

The author(s) shown below used Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice and prepared the following final report:

Document Title: Next Millennium Conference: Ending Domestic Violence; Building a Prevention Vision and Agenda for the 21st Century

Author(s): Mark Rosenberg; Carol Simpson; Elsa Soler; Bernadine Dohrn; Irma Guevara; Barbara Shaw; Susan Schechter

Document No.: 184573

Date Received: September 27, 2000

Award Number: 1999-WT-VX-0002

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**THE NEXT MILLENNIUM CONFERENCE:
Ending Domestic Violence.
Building a Prevention Vision and
Agenda for the 21st Century
August 31, 1999**

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BOS:nd

MARK L. ROSENBERG: Good morning. I know that Vickii did a superb job in clearing this conference, but I don't think she knows how incredibly perfect it was. I do want to tell her. This is, as Esta said, my very last day of a 19 year career working for the government. That's what it means to be a bureaucrat. You work inside the government. And if you work inside the government long enough people label you and get to know you as a bureaucrat. It's not all good qualities that people attach to being a bureaucrat, but to me it has been good. It's been wonderful. But Vickii planned it so that this is my last day in my job and I couldn't think of a better place, or more important place, or better people to be with so, Vickii, thank you.

I want to talk about prevention and about the changes that are going on and that are taking place right now, and what I think of this as is the movement meets public health. You know what "the movement" is. You are, you are the movement, but I want to tell you a little bit about public health because I think it's an extraordinary coming together that's very powerful. I want to talk about four principles of public health. This is the basis for everything we do in public health. These principles were put together largely by a hero of my in public health, Bill Faeghe(sp?). He's a

former director of CDC and someone I will be getting to work for starting tomorrow. It's really extraordinary in your life that you get to work with your hero side by side and get to learn from him. But these are principles that he and I put together.

The first principle of public health is that this is a cause and effect world. That things happen for reasons, and if we can understand the reasons, if we can understand the causes, we can change the effects. We can change the outcomes. It means that you, that we have power over the world. If we understand it we can change it. It means that we're not passive. We don't have to go through passively and accept this problem of violence against women, we can change it. And that change is based on understanding. Bill Faeghe said that the worst problem that public health faces today is not Aids, it's not drugs, it's not violence, it's fatalism. It's this notion that we just have to accept things, that's the way they are, I'm sorry this is what happens to women who live in isolation and live alone. I'm sorry, this is what happens to women who have disabilities. No, no. It doesn't have to be that way and we can change it. The first principle of public health, this is a cause and effect world. We are activists in this world and we can change things. The first principle.

The second principle in the public health is that we focus on our future health. We look towards what is going to happen, not only what is happening now, but what's going

to happen tomorrow. And that means that we have to look at our children and their future, because our children, yes, Bernadine, even as they go to college and leave us, our children are our future. We have to look towards the future and this means we focus on prevention. We look at changing the way things happen. I think you've heard this parable of someone who stood by a river with a friend and they saw someone floating down the river, it looked like they were drowning. They jumped in the river, they swam out to pull that person out of the water, they swam back to shore, they put them down, they started CPR, they did CPR, they got her revived, one of them went to call 9-1-1, they got the ambulance to come, the ambulance finally arrived there, the person was saved. They put the ambulance on it's way and they left. As they were standing there they saw another person come floating down the river. They jumped in, they swam all the way out, they grabbed the person, they brought them to shore, started CPR, one of them went and called 9-1-1, the ambulance came, they put them in the ambulance and they sat down. And again a person came floating down the river. One of them said to the other, come on, let's go save her. Let's go get her out of there, and he said, hu-huh, I'm not going in. He said, why? Come on, we have to go save this person. He said, I'm going upstream to see who's pushing them in. Prevention. Prevention has got to

look upstream to see where they're being pushed in, to see where it's happening. That's the change. This is such a big change for the movement, to start to focus on prevention. For a long time people were concerned with women who's lives were at risk every day, and that was absolutely the right thing to do. And it's now, from a position of experience, and a position of strength, there's one person who can go into the river while the other person goes upstream. The movement has grown, it is strong enough, it has learned and we have learned lessons from delivering services. We have learned lessons that we can now apply upstream and apply to prevention. This is a sea change, this is a huge change in the approach to this problem of violence against women. What are some of the most immediate implications? First is, that we've got to focus on the people pushing them in. The perpetrators, the people who do it and these are men. These are men. We have got to focus on them and we've got to look at them when they're young and they're upstream. We've got to focus on boys. Before they grow up to push people in. We have got to focus on children. When they learn, when patterns are set, when habits are formed, and beliefs are put into their heads. We have to go there and look at those beliefs. We have to work with the children. It also means we focus on children before they're even born. Women who are young, poor,

uneducated are at risk for having their children abused, frequently by the very men who will abuse them. We have to protect them, we have to break the circle to get them out of the circle, but it means focusing on women before their children are even born. To break the pattern of abuse that leads to violence later on. So, we've got to focus on perpetrators, on children, on expectant couples, on young parents after their children are born. And it means young people who are just starting to date. We've got to reach all of these with our message for prevention. But prevention is a big, big change. The corresponding part of public health is, public health is our future health.

