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Cultural competency and native women: a guide for non-natives who advocate for battered women and rape victims.

C Maicki

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C U L T U R A L C O M P E T E N C Y A N D N A T I V E W O M E N

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND NATIVE WOMEN

A GUIDE FOR NON-NATIVES
WHO ADVOCATE FOR BATTERED WOMEN
AND RAPE VICTIMS



Dedicated to Actions that Promote the Sovereignty and Safety of Women

722 St. Joseph St., Rapid City, SD 57701

1-877-RED-ROAD (733-7623)

(605) 341-2050

Fax: 605-341-2472

scircle@sacred-circle.com

A Project of Cangleska, Inc.

C U L T U R A L C O M P E T E N C Y A N D N A T I V E W O M E N

Written by
Carol Maicki

Edited by
Advisory Group

Layout by
Lonnie Jeffries

Sacred Circle:
Karen Artichoker, Project Manager

Advisors:
Desiree Allen-Cruz, Karen Baker, Marybeth Carter, Willetta Dolphus,
Joyce Gonzales, Verlaine Gullickson, Diane Moyer, Esq.

Special Thanks:
Lynda Smallenberger/Giuntoli, Lonnie Jeffries, Valerie L'Herrou,
Sally Roesch-Wagner, Victoria Ybanez

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

This guide is written for non-Native Advocates. It addresses the experience of Native women seeking advocacy and shelter from non-Native organizations. Our hope is to inspire respectful, appropriate advocacy and shelter for Native women who survive battering and rape. And, it is our intent to promote equality in local, state and national organizations. Therefore, our purposes are:

- Increase respect and accessibility for victims of violence who are Native women
- Improve knowledge and skills of non-Natives who advocate for Native women
- Eliminate racism within local programs and state, national coalitions
- Promote collaboration between non-Native organizations and Native Nations



MESSAGE FROM SACRED CIRCLE

This project began in response to the growing interest and desire from Native advocates to develop and implement Native specific shelters and programs. Native advocates seem to be of the sentiment that shelters/programs in urban areas or those located close to reservations/tribal communities are not responsive to the needs of Native women who are battered and their children. These Native advocates also indicated that they felt they tried to work cooperatively, initiated discussions and attempted to find common ground with their neighboring shelters/rape crisis programs.

The typical response Native advocates received appears to be: 1) lack of recognition of the differences between the situation of Native women who are battered and other women; 2) lack of cultural sensitivity and knowledge, 3) lack of knowledge about the specific legal/political relationship of Native Nations and the United States government; 4) lack of understanding about how colonization continues to impact Native people today; and 5) inability of non-Native advocates to recognize and respect the importance of having women who look like you as a resource.

Sacred Circle has always encouraged emerging Native advocates and programs to join forces with and work collaboratively with state coalitions. Again, and repeatedly, Native advocates reported feeling a defensiveness from non-Native women. Native advocates feel their voices are discounted in the face of a prevailing attitude that the existing shelter is perfectly capable of responding to the needs of all women who are battered and their children.

According to Native advocates, the existing shelter/program engages in cultural diversity training and, consequently feels this activity makes them capable of responding to the needs of all women who are battered and their children. Little thought is given to the racial and ethnic configuration of staff and board. Or, to the policies that guide the shelter or program.

In some respects, we also ignored the voices of Native advocates in our zeal to promote a unity amongst women that we felt would strengthen the social and political effort to stop violence against women. At some point, however, Native women throughout Indian Country, began to ask us for technical assistance to develop or expand resources in their community so they could provide advocacy and services themselves and not have to depend on the local shelter or program.

In response, Sacred Circle engaged a consultant to survey the state coalitions and to determine if state coalitions recognize the alienation that Native advocates feel and, if they did, were engaged in any process to address it. Coalitions were at varying stages with the issue. Some were actively struggling to figure out how to include Native women while others had little or no awareness that Native women existed. Still others knew that Native women lived in their state and were concerned that Native women didn't participate but were at a loss as to how inclusion might happen.

This manual is offered, as Native people would say, "in a good way." Our intention is to make you aware of some areas that are important to us as Native advocates. For too long, Native people, and especially Native women have been "invisible". The new wave of women's activism has created an energy throughout Indian Country that is exciting and revolutionary. The Violence Against Women Act has given Indian Country some long overdue resources.

It is time. As Native women we have much to offer. Our voices need to be heard. We can learn from each other, share with each other, and grow together in creating a strong voice to end violence against women. It's up to us.

Also in the way of Native people, we apologize if there is anything contained in this manual that might offend you. That is not our intention. If something bothers you, we ask that you look at why it bothers you. It is through this individual introspection that we will find a path that we can journey on -- together and in the spirit of sisterhood.

Mi takuye oyasin (We are all related).

Karen Artichoker,
Director, Sacred Circle

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

"When I got raped

my family and I

would have liked to

have an Indian

woman as an

Advocate. The

Advocate that

helped us was a

nice woman but

she didn't have a

clue what it was

like to live in an

Indian community."

*—Native Rape
Survivor*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EFFECTS OF COLONIZATION ON NATIVE WOMEN

By: Carol Maicki, edited by: Sally Roesch Wagner

This history is about Native women. It is not a history of all women of color. It is about the women who were here long before any other woman ever set foot on this continent.

We focus on the effects of colonization on Native women because their story explains what happened in terms that other women can understand. Non-Native women know how frustrating it is when men say, "What do you women want anyway?" Native women are equally frustrated when non-Native women say, "All of that happened in the past so get over it." Or, "I am not responsible for what my ancestors did to your people." Or, "My relatives were not here when all that happened." This denial of accountability fuels the racism that exists today because Native people want to remember and many non-Natives want to forget.

The crimes of sexism and racism are bound together. Understanding the history of Native women will move us closer to the day when all women can truly be sisters in our mutual struggle to end the violence being done to us all.

This history explains what Native women lost when Europeans came to this country. It also explains how the status of Native women and respect for their contributions had to be destroyed in order for the immigrants to steal this country from the original inhabitants.

The history of Native women starts with the beginning of time and not when Europeans came to North America. Before European contact, researchers estimate there were between 20- 45 million Native Peoples in what is now the United States. There were thousands of sovereign Nations, each one unique in language and culture. First contact with Europeans happened in the 1400's. By 1900, only 250,000 Native people had survived. The cause of death was disease, starvation and murder. It was genocide of such magnitude that we have yet to be told the true story in our history books.

To know what life was like for Native people before contact with Europeans, one must understand basic concepts about the ways of life shared by Native Nations. Probably the most central is the necessity for balance in every aspect of life. This included relationships between men, women and children. There were no "bosses". Each person had responsibilities and abilities that contributed to the well-being of the group whether it was the family, tribe, nation or confederation. The concept of a "chief" that had authority over others was an invention of white men.

Generally speaking, women were in charge of food production, trading, healing and were the artisans. They built and maintained the family homes, decided when and what to plant, when to harvest, what to trade and what to put away for the winter. They had equal voice with men in all things military and governmental. Finally, women were necessary in matters of spirituality, which included ceremonies and rituals. This was based on Native Peoples' understanding of women's innate spiritual power. The welfare of the community relied upon the abilities of sovereign women.

Sovereignty of tribes and of individuals was (and is) another important concept. Oren Lyons, Haudenosaunee, who is the Faith Keeper of the Turtle Clan, Onadaga Nation, defines it:

Sovereignty – it's a political word. It is not a legal word. Sovereignty is the act. Sovereignty is the do. You act. You don't ask. There is no limitation on sovereignty. You are not semi-sovereign. You are not a little sovereign. You either are or you aren't. It's simple. (Barreiro p.33)

Another definition from Paul VanDevelder; 1999@ Seattle Times:

When the legal concept of sovereignty was first challenged in the Supreme Court by the state of Georgia in the 1820s, Chief Justice Marshall took pains to examine this legal apparatus and to explain how it functions..."Sovereignty," explained Marshall, "exists as a pre-condition among self-governing entities and acts as a legal shield protecting all rights and privileges reserved and implied by nationhood. In fact, treaties were a granting of rights from the tribes, to the federal government."

Sovereignty refers to Nations but it also refers to the people within the Nations. Native women were considered sovereign and self-governing. Native women had the right to their own children, the right to divorce, and their own possessions. There were no bastards or orphans. In contrast, European women had no voice in government or military matters. They had no right to their own children or possessions. They could not own property, divorce was forbidden and violence against them by their husbands was legal.

The difference between the majority culture and that of Native Nations is like night and day. The oral tradition and the sense of relationship to all that is, continues to this day. On the other hand, majority culture's relationships are confined to nuclear family units and humans are thought to dominate over all other life forms.

The most important difference, however, is that between Gynecentric and Patriarchal thought and

"His family was

action. Gynecentric means a female centered social system and Patriarchal means a hierarchical system. In the former, power is distributed evenly between men and women. In the latter, power is held by a few men. (*Gunn-Allen p.195*)

after me when he

When Europeans initially came, they came in small numbers as traders and trappers. Native people welcomed them and the whites adapted to their hosts' ways. They married Native women and respected the women's place in their communities.

got arrested. The

Advocate said I

As a result, there was no calculated effort to change Native culture until Europeans came in large numbers to settle. Even then, the advantages of the Native Nations' social and economic systems were evident to the immigrants and the form of democracy that exists today owes its roots to the Native People.

wasn't in danger

because he was in

In March of 1621, something happened that changed forever the lives of Native people. The Mayflower landed, full of English pilgrims who were escaping oppression and looking for a new way of life. According to the Compact of the Mayflower, they wanted *civil and religious liberty*. But it was this sentence that proved to be mortally dangerous: "*For the glorie of God and the advancement of the Christian Faith.*" The settlers wanted religious liberty only for themselves. They would not recognize that the people already here had a religion. (*The Mayflower Compact*)

jail. She didn't

understand how

families could be in

This was the beginning of the end. For 20 years following the Mayflower's arrival there was an influx of 20,000 European settlers into what is now Massachusetts. The comedian Sinbad says that if Native People knew then what they know now, they would have said, "Don't let those people get off that boat here!"

my community."

***-Native Battered
Woman***

What the Europeans found was not a vast wilderness full of savages but an organized system of sovereign people. William Bradford, the leader of the pilgrims wrote that the people were "*affable, courteous and with well-disposed natures.*" They found people who were free and that's exactly what they were seeking, freedom. They came from a place where kings and strict feudal systems guaranteed a life of servitude for all but a powerful few. Had it not been for the courteous people that greeted them, they wouldn't have survived because they had no survival skills. (*Bradford p. 62*)

One of the greeters was a man named Squanto who spoke English!

Because of this, the pilgrims decided he was their gift from God. Squanto was grieving because his town of Pawtuxet had been wiped out by a plague two years before. Squanto learned English when he was captured by an Englishman and sold into slavery. In Spain, he escaped and made his way to England where he was befriended by another Englishman who hired Squanto as a pilot on a ship sailing to Newfoundland. He made several trips and upon return, found all his relatives had died. (*Barreiro* p.108)

A common practice for Native people was (and is) to adopt people as relatives. Squanto adopted the pilgrims as family and invited them to settle in his deserted town. They gratefully accepted because they were sickly and weak from a horrendous winter trip across the Atlantic. They renamed his town Plymouth and began their new living experiment that failed. They couldn't raise enough food to get through the winter so one third of them died. Some survived by going to live with Native families in nearby towns.

Squanto became their interpreter and teacher. He showed them how to plant, where to fish and because he had adopted them as family, stayed with them for the rest of his life. The pilgrims learned how Native people raised more than enough food. They learned about a division of labor that was under the supervision of women. Men and children worked the fields if needed but the Native women directed the entire operation from planting to harvest.

The pilgrims couldn't bring themselves to put women in charge of anything so they adopted the Native way with one important difference. They put heads of families (men) in charge and divided up the land in Plymouth accordingly. This process, with its basic flaw, was replicated with every new wave of immigrants. Had they respected the abilities of their women, white women would have been important economically and it would not have taken three hundred more years for white women to be allowed to vote.

Squanto convinced the other towns to include his new family in the confederacy so the pilgrims attended meetings and learned the governmental system of the Native people. They didn't develop the idea of democracy and free enterprise out of the blue; they learned it from their Native neighbors. They were ignorant of any other system except what they were escaping. They wanted to find a new way to live and found the freedom they sought by learning from the Native people.

Native women were a problem for the immigrants from the beginning. They simply couldn't understand why women held positions of honor and why they were included in all decision-making. When a Cherokee delegation met with the British in the early 18th century, their leader Outacitty's first words were, "*Where are your women?*" Native men were so accustomed to the active participation of women that they couldn't understand their absence in European decision-making. (*Green* p.34)

The Europeans dealt with the problem by refusing to negotiate if Native women were present. In 1762, Kanadihora, a Seneca went to speak to the English at the request of the Seneca women. The English asked him not to bring the women. The Seneca leader replied:

"White women talk

"It was always the custom for women to be present at such occasions ...being of much estimation amongst us, in that we proceed from them and they provide our warriors with provisions when they go abroad, they are resolved to come down." (Green p.34)

too much. They

In the 1800's, a Paiute, Sarah Winnemucca said, *"The women know as much as the men do...if women could go to your congress, I think justice would soon be done for the Indians."* (Green p.72)

never gave me a

chance to talk and I

really needed to."

Rape of Native women then became a tactic to get them out of the way. Fighting broke out when Native men tried to hide or protect women from gangs of men who came to their villages to steal food, furs and women. Often Native men were killed trying to protect their Native wives and daughters. The Spanish tell of lassoing women like cattle and dragging them off. (Green p.35)

*-Native Battered
Woman in
Non-Native Shelter*

As the numbers of settlers increased, it wasn't just abandoned towns that were occupied. Huge tracts of forest were clear-cut for farming. When Native people objected, deals were made to purchase the land. Native Peoples didn't have the same concept of ownership that the Europeans had. They did not understand why they couldn't hunt in their usual places simply because they were given money. To solve this problem, the colonists formed militias and scalping began. Bounty was placed on Native people with different amounts for men, women and children. The highest price was paid for the scalp of a woman because the women were the most feared.

After 54 years of trying to co-exist with the immigrants, the Native people in Massachusetts had had enough. The son of one of the original greeters named Metacomet organized a war effort to drive the whites back where they had come from. Metacomet was called King Philip by the whites and the war is known as "King Philip's War" in the history books.

What the history books don't tell us is that many of the warriors were lead by Native women. One was named Wetamoo and another was Awashonks. Wetamoo brought 300 warriors to the war effort and all were killed except for 25. She escaped but drowned trying to cross a river. The English found her body and cut off her head. Her head was put on a pike in view of her surviving warriors and there was "a loud wailing and lamentations" until the warriors were sold into slavery. (Niethammer p.141)

It was a bloody battle. Of the existing 90 English settlements, the

Native warriors attacked 52 and 12 were completely destroyed. The warriors were outgunned and finally defeated. It was during this time that the first Thanksgiving was "celebrated." There exists today, a proclamation by a governor of one of the colonies stating a feast be proclaimed to celebrate the massacre of Native men, women and children. One account tells of Native people's heads on stakes in a circle and in the middle the English feasted and celebrated. (*Means p.176*)

The settlers brought the grisly practice of cutting off heads and displaying them to this country. In Great Britain, the English used it to keep their own people in line but in this country it was used to terrorize the Native People.

Most Native people sided with the British during the Revolution because they thought if the British won, the settlers would leave. When the war was over, revenge was rampant and hostilities increased. The Six Nations and the new revolutionary government held a meeting and a treaty was signed in 1774 at Lancaster. This treaty described the relationship between the immigrants and the Native people. Benjamin Franklin was there and took notes. It was the leaders of the Six Nations who acknowledged the newcomers as a new and separate nation and considered them as 13 separate states.

