission and U4J reveals both organizations were comprised of actors with feminist analyses utilizing shared decision making while also demonstrating professionalized and hierarchical qualities.

Two important conceptualizations of domestic violence that actors wrestled with as they navigated these tensions included the incorporation of a feminist, survivor-centered agenda and acknowledging the role axes of difference play in shaping experiences of domestic violence and institutional responses. An analysis inclusive of the ways axes of difference impact peoples' experiences was resisted in important ways. There were a number of CC members who indicated that avoiding explicit discussions about gender would better elicit broad support from the general public. Making these kinds of decisions thwarted a nuanced examination and dialogue about domestic violence at multiple sites. When it came to pushing an ideologically grounded agenda, we do see the promotion of a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of domestic violence by key Commission staff and members in multiple contexts. Key Commission staff and members undertook an internal education project to promote a feminist, survivor-centered agenda through the use of strategic dialogue and the practice of speaking for others. Unfortunately, barriers to this work were also present. Social and professional hierarchies limited the success of these strategies through the work of silencing. The Commission staff demonstrated some feelings of intimidation at quarterly Commission member meetings, and the formal structuring of these meetings in some ways dissuaded staff from speaking outside of their formal, individual staff reports. Feminist identified Commission members were major implementers of the internal education work, but

social hierarchies created barriers to this work as well the reality of insufficient representation. Ultimately I identified mixed result for the “success” of the Commission’s internal education project. Social hierarchies and power/knowledge imbalances were both contested and produced through the Commission’s practices.

An important idea people considered related to these tensions was the belief that the Commission’s position at the state level conferred an opportunity to change institutional responses to and discourses about domestic violence. This was envisioned not only through legislative advocacy work but also through changing popular understandings of domestic violence. Both formal training and informal education efforts targeting actors working within a wide range of systems were regularly employed in order to achieve these ends. However, I sometimes heard from Commission staff that more radical messages should be put on hold in order to achieve certain successes. Kelly explained when working in the Capitol sometimes she needed to forego a discussion of the ways multiple oppressions impact peoples’ experiences of domestic violence and institutional responses in order to convince legislators of something needed, such as to pass an important bill. However, she simultaneously questioned whether foregoing what she believed to be a more truthful analysis did injustice to their cause. These were regular struggles she and other feminist identified actors grappled with through their advocacy and activism.

Commission staff also contemplated the significance of the role they played in maintaining the criminalization model of intervention and considered the age old question: can we really produce positive social change working “through the system?” Belinda Leach (2011) quotes words by Angela Davis that she believes “captures the

paradox of the feminist movement's (and individual women's) relationship to a state that abuses its power in misogynist acts (and abuses of minority populations), yet is simultaneously the only actor with sufficiently broad power to make sustainable, legally binding, and enforceable change" (195). Angela Davis asked, "Can a state that is thoroughly infused with racism, male dominance, class-bias, and homophobia and that constructs itself in and through violence act to minimize violence in the lives of women?" (Leach 2011: 195). These words get at the heart of the questions Commission staff asked themselves about the strategies they employed and the systems they worked through to be "successful."

Advocacy work through the violence against women's movement faces a host of paradoxes through its partnerships with the state and criminal justice system and the professionalization and bureaucratization it necessitates. Markowitz and Tice (2002) made an illuminating argument that raised important issues that were applicable at my field site. They posited that while feminist activists efforts to professionalize organizations have successfully enabled "once marginal feminist voices to be heard in established center of political power…such efforts have frequently contributed to the persistence or creation of social hierarchies within and between women's organizations, as well as a subversion—or more generously—a reorientation of social change agendas and strategies" (954).

Social hierarchies were absolutely visible within the Commission and produced barriers that sometimes impeded key actors ability to promote a feminist, survivor-centered agenda. The bureaucratic organizational structure with an advisory board and staff produced significant power and knowledge differences between and within these

positions. The Commission staff and a small number of advocate representatives worked together to informally educate other Commission members on a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of domestic violence. While the Commission undoubtedly produced successes in this regard, social hierarchies between domestic violence advocates and criminal justice professional sometimes hampered the promotion of a feminist, survivor-centered agenda. The stalemate outcome from the spousal privilege debate represented an important example of the silencing of a feminist, survivor-centered analysis of domestic violence because its advocates could not convince the majority of the advisory board of the value of grounded knowledge based on the experiences of domestic violence advocates.