The third principle here of public health is that public health is everyone's health. It is everyone. Especially the least advantaged, the disadvantaged. Those without access to care, those without access to services, women who live in rural areas where there are no neighbors to ask for help, women with disabilities. And I'm struck coming back to the city, a wonderful friend of mine lived here. Her name was Vie Harwell. Vie was shot in the back of her head by her husband and Vie became a quadriplegic and lived in this city for four years. And, boy when you think about disabilities, not being able to lift a finger, not being able to move your hand, that's a disability. But she felt that this fight was so very important, and it is. Not

only do we have to recruit people with disabilities and focus on them, but we have to think about everybody. Racial, ethnic, national, minorities, all must be part of this. Everyone's health, everyone must be part of this movement.

The fourth principle of public health is that the world is constantly changing and we can't sit still and assume we know everything and go on with our business the same old, same old way. That will not work. What are some of these changes that are happening? A friend of mine told me a story about a good friend of hers. This friend worked in Social Services and then decided she needed to know more so she went back to school and got a PhD in Social Services. Her husband did not have a PhD, her husband worked for the Fire Department. One day at a fire a hose was running by, being pulled off the truck and it tripped him and knocked him down. He fell on his head, he lost consciousness, but then got back up, recovered apparently, but suffered this brain injury and slowly and gradually over the next few years he became depressed and he became violent. Not everyone knew what he was doing to his wife. The new PhD in Social Services Delivery. But he became threatening, physically abusive and then one day shot her and killed her and shortly thereafter killed himself. And it was from a brain injury, a traumatic brain injury. Those things that

happen physiologically cause people to be violent. The other story, the new thing about what's happened is Bruce Perry a psychiatrist in Houston, some of you may have heard him talk, is studying children who witness violence. He also studied people who are the victims of torture, and he spoke to torturers and he found out from torturers that if you really want someone to confess you don't torture them, because in torturing them they produce endorphins, they can rise above the physical pain, disassociate from this. If you want to get their confession you torture their loved one and make them watch. He said this is not new, he said this is standard operating procedures for the torturers. Torture the person's loved ones, their wife or their children in front of them. This is devastating, just devastating, and it works. And this is what happens to children who witness a father torturing a mother again and again and again. These children grow up to develop post-traumatic stress disorder. They're always tense, always on edge, always ready to jump, and this produces physiological changes in their brain. Life-long changes. The same sorts of changes that are produced by falling down and injuring your brain. What is it about these connections? What can we learn? What can we do better? There are always things to learn. It's always changing. That's the fourth principle.

So there you have it. It's a cause and effect world

and we can change it by understanding it. It's our future health, our children's health and prevention is the key. Third, it's everyone's health. Everyone is part of it, even the least advantaged and that means social justice is at the core of what we do. And finally, the world is constantly changing. This is an extraordinary time to take this on. You have extraordinary leadership in government. Secretary Shalela(sp.?) is deeply committed, deeply committed to this issue. And will work to see this through. The Attorney General is deeply and passionately committed. These are two extraordinary women. The very fact that we have two women in these key leadership positions, it has never happened. We have never been there. The Attorney General talks about herself as the tallest Attorney General ever to hold that office, and she is. And her partner, Secretary Shalela is the shortest. And here you have these two women passionately committed to your cause at the same time. I don't think she's just the tallest, I don't think she's just the shortest, I think they're the best. I think they're the best. We have got to cease this moment and make it happen, and the way to do it is by working on this agenda for the nation. Peggy McGarry(sp.?) is an extraordinarily gifted, experienced person working on this. You have in your hands now the key to changing the world. It's extraordinary what you have, your ability. This is my last day. I now switch

from being a bureaucrat to being a private citizen. I spoke to my daughter this morning and she said, dad, don't you think it's kind of notable that on your very last day on the job you're away, you're on the road, you're not home. It is. It is telling, it's telling, but there's no place I would rather be. There's no group I would rather be with. You are extraordinary. What you have done, your intelligence, your energy and your ability to change the world. Together we can do it. Thank you, very much.