This was not the first treaty. The earliest treaty known was between the British and the Haudenosaunee who lived in what is now Albany. It was called the Two Row Wampum and it established the Native Peoples' rights to the land and a separate and equal coexistence between two peoples.

It reads: *"The canoe of the Indian and the boat of the white man going down the river of life in peace and friendship forever. For as long as the grass grows green, as long as the water runs downhill and as long as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west shall we hold this treaty."* This was written in 1613, seven years before the pilgrims landed. (*Barreiro p.33*)

Learning about treaties is the responsibility of Non-Natives because they are written government to government and are the supreme law of the U.S. government. They are not documents of surrender. As stated earlier, they were a granting of rights to the U.S Government by individual Native Nations.

Women's rights advocate Matilda Joslyn Gage wrote in 1878:

"That the Indians have been oppressed, and are now, is true, but the United States has treaties with them, recognizing them as distinct political communities, and duty towards them demands not an enforced citizenship but a faithful living up to its obligations on the part of the Government." (*Gage p.2*)

The new government understood they were guests in a country that was already inhabited from shore to shore. The problem was (and is) that the government has not honored the treaties. The treaties are as valid today as they were when originally written.

"My husband raped

our girl. I reported

it. Nobody even

came to investigate

from the Feds. The

shelter worker

didn't know what

to do and neither

did I."

*-Native Battered
Woman in
Non-Native Shelter*

The "founding fathers" of the new government made many trips to visit with the Iroquois to learn about their representative form of government and patterned the U.S. congress after what they learned. Also, the early white feminists learned from the Iroquois women. They had never known what it was to be free and seeing how the Native women lived inspired them to start their own revolution for equal rights.

Paula Gunn-Allen writes:

"It was to the advantage of white men to mislead white women, and themselves into believing that their treatment of women was superior to the treatment by the men of the group which they considered savage. Had white women discovered that all women were not mistreated, they might have been intolerant of their men's abusiveness."

Matilda Joslyn Gage, a white feminist, was arrested in 1893 at her home in Fayetteville, New York for the "crime" of trying to vote in a school board election. She was adopted into the Wolf clan of the Mohawk nation the same year and given the name Karonienhawi that means Sky Carrier. (Wagner, 2, p.34)

Native women were well aware that if they became United States citizens, they would lose their rights. One Native woman said: *"As an Indian woman I was free. I owned my home, my person, the work of my hands, and my children could never forget me. I was better as an Indian woman than under white law."* (Wagner, 1, p.8)

The U.S. government devised ways to make room for new immigrants by driving Native people west. The most infamous is the "Trail of Tears" orchestrated by President Andrew Jackson and the resulting death of 6,000 Cherokees. This was after the Cherokees (by treaty) had agreed to abolish their ancient form of government which included women. They abolished the honor paid to the "Beloved Woman" and replaced her with a council of men. It didn't matter. The whites wanted their land. President Jackson lied to the Cherokees and reneged on the U.S. government's agreement with them. This was the beginning of many treaties not honored.

When gold was discovered in South Dakota and California, the killing of Native people intensified. Militias were formed with the sole intent of murdering Native people. The cavalry was posted to protect the whites and they did this by murdering Native men, women and children. At the battle of Little Big Horn in Montana the Lakota people

wiped out George Custer and the cavalry. White historians described it as a massacre.

Marlin Mousseau, Lakota, calls it self-defense.

“The celebration of the Battle of Little Big Horn – Victory Day – is not about celebrating Native men’s ‘warrior image.’ Custer had targeted women and children to demoralize Native men and destroy Native people. The Battle of Little Big Horn was about the defense of Native women and children, who are the life and future of the people.” (Sacred Circle Training Manual, Rapid City, SD, 2000)

The army sought revenge and found it at Wounded Knee in 1890 when over 300 Lakota men, women and children, carrying the white flag of peace were murdered and buried in a common grave. To the United States’ great shame, 30 medals of Honor – the largest number ever awarded for a peace time action – were given to the cavalry members for murdering innocent, unarmed men, women and children.

Author, Rene Samson Flood in Lost Bird of Wounded Knee, described the scene in this way:

“One of the survivors, a young mother ran one-eighth of a mile away from Wounded Knee Creek before she was chased down by a mounted soldier. Perhaps when she saw that it was too late to run, she begged the man for her child’s life, as other women had done by holding her infant up to him. “Michin chila! Michin chila” (My baby! My baby!) But the plight of a child brought no mercy. She was shot twice in the breasts at point-blank range and left for dead. Wind had slammed her against solid ground under a cut bank. The Lakota mother and child may never have been separated during life, but in death they were divided...she must have wrapped the baby beneath her own body in a last attempt to save her little one.” (p.46)

At Sand Creek, in Colorado, on Nov.29, 1864, a cavalry unit launched an unprovoked raid on a sleeping Indian village, killing more than 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho, mostly women, children and elderly men. The private parts of some of the victims were paraded through the streets of Denver. (Weller)

Sally Bell, a Sinkiyone in California wrote this in the 1800’s:

“--My grandfather and all of my family – my mother, my father, and me – were around the house and not hurting anyone. Soon, about ten o’clock in the morning, some white men came. They killed my grandfather and my mother and my father. I saw them do it. I was a big girl at that time. Then, they killed my baby sister and cut her heart out and threw it in the brush where I ran and hid. My little sister was a baby, just crawling around. I didn’t know what to do. I was so scared that I guess I just hid there a long time with my little sister’s heart in my hands. I felt so bad and I was so scared that I just couldn’t do anything else. Then I ran into the woods and hid there a long time. I lived there a long time with a few other people who had got away. We lived on berries and roots and we didn’t dare build a fire because the white men might come back after us. So we ate anything we could get. We didn’t have any clothes after a while, and we had to sleep under logs and in hollow

"The rape
counselor said she
didn't know much
about Federal
Court, only state
court. So, she
couldn't answer my
questions or help
me much."

trees because we didn't have anything to cover ourselves with, and it was cold then – in the spring. After a long time, maybe two, three months, I don't know just how long, but sometime in the summer, my brother found me and took me to some white folks who kept me until I was grown and married." (Margolin)

There are many, many accounts of the atrocities done to Native People by the U.S. government, state militias and outlaw bands of murderers. When genocide failed, new policies to deal with Native Peoples were developed. The policies ranged from removal, termination, relocation, and assimilation to self-determination. Assimilation was probably the most devastating to Native culture because it sought to destroy all that was sacred and replace it with the values of the immigrants which were opposite to Native values. In many respects, the insistence on assimilation continues today. Many white people still believe that total assimilation is the only answer for Native people.

The assimilation tactic to christianize (remember the Mayflower Compact) Native people employed the most vicious acts. In order to be successful, the extended Native family had to be destroyed because the family was the heart of the culture. This was accomplished in a number of ways. One was by taking children away to be educated in boarding schools often run by religious people with no experience in parenting and a hatred of the "heathens".

Earlier Missionaries led the way when they accompanied French hunters and trappers to the St. Lawrence valley. This was the home of the Montagnais people. Paula Gunn Allen describes the plan devised by the Jesuits under the leadership of Fr. Paul Le Jeune:

"His plan had four parts, which, he was certain, would turn the Montagnais into proper, civilized people. He figured that the first requirement was the establishment of permanent settlements and the placement of authority in the hands of one person....More ominously he believed that the institution of punishment was essential....How could they understand tyranny and respect it unless they wielded it upon each other?....He was most distressed that the 'savages' thought physical abuse was a terrible crime....In his reports he stressed that the cure rested only in the abduction or seduction of the children into Jesuit-run schools located a good distance from their homes....Last, Le Jeune wished to implement a new social system whereby the Montagnais would live within the European family structure with its' twin patriarchal institutions of male authority and female fidelity. These

–Native Battered
Woman in
Non-Native Shelter

would be enforced by the simple expediency of forbidding divorce. He informed the men that in France the women do not rule their husbands..."

(Gunn-Allen, p.39)

Mission schools and boarding schools were an invention of the religious institutions in collusion with the new U.S. Government. Competing churches were designated by the Government to set up schools to christianize and educate the Native children. Unspeakable crimes were perpetrated on these children and many adults today suffer daily from the rapes, beatings, humiliation and cruelty they survived. There are now more than three generations of Native people who grew up in boarding schools whose sole purpose was to destroy the soul of the Indian. The children were never parented and so were not prepared to be parents. The destruction of the Native family was underway.

A typical boarding school experience was described by Alta Swift Bird in 1993:

"We were told by the nuns and priests never to speak the Indian language. It was forbidden. They never told us why, and I was too scared to ask. Since I knew very little English, it was very difficult to communicate. Every time I said a word in Lakota, the nuns would take a ruler and hit me over the hand with the sharp edge of that ruler. It was such a habit to speak our language that we'd say words without thinking. My speaking Lakota words was never intentional, it was out of habit. And I got punished for it. I remember having big lumps on my hand. When one hand would get too sore and swollen, they would hit me on the other hand. When both hands became sore, they would take me into a room and use a strip of rubber and beat me on the back or on the butt. Sometimes we got beat on the legs too." (Arbogast)

Another focus was the degradation of Native women. To destroy the culture, the early missionaries understood they had to rid Native Peoples of the notion that women were important. As the Bible preached - or as it was interpreted, the missionaries insisted that men be in control and that women were to subjugate themselves to men. Another tactic was the punishment of children, a practice unheard of in Native life. This was because "spare the rod and spoil the child" in the Bible was incorrectly interpreted. There are written accounts of missionaries actually forcing men to beat their wives and of mothers forced to beat their children.

Finally, the U.S. government banned all spiritual practices. It was against the law for Natives to hold ceremonies, sun dances and anything connected to their spiritual life. This continued until 1978 when Congress passed the Indian Religion Freedom Act. Ceremonies and rituals survive today because of the will of the People and the determination not to forget their traditional spirituality.

The effects of colonization on Native women are evident today. Even though Native women are no longer running in fear from the whites, the destruction perpetrated by the colonizers lives on in the daily lives of Native people. Some call it "internalized oppression" others call it "effects of colonization" and still others define it as "casualties of war".

*"I asked her how it
was in the shelter*

In spite of all of the above, the "soul of the Indian" survived. In spite of the estimated deaths of over 20 million, they never gave up. And they never went away. Native people live in every state, in every corner of this country. Today the Native population is just under 2 million. Native people have survived the genocidal policy of the U.S. government; but not without a terrible cost.

that had all non-

Statistics for life expectancy are far lower than any other racial group and infant mortality rates are much higher. The Native woman is now treated with the same disrespect as European women. Ironically, though their traditional ways did not tolerate wife beating or rape, violence against Native women is highest of any racial group. This violence is not by accident. It is directly related to government policy and the dynamics of oppression.

Native staff. She

said she was

considered "slow"

As non-Native women reading this, please work hard for the vision of two cultures living side by side in mutual respect. But understand this can't happen until white women confront their own participation in the genocide. Participation can be as benign as silence or lack of education. Being accountable for what majority people did to indigenous people is a start. Providing respectful advocacy services to Native women who are victims of violence gets us closer to the day when violence against all women is eliminated.

but I told her it was

just because she

The fact is, white ancestors committed terrible crimes of genocide toward a people whose country they stole. It is a fact that violence against Native women today is a direct result of colonialization. It is also a fact that the genocide stops when whites of today no longer think or act as their ancestors did.

steps with

caution!"

-Native Advocate

I am, I am
In wisdom I walk
In beauty may I walk...
In beauty it is restored.
The light, the dawn.
It is morning.

Luci Tapahonso, Navaho

Note: This history is not comprehensive so it does not represent the experience of every Native Nation. It traces European contact from the east coast as it moved west. There are many different histories to consider when Europeans came to Alaska, California, Mexico, etc.

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THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN MOVEMENT A BRIEF HISTORY

"I knew some

women who went

back because their

husbands used

Indian medicine on

them. The white

staff could never

understand this."

*—Native Advocate
about Non-Native
Shelter*

Something astonishing happened over the past 30 years that is unique in this country's history. For the first time, ordinary women, all across the country created a movement to end violence against themselves. It was exceptional because it was women organizing on a local level without high profile leaders. Groups sprang up almost simultaneously without the Internet, without money for long distance calls and often, without knowing what their sisters were doing in the next town or adjacent state.

There are *three* distinct waves to the movement to end violence against women. The *first* was the anti-rape movement, *second* was the battered woman movement and *most recent is a wave to end violence against women in Indian Country*. We name this the third wave of the movement.



Each effort was almost identical in the way the women organized themselves and how they began advocating for women who were raped or beaten. In the early 70's Rape Crisis groups popped up all over the country. The battered women's movement started opening shelters in the late 70's. There was one shelter for battered women on one reservation in the early 80's but now the 3rd wave is gathering momentum and shelters are emerging on Indian lands all across the country.

Credit must be given to the women's movement and the feminists who started "consciousness raising" groups during the 60's. For the first time, in these groups, women began speaking out about the rapes they survived. There was liberation and healing in not having to suffer in silence any longer. They learned to trust one another with their secret. As they gathered strength, the secret was out and their voices were as one. The time had come to end rape. What they discovered: There was no taboo against raping women but there was definitely a taboo against *talking* about it.

The movement owes much to the self-help model developed by AA. The practice of being anonymous was adapted by the early anti-rape movement and later called confidentiality. Also, asking former victims to respond to crisis calls was similar to AA's sponsor process. And, there were plenty of women willing to help so the movement gathered steam and spread like wild fire.

The early advocates accompanied rape victims through the criminal justice process and emergency room exam. What they found was more victimization perpetrated on victims by these systems. For example, it was common for most rape victims to be required to pass a polygraph before offenders were even questioned. In other words, she was presumed guilty.

Stereotypes were everywhere. What she was wearing, whom she socialized with and if she was drinking were all considered before the system reacted. The belief that most women lied about being raped was the norm. In addition, by law, it was legal for husbands to rape their wives and her past history could be used against her in court. Date or acquaintance rape was not considered a crime and women raped as children didn't fit into any category.

There were no standardized rape kits. Some rape crisis centers made up kits. There was no funding so they conducted fundraisers and learned how to write grants. There were no videos or training protocols. The literature available was erroneous if not downright dangerous. So, the advocates wrote their own material. As they developed literature, old mimeograph machines churned out reams of paper that was recopied all over the country.

The women came from all walks of life and from every ethnic background. They were old, young, psychologists, teachers, housewives, homeless, prostitutes, lesbians, nurses, white, Native, African American, Asian and Latina. The mix created a unified, solid core. It was truly a diverse and grassroots effort. One by one, they listened to victims and fought for justice side by side in their local communities.

It was dangerous work because many local people and politicians didn't understand their motives. Our country was just coming out of the civil disobedience of the 60's and there was great fear that these women were a new kind of radical. The FBI kept files on those they determined to be leaders. There was a spate of murders of rape advocates across the country during a short period. These murders were never officially linked but were regarded as separate, unrelated crimes.

Advocates received hate mail, tires were slashed, and families were threatened. Women helping one another with such determination was unheard of and suspicious. Advocates were called man-haters and given other derogatory labels. It took great courage for them to continue but they did. Rape victims who returned to the centers after the crisis offered their services so their numbers continued to grow.

It became obvious that laws had to be written or changed and that law enforcement and medical people needed to become allies. The barriers that rape victims faced were astronomical. The advocates started to organize on a state and then national level.