What about the second part of Markowitz and Tice's proposition? Did the Commission's bureaucratic organizational structure and reliance upon the state for funding produce a "reorientation of social change agendas and strategies?" The Commission's entanglements with the Governor's Office certainly led to a reorientation of its efforts away from institutional change to fighting to remain in existence, but what about the years of work proceeding this particular historic moment? The Commission did successfully advocate for policy changes they felt would help to better keep survivors safe and hold perpetrators accountable by improving the implementation of laws and the accessibility and availability of services. While this was important work, the Commission staff recognized an emphasis on criminal and legal reform and the provision of formal social services left out important sites where other avenues to justice and safety might be achieved.

The time period between 2004 and 2011 signified a period when the Commission began shifting its attention towards the "at risk" survivor through the Fatality Review project, which led to the development of new targets of education and reform work outside of social services and the criminal justice system. These new targets included the media, faith communities, and "friends and family" of survivors. The Fatality Review project, which emerged from qualitative case study data, took an in depth look into the lives of women who were murdered or came close to death at the hands of their intimate partners. The Commission aimed to better understand the routes women sought for support and then better equip persons at those sites with the tools to support and guide women toward needed resources. Through Fatality Review they learned that there are important sites outside of the criminal justice system and service providers where survivors go to for support. This work did not directly challenge the dominant criminalization and social service provision response model, but aimed to complement it through a more holistic approach to intervention. Bringing new institutions under the Commission's purview had the opportunity to produce more effective interventions. Moreover, the Commission was shifting the discourse about domestic violence and institutional relationships by bringing attention to these new targets of education and reform. At the same time, another significant finding was that the Commission frequently utilized technocratic approaches of trainings and protocol development when working on these new targets. This revealed the effects of working through bureaucratic structures that naturalize these sorts of practices as appropriate routes to change. Implementing change through technocratic procedures limited thinking outside of the box even though the Commission was pursuing exciting new approaches to their work.

The Commission's work was not static, but an evolving process guided by key actors with a feminist, survivor-centered agenda but also inclusive of other diverse positionalities. The Commission was intentionally designed to have a diverse advisory board composition with the hope that better coordination would emerge between the multiple systems that interact with perpetrators and survivors. However, in practice the inclusion of persons in different positions with a wide range of perspectives meant that the Commission actors did not feel they could always freely put forth a radical, social change agenda. Instead, key actors within the Commission worked through the legal, criminal justice, and social service agencies aiming for incremental changes to institutional responses and actors' understandings of domestic violence. They carefully chose their battles and decided when more radical understandings of domestic violence could be promoted. The eight years conservative Governor Perry was in power represented a time period where more broad conceptualizations of domestic violence could not be promoted. While the Commission's attachment to the state undoubtedly limited their work during my fieldwork, a historical analysis reveals their position also opened up opportunities to produce some major changes that served the greater goal of increasing safety for survivors and holding perpetrators accountable.

Another example of the paradoxical effects of professionalization was the work of U4J. Power and knowledge differences between U4J members were exacerbated by the structural separation of work into committees. Here we see organizational structure contributing to the quelling of dissent. This case study makes a strong argument that if we become fixated on the maintenance of a particular structure or policy we can fall into the trap of eliminating space for the consideration of alternative forms of knowledge and

practice that might be relevant to our work. In addition, this example reveals the influence hegemonic discourses have on the construction of knowledge even within sites of resistance.

Following Westlund and Piven, I argue the nefarious effects of disciplinary work cannot be assumed but need to be investigated. Moreover, organizations that appear to be participating in this project are not fixed entities but better resemble processes that are changing due to historical contingencies. A conglomeration of collective and hierarchical processes characterized the Commission's internal and external practices. The Commission had clear bureaucratic, hierarchical components to their work but was also comprised of actors with feminist orientations and radical, social change agendas who tried to stay true to their ideals while engaging in their work. Similarly, U4J actors participated in a mixture of collective and hierarchical decision making undergirded by important power differences related to professional background but they were also able to affect important changes to the institutional responses to intimate partner violence for LGBTQQI identified persons and the ways actors operating within these structures think about the problem. My findings reveal that discursive and institutional change can occur through structures with bureaucratic, hierarchal elements. We should not hasten to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

ENDNOTES

[1] I use the terms *intimate partner violence* and *domestic violence* in the dissertation to define physical, emotional or psychological, economic, and sexual abuse perpetuated between intimate partners. I also recognize the use of an array of other terms by scholars and practitioners alike, such as gender violence, but recognize the social construction and usage of these terms have fluctuating meanings for diverse people.