CAROLE SIMPSON: While we're getting situated here. Good morning, everyone. Congratulations, Dr. Rosenberg. An excellent presentation and we wish you all the best at Emory University. You have given us a context this morning to begin this prevention plenary. I am Carole Simpson of ABC News, and it is my pleasure to moderate what we hope will be an interesting and stimulating discussion on family violence. Is everybody awake? When they told me this was an 8:30 a.m. panel, I know what you audiences are like. But I think Dr. Rosenberg got you moving, but just in case you're not, I'm going to tell you my favorite joke. This ought to get you awake. It's one that I like to tell to predominantly female audiences. It's an old joke, it came out during the 1996 election, but it still works. It seems President Clinton, Senator Dole and House Speaker Newt Gingrich were up at Camp David and they wanted to appeal to

the gun lobby, so they were going to go hunting. And they're dressed in these fatigues and they got their rifles and they're looking for little birds to shoot, and all of a sudden President Clinton hit something in the leaves and he stoops down and picks it up and it's a magic lamp. He rubs the leaves off it and the dirt and all of a sudden a genie comes out. And the same story you've heard before, grateful to be released from thousands of years in the bottle in the magic lamp, and he agrees to grant each of them a wish. So President Clinton says I should be first, I'm President of the United States and I've got a tough re-election campaign and, genie, I want to be 25% smarter than I am. Genie says, no problem, Mr. President, you are 25% smarter. Then Senator Dole, well, I'm next. I'm majority leader of the U.S. Senate and I'm an older man and I'm running for election against the president. I need to be 50% smarter. The genie says no problem, Senator Dole, you are 50% smarter. And then Newt Gingrich, my turn, my turn. And he says, I'm head of the Congress, I'm third in line to succession of the presidency and I led the Republican Revolution and I got to change this country, I need to be 100% smarter. And the genie said, Mr. Speaker, are you sure you want to be 100% smarter? Yes, absolutely, I want to be 100% smarter. He said, you're sure now. You really want to be 100% smarter? Yes, yes, of course, do it. And he said,

okay, Mr. Gingrich, you're a woman.

Also from an election year, let me use the immortal words of Ross Pierot's vice-presidential running mate, Admiral James Stockdale, who asked, who am I and why am I here? Well, I'm a reporter who has covered the issues of domestic violence for many years. Won some awards for them, too, I might add. But also because I was born in Chicago, I grew up here. I began my TV broadcasting career at Channel 5, WMAQ. As a child I had an experience with domestic violence that has never left me, and perhaps that's why I wanted to be here to support you today. It was New Year's Eve and I was 11 years old and I was babysitting my little cousin who was four months old. My parents lived in the next block so it wasn't like I didn't, as an 11 year old with a four month old baby I had my family to call on close by. And we're playing and doing stuff and I'm watching TV and the baby and all of a sudden the doorbell rings, frantically, ringing, ringing, ringing. And it was one of my aunt's. Not the aunt who's baby I was watching, but another aunt. She was crying and screaming and her hair was all askew, her clothes were all askew and she said, let me in, let me in. And of course I let her in, and she ran back to the bedroom, to my other aunt's bedroom, and started making telephone calls. She shut the door. And I'm 11 years old, I didn't know what to do or what was going on. A

few minutes later there was a glass window in the door and about 10 minutes after she arrived my uncle came and he started beating on that glass door with such fury, it was so loud, and all of a sudden it broke. And it was my favorite uncle. He had served in WW II and he and I had just the greatest relationship. He used to carry me, he would take me places, he would take me to Riverview Park, and he was my favorite, favorite uncle. And he comes in this door and the look on his face and he screams, where is she? And I didn't answer, I had the baby in my arm, and he goes back to the bedroom and smashes in that door, she had tried to lock it. And I could hear her screaming and crying. She started running in the hallway, away from the bedroom, and he grabbed her by her hair, snatched her, took his shoe off and began beating her like I had never seen. I put the baby down and I'm going Uncle, and I won't use his name, in case this is ever recorded. I can't discuss this with him to this day. I leaped on him and I said, stop it, stop it. And I leaped on his back to try to stop him from beating her and he threw me against the wall. I hit my head against the wall, was stunned and then he continued to beat her and I ran to the telephone to call my dad who came to the house. My aunt's eyes were swollen, her jaw was broken, my dad had to take her to the hospital. They got my uncle out of the house, I don't know how they got him out of the house. He

now lives in California and I love him, but it was my first experience with domestic violence and I will never, ever forget it and I have never felt the same about this man. And it's as vivid to me today as it was when I was 11 years old. So, I know what these things to do children when they see them. And I vowed this will never, ever happen to me. No man will ever lift a finger.