<p><i>"There's so many rules. I felt like I was in boarding school again. It made me feel like a</i></p>	<p>The National Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) was formed to provide technical assistance to local rape crisis centers and to lobby on a national level for legislative change and funding. The lobbyists working with friendly congress people drafted a bill called the Victims of Crime Act. (VOCA) The intent was to use criminal fines to fund local rape crisis centers. After several years of hard work, the legislation looked like it was finally going to pass. Then along came the Battered Women's Movement. So, when VOCA became law, it was not exclusive to rape crisis centers. The law included services for battered women and victims of child abuse.</p>
<p><i>little kid and it made me mad, but I couldn't say any-</i></p>	<p>The battered women's movement began in much the same way as the anti-rape movement with one major difference. The rapid growth of shelters across the country didn't begin until after the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) organized in 1978. Prior to that there were only a few shelters for battered women primarily located in large urban areas.</p>
<p><i>thing 'cause I was afraid I'd get kicked out and I had no place to go. I just</i></p>	<p>The difference between the first two waves was that the rape crisis movement started at the local level and later went on to organize at the state and national level. The battered women's movement started at a national, then state level and finally spread to local communities. However, the end result was the same; local women formed organizations to eliminate violence against women in their communities.</p>
<p><i>had to take it. They gave me a paper to fill out when I left and I just put that everything was</i></p>	<p>The cost of starting a shelter was daunting but they did it anyway. In one western town, 5 women parked a Winnebago in the local shopping area and panhandled until they had enough money for 3 months rent. Unpaid staff then opened the doors to battered women. Battered women, social workers, neighborhood women and rural nurses, among others, started shelters. In some cases, if there was an existing rape crisis center in the community, they began working together immediately and pooled resources. In others, they remained separate and still are today.</p>
<p><i>good."</i></p> <p><i>-Native Battered Woman</i></p>	<p>The similarities between the two waves became apparent when battered women's advocates found few resources and huge barriers in their communities. While rape was already a crime on the books, battering your wife was not yet considered a crime but a family matter. Battered women's Advocates were now considered the enemy. Not only were they suspiciously helping women but also were accused of breaking up the very bedrock of the American culture, the family.</p>

The backlash was tremendous. It became dangerous work, not from confused citizens but from the batterers. Because of this, most shelters tried to keep their location secret. This secrecy bothered law enforcement and the shelter programs were viewed as obstructing justice and advocates as the enemy. Battered women desperately needed the police to protect them but the police didn't know how because battering the woman you lived with was not considered a crime.

The business of running a shelter became problematic because there were no guidelines and most of the women were new to group process and non-profit board oversight. Battered women demanded to be a part of the decision-making process and took on leadership at all levels. The internal battles produced a new, woman-centered organizational model.

In both waves, a woman-centered philosophy was the foundation. The women who needed a safe place or an Advocate educated about where the injustices lay. It was their experience and voices that changed everything. Because of their leadership, laws were changed everywhere in the country.

As the population became educated a number of things happened that changed this basic philosophy and the momentum slowed. Rape crisis centers disappeared in many states. The numbers of battered women so overwhelmed the shelters that advocacy for rape victims couldn't be a priority. Competition for funding between shelters and rape crisis centers became a problem.

Some funding sources required change in board composition and staff requirements. In many areas, new board members changed how the shelters treated battered women. A social service approach gradually took over that regarded the women who came for safety as the problem. The focus became that of *fixing* the battered woman instead of regarding her as a victim of a crime and holding the criminal accountable.

Many shelters began to mandate that battered women attend counseling sessions and parenting classes. Child protection services accused battered women of not protecting their children, even when they escaped the violence to come to the shelter!

Before laws changed and when law enforcement wasn't cooperating, many shelters were filled with women from all walks of life and every ethnic group in the community. No other alternative was available. As batterers were arrested, and women found greater justice in the courts, more women could stay in their homes.

The shelters are now a refuge of last resort, primarily, for poor women. This shift in the population of shelter residents presents new challenges because, generally speaking, women with white, middle class values run the shelters and poor battered women of other classes and ethnic groups are called clients. There is a disturbing aura of missionary zeal connected with this approach that assumes the dominant culture's values are best.

Now, there is a third wave developing in Indian country. Federal and some state funds are finally

<p><i>"We take women from the rez to one of four shelters and none of them have Native staff. Our agency has been looking for a house to rent. There has been more than one time when we've been asked why we wanted to rent a house (by non- Native providers). When landlords find out we will be sheltering Native women, we are told we cannot rent. I think it will take a long time for this history to change."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>—Native Advocate</i></p>	<p>filtering to Native communities and reservations. These new programs are creating culturally respectful shelters and advocacy for Native women.</p> <p>As was true with the first two waves, the current wave in Indian country must overcome obstacles from community people, offenders and law enforcement. But, astoundingly, there are barriers from non-Native advocates! Some established shelters, rape crisis centers and coalitions are opposed to Native women and men deciding how this new wave should proceed.</p> <p>The barriers experienced by Native shelters and advocacy groups are many. Some of the barriers are: disagreements over funding plus lack of respect and honorable advocacy for Native women and exclusionary policies for membership in task forces and state coalitions. In addition, there is lack of understanding of sovereignty and how culture, as an avenue of healing for Native women, is real and important. There is lack of knowledge of Tribal criminal justice and other systems and lack of knowledge about federal laws that impact Native people. Last, there exists resistance of non-Natives to become educated about Native People's history and culture and to collaborate with Native Nations.</p> <p>Each wave contributed new understanding. The third wave is no exception. Despite the obstacles, Native Nations are developing innovative strategies and a vision that draws on cultural accountability and wisdom. This may prove to be the key to finally ending disrespect and violence toward all women.</p> <p>The good news is there are over 90 separate state coalitions. Some are exclusive to anti-rape work; some exclusive to battered women and some are combined. Many national resource centers exist. The three waves of the movement spawned hundreds of new service organizations and legislative reform. Funding via the Violence Against Women Act, enacted in 1994, is bringing much needed funding to Rape Crisis Centers, Battered Women's Programs, Tribes and State Coalitions. There are several national resource centers. Most recent are, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center in Pennsylvania, Sacred Circle in South Dakota and Mending the Sacred Hoop in Minnesota.</p> <p>No longer are there exemptions for husbands who rape in state or federal statutes. Now, batterers can be arrested without a warrant. A rape victim's prior history can no longer be used against her in a court</p>
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of law. Battered women can now apply for protection orders that when violated by abusers bring criminal charges.

Police, prosecutors and medical personnel now receive specialized training. The public understands that a man who beats a woman should be arrested for a crime. The courts now hold rapists accountable and don't automatically expect victims to lie. Acquaintance or date rape is now a prosecutable crime. Gang rape is taken seriously and men who rape children receive tough sentences. These are enormous changes that have happened over the relatively short period of 30 years.

The third wave, the struggle to end violence against Native women holds promise for new approaches. Non-Natives need not be afraid or threatened. The inclusion of Native women, men and organizations will only serve to strengthen the movement and the contributions made will be long lasting and will benefit all women.

OVERVIEW: CULTURAL COMPETENCY PROJECT

"I'm a white

woman and was

living with a Native

man. He was

getting dangerous

so I called the local

shelter. The worker

didn't help me

much. She asked

what was I doing,

living with an

Indian?"

*—Non-Native
Battered Woman*

Cultural Competency is a project of Sacred Circle, a national resource center to end violence against Native women. The project began in 1999 when a survey consisting of 10 questions was sent to 73 state coalitions. Fifty-seven responded. Some coalitions were exclusive to domestic/family violence or rape/sexual assault and some were combined. Of 50 states, 46 responded.

Following are two of the questions:

1. Are you interested in enhancing your ability to assist battered women or rape victims who are Native women? In what way?
2. What is your organization's priority regarding Native women who are victims of violence?

The responses to these 2 questions from the coalitions were compiled and rank-ordered according to the number of times each issue was mentioned. The nine top issues, in order of priority are:

1. Help us become more Culturally Competent
2. We want improved services and outreach to Native victims
3. Safety, respect for Native women
4. We want information, we need to learn more
5. We want to assist tribes and tribal programs
6. Help with political problems with tribes, both past and present
7. Help with identifying population clusters of Native people
8. We want more interaction/collaboration with tribes
9. We need help providing resources to urban Native women survivors

Sacred Circle leadership decided to address these issues by creating a manual called "Cultural Competency" and to offer the manual as a resource to all domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions across the country.

A project facilitator was put under contract and a panel of 7 women was selected from various state coalitions to become the advisors. The advisors met for four days in November of 2000 to draft the outline of the manual. The working session was held during a National Training Institute of Sacred Circle in Rapid City, SD. The advisors are respected leaders in their field and are Native and non-Native.

Because this manual is intended for non-Native people, the original idea was that non-Natives would write it and become educated in the process. When the request was made to national and state organizations for advisors, something interesting happened. Native women called to say they didn't trust this process and they wanted to participate. In fact, one woman announced she was coming whether she was invited or not! So, the panel of advisors became balanced and a lesson was learned.

The lesson was that the dynamic energy of this diverse group resulted in a much-improved product and the interaction between Native and non-Native women served as a model for what the advisors hope will be replicated by all who read this manual.

The work session was held in conjunction with one of Sacred Circle's national training institutes where all presenters were Native people and all attendees worked for Tribal organizations. For the first time, some non-Native women experienced how it felt to be in the minority and were uncomfortable. One remarked she didn't voice her opinion, at first, for fear she would say the wrong thing or worse, be labeled a racist. Another comment was, "considering the manual is for allies, then I felt it appropriate for allies to be a part of this".

A Native woman said that everyone was sincere, wanted to contribute what she knew, not always agreeing, but wanting this document to be relevant. A Native woman noticed that everyone in the room had the same concerns about battering and rape in relation to Native women and it was a positive that there was national concern. All of the advisors appreciated spending time together at meals and away from work so they could get to know one another, personally.

Each organization, represented by the advisors, contributed to this project by paying for expenses and time of the participants. This demonstrates appropriate, concrete support. It is appreciated.

Writing, revisions and editing was conducted via mail, email, fax and phone. In addition to the advisors, Karen Artichoker, Director and Brenda Hill, Education Coordinator of Sacred Circle performed oversight. All bios are included in this manual.

Of primary importance are the personal comments contributed by Native and non-Native women survivors and advocates. This manual is dedicated to them with gratitude.

SACRED CIRCLE SURVEY RESULTS

Completed September, 2000

State	Coalition Info	Tribal Info	Coalition Wants	Priority/Problem	Notes
AL	2 coalitions DV: 18 programs SA: 12 programs	15,238 Poarch Creek 1 grantee	SA: provide direct services & understand needs. DV: wants help w/tribal leaders.	encouraging coalition membership	
AK 16%	1 coalition 20 Programs (12 contract with Tribes)	99,603 226 recognized tribes, 13 grantees	help with oral resources in AK- Native languages	safe places, info, advocacy for native women	P.L. 280 state
AR	1 coalition 23 programs	13,712 <u>NO LAND</u>	serve women regardless	services restricted to AR residents. no requests from native women.	Sharon Sigman
AZ 06%	1 coalition 24 Programs 1 on Tribal Land (most serve native women)	256,183 21 reservations 16 grantees	coordinated community response legal adv. & funding	safety for women	Leah Meyers
CA	3 coalitions SA: 77 DV: coalition (no response) DV: network (no response)	308,571 82 reservations 10 grantees	to network native women w/rape crisis close by. cul.comp. training	largest population of native people is urban	Marybeth Carter
CO	2 coalitions DV: 41 SA: 59 (5 dual)	36,740 Southern Ute Ute Mountain 1 grantee	both want cul.comp.. both want information	DV: increase outreach. SA: build trust. respectful services	Bonnie Weimer
CT	2 coalitions no response	7,942 5 reservations 1 grantee			
DC		1,768			
DE	1 coalition 4 programs.	2,391 Nanticoke Tribe	knows little re: ser. on tribal land.	started woman of color task force.	Pauline Gyan
FL	1 coalition no response	58,070 7 reservations 2 grantees			
GA	3 coalitions SA: 25 DV: no response DV: no response	18,150 3 reservations	would like to do outreach	don't interact. don't know of tribal lands	
HI	2 coalitions DV: 20 SA: no response	6,762 <u>NO LAND</u>		don't make distinction, serve all	
ID	1 coalition DV: 20 SA: no response	16,667 4 grantees 5 reservations	PO enforced on Tribal land. FF&Credit training	political problems. can't go if not invited.	

State	Coalition Info	Tribal Info	Coalition Wants	Priority/Problem	Notes
IL	2 coalitions DV: 50 SA: 31	27,293 <u>NO LAND</u>	Learn more, identify where population is. cul.comp	both have 3 prog. that serve native women	Carol Corgan
IN	2 coalitions SA: 35 DV: no response	14,675 <u>NO LAND</u>	Want edu & how to serve effectively.	Learn diversity of issue	
IO	2 coalitions DV: 33 SA: no response	8,456 Sac & Fox	help tribes with T.A. and how to get funding.	bridges burned in past. wants to develop relationship.	
KS	1 coalition 30 programs	23,333 4 reservations 3 grantees	Help develop a respectful strategy.	trying to build bridges.	
KY	2 coalitions DV: 17 SA: 13	5,840 <u>NO LAND</u>	DV: not aware of any natives. Will help if they come	SA: wants info for natives not on tribal land.	Nancy Spooner
LA	2 coalitions DV: 19 SA: no response	19,467 3 reservations	make ser avail & provide workshops	looking forward to learning more	Merni Carter
MA	1 coalition 40 programs (3 contract with Tribes)	15,046 3 reservations 1 grantee	wants info		
MD	2 coalitions DV: 21 SA: no response	15,779 <u>NO LAND</u>	help identify groups & orgs & where located.	wants to jointly address violence with Tribal people.	
ME	2 coalitions DV: 10 SA: no response	5,617 4 reservations 2 grantees	wants to connect with 2 other tribes	works with two tribes.	Tracey Cooley
MI	1 coalition 75 programs	59,601 11 reservations 6 grantees	help with cul comp	assist Tribal programs.	
MN	2 coalitions DV: 96 SA: no response	57,522 11 reservations 6 grantees	more interaction.	to assure Native voices are heard & we respond	Mn-St Paul large urban population
MO	2 coalitions DV: 73 SA: no response	20,644 <u>NO LAND</u>	improve outreach to Native women	Trying to identify relevant sources & TA.	Stats: served 32 women 32 children
MS	2 coalitions DV: 12 SA: no response	10,129 MS band Choctaw 1 Grantee	offer services that fit their needs		Michelle Carroll
MT	1 coalition 46 programs	55,615 7 reservations 7 grantees	best practice info P.R. materials	coalition doing TA project with Tribes	
NC	2 coalitions DV: 62 SA: 68	97,507 6 reservations 1 grantee	DV: whatever they need. SA: we are new we need everything	DV does training for Tribes	

State	Coalition Info	Tribal Info	Coalition Wants	Priority/Problem	Notes
ND 05%	1 coalition 20 programs	30,109 4 reservations 5 grantees	safety so Natives can go to any shelter in state.	coalition doing TA project with Tribes	Bonnie Palecek
NE	1 coalition 22 programs	14,839 4 reservations 4 grantees	To help stabilize native programs (2)	problems w/ Tribal politics	Sarah O'Shea
NH	1 coalition 14 programs	2,423 <u>NO LAND</u>	Help w/ cult comp.	improve out reach assistance.	
NJ	1 coalition 23 programs	22,166 3 reservations	more info. don't have Indian lands	works w/large urban Ind. Center	Lynda Carson
NM 09%	1 coalition 28 programs	134,000 24 reservations 10 grantees	help w/multi-cult. issues need resources	make sure native women have access & ser are sensitive	Mary Ann Copas
NV	1 coalition 12 programs	31,206 25 reservations 9 grantees	better collaboration between native & non providers. better services for native women.	To overcome historical barriers.	Sue Meuschke
NY	2 coalitions DV: 120 SA: no response	75,886 10 reservations 2 grantees	very interested	trying to connect w/Tribal Leaders Invites to training	Lorien Castelle
OH	1 coalition 62 programs	22,939 <u>NO LAND</u>	provide cul. comp.anti oppress. services & wk shops.	Police stats: 219 victims 259 offenders (Native American)	Brenda Manders
OK 08%	1 coalition 27 programs (One half of programs contract with Tribes)	263,260 14 grantees	Help w/ cult comp for members	safe services & prevention tactics	Ok city large urban
OR	1 Coalition ? programs	44,998 10 reservations 9 grantees			Desiree Allen-Cruz (1) Native staff
PA	2 coalitions DV: 63 SA: 52	17,727 <u>NO LAND</u>	PCAR: cult.comp. training. PCADV: training	PCAR did survey of member progs. PDADV found large # of Native Am. served in rural area	
RI	1 coalition 6 programs	5,169 Narragansetts	cult comp. training prev/ed	collaborate with tribe	
SC	1 coalition no response	9,291 Catawba			
SD	2 coalitions 40 programs	59,292 9 reservations 11 grantees	Wants respectful services & both want safety for women	One coalition has TA project	Verlaine Gullickson, Willette Dolphus, Krista Heeren-Graber