[2] I use the term family violence herein to signify the original broad scope of the Commission's work to address violence and abuse within the family, including between intimate partners, child abuse, and elder abuse. I use the term domestic violence to zero in on abuse between intimate partners, which ultimately became the primary focus of the Commission's work.

[3] Henrietta Moore is one anthropologist who has dealt with this issue. She argues that engendered subjects and notions of self and agency are produced and reproduced through discourses and symbolic categories of gender and engendered subjects in turn produce self-representations of themselves (1994: 138-140). Gender discourses thus vary which inevitably leads to a hierarchical organization of different gender discourses. She argues that the dominant gender discourse is often one that emphasizes male and female difference in a hierarchical manner. Using this understanding of the production of the engendered subject she argues that men are violent against female partners when they perceive a threat from a partners' behavior against their self-representations of themselves, what she calls a "crisis of representation" (151-153). For Moore, violence against intimate partners represents a "struggle for the maintenance of certain fantasies of identity and power," not "a breakdown in the social order" (154). Moore's "crisis of representation" closely parallels arguments presented by anthropologists, Sarah Hautziner (2004) and Bo Wagner Sørensen (1998), who both use specific ethnographic evidence to support their arguments.

[4] Plesset (2006) highlights two dominant oppositional ideologies of gender and the family provided by staff at each shelter to explain interpersonal violence in the Italian context. Most shelter staff at one shelter cite traditional understandings and conceptualizations of gender as the source of interpersonal violence and the most staff at the other shelter argue that the shift from tradition to modernity has disrupted traditional gender relations and thus propelled interpersonal violence. However, she argues that this opposition was not neat and was often characterized with overlaps in practice.

[5] Major findings included a.) domestic violence was a widespread problem across the state often resulting in serious injury or fatalities; b.) gender bias, myths, and lack of understanding of domestic violence was a common problem among criminal justice system professionals including law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges; c.) lack of or inadequate response to domestic violence cases was a problem among law enforcement,

prosecution, the courts, and probation; and d.) lack of training and written protocols on responding to domestic violence cases.

[6] A group of domestic violence activists in Minnesota came together to create the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) in 1991, which aimed to reform institutional and systemic responses to domestic violence through the development of a CCR. The Duluth DAIP emerged from a project implemented in Duluth, Minnesota over a fifteen-year time period. Individuals working on the project aimed to increase coordination between the various agencies that work with survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence. Improved coordination between different agencies took the form of developing policies and protocols that guided interventions and responses to domestic violence implemented by each agency (Shepard and Pence 1999).

[7] Initially, the Commission was administratively attached to the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), in 1997 they moved to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), in 2001 they moved to the Department of Corrections (DOC), and then finally moved back to the AOC in 2010.

[8] See Adelman 2004 and Bumiller 2010 for a discussion of the dominance of criminalization responses in the U.S.

[9] Foley county is the principal county of the Morganville Metropolitan area.

[10] I will delve further into the issue of protocol development and implementation in a later chapter. However, I wanted to highlight here a strong, consistent interest in protocol development historically not only among Commission members and staff but also CC members. This is significant considering the frequency with which people identified problems with protocols "sitting on a shelf."

[11] The Judicial Qualifications Commission (JQC) is a body of appointed members designated to investigate complaints of ethical misconduct by judges and is also permitted to provide opinions regarding proper judicial conduct. The Commission's first secretary and a sitting superior court judge requested an opinion in 1994 on the appropriateness of judicial involvement in convening initial meetings to organize the formation of a community coalition. The JQC responded by issuing an opinion that chief judges involvement in organizing a meeting to plan the formation of a community coalition was appropriate. Commission members included this opinion in their community coalition manual strategically in order to encourage superior court judges' participation in this process. Shannon spoke of the utility of the opinion for her community coalition support work. She highlighted, "that helped to be able to wave around the JQC opinion. That was a new tool either just before or shortly after I got there for me to show judges to say it's ok [to convene the initial community coalition meeting]."