State	Coalition Info	Tribal Info	Coalition Wants	Priority/Problem	Notes
TN	1 coalition DV: 39 SA: 09	12,151 <u>NO LAND</u>	2 programs serve at least 10 Natives.		
TX	2 coalitions DV: 68 SA: 85	95,682 3 reservations most urban	SA: to create awareness DV: keep women safe	SA: Tribal leaders not receptive. say no problem.	
UT	1 advisory DV:16	29,544 1 grantee	collaboration		Judy Kasten Bell
VA	2 coalitions DV: 48 SA: 33	18,646 7 reservations not federally recognized.state only	SA: provide respectful services. DV: to improve Both: help w/ cult. comp	Kristi Van Audenhove: DV	Valerie L'Herron: SA
VT	1 coalition no response	1,500 <u>NO LAND</u>			
WA 02%	2 coalitions SA: 38 + DV: no response	102,940 26 reservations 15 grantees	better understand Native people in WA cult.comp	Seattle/Tacoma large urban	Christiane Hurt
WI 02%	2 coalitions DV: 77 SA: no response	46,304 11 reservations 10 grantees	Native women to have access to services they want.	Coalition doing T.A. Rural Project	Diane Wolfe Rural Project Dir.
WV	2 coalitions SA: 09 DV: no response	2,585 <u>NO LAND</u>	Wants info		Nancy Hoffman
WY 02%	1 coalition 22 programs	10,608 Wind River Res. 2 grantees	Training for I.H.S. Law Enforcement. Coordinated Comm. Response.	coalition has T.A. grant	

Column explanations

- State. Percent numbers are 10 states with highest percentage of Native people compared to state population.
- Number of coalitions. Number of local member programs. DV=domestic violence, SA=sexual assault.
- Population of Native people in state. Grantees=Tribal organizations that receive funding for anti-violence.
- Comments from coalitions about what needs are re: Native women survivors.
- Comments from coalitions re: unique circumstances or initiatives specific to Native women survivors.
- Miscellaneous facts or names of responders to survey.

Miscellaneous information about Native Nations

- Total population (prior to 2000) of Native people: 2,359,946. (0.9% of U.S. population).
- Thirty-seven states have federally recognized Indian Lands within borders.
- Largest population of Native people is in CA (308,571) Largest percentage is in Alaska (13%).
- Tribes with most members (in order): Cherokee, Navajo, Chippewa, Sioux (Lakota, Dakota, Nakota), Choctaw, Pueblo, and Apache. (All other Tribes combined represent 51%)
- 4/5 of all Native people do not live on Indian Lands.
- 1/3 of all Native people have income below poverty line.
- 1/4 of all Native people moved during previous year.
- Of seven counties with largest Native population, six are in SD and one is in AK.
- Of ten poorest counties in U.S., three are in Indian Country.
- Native people population will increase over next two decades faster than whites or African-Americans but not Hispanics.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ADVOCACY

"On Sunday, the

staff made sure the

non-Indians got to

their churches or

people would come

to pick them up

and help with their

kids. They never

helped me to get to

a sweat. I was on

my own."

*—Native Battered
Woman*

The following is offered to non-Natives providing *any* type of service to Native women who are victims of rape or battering. For specific considerations about battering or rape services, please see appropriate sections.

Here are words that describe an honorable *non-Native* Advocate; Accessible, Accountable, Non-racist, Non-offensive, Respectful, Trustworthy, Collaborative and Flexible

Accessible

Most of us pride ourselves on serving everyone that comes to us but to serve Native women, it is often necessary to step outside our doors. This means three things; *first*) self education about where Native women live and what their community is like, *second*) advertising your services in Native communities, and *third*) transportation options. How can she get to where you are?

Accountable

To be accountable is to have the ability to recognize racism, stereotypes and systemic oppression as it impacts yourself and Native women.

Non-racist

Being non-racist means that your board of directors and staff reflect the women you serve. In other words, if a Native woman comes to your rape crisis center or battered woman shelter, she will find staff she recognizes as being from her group and understands something about her life. She will not have to waste precious time educating her helpers.

It means that non-Native Advocates are making a personal commitment to unlearn the racism they received as children. They are doing this by: reading the history of the Native people in their service area; being knowledgeable about where their own people originated, and by acknowledging that this country was stolen from Native people and that genocide was waged against them.

Non-offensive

White people and other non-Natives have cultural quirks that are offensive to Native women. Offensive is another word for impolite. Being aware of habits helps to minimize them so working with Native women can be more productive for both. The following is not to judge because these traits are acceptable in the dominant culture. The intent is to point out behaviors that are not helpful when working with Native women.

1. *Assuming that all Native women are the same.*
2. *Believing what works for the majority works for all.*
3. *Handshakes that are like corporate America.*
4. *Not allowing for silences.*
5. *Interrupting, talking over, talking too much and talking in a loud voice.*
6. *Assuming Native women are Christian.*
7. *Assuming Native women are NOT Christian.*
8. *Being directive, dogmatic, aggressive or intrusive.*
9. *Criticizing mothering practices different from your own.*
10. *Saying, "color doesn't matter to me" or "some of my best friends are.."*
11. *Mistaking quietness for shyness, weakness or disability.*

Respectful

Understand, without question, any cultural activities that she says have priority over activities you would prefer she do. Make accommodation for family members accompanying her. Take time to find out exactly why this particular woman seeks your help. What are her expectations about what you are able to do? If a third party referred her, don't assume the referral source knows what this woman needs. Pay attention, not only to her words but also to words left unsaid. Remember that every woman has the right to be herself. Don't talk about her with co-workers or other agency people without her informed consent. Try not to lump her with other victims of crime or even with other Native women.

"The white staff

didn't talk to us.

They stayed in the

office and talked to

each other."

—Native Battered
Woman

"I was thinking

about the first

question the

advocate asked me

and then she asked

me another

question. So I was

thinking about

both. Then she

started asking more

questions. I got so

confused trying to

figure out what to

answer, so I just

shut up.."

—Native Battered
Woman

Collaborative

You and she are a team. Learn from one another. Ask her to keep you informed. Promise to share any information you get about her situation. Tell her about others in the community who could be part of her team. Find out who her support persons are and ask if she wants you to meet with them. Remember that no traumatized woman should ever have to navigate medical, social and legal systems alone.

Flexible

Strategies that have worked for other women may not work with Native women. Have an understanding of her reality in the world in which she lives. Be willing to be innovative and to "think outside the box".

Trust

The historical foundation explains why trust is not a given. When interacting with a Native woman remember that trust has to be earned. Trusting takes time so be patient.

Finally

There are two major cornerstones for all services. They are confidentiality and finding out what the Native woman wants to do.

Confidentiality or privileged communication means that you will not repeat anything the woman tells you to *anyone* unless she specifically asks you to do so. If you are not protected by law with a statute or do not have a program policy, she deserves to know. If your program policy mandates that you keep all confidences, explain to her what this means and what the limitations are. If there is a state law and you are covered by it, explain what the law forbids you to do.

Finding out what the woman wants to do will take some time because she is looking to you for answers only she has. We know it is true that most victims of crime feel helpless to make decisions for themselves. Native women may present a greater challenge because of the intrusiveness of governmental and social agencies they've had to negotiate their entire life. Often, they are so accustomed to "agency" people telling them what to do it takes extra patience to help them find their own strength. She may not respond to questions immediately. Don't feel you have to keep talking, prompting and asking more questions. Silence is ok. She may just be thinking.

Comment from a Native Advocate

I got a call from the local shelter. The advocates wanted to make sure that a young Indian woman was getting her needs met there and since there were no Native advocates on staff, they felt the responsible thing to do was to call me. I thought that was pretty neat.

They said they thought this young woman was depressed. She stayed in her room all the time. She was 17 years old and had two children and the advocates were concerned because they'd heard her cussing at her kids, thought she might be giving them aspirin to make them sleep and wondered if she was physically abusive to them.

I went to the shelter and introduced myself to this young woman. We talked for several hours. She chatted away. Said she was worried sick that she was pregnant. She'd called the local hospital for an appointment but got scared when they asked her what department she wanted and she didn't know so she just hung up. I asked her if she'd like for me to make an appointment for her. She looked so relieved. I asked her if the advocates would take her and watch the kids during the appointment. She said they would give her a token for a cab and she'd have to take the kids.

This young woman was from a nearby reservation and had little urban experience. She obviously was frightened about going to this appointment alone. I offered to take her and help with the kids. Good thing I did because it ended up taking hours. She wasn't pregnant and was all smiles!

When I talked with the advocates, I figured out that they had all talked with her at one point or another. They all knew she was worried sick about the possibility of being pregnant and was intimidated about being in a shelter with non-Native women and their kids. She was worried that there would be a racial problem and she'd get kicked out so she stayed to herself.

The advocates all knew what was what. This young Indian woman had shared as freely with them as she had with me. The only difference was - I did something! The advocates said they didn't want to "disempower" her by doing everything for her. I replied it wasn't empowering to throw someone out in the middle of ocean with no boat or life jacket and she doesn't know how to swim! We had a good discussion about advocacy in general, and what was respectful advocacy when there was concern about care of children.

In this instance, I don't see "cultural competency" as an issue. I think competent advocacy was more the issue. It was what followed that was disturbing...I was telling a crazy Indian joke about an old grandma and grandpa. One of those long stories. When I was done (and I sorta had to explain the punch line before they got it), one of the advocates, who never did laugh, looked at me intensely and said, "I didn't really listen to the joke. What I was listening to was how your accent changed as you told the story. It was fascinating to see and hear the change in your voice and body language."

That moment of connection I felt with those advocates was gone. I felt like we didn't know each other at all and had no common ground. I was also disgusted because I thought, "It's always the same ole, same ole. I know and understand their reality but my reality is 'fascinating' or 'interesting'. I wish she would have just let it alone and talked to one of her peers that could have helped her understand. I tried to and ended up feeling resentful.

RAPE CRISIS AND ADVOCACY FOR NATIVE WOMEN SURVIVORS

"I only came to

town to go shop-

ping so didn't know

the city very well.

When I was run-

ning for my life,

they gave me 30

days to sign up for

TANF, take parent-

ing classes, get a

job, get my kids in

school, get a place

to live and I could-

n't get it all done. I

had to go back to

the rez where my

boyfriend was. "

-Native Battered
Woman

Some Statistics

Native women, per capita have a higher rate of rape than any other ethnic group. They are more likely to be raped by someone from outside their cultural group than any other. As a group, Native women rape victims are the most underserved. (Bureau of Justice Statistics)

Non-Native Service Provider May Say:

We have an excellent rape crisis team of paid and volunteer staff who are required to under-go rigorous initial and follow-up training. There is a nurse examiner program at the hospital we lobbied for many years to get in place. The police and prosecutors treat rape victims with respect because of our work. Many victims we serve are Native American women and children. We don't have Native American advocates but this is not because we don't want them. Native women do not respond when we make appeals for volunteers. We never had a victim who objected to having an advocate who was non-Native. We sincerely believe that our advocates are capable and qualified to assist any rape victim, no matter to what ethnic group she belongs.

Food For Thought

When given the choice, most female rape victims prefer to work with female advocates. The argument that male advocates could be equally qualified and capable is valid. However, we *instinctively* believe that women are best suited to be advocates for women who are victims of rape.

The same parallel can be made when a victim of rape is a Native woman. The argument that non-Native advocates could be equally qualified and capable is valid. However, we *instinctively* believe that Native women are best suited to be advocates for Native women rape victims.

Comment From A non-Native Advocate

"I was called to the emergency room at 3 a.m. Around 10 p.m. the night before, a Native woman had just arrived by bus from the reservation. She was in a phone booth trying to reach her relatives when a Native man

approached her. He said Indian people were partying in the nearby park and invited her to join in. There was no party. He raped her and took the few dollars she had in her purse.

I was with her during the exam, back to the crime scene with the police and then to the police station to give her statement. She was very upset and hung onto my hand for dear life throughout the entire ordeal.

At 8 a.m., Sunday morning it was finally over and we were exhausted. We went to the Rape Crisis Center to phone her relatives. No luck. She had no money, nowhere to go and couldn't stop crying. There was another problem; she was bleeding heavily and needed sanitary napkins. I didn't have any money either. The only thing I could think to do was to suggest we go to my house to get what she needed and she could rest until we located her relatives. She nodded OK and off we went. On the way to my house, we passed a development she believed was Indian housing. 'Stop,' she said. 'I'll get out here. I'll know someone there.'

When I told her it was not Indian housing, she slumped down in her seat and wept. We did finally find her relatives and they came to pick her up. I learned something that day that I'll never forget.

Despite the fact she trusted me and appreciated me being with her, despite the many intense, emotional hours we shared, I knew in my heart that had I been a Native woman, it would have been less traumatic for her.

The reasons I believe this—the look on her face when she thought she saw an Indian community...I knew immediately she was nervous going to a white person's house, my lack of knowledge about the Native community... I didn't know who to call and finally, if I was going to be a responsible advocate, I had to accept that no matter how respectful I tried to be, I was not a Native woman."

ACTION PLAN

Individual, personal commitment

Please read the sections on "General Principles of Advocacy" and "Historical Foundation". You will understand more fully Native women and her life challenges that could result in recanting or non-participation in the criminal justice system. Reflect on how your approach, mannerisms and language may or may not contribute to honorable advocacy.

Organizational commitment

In the interest of expanding advocacy services to the most underserved population, Board and staff prioritize recruiting, hiring, training and retaining Native women. The Board takes the self-test on "cultural competency" found in the section "Additional Information" and develops a plan to move to the next level.

Fact Sheet

A fact sheet specific to the Native People in your coverage area is developed and used as a training tool for advocates. Suggested elements to include in a fact sheet can be found in section *Steps for Change*.

Outreach and Resource Development

"The biggest

problem that

Native women have

A list of resources in the Native community is available for advocates and rape victims. In reservation communities this could include names and numbers for tribal court, health services, police, government, transportation options, federal/state court liaisons, rape crisis or domestic violence shelter programs, women's societies, etc. In urban areas, the list could include gathering places Native people frequent such as Indian Cultural Centers, health services, churches, etc. Brochures or posters describing your services are available at all of these places.

Training and Prevention/Education

when they go 2

hours away to the

shelter is that they

Basic training for your advocates includes a section on advocating for Native women and how this may be different. Native women familiar with the community you serve conduct training. Your program offers cross training to Native service providers to facilitate referrals and to increase awareness. Your program has a presence at cultural gatherings such as health fairs and pow-wows. Your program has subscriptions to local Native newsletters/papers to keep abreast of events and to place ads or submit articles.

are not allowed to

burn sage, smudge

Board, Staff and Volunteers

The make-up of Board and Staff reflect the women you serve. For example, if 25% of the women you serve are Native People, your commitment is to have at least that number in decision-making positions and direct services. For ideas on how to recruit, please see section *Steps for Change*.

or anything like

that. They are told

it's because of fire

rules."