In 1995, another JQC opinion was issued that declared judicial participation in a community coalition as a member was inappropriate. The Commission and several judges requested a reconsideration of the opinion, which was answered a few months later. The revised opinion declared judicial involvement on a community coalition as appropriate as long as involvement does not infringe on their impartiality or ability to perform their judicial duties. However, involvement in the production and distribution of judicial protocols was maintained as inappropriate, as well as judicial requirement to follow judicial protocols. Instead the opinion declared judges could only use judicial protocols as an additional form of education.

[12] Coney County is a large, suburban county located northwest of Morganville.

[13] The Marion Judicial Circuit is comprised of three counties in the northeastern region of the state, including Hanson County.

[14] Later in the dissertation I will delve more into a variety of problems community coalitions experienced around participation. Here I wanted to briefly demonstrate the historical basis of the judicial participation problem and the Commission's role in the creation of JQC opinions that support judicial participation on community coalitions.

[15] Members of five out eleven community coalitions I conducted interviews with identified the Commission as an impetus for their creation. Two of these community coalitions were created before the Commission was created and interviewees from the other four community coalitions were uncertain whether or not the Commission played a role in their creation. Every interviewee that had knowledge of the creation of their community coalition, confirmed that they were established sometime in the early to mid 1990s, except for one community coalition that was established in 1985.

[16] Teams identified closed fatality cases through the district attorney's office and selected a case to focus on based on the groups' interests and access to information to build a story of events as complete as possible leading up to the fatality. After selecting a case, the teams worked to collect relevant information available through open records and identified friends and family of the survivors who were willing to sit down for an interview. This information was given to Tiffany and Gary who conducted interviews with friends and family of survivors and constructed a chronology of events leading up to the fatality using both sources of information.

[17] See Fisher's discussion of the fact that many NGOs as not very "grassroots".

[18] DHR monitors, certifies, and allocates state and federal funding to domestic violence shelters. In contrast, the Commission does not interact with shelters in any bureaucratic function.

[19] Speakers included judges, a police sergeant, a doctor, and non-profit professionals, including Commission board members.

[20] The Commission was not the only agency targeted for consolidation. DHR's duties of training and monitoring sexual assault centers and domestic violence shelters were also listed to be moved to the same state agency.

[21] Jane previously served as the director of two other state bureaucracies focused on children's welfare but nothing related to domestic violence.

[22] After my fieldwork ended, DHR's responsibility for allocating state and federal funds to sexual assault centers and rape crisis centers was ultimately moved to GOCW through a memorandum of understanding. This victory for GOCW meant all agencies receiving VAWA money had to now answer to them, which did have a negative impact on the Commission years later as they used VAWA funds for some projects. For example, I later learned that the Commission was forced to decide between removing the use of "LGBTQQI" language from the title of one of the conference workshops because GOCW did not approve or face losing the VAWA funds supporting the conference.

[23] Men represented the vast majority of state legislators, which stood in stark contrast to their actual demographic composition within the state. In 2010 women represented only 19.1% of the state legislators versus 51.2% of the state population. The racial and ethnic composition of the state legislature was also underrepresented compared to the population. In 2009 the state legislature was 22% African American versus 30% of the population and 1% Latino versus 8.8% of the population.

[24] I emailed several legislators to request interviews, but she was the only one willing to sit down with me.

[25] This was organized in line with the Commission's six-year sunset provision.

[26] Commission Quarterly meeting minutes 1/13/1993.

[27] The power and control model, developed by the DAIP project, was originally designed as an educational tool to be used with domestic violence survivors to help them critically analyze and think about their own and other women's experiences of abuse. The power and control analysis is visually captured with the use of The Power and Control Wheel, which has become institutionalized in shelters in Canada and the United States as "the" explanatory model for defining and understanding domestic violence (Price 1998 cited in Ristock).

[28] Men Against Violence works to organize men in domestic violence activism and advocacy work.

[29] I am defining active board members as those who attended most quarterly meetings as opposed to inactive board members who never attended a meeting, such as the state legislator representatives

[30] One male staff person left early in my fieldwork. I emailed him after he left to inquire about an interview but he was not responsive.

[31] The debate over spousal privilege, discussed in the next section, presents an example of the latter scenario.

[32] This procedure was permanently changed at a quarterly meeting in late 2009 when then chair Judge Harry outright asked the staff at the beginning of the meeting to move to the conference table and sit with the board members.

[33] I'm using the term regime of truth here in the way Foucault does. Foucault proposes "'truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it as a 'regime' of truth" (1980: 133).

[34] Haraway (1988) is arguing for the preference of subjugated knowledges since they are more likely to be aware of the constructed nature of knowledge and knowledges connection to power, due to their own positionality. Although Foucault (1980) does not specifically state that subjugated knowledges are preferred, he argues that their emergence enables the critique of dominant modes of thought, knowledge, and power. His argument is thus analogous to Haraway's regarding the significance of subjugated knowledge.

[35] All population data is from 2010 Census data.

[36] She felt a positive, affirming aspect of her work with the pharmaceutical company was that her supervisors regularly set small, achievable goals that allowed staff to experience a sense of accomplishment. Later, when she worked at the Commission this was an approach she pushed CC members to adopt.

[37] Jessie's work as a prevention specialist included going into schools to create curriculums on bullying and dating violence. In addition to work on fundraising and public awareness, she also served as a child advocate. Before taking the position, she had no experience in counseling or in any child advocacy. Her training at the domestic violence shelter was not formal but instead more along the lines of shadowing and learning through watching what others do. This was typical of training at local domestic violence shelters for many of the domestic violence advocates I spoke with at my field site.

[38] In the next chapter, I demonstrate this reflects a common trend among the CC members I interviewed who were also employed with a shelter.

[39] In that position, she managed and assisted clients living in transitional housing, which consisted of scattered apartments within a large apartment complex. She was required to

evict women who were not following the shelter rules, which was an action she deeply wrestled with having to implement. She recognized contradictions between official policy and practice as shelter rules jarred with the dominant empowerment discourse within domestic violence advocacy work in the U.S. antiviolence movement. At the same time, she felt frustrated with clients when she felt they did not take full advantage of the assistance transitional housing offered. She hoped clients would save money since they were either not required to pay rent or utilities or pay a nominal monthly amount. Her frustration with survivors' failure to save money stemmed from her own imaginings of what was possible for the women she served and the meaning she felt staying in shelter had or should have for survivors.

[40] Weekly or bi-weekly staff meetings included the staff and Kelly sitting around a table updating one another on each person's individual work projects, bringing up concerns, and asking for advice. Kelly felt very proud of the fact that the staff had a greater understanding of each others' work and even collaborated with one another, which Kelly felt was a shift from the work culture upon her entering the position as executive director.

[41] Jessie heavily relied on a manual written by psychologist Nicole E. Allen and legal professional Leslie A. Hagen (2003) to design her assessment tool. The manual, A Practical Guide for Evaluating Domestic Violence Coordinating Councils, was designed as a guide for self-evaluation by members of coordinating councils and other entities working to create a coordinated community response to domestic violence. Process and outcome evaluation are delineated in the manual with a focus on four categories to determine coordinating council effectiveness: 1) "quality of the council's internal working climate," 2) "quality of the council's infrastructure," 3) "breadth and nature of council activities," and 4) "outcomes associated with the council's activities" (Allen and Hagen 2003: 9). Jessie modeled her assessment tool off the process evaluation section of the manual. She focused on observing the way community coalition members structured their work and the way meetings were conducted and organized, checking for the existence of goals and objectives, work committees, meeting agendas and minutes, and succession planning. She also considered which systems and agencies were represented, how evenly workload was distributed amongst members, whether all meeting attendees were engaged in dialogue, and the degree to which work towards achieving goals was happening. Finally, Jessie also looked for evidence of accomplishments and outcomes, such as protocols developed and in use; however, the bulk of what she performed was process over outcome evaluation.

[42] Jessie defined key components of a successful community coalition as: active membership participation, established committees, functioning committees, defined goals and objectives with timelines for achievement, actively working toward goals and objectives, current protocols for systems response to domestic violence, effective use of meeting (agendas, start and stop on time, meeting minutes), effective leadership to help engage all members and to help resolve conflict, a shared mission, buy in from the top down, a multi-system representation, shared work load, succession planning for lining up leadership.

[43] Jessie's definition of participation was comprised of two components, both of which she concentrated on in her assessment tool. First, Jessie identified the number of attendees at the meeting and their participation in dialogue within those spaces as important. Second, Jessie looked for evidence that several people were actively involved in conducting the actual work of the group. Jessie found through her attendance at community coalition meetings and conversations with members that often there was a small group of people Jessie watched at community coalition meetings she assessed to see which members seemed to be leading and participating in the implementation of tasks, such as planning a public awareness event or conducting training.