Spiritual and Cultural

Most non-Native advocates have little or no knowledge of the spiritual practices of Native Peoples that might include altered states of consciousness on the part of the traditional healer. For Native women who are not Christianized, this personal force or power is not a separate thing but is integral to her existence, well-being and personal balance. As a good advocate, your task is simply to listen without judgment. It is also your responsibility to give the woman the space or opportunity to practice or connect with spiritual leadership/ways of her choosing.

-Native Advocate

Various programs for victims may pay for counseling. Often, your advocacy will be needed to help a traditional Native woman get the help she deserves if her choice is to go to a spiritual leader in addition to or rather than main-stream counselors, with or without compensation program assistance.

Spiritual practices around compensation varies amongst individual healers and tribal traditions. Some may prefer not to utilize crime victim's compensation programs when it comes to traditional healing. In the event compensation programs are not being used to compensate traditional healers, non-Native advocates should defer the issue to Native advocates, traditional healers or Native Nations.

SHELTER AND ADVOCACY FOR BATTERED NATIVE WOMEN

"We were told that

Native women

coming from the

reservation had to

have \$300 before

they could get into

the shelter."

—Native Advocate

Some Statistics

The rate of violent crime experienced by American Indian women is nearly 50% higher than that reported by black males. The violent crime rate for American Indian females was 98 per 1,000 females, a rate higher than found among white females (40 per 1,000) or black females (56 per 1,000) (*Bureau of Justice Statistics*)

Non-Native Service Provider May Say:

This talk about racism undermines our ability to advocate for battered women. In our shelter, all residents are here for the exact same reason... to escape from a violent partner. Providing services to victims of domestic violence is what we do. We are good-hearted women working long hours for little pay. We resent the implication that we practice or condone racism. We treat everyone exactly the same. The shelter rules apply to everyone without discrimination. We are opposed to making separate or different rules for Native American women because that in itself would be discriminatory.

Food For Thought

Treating all women the same is not possible even if all are of the same cultural group because each woman's situation is unique. It is especially impossible if women coming for help are from a culture different from the helpers. To make the assumption that all battered women are the same goes against the core of the work we do. Remember the frustration felt when asked to provide a "profile" of a battered woman. This is because we know a profile simply doesn't exist for battered women.

Rules in shelters could use re-evaluation because loosening rigid practices would benefit *all* women. The specific reason to re-evaluate rules with Native women in mind is because of the "missionary attitude" that is inevitable when good-hearted white women function from their cultural base without understanding or education of Native cultures.

Comment From a non-Native Advocate

When I was married to a man who beat me, I was a resident in the shelter where I now work. I am grateful for the chance to give back and I love my job. Most of the battered women in the shelter are Native Americans. When I lived here I had a hard time adjusting to the Indian women but after a while I made friends with them. After all, we were all in the same boat! Now as staff, I spend a lot of time educating my co-workers (who were never battered) about what it's like for us.

The staff was all white until we hired a Native woman (Charlotte) to do childcare during support groups. One day, I was doing an intake with a Native woman who was scared to death. She was very serious and not very talkative until Charlotte walked by. All of a sudden, the woman got a surprised look and said to me, "Does she work here?" When I said yes, she seemed to relax and from then on the intake went along just fine. It took me a couple of weeks to understand that we really needed to have Native women as advocates. I'm still trying to figure out why I didn't see this before.

ACTION PLAN**Individual, personal commitment**

Please read the section "General Principles of Advocacy" and the "Historical Foundation". You will understand more fully Native women and the life challenges that could result in not cooperating with shelter policy. Reflect on how your approach, mannerisms and language may or may not contribute to honorable advocacy.

Organizational commitment

In the interest of expanding advocacy services to the most underserved population, Board and Staff prioritize recruiting, hiring, training and retaining Native women. The Board takes the self-test on cultural competency found in section "Additional Information" and develops a plan to move to the next level.

Fact Sheet

A fact sheet specific to the Native people in your coverage area is developed and used as a training tool for advocates. Suggested elements to include in a fact sheet can be found in section *Steps for Change*.

Outreach/Resource Development

A list of resources in the Native community is available for advocates and battered women. In reservation communities this could include names and numbers for tribal court, health services, police, government, transportation options, federal/state court liaisons, domestic violence shelter/programs, women's societies, etc. In urban areas, the list could include gathering places of Native people such as Indian Cultural Centers, health services, churches, homeless shelters, etc. Brochures or posters describing your services are available in all of these places.

Training and Prevention/Education

Basic training for your advocates includes a section on advocating for Native women and how this may be different. Native women familiar with the community you serve conduct training. Your program offers cross training to Native service providers to facilitate referrals and to increase

"I have always

slept with my kids.

The advocate told

me that it wasn't

healthy. She made

me feel like I was a

bad mother."

*-Native Battered
Woman*

awareness. Your program has a presence at cultural gatherings such as health fairs and pow-wows. Your program has subscriptions to local Native community newspapers and newsletters in which you periodically place ads or submit articles. These print resources are available to the women in shelter.

Board, Staff and Volunteers

The make-up of Board and Staff reflect the women you serve. For example, if 10% of the women you serve are Native people, your commitment is to have at least that number in decision-making positions and direct services. For ideas on how to recruit, please see section *Steps for Change*.

Shelter Rules

Reconsider all mandatory activities for women coming to your shelter. These include mandatory attendance at support groups, parenting classes, counseling, etc. Reflect on the efficacy of 30-day stay maximums and punishment for staying elsewhere overnight. Finally, challenge the mandate to automatically report all children to child protective services simply because they are staying in a shelter.

Intakes/Record Keeping

How long does your in-take procedure last? Could it be shortened? Are the resident records and notes you keep really needed? Could any be eliminated? Do you have a list of women who are "not acceptable" for shelter services? Do battered women have access to their own files? Do you keep records with the fact in mind they could be subpoenaed? An evaluation tool for forms and record-keeping is to ask the question: *How will this information keep her safe?*

Harmony in the House

Women living in the same house who are from different cultures can be intensely rewarding or a hellish experience. Battered women are not unlike the general public in their communities. Some are racist or afraid of people they consider different. When racist actions or language are expressed, it is the responsibility of staff to address the situation immediately and not to minimize. Children are watching how these situations are handled and there are enormous future benefits for them if it is handled in a calm, fair manner.

For example, if one resident subjects a Native woman resident to racist remarks, it should not be handled as a communication problem and the situation does not call for mediation. The offender needs to be told that her remarks are not acceptable. No matter what the intent, the importance is in how it was *received* by the Native woman. Just as we do not tolerate

violent actions, we do not tolerate words that cause harm. For some non-Native women, this may be the first time they are held accountable. It can be done in a firm, but not hostile, manner by staff.

Often disputes arise around mothering and housekeeping practices. For example, Native women often swaddle or cradle board their children. Non-Native women may find this strange and make comments. Staff may make remarks about Native women if they sleep with their children in the same bed.

What to do when Native women behave badly toward non-Native residents or staff? The same skills are needed by staff to defuse the situation. We can not tolerate violence by word or deed no matter if it is directed toward other adults or children.

To be able to handle potentially explosive situations, staff must be trained. It takes much tact, skill and emotional maturity for staff to help women live together in harmony. In addition to individual accountability, the issue of racism in the shelter should be addressed by board policy. Orientation for new employees should include an explanation of the policy. Advocates need enhanced training to know how to deal with these situations. If a staff member cannot overcome personal prejudice, she cannot be an honorable advocate and should work elsewhere.

Spiritual/cultural

Some shelters try to be culturally correct by hanging symbols or pictures that could be offensive even though well-intentioned. The best monitors are Native women. Non-natives should never assume. This is because some symbols are sacred. Native women may perceive some displays as cultural theft. Native people have experienced their relatives' remains, clothing and tools stolen and sold to museums. The controversy over Indian names for sports teams is illustrative of so-called good intentions that offend.

Most non-Native advocates have little or no knowledge of the spiritual practices of Native Peoples that might include altered states of consciousness on the part of the traditional healer. For Native women who are not Christianized, this personal force or power is not a separate thing but is integral to her existence, well-being and personal balance. As a good advocate, your task is simply to listen without judgment. It is also your responsibility to give the woman the space or opportunity to practice or connect with spiritual leadership/ways of her choosing.

Various programs for victims may pay for counseling. Often, your advocacy will be needed to help a traditional Native woman get the help she deserves if her choice is to go to a spiritual leader in addition to or rather than main-stream counselors, with or without compensation program assistance.

Spiritual practices around compensation varies amongst individual healers and tribal traditions. Some may prefer not to utilize crime victim's compensation programs when it comes to traditional healing. In the event compensation is not being used to compensate traditional healers, non-Native advocates should defer the issue to Native advocates, traditional healers or Native Nations.

ADVOCATING FOR NATIVE WOMEN FOR THE COMMUNITY

"When I was in the

shelter, the Indian

women were

leaving like rats

leaving a sinking

ship. They just

hated it there."

*-Non-Native
Battered Woman*

Criminal Justice System

Battered Women Accused of Crime

Battered women accused of crimes against their abusers are particularly at risk. Often it is because of lack of understanding of Native culture by defense attorneys. Some Native women are pre-judged to not be "good" witnesses in court. Every defense attorney will weigh the pros and cons as to how she will come across to a jury that, in many cases are all non-Native.

As an advocate you can assist by finding resources the defense needs to build confidence and to make the case viable. Too often, battered women are pressured to plead guilty even when the act was in self-defense. Another problem arises when battered women are present when the batterer commits a crime against someone else or if she is coerced into committing a crime by the batterer.

The National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women, as well as attorneys who have successfully defended battered women can be valuable resources to you. Research to find experts to testify about Battered Woman Syndrome and to educate a jury about the dynamics of battering. These experts are different from psychologists that assess whether the accused woman is a battered woman. An expert can be any advocate with experience and knowledge.

Last, but not least, the accused woman needs to have ongoing contact with one advocate with whom a relationship has been developed.

Victims of rape or battering

A rape victim or battered woman needs support and correct information. An advocate is the confidential sister-friend the Native woman needs for herself and her family.

It is your job as an Advocate to help the victim understand how and why decisions are made about the case. The prosecutor has total discretion in making the decision to go forward with the case and if the decision is not to prosecute, often the victim feels this is because of something she

did or didn't do. This feeling adds to her trauma, prolongs her recovery and diminishes her trust in the system.

Some courts have victim-witness personnel whose job is to keep the victim informed about court dates and how the process works. Victim witness people cannot offer confidentiality and the victim needs to be aware of this. This is why an advocate is necessary. Her role is different in that confidentiality is given and the support offered is not exclusive to the court proceedings.

Native women sometimes are not assertive when confronted with non-Native officials. The prosecutor may interpret quietness as reluctance to participate and may decide she would not be a good witness. The advocate can assist by helping the relationship develop by reassuring the victim and by educating the prosecutor about the realities of the victim's life. A common barrier for Native women in telling details is fear. The victim may be afraid or ashamed for her family to know what happened. She may fear retaliation against herself and her family from the perpetrator and the perpetrator's family.

Community Task Forces, Committees, Coalitions, and other Decision-Makers

In too many cases, Native people do not have a collective presence in groups that make decisions regarding victims of crime. As an advocate and an ally of Native people, your task is to convince the people with whom you interact that having Native people involved will make the decision making process more dynamic and valuable. Be ready for the usual arguments such as: "We ask but they won't come to meetings."

The mistakes non-Natives make in trying to get participation from Native people often become self-fulfilling prophecies. Sometimes non-Natives decide who they believe to be leaders in the Native community and these people are expected to join every group and to speak for all their people. This practice is a form of tokenism. The "chosen" people then become over extended and other Native people may not view their participation as valuable. For ideas on how to recruit, please see the section on *Steps for Change*.

Other Service Providers

Become a stubborn advocate for Native women. If you know that the clients of a particular helping program or agency are a majority of Native women and if you notice that the majority of staff is not, you immediately recognize there is something wrong with the picture. Advocating for a Native woman does not mean that you help her "adjust" to uninformed or racist service providers but rather it is to lobby for the recruitment, training and retaining of Native people when jobs are available.

The goal is to create allies, not enemies so some of the things an advocate can offer to another helping organization are; (1) Offer to help recruit candidates for job openings and (2) Offer to conduct "cultural competency" training for non-Native staff.

"I was called racist

names by a white

resident and the

staff didn't even do

anything. They said

we should sit down

and talk it out. That

it was just a

'communication'

problem."

*—Native Battered
Woman*

In the meantime, go through the process with her. It is not coddling or rescuing when you accompany a Native woman to places where she will only see non-Natives because you now understand the history and why these faces and processes may be intimidating. Even though the majority of Native people speak English, it may not be their first language. Explaining and helping with forms or applications is daunting even when English is a person's first language. It becomes almost impossible when it is not. This is one more reason to have Native women on staff. At the very least any organization that serves Native women should have a resource list of Native-language speakers to assist.

Remember to ask the victim of rape or battering what her preference is. Don't make assumptions!

There will be occasions when you accompany a Native woman and other agency people act in disrespectful ways. Some of those are: directing comments to you, the advocate, instead of to the woman herself; making remarks about Native people in general that are rude; neglecting to offer benefits she may be entitled to; making judgmental statements about her lifestyle or parenting skills; etc.

Here is a suggested strategy: Never confront the worker while the Native woman you are accompanying is present. First, discuss what you observed with her and ask permission to talk with the worker. Then, arrange for a private conversation. Remember the goal is to multiply allies, not to create enemies. Much tact is needed when pointing out behavior or speech that is not useful. People can get defensive and the situation will get worse if your approach is confrontational. Some negative results could be that you are now considered a problem or it could globalize to your organization. This means that Native women will have a hard time. It takes an act of bravery to talk with other non-Natives but this is the responsibility of a non-native advocate.

However, there are "bad apples" and sometimes you may need to file a complaint with the worker's supervisor if the behavior is consistently disrespectful. Keeping the larger situation in mind, cautiously pick your battles and try to do the right thing.

Social Services and TANF workers now have flexibility in providing resources. Sometimes non-Natives aren't forthcoming with all the discretionary benefits they have to offer particularly when there are preconceived notions about Native women. Small repairs for vehicles, gas money, child-care and job training are available but may not be

offered. Food stamp applications can be defeating because of the lengthy forms.

Rather than determining immediate need, some workers place impossible burdens on Native women because of judgments made about parenting that is culturally different. So, they may see their job as “fixing” deficiencies instead of offering resources that are legally the woman’s right. Running interference and convincing workers to do their jobs becomes your task as an advocate.

Housing is an on-going problem. Some non-Native managers try to exclude Native families from low-income or section 8 housing. Non-native advocates have been known to make phone inquiries pretending to be the Native woman. Then they accompany when it’s time to take a look. Landlords or managers will not deny housing if a witness is present because it’s against the law.

Native women are more likely than any other group to have children taken away. Advocates need to be aware of ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) and the philosophy behind it so they can help mothers retrieve children or at least be sure the children are placed with Native families. This is not to suggest that all Native women can protect their children it only means that non-Native advocates should be aware that Native women have experienced discrimination, prejudice and re-victimization from the social services/child protection system. Often, the mother’s unique circumstances can be explained to assure the worker the children are safe. This is especially true if the woman is in a shelter.

Alcohol and drug treatment centers don’t make participation easy for women in general. Men seldom have to worry about who will care for their children but women always do. When a Native woman is court ordered to treatment and doesn’t go because she doesn’t have child-care, she risks losing them. As an advocate, try to help her get creative in finding resources. Also, treatment personnel need to begin to take this barrier for women seriously and work with you to make it possible for her to attend. Advocacy may need to extend beyond actual treatment and continue as she participates in post-treatment activities and options.

JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES & NATIVE WOMEN

"My kids and I spent

the night at my

auntie's who lives

in low-income

housing. They

kicked me out of

the shelter because

they said I must

have a safe place to

go. I didn't."

*-Native Battered
Woman*

Jurisdiction issues for the purposes of this manual are specific to how crimes are prosecuted and the federal legislation through the Violence Against Women Act on Full Faith and Credit provisions.

Each coalition and program will have to determine what the jurisdictions are in your area. Generally speaking, in Indian Country, major crimes such as rape and serious assault will be investigated and prosecuted by either State or Federal authorities. Simple assault and other "lesser" crimes are investigated and prosecuted by either Tribal or State authorities.

For example, in 1953 the Federal government relinquished criminal jurisdiction over crimes on some Indian reservations and gave that jurisdiction over to the State. This action affected Native nations in six states, which are known as Public Law 280 (PL 280) states. This means that district or county authorities investigate and prosecute major crimes occurring in Indian Country in those states.

The Federal government retained its criminal jurisdiction for major crimes occurring within all other Native nations, with the United States Attorneys' offices responsible for prosecution of major crimes occurring on those lands. In either case, Tribal governments may choose to investigate and prosecute lesser (misdemeanor) crimes, such as simple assault, provided the perpetrator is Native American.

There are four types of local law enforcement in Indian Country: 1) Under trust responsibilities, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) may operate law enforcement services for Indian lands; 2) the Tribe can contract the law enforcement function from the BIA; 3) the Tribe can subcontract all or part of their law enforcement services to a county or the State; or 4) in the case of PL 280 states, the State maintains law enforcement services, sometimes in conjunction with or contracting with the Tribe for part of local law enforcement services.

This variety of law enforcement services and jurisdictions, along with the fact that most Tribal law enforcement only has jurisdiction over Native offenders, presents enforcement and safety problems for Native women. For example, if a non-Native in Indian Country assaults a Native woman, and the crime is considered simple assault, the non-Native assailant is usually not held accountable by anyone. The resources of State or Federal authorities, who do have legal jurisdiction

over non-Native offenders, often do not provide for this situation. Tribal courts, while having civil authority over persons within their boundaries, still may have only limited civil remedies available against non-Native offenders.

Even outside Indian Country jurisdictional problems occur. If a Native woman is raped or assaulted on a military installation, the crime may be investigated and prosecuted by either the military criminal justice system or that of the State. If the crime occurs on U.S. Postal Service property, in a national park, or on any other Federal reserve, the crime will be investigated and prosecuted by the Federal government. On university campuses, the crime may be investigated by campus law enforcement, local law enforcement, or the State.

Coalitions and programs must provide adequate training on jurisdictional issues and find out what jurisdictional issues a Native woman might face in their area.

Full Faith and Credit (FFC) means that orders of the court from one jurisdiction will be honored by another jurisdiction. For Native women this is supposed to mean that if she has a protection order issued in Indian Country and she moves away, the order is honored exactly the same as if it were issued in that particular jurisdiction. It is supposed to work in the reverse also. FFC is relatively new and the practice may not be in compliance yet in your area. As an advocate, your responsibility is to assist the woman so she gets the protection she is entitled to under the law.

A NOTE TO FUNDERS

"I had to go to Sun

Dance. The

Director said if I

was gone for 4 days

that I wouldn't be

able to come back

to the shelter."

*-Native Battered
Woman in
Non-Native Shelter*

This is an appeal to potential funding sources of services, research or educational grants that will benefit Native women victimized by criminal acts. This appeal is not about money. It is about participation, investment and ownership or control of projects that affect Native people.

Whenever an application from a non-native organization or individual is being considered, there should be either a collaborative agreement or a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Tribal Government, a local Native women's organization or one of the national resource centers that serve Indian Country. The two national resource centers are Sacred Circle in South Dakota and Mending The Sacred Hoop in Minnesota.

Well-intentioned service providers often are not educated about Native Nations or culture. Assumptions and stereotypes about Native people could create work that is not useful or could prove to be dangerous for Native women.

If there is collaboration with a Native organization or government, the quality of the services to be provided, research conducted or educational materials developed will be of better quality and more relevant. In addition, the developing network of Native service providers would be the most logical avenue for disseminating new material or practices.

STEPS FOR CHANGE

"We brought in a

State Coalitions

woman from

Coalition Fact Sheet on Native Peoples

another state where

Don't skip this step. The fact sheet you develop is the basis for everything else you may do! Hopefully, member programs will then use it to develop a fact sheet for the local area they cover. The Coalition will use it in trainings, presentations and as a source for news articles or press releases.

she was asked to

Following are suggested topics to research and include:

leave the white

shelter. She told me

1. State Name: What does your state name mean? Many are Native-language in origin. For example; Massachusetts means "Great Mountain Place", Kansas means "People of the South Wind", Illinois means "Tribe of Superior Men", Missouri means "Town of the Large Canoes", etc.

the reason was

because she was

Indian."

—Native Advocate

2. Population Numbers: What is the total number of Native people living in your state? Summarize where population clusters are located.
3. Tribal Nations, Reservations, Corporations, Rancherias, Pueblos, etc: List the Native Nations within state borders. There are 13 states that don't have federally recognized Nations but Native people live in every state. Some tribes are recognized by the state and some aren't recognized by anyone but they exist. Urban areas include Native people from many Nations. The goal is to present an over-all view of Native people in your state.
4. Brief History: Describe the origins of the Native people in your state. Have they always lived there? Were they forced to relocate by the government? What happened to Native people when colonizers arrived? What was life like before white contact? What was resistance like? Try to include at least one creation story from at least one Native Nation.
5. Violence Against Native Women Statistics: Research the numbers of Native women served by members of your coalition. Compare numbers with total Native population figures.

Coalition Membership

How many coalition members are Native programs with Native women staff? How many could be? Are Native programs located in Indian Country excluded from membership? What are the barriers or issues that exclude these programs from membership? Is there a woman of color task force? If so, are Native women actively involved? Have you considered a Native women's task force?

Coalition Self-Evaluation

The cultural competency self-evaluation can be found in the section on additional information. Devote a coalition meeting to evaluate your organization and determine where you are, where you want to be and a timeline for getting there. Read "Cultural Competency and Management" as a foundation for your plan.

Coalition Leadership and Staff

Do staff and leadership reflect the women you serve? Compare statistics mentioned above and determine if your coalition needs a recruitment strategy. Strategies are included at the end of this section.

Coalition-Sponsored Training

If your coalition conducts periodic trainings or conferences, do you include a section about advocacy for Native women? Do you have Native women as facilitators? Do you include cultural competency training for non-Natives?

Becoming an Ally

The process involved in unlearning racism and becoming an ally to Native people is not easy. The stages that non-Natives experience are predictable. After education, awareness and steps for change, there comes a point when non-Natives sometimes "get stuck". Non-Natives become silent for fear of saying the wrong thing or being labeled racist. It takes courage to overcome this stage and to have confidence in yourself and in your relationships with Native people. If anger is directed at you because of something you said or did, simply say, "I'm sorry" and move on. Don't defend, rationalize or repeat. Accept the criticism as it was intended, and consider it a lesson.

STEPS FOR CHANGE

"For women who

Local Rape Crisis Centers and Battered Women's Programs

come from the

Local Program Fact Sheet on Native Women

rancheria, it seems

Develop a fact sheet for the area your program covers to include the following suggested topics:

harder for them to

1. Population and Geographic Information

work such

How many Native people live in the area you serve? Where are they located? What is the percentage of Native people compared to the general population?

structured

2. Brief History

programs. The

Have Native people always lived in your area? Were they forcibly re-located? If so, what were the circumstances and facts of resistance? Are there reservations, corporations, rancherias or pueblos in your area? What are the names and how many people? What are the origin stories of the Native people in your area?

urban Indian has a

3. Statistics on violence against Native women

much easier time

How many Native women does your program serve? How does this number compare with the population figures mentioned in #1?

adjusting."

4. Collaboration

-Native Advocate

What relationship does your program have with the governments of Native Nations in your area? Do you contract with Native government to provide services? Describe the relationship.

Board Membership

Does the membership of your board of directors reflect the women you serve or does it reflect the community population in general? In either case, do you have Native women as board members? If not, do you want to? Do you have a recruitment strategy in place?

Board Evaluation

The cultural competency self-evaluation can be found in the section on additional information. Devote a board meeting to evaluation to determine where you are, where you want to be and a timeline for getting there. Read "Cultural Competency and Management" and use as a foundation.

Staff and Volunteers

Are you satisfied that your staff and volunteers reflect the women you serve? If not, do you have a recruitment strategy? Ideas for recruiting are included at the end of this section. When you do orientation or on-going training, do you include a section on advocating for Native women and how it may be different? Do you use Native women as facilitators or trainers?

Program Procedures

What are the rights of Native women who come to you for assistance? How is this information communicated? Do you periodically get feedback from women you serve via anonymous surveys? Carefully assess program/shelter rules and procedures. Are there any that could be barriers or exclusionary for Native women? For example, Native women may not have access to transportation, particularly in rural and suburban areas. Do you provide transportation as an integral part of advocacy?

Relationship with Sovereign Nations and Native Organizations

Have you made courtesy calls to introduce your program to Native government people? Have you visited with Native service providers to enhance referrals? Is information about your program available where Native women go? Does your program have a presence at Native peoples' events such as health fairs, cultural/art activities, Native colleges or pow-wows?

Resources and Public Education

Does your organization subscribe to Native newspapers or newsletters in your area? When you do press releases are these sources included? Do you have a resource list of Native organizations to which to refer Native women?

Becoming an Ally Organization

If there is a Native organization in your area working to end violence against Native women, develop a relationship and offer resources. Include them in your public education activities, become educated about their programs and develop a mutual referral system.

"I stayed at the shelter on my reservation. I was crying because I was supposed to Sun Dance and besides the fact that I had nothing and no one to watch my kids, I was afraid of my husband. When the advocate found out, they really helped me. Found me a tent, a babysitter, and took me to see a medicine man... everything I needed. They brought my kids everyday and came themselves to support me. I didn't feel alone and now I know I can start a new life and people will help me."

—Native Battered Woman

STEPS FOR CHANGE

Native Women Recruitment Strategies

Following are ideas to recruit Native women as board members, staff or volunteers. First some ideas for thought.

Native women will be more likely to want to be involved with your organization if they don't feel like tokens simply to "color up" the organization. Therefore, some serious thought needs to go into deciding exactly why you want Native women involved. These reasons should be written down and shared with potential board members or staff. Articulate what the advantages will be to your organization if you include Native women.

You must be sincere in your goal to improve services and accessibility to all women.

If your organization is perceived to be a "white" or Non-native organization, don't make the mistake of recruiting only one Native woman.

To illustrate, here is a true story from the marines.

Women Marines fought for years to get respect and to be allowed into prestigious jobs that facilitated advancement. One of those jobs was to do guard duty at embassies in foreign countries. Finally, the leadership decided it was time. The first woman Marine was posted to a foreign country with few American citizens, a small embassy and she didn't work out. The leadership used this sad experience to confirm that women weren't capable.

An evaluation was done and this is what they found: The woman Marine was lonely. She had no one to communicate with. The men Marines didn't include her in their socializing. The men resented her presence. She was constantly harassed and asked to be a representative of and to speak for all women. She felt the burden of having to prove her worth over and over again. She felt she had to perform at a higher standard to be accepted.

The end of the story is that now women Marines are posted (at least) in two's to embassies in foreign countries. The most sought after deployment was at the American Embassy in Paris and just recently, women were on duty there.

Specific Strategies to Recruit Board Members

1. Visit a Native organization that has a board of directors and leave an announcement that you are developing a file of potential board members and you are especially interested in Native women. Include your reasons why this is important. Ask if you can attend a board meeting to answer questions. Visit Indian Health Service Clinics and visit with staff. Go to Alcohol Treatment Centers that serve Native people and talk to staff. Leave your announcement and reasons why you are actively recruiting.
2. Develop a flyer to be posted at Tribal headquarters, Indian Health Facilities, Cultural Centers, Youth Organizations, Head Start Centers, etc. with the same information as stated above.
3. Place an ad in a native newspaper or community newsletter. Buy an ad on a Native radio station.
4. On a one-to-one basis, ask Native people in the community for names of women they would recommend.
5. Be personal: when you have leads, board members could take turns having coffee with potential candidates to explain how your organization operates and what board meetings are like. Develop a buddy system for new board members.
6. Watch the local newspaper and write down names of Native people who are in the news because of leadership initiative. Call them.
7. Consider Native women that have used your services.

Specific Strategies to Recruit Staff

- Use any of the ideas above that apply...remember the Marines.
- Job announcements should send the message that you serve Native women and require culturally competent advocates.
- Take job applications to Native women working for another organization and encourage them to apply. Steal them away!
- Post job announcements wherever Native people congregate such as pow-wows, rodeos, churches, Native women's societies, cultural centers, arts and crafts shows, art galleries, health clinics, etc.
- If you have one, contact the women of color task force in your coalition and ask them to distribute job announcements.
- Contact Native shelters in other states and send them job announcements.
- Post job announcements in tribal headquarter offices on and off reservations.
- Be personal: contact Native women directors of other organizations and ask for recommendations for names.
- Go to Native communities and post job announcements on bulletin boards at food markets and post offices.
- Be patient and commit. Don't fill position(s) until you have hired Native women. Utilize temps if necessary.

IN CONCLUSION

We thank you for taking the time to read this manual. The articles included in the last section are important to read as a resource to develop strategy for your organization.

When you develop your fact sheets please share them with us. You will be contributing important information that will be invaluable.



BIOGRAPHIES / SPECIAL THANKS

SACRED CIRCLE STAFF

Karen Artichoker

(Oglala Lakota, HoChunk) Karen is a co-founder, Director of Administration and Shelter Services for Cangleska, Inc., a multi-level non-profit to end violence against Native women and their children located on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, home of the Oglala Lakota Nation. She is a recipient of Charles Bannerman Fellowship and the Marshall Peace Prize. She has worked in the battered woman/rape crisis movements for over 20 years and is nationally-recognized as a speaker, trainer and is a published author. Karen is also the Director of Sacred Circle, a national resource center to end violence against Native women and a project of Cangleska Inc.

Brenda Hill

(Blackfeet) Education Coordinator of Sacred Circle. Brenda is a founding mother and former Director of Women's Circle Shelter Program on the Lake Traverse Reservation. Brenda earned a B.A. from New York University and an M.A. from University of South Dakota. She was a member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Community College faculty where she developed degree programs on Chemical Dependency Counseling and Cross-Cultural Counseling. She attributes her expertise in the area of victim advocacy to the many women who honored her with their stories and friendship, her personal experience as a survivor of domestic violence and her involvement with the South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

ADVISORS

Desiree Allen-Cruz

(Nez Perce, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Cayuse – with lineage to Shot-in-the eye, Whitebird, Ollokut (brother of Chief Joseph [In-mut-too-yah-lat-lat or Thunder Traveling over Mountains])). Desiree is Director for the Women of Color Caucus, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence. She has been involved in domestic violence, sexual assault, and unlearning oppression training/education for eight years. Desiree has been instrumental within the Anti-Racism Committee in reviewing, editing and training using the Ally Model. She assisted member and non-member programs in strategic planning by facilitating discussion and training on How to Build an Organization with Diversity. She is involved with the Governor's Council on Domestic Violence, AG Elder Abuse Taskforce and Women of Color Network. She is a survivor of domestic violence (intimate partner violence), sexual assault and the system.

Karen Baker

(English, Irish) Karen is Project Director of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, a project of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. A licensed Master's Level Clinical Social

Worker, she has extensive background in clinical and administrative social work, especially working with sexually abused children and their families. She was instrumental in the Kansas initiative to privatize the foster care system and received the "Friend of Children" Award from Kansas Children's Alliance in April, 2000. In addition to her commitment to children's well being, Karen is committed to ending violence in general, to improving the status and safety of women and assisting underserved and marginalized populations in their efforts to seek resources and justice.