[44] Jessie's promotion of specific practices also occurred via a newsletter she distributed to community coalitions with the provision of "suggested" or "recommended": systems that should be represented on a community coalition; tools and structural processes, such as a mission statement, bylaws, protocols, and memorandums of understanding; committees based on recent Fatality Review findings; and systems for which the community coalition should create domestic violence protocols.

[45] Jessie broadly sketched what the goals of community coalitions should be and through what means they should be achieved. The clear message Jessie's presentation conveyed was that community coalitions should work towards creating positive improvements to the way various systems and agencies respond to survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence.

[46] Jessie decided to offer the award annually as a strategy for demonstrating support and praise for the hard work of community coalitions.

[47] The rigid differentiation between victims and perpetrators is entangled within this hegemonic discourse. The U4J chapter will delve into the politics of all this and consider implications for individuals who do not fit into such compartmentalized binaries.

[48] Anthropologists examining women's work culture have demonstrated that social relational work is often an important part of their work and something that women highly value and take pride in performing (Goode and Simon 1994; Lamphere 1985; Sacks 1988).

[49] I appreciate comments by Judith Goode who illuminated this point.

[50] I identified two basic levels of struggles experienced by community coalitions to which Jessie offered guidance and support regarding. One included the mission and organizational infrastructure. Why should community coalitions exist and what should they be trying to achieve? Also, what was the ideal organizational form and what activities should different CC members engage in? Jessie's first stage of support towards community coalitions was giving advice on this basic level of information. Many CC members I spoke with reflected on times in the past when they were meeting as a

community coalition but did not have a solid or coherent understanding of what the group should be working towards. Other CC members struggled in the present moment to identify direction revealing divergent perceptions of their community coalition's mission and goals. These CC members looked to Jessie and past Commission actors implementing support work for guidance around what they should be working towards. Once this basic framework for community coalition practice was identified, the second level of struggle CC members expressed concerned difficulties performing their work and reaching the goals they set out to achieve. In response to CC members expression of struggle, Jessie acknowledged their experiences, reassured them that other community coalitions were dealing with similar issues, and offered specific suggestions to address problems. Since Jessie was a CC member prior to working at the Commission, she could use that personal experience plus what she heard from other CC member so her guidance was more than abstract suggestions.

[51] The survey included the following questions: what is helping/helpful; what would be helpful to your task force over the next 12 months; what are the task force's 12 month goals, where do you want your task force to be in 12 months, in an ideal world how can I be helpful to your task force.

[52] Here I am referring to United 4 Justice, which will be central topic of a subsequent chapter

[53] This issue will be discussed in depth in the chapter on United 4 Justice.

[54] This status was based off of the evaluation of community coalitions Jessie conducted the previous year.

[55] Here I am specifically referring to complaints both women had heard from CC members about trainings and meeting organized by state entities being concentrated around Morganville, which will be examined further in the next section.

[56] The north was broken into "Northeast region" and "Northwest region" because there were several community coalitions Jessie identified as active in both areas and travel between the two areas was more difficult due to a mountain range. In contrast, the east and west southern regions of the state were lumped into one group, the "Southern region." Despite the fact that the traveling distance from the southeast to the southwest regions of the state was four hours and both areas had active community coalitions, because of the fact that there were far fewer active community coalitions in the southern region overall they were grouped into one category. Jessie and Kelly wanted to try and ensure more than a few people were at each meeting to maximize learning and sharing between CC members. The "Morganville region" was identified as its own area since there were several active community coalitions in the metropolitan area. "Middle region" was designated as a separate area in order to give community coalitions located between Morganville and the southern regions of the state two options dependent on what was most convenient and where they most identified. Jessie also highlighted there were

several community coalitions on the east coast near the middle of the state that may not want to drive all the way to Morganville, although only one was very active. Jessie also felt CC members located around the middle of the state may or may not identify with Morganville so felt another option would be beneficial.

[57] I felt this personally while conducting interviews with CC members. On more than one occasion CC members associated with shelters and BIPs expressed frustration to me with the fact that most trainings for continuing education credits were located in or near Morganville, which made it difficult for people located in different parts of the state to attend. They would then suggest that I bring this up with the Commission or Coalition staff in order to address the problem. Since my introductions to CC members went through Jessie, I was automatically associated with the Commission and other state-level actors.