Marybeth Carter

(English, Irish, Native American & Swedish) Marybeth is Executive Director of California Coalition Against Sexual Assault in Sacramento. She is former President, National Coalition Against Sexual Assault. She developed Sexual Assault Response Team Programs while Executive Director at Rape Crisis Center in Contra Costa, Marin counties in CA. Formerly she served as Executive Director of Self Help Center, a sexual assault and domestic violence service agency in Casper, WY. Marybeth serves as a Steering Committee Member for the National Alliance of Sexual Assault Coalitions. She graduated from Indiana University- Bloomington with honors, in Religious Studies. She has been involved in the field to end violence against women for 22 years.

Willetta Dolphus

(Cheyenne River Sioux) Willi is Co-Director, South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She developed the Rape Crisis Team for the Cheyenne River Nation. She is former Co-Chair, South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She is certified by the National Center for State and Local Law Enforcement Training as a S.T.A.R. Instructor on domestic violence. Willi has worked in the battered women/rape crisis movements for 16 years.

Joyce Gonzales

(Apache, Cherokee, Mexican, Irish and Dutch) Joyce has lived in Butte County, California for 19 years and considers it her home. She is a mother, grandmother, daughter and auntie. She has worked with Feather River Tribal Health, Inc. for seven years and prior to that worked with Northern Valley Indian Health and Four Winds of Indian Education, as a substance abuse counselor, sexual assault and domestic violence advocate and coordinator of programs. She currently coordinates two programs: FOCIS and Family Healing Circle. FOCIS is a sexual assault/domestic violence prevention/education and intervention program. Joyce sits on the California Statewide VAWA STOP Task Force and Vice Chairs the Butte/Glenn Family Violence Prevention Council.

Verlaine Gullickson

(Welsh, Scottish, Irish and English) Verlaine is Co-Director of the South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault since 1995. A non-traditional graduate student, she earned her master's degree in Women's Studies from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Her previous work experience includes state government, legislative education and public education in secondary schools and college.

Carol Maicki

(Direct descendant of William Bradford, John Alden, Priscilla Mullins, Andrew Jackson and a Finnish immigrant) Carol is a consultant to government, non-profits and attorneys in ending violence against women. A published author, she conducts workshops, keynotes and provides expert testimony. She has been working for battered women and rape victims for 25 years. She is a former state senator in South Dakota and Secretary of Defense appointee for women in the services (DACOWITS). Currently contracts with Sacred Circle to produce "Cultural Competency" a guide for non-natives.

Diane Moyer, Esq.

(German, French, Irish and English). Diane is Policy Counsel for the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. She provides training for volunteers and advocates, advocates at the state and federal level for improved legislation impacting victims of sexual violence. She graduated from Dickinson College and New England School of Law. Formerly worked as an intern for the Conservation Law Foundation, for indigent clients in legal services and for a major law firm in Boston for 15 years. She is a member of the Children's Rights Committee of the PA Bar Association and is Co-Chair of the Sexual Assault Issues Committee of the Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women. She is a member of the Violence Against Women Advisory Group to the National Crime Victims Law Institute. Diane belongs to the League of Women Voters and Lancaster and PA Bar Associations. She likes cats, disco music, mystery novels and vegetarian cuisine.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Lynda Smallenberger/Giuntoli

(Peruvian, Mexican and German). Executive Director of Kene-Me-Wu Family Healing Center, Inc., a four county Indian specific agency in the Sierra foothills. She is a grant writer, trainer, lecturer, advocate, fund-raiser and talking/healing circle facilitator. She has an AA in Social Sciences, obtained a Drug and Alcohol Certification from the University of the Pacific and is a certified Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Counselor. She sits on DV councils in 4 counties and works with the California Alliance Against Domestic Violence with regards to Native Americans.

Lonnie Jeffries

(Minneconjou) Lonnie is the Graphic Artist for Sacred Circle. She is responsible for the design and layout and the printing of all publications for Sacred Circle. These include the brochures, posters, training manuals, certificates, flyers, mail pieces, etc. Lonnie has worked in the graphic design field for over 13 years and has worked in domestic violence for 4 years.

Valerie L'Herrou

(French/Italian) Valerie is Coalition Projects Director at Virginians Aligned Against Sexual Assault, the Virginia coalition of sexual assault crisis centers. She has been working in the sexual assault field as an advocate and educator since 1991. Since 1997, she has been primarily responsible for all VAASA publications, including brochures, public awareness projects and training manuals. She also

gives training on awareness, media relations, design, and web programming for those working in the field of gender-based violence. She serves on many committees and task forces dedicated to social change to end violence against women and children.

Sally Roesch-Wagner

(German/Russian) Executive Director, Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation in Fayetteville, NY. She is a writer, lecturer and historical performer. One of the first to receive a doctorate in women's studies, she is a scholar in residence for the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, NY. Published author of many books most recent include: *She Who Holds the Sky: Matilda Joslyn Gage*; a Modern Reader's Edition of Matilda Joslyn Gage's 1893 classic, *Woman, Church and State*; *The Untold Story of the Iroquois Influence on Early Feminists* and *Celebrating Your Cultural Heritage by Telling the Untold Stories*.

Victoria Ybanez

(Navaho, Apache and Mexican) Vicki is a Trainer/Consultant working out of Colorado Springs, CO. Formerly she was the Executive Director and founding member of American Indian Community Housing, providing culturally specific transitional housing, battered women's shelter and civil legal advocacy for Native American women and their children. She currently contracts with Mending the Sacred Hoop Technical Assistance Project, MN Program Development Inc. – National Training Project, Praxis International and the Battered Women's Justice Project. She has worked in the battered women's movement for 16 years and is nationally recognized as a trainer on domestic violence and community organizing issues.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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CULTURAL COMPETENCE CONTINUUM FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Terry Cross

1. DESTRUCTIVENESS

- blatant racism
- genocide
- organization does not hire ethnic minorities

2. INCAPACITY

- organization is inaccessible to people of color
- organization avoids working with ethnic minorities

3. BLINDNESS

- organization is blind to differences
- organization believes everyone is really the same

4. PRE-COMPETENCE

- organization tries to educate employees, but has no real knowledge
- organization often has conflicts with little understanding of what occurred

5. BASIC COMPETENCE

- organization is aware of and accepts differences
- employees are aware of their own cultural values
- organization understands the dynamics of difference
- organization promotes cultural knowledge
- organization has the ability to adapt practice skills to fit cultural context of the person

6. ADVANCED COMPETENCE

- organization values and promotes differences

- employees value their own cultural differences
- organization values the dynamics of difference
- organization values and promotes cultural knowledge
- organization has strong practice skills in fitting the cultural context of the person

CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND MANAGEMENT

Fernando Mederos, Ed.D.

This is an attempt to outline some issues that should be considered by managers when an agency moves toward establishing a culturally competent management and service provision model. It is important to begin by acknowledging that systematically integrating culturally competent practices into management and service delivery calls for a significant commitment of time and resources from managers and agency staff. Furthermore, this commitment must be maintained through sustained changes in many management practices, such as hiring, program design, service evaluation, policy development and community outreach. Managers should expect to have to make a substantial investment in terms of exercising active leadership, energy, time and organizational resources. On the other hand, the potential gains for engaging in this process are substantial:

- An enhanced organizational capacity for flexibility and ongoing innovation.
- Increased sophistication in program design and service delivery.
- Greater responsiveness to community needs (services are better designed to meet needs of consumers).
- Closer ties and communication with diverse communities.
- Improving the agency's image and acceptance in the public arena.

There is no roadmap for this type of change. Therefore, this document will define basic terms and outline options for moving toward cultural competence, with an emphasis on the role of managers in the process. We will begin with a discussion of how to define culture, since how one defines culture has major implications for structuring cultural competence initiatives. This will be followed by an outline of three options for culturally competent management practices: the cultural sensitivity approach, the self-reflective cultural sensitivity approach and the cultural solidarity or cultural collaboration approach. Each of these approaches will be described below, along with some discussion of the key management tasks and the level of commitment of resources that each approach calls for. Finally, there will be a brief discussion of the planning and implementation strategies for integrating cultural competence into organizational management.

DEFINING CULTURE

Developing a vision or a definition of culture is a crucial starting point since it sets the boundaries or limits of cultural competence campaigns. Culture is traditionally defined in terms of race, ethnicity and practices and values that are common for certain groups. This includes kin and non-kin network or association patterns, gender roles, traditions and rituals that mark and define life transitions such as birth, marriage and death, religion and spirituality, language, subsistence activities and differing core value orientations (such as individuality/independence, collective interdependence, belief in fate versus individual will, etc.) This is a cultural traits approach.

On the other hand, culture can be defined so as to include life context issues. Expanding the definition of culture to include life context issues allows us to consider experiences that many individuals from a given group have lived through due to historical factors. These shared experiences influence the collective identity of a group and have an impact on individual identity. A list of these experiences could include:

- Gender
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Widespread exposure to public or intimate violence
- Experiences of physical, sexual and/or severe psychological abuse or neglect
- Severe deprivation such as hunger or childhood abandonment
- Religious affiliation and spirituality
- Privileged status
- Disadvantaged status
- Political and other forms of institutional oppression
- Immigration status

This is not meant to be a definitive list of life context issues. Many other types of experiences that are common to many members of any group could be included. The intention is not to build an ever-expanding list of experiences that differentiate or separate people, but to encourage an awareness of the many factors that could have a lasting and deep impact on relationships, families and individuals and on help-seeking activities. In other words, life context and traditional cultural factors permeate family relationships and introduce many factors that institutions need to take into account when attempting to provide services. Including life context issues in a definition of culture allows us to take into account multiple factors, such as adaptive resources and strengths, special vulnerabilities, who one can go to for help, what one can disclose and what types of help will be most readily accepted. For example, if a police officer rings a doorbell after neighbors have reported a disturbance, people may respond and experience the encounter in very different ways depending upon their prior experiences with law enforcement, their immigration status, sexual orientation, capacity to speak English, their cultural traditions about disclosing family problems, etc. Likewise, the police officer's gender, race, linguistic capacity and cultural knowledge may influence his/her capacity to intervene in a connective fashion.

It is also important to consider whether the definition of culture is static or dynamic. A static definition of culture tends to reduce culture to sets of enduring traits and does not reflect the fluidity of individual and group identities. It may encourage broad generalizations and stereotypes that do not make sufficient room for the constant transformation that many people and societies undergo. A fluid definition of culture allows for change and attention to individual differences while recognizing the lasting influence of certain experiences.

In conclusion, developing a common definition of culture helps set the boundaries and the focus of efforts to move toward cultural competence and a broad, inclusive and flexible definition of culture can set the stage for more flexibility, sensitivity and sophistication in service provision.

OPTIONS FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Depending on their structure, internal culture and mission, organizations develop different visions of cultural competence. For some, the goal of cultural competence revolves primarily around modifying existing services in order to better meet the needs of target populations. I will call this the **cultural sensitivity approach**. When this is the goal, change focuses on developing an understanding of various factors regarding the target populations' values and preferences and modifying an existing service to "fit" the population. The managers' task, at a minimum, involves organizing the acquisition of certain types of knowledge and managing the process of using this knowledge for change. A cultural sensitivity approach usually involves re-training staff to learn about target populations, empowering staff members from the target groups who are already on board and bringing consultants or developing community resources to bring in the right types of knowledge. It may also involve hiring staff from the target population, conducting focus groups or establishing collaborative relationships with individuals or agencies from target populations.

Each of these practices calls for different levels of commitment of time and effort from managers. For example, conducting focus groups is a very limited task that may be engaged in for specific purposes. Focus groups may be assembled and ended rapidly, and their purpose can be to gather input or feedback about a specific matter. The information gathered from focus groups leads into a process of setting certain change/modification priorities for the original service and carrying out the change process.

On the other hand, a cultural sensitivity approach that is intended to increase staff diversity or establish ongoing collaborative relationships with agencies or individuals calls for a more intense level of commitment from managers. It is not realistic to hire one or two individuals from a target group without expecting them to feel isolated. They may need support and assistance understanding a work environment with a different majority culture. Managers may also need to work with existing employees to insure that they welcome and integrate the new staff. Managers must see the development and maintenance of staff diversity as an ongoing process. Furthermore, managers should recognize that some staff members from other cultures may not behave in the same way or have the same skill sets as staff who are from the dominant culture. Managers should expect some trade-offs because staff from other cultures may have different strengths. For example, people of color may feel less distance from and may identify more directly with some consumers and their communities. In many settings, professionals are traditionally encouraged to maintain detachment from clients. However, a higher level of engagement can be the basis of enhanced understanding and sensitivity in providing services. Staff members from minority or underrepresented groups may be much more capable of communicating with certain communities and may bring in different and unique perspectives in policy development, service provision and outreach. Managers should recognize these different strengths as unique skill sets that add value to the organization. Conversely, a demonstrated capacity to do outreach and engage effectively with minority communities may become a valued skill set or asset for applicants from the majority culture.

It is also important to consider that the cultural sensitivity model can be centered on learning mostly about the "others"-the target populations-or it can be self-reflective: it can include the development

of self-consciousness about the culture and values of the organization and of individuals within the organization in order to understand how personal and organizational cultural value orientations exert a powerful influence in many ways and act as obstacles or facilitators of change. In other words, a **self-reflective cultural sensitivity approach** calls for managers to undertake an ongoing personal and managerial self-inventory. A self-reflective approach recognizes that everyone carries cultural and institutional baggage and that this baggage can be both a source of strength and a hindrance. For example, it may be that managers expect job applicants to be assertive both in presenting their qualifications and in demonstrating an ongoing interest in obtaining a position. These expectations may be an obstacle for people from cultures where self-assertiveness is not customary or valued in the same way.

The managerial focus in a self-reflective style involves a non-defensive and searching openness about personal and organizational values. It also calls for engagement in a group inquiry about these issues that is revisited often. Managers who implement a self-reflective cultural sensitivity model understand that their work styles and services are value-laden rather than neutral and are committed to self-awareness in these areas. They take steps to design work teams and planning and service delivery processes that are self-consciously inclusive and diverse. They remember that the way tasks are organized and the way services are planned and delivered is not random or neutral. They understand that the results (redesigned services, etc.) communicate values and different types of understanding of the consumers or clients.

In addition to the cultural sensitivity approach, there is the **cultural collaboration approach** (or as Juan Carlos Arean calls it, the cultural solidarity approach). This approach includes all the aspects of the self-reflective cultural sensitivity model mentioned above, but it goes further. The cultural solidarity approach takes for granted that there is institutional power and privilege vested in managers and in institutions from the dominant culture. It challenges managers to develop practices that undo these advantages and empower other groups. Here are some elements of this model:

- Cultural competence is expanded from the traditional focus on values and preferences (including issues such as language). It also addresses issues of oppression, advantage/disadvantage and empowerment/disempowerment. Managers may acknowledge that their institution has historically had an oppressive impact on certain populations and take steps to uncover and remedy such impacts. For example, managers who are sensitive to these issues can develop systems to track whether there is under- or over-representation of certain groups in programs and services. If the data indicate there is a disproportionate representation of one or more groups, managers can begin an inquiry about the intake referral or screening process or about the service delivery process and staff. Managers can also analyze their own (and their institution's) policy and program development process to see whether they have also contributed to an unwanted outcome.
- Managers reexamine the core mission of their institution and expand it so as to acknowledge the interests and needs of underserved populations. It is important to remember that managers do not discard or replace their institution's core mission, but that they supplement the mission. For example, a probation department can recognize that men who batter are often men of color who are

in a disadvantaged and oppressed position in society. It can enhance its monitoring mission to include referrals to education and job training programs, substance abuse treatment and job placement. At the same time, it continues to hold men accountable for refraining from further abuse. In a sense, this involves the implementation of a **life context perspective** that attempts to help the men remedy their economic and social disempowerment while insuring that they remain nonviolent. In this type of effort, managers help staff redesign their tasks and support staff establishment of referral and resource networks.

- Managers bring in people from the target communities (either staff or people from community agencies) not only as informants, but also as ongoing partners in redesigning services. This means that managers redefine their own work to include the creation and maintenance of these relationships and that the establishment of these relationships is allocated as much effort and valued as much as the creation of a new product or the redesign of a particular service. These efforts are well-organized and consistent rather than sporadic. They become a core management function, so fewer and fewer decisions are made without consultation with partners.
- Managers make an ongoing effort to name and undo their personal and institutional privilege. They define the task not only in terms of expanding their cultural fluency. They work to develop an understanding of their privilege as members of a majority group and as members of an empowered administrative group within an executive hierarchy. They do not take for granted that others can perceive and accept their willingness to share power. They repeatedly affirm this willingness and practice it by asking for suggestions, by constantly creating consultative forums where they listen with respect and by reflecting that attention back to participants. They ask others whether they feel that the consultation process has worked for them and how it can be improved. They are not surprised if people of color or others are inhibited or fearful with them because of the internalized impact of majority/minority relations and they develop ways to inquire about these effects and ways to mitigate them in practice. They are transparent about the difficulty of change and about their own limits as managers within an institution that expects certain types of performance and that has its own boundaries about change and sharing power.
- In this effort managers have to take responsibility for creating safe and supportive environments for examining their personal and institutional privilege. Sometimes it is necessary to have an environment where people who have similar institutional privilege and similar types of racial/class/gender and other types of privilege can safely discuss these issues with each other. Many people are not clear about their privileged status and have a strong sense of vulnerability and guilt in this area. There may also be competitiveness and a fear of loss of status or a loss of perceived competence. On the other hand, naming and uncovering privileged attitudes and acts (or omissions) together can be a very supportive source of relief and of self-acceptance. Developing an environment where managers can talk to each other frankly and searchingly about their privileged status and provide support to each other in this process may require outside facilitation.
- Likewise, people who are not from privileged groups, particularly those who are employees within an organization, may need to meet together for support, problem-solving and mutual empowerment.

They may have a constant struggle to name issues and to avoid silence. Managers can facilitate the process of staff meeting together by releasing staff time for this purpose and viewing this as an essential maintenance/empowerment activity for a targeted group of people who may otherwise feel isolated or disempowered.

- As this process moves forward, the possibility of deeper modifications or transformations of services, products and organization of tasks arises. Majority/minority collaborative groups may envision profound changes in services and in service delivery. Managers need to approach these deeper transformations with caution and with careful planning. Does it make sense to develop more manageable pilot projects? How does one measure the impact of redesigned systems? How does one obtain support and validation for these efforts within a larger institution? How does one make the case that the core mission is still central?

Throughout the implementation of a cultural competence approach, managers must strike a balance between direct oversight, delegation and empowerment of a collaborative process. Too much oversight without delegation may suffocate the process and severely limit the input from participants. On the other hand, an overly detached approach does not truly empower a group that is more diverse since there is a risk that they may develop services or products that do not sufficiently reflect the institution's core mission or traditional work style. The result can be an isolated group whose efforts, though excellent, cannot be integrated into the institution. Managers must avoid an excessively detached stance. This aspect of the process needs to be planned carefully.

Finally, it is important to revisit the issue of staff diversity. In most circumstances, this is a key building block of a culturally competent model. However, the pool of candidates from underserved communities may be very restricted, so that managers who make a commitment to developing a diverse staff need to make realistic assessments of the commitment of time and effort it will take to achieve desired results. They also need to establish realistic goals. Diversity cannot be maintained (and will not become self-perpetuating) through hiring a few individuals who end up feeling isolated. Furthermore, staff diversity needs to be targeted at every organizational level. A sense of isolation and alienation will be created if after a prolonged, time minority employees remain clustered in direct service positions. Therefore, managers need to also think of staff diversity in terms of vertical integration of the workplace.

In summary, there are various approaches to moving toward culturally competent management. All of these approaches call for a conscious and sustained commitment of resources, and managers should take this issue into account as they decide how to move forward. Change can be more limited in scope as in the cultural sensitivity approach or it can be more comprehensive, as in the cultural collaboration approach. There is no single avenue toward change, but all the avenues will challenge managers and prove to be an opportunity for professional growth and increased effectiveness and flexibility.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Just as there is no roadmap for cultural competence approaches, there is no set course for developing a strategic plan for cultural competence. A plan is useful for a variety of reasons: many decisions will

have to be made for allocation of resources, a strategic initiative usually has to address and coordinate activities in multiple areas (hiring, program development and service delivery, community outreach, etc.) and managers have to set priorities not only about how to allocate resources, but also about which populations or underserved/underrepresented groups need to be addressed first.

A strategic plan should begin with an exercise to help participants develop their own **definition of culture**, since this creates a common language and creates awareness of populations and issues that need to be addressed. This is followed by an **organizational cultural competence self-assessment** process that identifies strengths and areas that need to be addressed. This can be thought of as a diagnostic organizational self-inventory. The Cultural Competence Self-Assessment can be used for this purpose. Self-assessment also needs to help managers and staff members identify their strengths as well as skills and knowledge that they need to enhance. The next step is to have managers, staff and other collaborators engage in a vision process. This process usually involves asking managers and agency staff broad questions such as these:

"Given our assessment of where our organization is with respect to cultural competence, where would we like to be five years from now? How would we like our work and our organization to be different?"

It is helpful to respond to these questions initially through a brainstorm. Participants should be encouraged to be ambitious and broad in their thinking. There should be no attempt to prioritize or critique ideas at this time. It is also helpful to place potential obstacles in an **"environmental factors" list**. Environment factors can vary. There can be a severe lack of job applicants from target populations; a history of mistrust by agencies or individuals from underserved populations; a lack of funding or staffing to carry out new initiatives; other agencies that feel threatened by a cultural competence initiative and attempt to undermine the process. It is crucial to consider such potential obstacles as issues that need to be addressed in the strategic plan rather than to allow them to short-circuit the vision process. Establishing an environmental factors list is essential.

Once the vision process is completed, there is usually a **goal-setting and planning process** in which organizations translate and prioritize their broader vision into a limited number of concrete goals. The goal-setting process involves intense internal dialogue (and possibly discussion with organizational allies) since the end product should be a detailed plan that allocates resources and responsibilities and sets timelines for the fulfillment of a limited number of concrete goals. At the end of the goal-setting and planning process there should be a clear sense in staff and management of the goals of the cultural competence campaign, a clear understanding of each person's role and of the resources they will have for this purpose. In the **implementation phase** timelines and progress are monitored and there may be ongoing revision of goals and activities depending upon changes in resources, successes and special obstacles encountered. As the plan proceeds and more partners and allies participate, there is an opportunity to expand the range of feedback to refine and enrich the sophistication of the plan.

Again, there is no standard model for a strategic plan. This short description is not meant to be taken as a model, but as a way of suggesting how this process can move forward.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR MANAGERS

Fernando Mederos, Ed.D.

The underlying issue in cultural competence self-assessment for managers is to explore three primary areas:

- **Policy and program development:** Are policy and program development processes inclusive? Is the impact of policy and program development measured? How is this information used?
- **Staff diversity:** Is the staff diverse at all organizational levels? Is there ongoing support and recruitment of staff from minority groups? Is cultural competence a valued asset for all staff members?
- **Outreach and collaboration with diverse communities:** Is there consistent outreach and productive involvement with individuals and agencies that represent diverse communities?
- **Personal self-assessment and leadership:** What strengths does each manager have with respect to cultural competence and the management challenges it presents? What skills and knowledge do they need to develop as leaders?

Since there is no roadmap for cultural competence, I have provided a variety of questions that could serve as a starting point for an assessment. These questions could be applied to any model or vision of cultural competence, so they are very broad. In reality, managers and their staffs are the experts regarding what areas to explore and the level of detail the self-assessment should involve. Therefore, readers should review these questions and add/subtract/modify others. The self-assessment should fit your needs.

1. Definitions.

Is there a common definition of culture? What does "culture" include?
Do you have a working definition of cultural competence?

2. Vision and mission.

Can you articulate short and longterm goals for cultural competence in policy and program development, staff diversity at all levels and outreach and collaboration with diverse communities?
Do you have specific goals in each or some of these areas?

3. Leadership.

Do you consistently advocate for cultural inclusion in all aspects of your work as a manager?
Can you articulate reasons to move toward cultural competence and inspire others to move in the same direction? Can you create a safe climate for the discussion of cultural differences and for exploring your own cultural assumptions? Can you *model* your own vision of cultural competence? In a sense, are you comfortable doing a lot of what you expect employees to do? For instance, if you have privileged status in some way, can you talk non-defensively about this? Can you take active steps which model undoing privilege while remaining a leader? Do you have specific priority activities for promoting cultural competence in different aspects of your work as a manager?

4. Strategies and action plan.

Has there been a process for developing a vision, a mission statement and an action plan

regarding cultural competence? Has this process been broad and consultative/inclusive? Is organizational buy-in strengthened by inclusion of staff at all levels? Does the action plan address policy and program development, staff diversity at all levels and outreach and collaboration with diverse communities? Are there clear goals and timetables? Does the plan incorporate internal and external feedback mechanisms? Does feedback also address the impact of program and policy development on diverse communities? (Do required outcome evaluations reflect exploration of these issues with clients, helping professionals and service agencies in the impacted communities?) Have you allocated resources in terms of your time, staff time and funding that are in proportion with the goals and activities of the action plan? Are there mechanisms to obtain ongoing feedback and modify action plans periodically?

5. **Staff diversity.** (Though staff diversity is mentioned repeatedly above, this is an essential area of assessment that deserves sustained attention.) Do you understand the benefits and value of staff diversity? Is staff diversity a goal at all organizational levels? What concrete steps are taken to build staff diversity at all organizational levels (career paths, long term recruitment combined with wide outreach? Have you developed an organizational culture that generally supports staff diversity? In other words, are there organizational practices that support staff members from minority populations? Do staff members from non-majority populations feel that their contributions and perspectives are valued and viewed as crucial competencies for their organization? Do they feel isolated? Do they feel that they carry a disproportionate amount of the weight of advocacy for cultural competence within the organization? Are all staff supported in developing cultural competence? Is cultural competence part of the core competencies for all staff? Is cultural competence part of the hiring criteria for all staff? Are there opportunities for all staff members to engage in educational activities related to cultural competence? Are all staff members encouraged to develop experience and knowledge in this area?

6. **Community outreach and collaboration.**

Is there consistent outreach to diverse communities and representative agencies? Does the outreach involve participation and collaboration in program design? Are people from minority communities involved in redefining problems and solutions in ways that reflect knowledge of their communities? Are there feedback mechanisms to measure whether this is occurring?

7. **Cultural self-awareness for managers and organizations.**

Does the management team understand its work style and its potential impact on cultural competence efforts? For example, is the work culture results-oriented and "linear" or process-oriented? Is the management style highly hierarchical? Consensual? Is there guardedness and defensiveness or is there consistent openness to feedback? Are qualifications such as formal education and technical knowledge preferable? Or are longterm professional experience and a background as a practitioner equally valued? Do managers prefer directness or indirectness in providing feedback? Is direct confrontation preferred? How is conflict and disagreement expressed and worked through? Is direct anger and challenge typical or is this seen as counterproductive? Are managers aware that some aspects of their own and their agency's work style may be alien and inappropriate for some people? Can they work this issue through with diverse staff members?

Again; this list is not meant to be all-inclusive. Feel free to add or modify questions depending upon your needs.

STAFF CULTURAL COMPETENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Fernando Mederos, Ed.D.

The underlying issue in cultural competence self-assessment is to provide you an opportunity to reflect upon your knowledge, skills and efficacy in culturally diverse practice and to help you think about training and other resources that can enhance your capacity in this area. There is no general roadmap for culturally competent practice, so this self-assessment is somewhat general. It may address areas that are not closely related to your work. Below are statements grouped under three areas that are relevant to culturally competent practice: skills, self-awareness and community. Please read these statements, think about yourself and use them as the basis of discussion in your small groups. You do not have to share this self-assessment with the large group. The second section of this document, "SPECIFIC PRACTICE SKILLS," helps people reflect on cultural competency from the perspective of different professions within the criminal justice system and within other institutions that are involved in domestic violence interventions.

SKILLS

- 1. I have a framework for developing cultural awareness and knowledge about groups that are unfamiliar to me.**
- 2. I can identify gaps in my knowledge about cultural diversity or culturally competent interventions.**
- 3. I can tell the difference between cultural stereotyping and cultural competence and sensitivity.**
- 4. I have been able to intervene with families and individuals in ways that I consider culturally competent.**
- 5. I can intervene effectively with colleagues or with teams to help them move toward culturally competent practice.**
- 6. I have a sense of what I need in terms of training and other resources in order to enhance my effectiveness in this area.**

COMMUNITY

- 7. I have a sense of the elements of culturally competent community outreach and organizing.**
- 8. I have shared and reflected upon my sense or vision of culturally competent practice with other practitioners and with consumers or their representatives.**

9. I can identify strengths and helping resources that are protective against domestic violence within my own community and culture. I can also identify strengths and helping resources within other communities that I work with.
10. I can use my knowledge of cultural strengths in field practice.

SELF-AWARENESS

11. I am aware of how my own cultural and class background may act as a filter in my work with colleagues and consumers in a way that distorts my capacity to intervene in a culturally sensitive manner. I can name some of these "filters."
12. I am aware of my privilege as a professional and/or as a member of a majority group and I take steps not to use privilege in my work with colleagues and consumers.
13. I am aware of how my own history of oppression or disadvantage can impact my work with colleagues, consumers and communities and I can take steps to balance my role as a professional with my history of oppression.

SPECIFIC PRACTICE ISSUES FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND RELATED PRACTITIONERS

Fernando Mederos, Ed.D.

These questions may help you identify and reflect upon culturally sensitive practices in your field.

FOR EVERYONE:

- DO YOU FIND YOURSELF THINKING THAT MEN FROM SOME GROUPS ARE MORE VIOLENT OR LESS LIKELY TO CHANGE?
 - DO YOU FIND YOURSELF THINKING THAT WOMEN FROM SOME GROUPS ACCEPT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS UNAVOIDABLE? DO YOU FIND YOURSELF THINKING THAT WOMEN FROM SOME GROUPS ARE MORE PASSIVE?
 - DO YOU FIND YOURSELF THINKING THAT SOME CULTURES "JUST DON'T GET IT" ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE? HOW DO YOU WORK WITH THIS?
1. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for police officers? At the time of arrest? When you are interviewing victims? When you are interviewing witnesses? In community policing activities?
 2. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for detectives? When you are interviewing victims? When you are interviewing witnesses? When you are interviewing defendants? When you are collecting evidence or talking to people in the community about domestic violence?
 3. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for prosecutors? When you are talking to victims about prosecution? When making decisions about how to proceed with cases or about sentencing recommendations?
 4. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for public defenders? While looking for background information for preparing a case? When making plea recommendations?
 5. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for judges? In assessing defendants' dangerousness? In setting bail? In making decisions about case disposition?
 6. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for governmental and non-governmental battered women's advocates? Can you think of ways in which you have changed your practice? Used additional community, family or institutional resources?

7. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for probation officers? Do you practice a "holistic" case management model? Use specific community resources?
8. What are some examples of culturally competent practice for batterer intervention programs and their staffs? Do you change the way you approach men from different cultural backgrounds? Do you have culturally specific groups? Culturally heterogeneous groups which embrace cultural diversity? Do you have any culturally specific group practices or curriculum content?