[58] I will later critically examine this hesitancy to talk about women's use of violence but instead am using this example to make some arguments about CC members' perceptions of and relationship with Jessie.

[59] Scott County is a small, rural county located in the southern region of state.

[60] One person was with a community coalition in the Morganville Metropolitan Area, and two were from northern regions of the state.

[61] A billboard company, which the Commission staff was introduced to through their lobbyist, donated billboard space to the Commission to utilize in the public awareness campaign.

[62] Mary was working with a tool she picked up through a media training at the Commission for the creation an "effective message." The sequence of steps to develop a message was to determine: 1) goal, 2) audience, 3) message, and 4) tools. Mary acknowledged to the staff that they were "cheating," since they already identified billboards as the tool. Nevertheless, Mary wanted the staff to select a goal and audience before determining the "specific community" in which the billboards would be located. Mary trusted the model and felt this would result in the creation of an effective message. Her use of the expression cheating was interesting as it reflects a certain level of pressure to stick to the order of steps for message development provided by the tool. On one hand, using the tool constrained Mary's imaginings for the billboard project through pressure to stick to a specific order of steps; however, this was a selective restraint because Mary allowed for the selection of the tool before the first three steps. In theory, the sequence could have been initiated from the very beginning *after* inviting community coalition members to the table. However, Mary's vision for the project consisted of a centralized project design, with input from a "specific community" at appropriate points in time when solicited.

[63] Victim blaming is commonly understood to be a byproduct of frustration with survivors as domestic violence advocates, judges, and prosecutors find themselves in

positions where they are trying to do something they believe will help a survivor stay safe but they are unwilling to cooperate. The official empowerment approach is to support survivors in the decisions they make, even if they decide to stay in an abusive relationship. At domestic violence trainings and public awareness events I attended across the state, speakers regularly provided statistics and anecdotes intended to assuage feelings of frustration towards survivors. The belief that leaving an abusive relationship was easy was targeted as a myth through highlighting barriers to exiting a relationship, such as lack of employment. Speakers regularly pointed to statistics to demonstrate most domestic violence fatalities occur when a survivor is taking steps to exit an abusive relationship. Also, a commonly recited truism was that it takes the average survivor seven times to successfully leave an abusive relationship.

[64] This label is Schneider's (1993).

[65] Andrea Smith (2007) highlights that most government funding for the U.S. antiviolence movement is funneled through the Department of Justice which has led to a disproportionate focus on criminal justice oriented solutions, which demonstrates a negative impact of the non-profit industrial complex on the antiviolence movement in the U.S. While a disproportioned amount of government funding in the U.S. goes to criminal justice oriented programs and research though the Department of Justice, that only partially explained the imbalance in funding across the staffs' various projects. While the Fatality Review project was well-funded prior to my entry into the field, changes to the CJCC distribution of VAWA funds in early 2009 led to a smaller than usual budget that could only cover the staff person's salary plus a small amount of his travel expenses. This did not have a deleterious impact on the Fatality Review project since the Coalition was able to perform some "gerrymandering" and produce an increase in financial support for their portion of the Fatality Review project that was sufficient to fully cover other key expenses. The Commission's BIP certifying and monitoring work was largely self-funded through the dues programs paid and consequently often had "excess" money at the end of each year that the BIP staff scrambled to figure out how to spend. In contrast, Jessie had a significantly smaller budget that constrained her ability to support community coalitions in the manner she wanted.

[66] I define significant lack of knowledge as only being able to recall one or none of the Commission's formal projects or duties.

[67] I use the term positions of leadership to refer to all members of an executive committee, not only to chairs and co-chairs.

[68] Between 2002 and 2011 a total of four Community Coalition Liaisons were been employed by the Commission.

[69] Morganville was situated in the middle of the northern half of the state and not more than a two hour drive from northern and centrally located community coalitions. Community coalitions located in southern regions of the state were further away,

approaching four hours in some cases, which necessitated an overnight stay depending on the time of the meeting.

[70] Grady is the second largest county in the state neighboring Foley County where Morganville is located. Clinton, the second largest city in the state, is located one hundred miles south of Morganville in the central-western region of the state

[71] The percentage of the population below the national poverty level in Scott County and the counties comprised of the Adams Judicial Circuit ranged from 22.4% to 31.5% between 2007 and 2011 compared to 16.5% for the state. Unemployment rates in 2011 ranged from 8.5% to 14% for the southern counties compared to 9.8% for the state. Two of the six southern counties had slightly lower rates of unemployment (8.5% and 9.3%) compared the state, while the other four were worse off in comparison. I interviewed a CC member from the Adams Judicial Circuit Community Coalition who argued there were "no jobs here" referring to the county with the highest unemployment rate of this group of southern counties. She attributed the lower unemployment rates for two neighboring counties due to proximity to the interstate which brought business. The CC member highlighted these issues and others highlight regional differences and support her argument more resources and support were needed from Morganville.

[72] The Coney Circuit is located in a northwest region of the state.

[73] Aggravated stalking, the charge for violating a TPO, was previously a felony but was changed in state law to add a misdemeanor charge as an option. The rationale to having both charges was that law enforcement may be less likely to charge a man for violating a TPO if the only charge available is felony, which could be perceived as overly harsh.

[74] This is an issue I deal with more in depth in the next chapter.

[75] Judicial political power was also leveraged systematically in the approach the Commission promoted for starting community coalitions. The Commission first sent letters to superior court judges in each judicial circuit requesting they convene the first meeting of a community coalition in their locality. Many CC members I interviewed with knowledge of the start of their community coalition recalled their superior court judge calling the first meeting to order and spoke positively about judges' ability to get people to attend the first meeting; however, problems with participation centered on CC members' inability to maintain participation beyond that first meeting.

[76] Allen et al. (2008) examined 41 out of the 45 existing coordinating councils in one Midwestern state, utilizing extensive qualitative interviews with key informants, usually a person presently or formerly in a position of leadership on councils.

[77] DVRT began with only one out of three law enforcement agencies providing their police reports and then added another cooperative law enforcement agency in late 2008. As of the time of interviews with Betsy in late 2009, the third law enforcement agency

still was not on board, which she attributed to geography and interagency guidelines around handling of police reports. Betsy explained the agency was too far away (approximately fifteen miles) for the staff to drive out and obtain the reports regularly and the law enforcement agency was unwilling to transport them to DVRT. Another agency did send their reports electronically but the third agency did not believe it was secure. Betsy explained, “you kind of walk a tightrope with this; all it takes is one bad incident [to destroy this set up].” Betsy has seen an increase in the number of reports they receive, something she attributes to a belief that in the past officers were only providing a portion of their reports to the DVRT team.

[78] In fact, there was a discernable tension within CC member discourse and practice between those whom identified as feminist and possessed a critical analysis of domestic violence with attention to multiple axes of difference and those who rejected the feminist label and analyses inclusive of social difference which will be discussed in the next section.

[79] As discussed in the previous chapter, Moore used this understanding of the production of the engendered subject to argue men are violent against female partners when they perceive a threat from a partners’ behavior against their self-representations of themselves, what she calls a “crisis of representation” (151-153).
[80] My use of the term *intimate partner violence* in this chapter honors the language selected by United 4 Justice members in order to promote a broader shift within the movement away from other terms like *domestic violence* which some scholars and practitioners argue reflects a heteronormative conceptualization of abuse or *family violence*, a broader term which includes abuse between family members. I maintain the use of the term domestic violence herein to refer to shelters and other mainstream agencies not actively taking steps to challenge the status quo with regard to acknowledging and addressing sexual orientation and gender diversity.

[81] Such as only serving survivors, which becomes problematic when a person does not identify as a survivor and thus assumes services are not available to them.

[82] The second election year Jessie remained chair and Lisa stepped up as co-chair to replace Tracy who still remained active on the executive committee unofficially.

[83] Most domestic violence shelters in the U.S. do not serve the LGBTQQI community; none serve gay men and it is well documented that lesbian women face an array of barriers to receiving services in a tolerant, non-discriminatory environment (Hammond 1989; Renzetti 1989, 1996; Turell 2000). In the state where I conducted fieldwork, no domestic violence shelters and a very small number of support groups and BIPs served LGBTQQI identified persons.

[84] This new section replaced a smaller section which to the horror of U4J members included a conflation of sexual orientation with immigrant status within a discussion of the different barriers these social categories produce for survivors.

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