My sister who is 9 years older than I experienced something even more traumatic. My parents' best friends, again, the woman comes to my parents' house and she was crying and running from him, her husband, and he stabbed her. My sister was four years old and he stabbed her to death, multiple times in our kitchen. My sister even to this day, I think, has emotional problems because of what she witnessed as a four year old. She had a lot of difficulty in her life. And, again, we need as Dr. Rosenberg says, children, we have to see what effect this has on them, we have to help them get through these experiences, so I'm here because I care deeply about this issue and really do not want any other child to go through what I witnessed or any other woman to go through what I saw my aunt go through.

So I'm happy to introduce our panel which will help us try to get at how do we prevent domestic violence. We're hopefully going to get some concrete answers. First the

format. Each panelist that I introduce to you is going to make an opening presentation. I will question them and hopefully lead an interesting discussion, and then we want to say about 20 to 30 minutes for you to join in the dialogue. I think there are microphones that have been placed in two places, so at some point during our discussion I will ask you to come to the microphone and join in our talk. This is a distinguished group of very accomplished women, so I'm not going to read their fabulous credentials and biographies, I think they're in your programs, but let's not waste the time going through, suffice it to say they are well qualified to address this topic. So, let me briefly introduce them to you. First of all, Esta Soler, who is executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund. Next to her, Irma Guevara(sp.?), a survivor of violence. Catlin Fulwood, a community organizer and consultant. Bernadine Dohrn, director of the Children & Family Justice Center, Barbara Shaw, director of the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority and lastly, but not least, Susan Schechter, author and chair of the Prevention Task Force of the National Advisory Council. Let's have a round of applause for our panelists. We'll bring first, Esta Soler.

ESTA SOLER: Good morning. Thank you, Mark Rosenberg, for your eloquent remarks and I know all of us are going to miss you deeply, and I hope that the standing ovation will stay

in your heart for a long time for your extraordinary work. Thanks. And I want to thank you, Carole Simpson, from ABC Network News for being here with us today, for traveling so far, and to thank you for your commitment to women and to children and to people of color in this country, and for making their lives better, and I think all of us really thank you so much for being here. Thanks, Carole. And I want to thank our extraordinary panel. We've been working together and separately for the last two months to put this together, to make this a dynamic conversation about prevention strategies for the next millennium. And we've weaved together, hopefully, a quilt of exciting new strategies and the issues that can push us to the point where in the next millennium we can end domestic violence. We will talk about children, we will talk about poverty, we will talk about what state agencies can do and how domestic violence is part of a number of different issues of violence, and youth violence. And we will say that if we're going to do this we have to do the teachings we did, and those of you who were around in the 60's and 70's, and then we will talk about how important it is to organize block by block, neighbor by neighbor. And how at the very core of our organizing we must have survivors and witnesses who speak, who lead and who tell us the truth. And I also want to thank all of you who send such wonderful public service

announcements and print ads. We have some of them displayed in the hallway as you enter into this wonderful session, and for those of you who got here early you saw a loop of some of the public service announcements that people have put together from across this country. We got so many and if any of you want these we have them and we would love to share them. Any of you here, did you see them? Did you see the loop? Congratulations. And this conference is congratulations. It is a celebration of what we have accomplished as a movement.

Ours is a proud record of courage and compassion, strength and solidarity, vision and victory. But we are here this week because despite our remarkable accomplishments we know that we have not yet done enough. Too many women remain trapped in violent relationships, their lives and futures forever damaged or destroyed by abuse. And too many children grow up in homes in which violence can occur at any moment. Homes in which they learn to hate and hurt and hit.

Our movement started at kitchen tables in homes around this country and some of the kitchen tables are from people who are on the podium today and in the audience. And it was sparked by outrage, and it was fueled by determination and it was sustained by our boundless resolve. And we have to find that outrage again. We have to challenge this nation

to look at this issue differently and we have to challenge. We have to repeatedly challenge our shameless opponents who dare to claim that we exaggerate the scope of domestic violence in this country. We have to become angry at this and we have to become more active and more political. I believe that as a movement we must continue to provide the critical services for battered women and their children, and we must hold batterers accountable. But at this point in time we must recognize the providing services simply is not enough. We have to change the social norms that allow domestic violence to flourish and remain unchecked in America. Whether we change the social norms through public education, media advocacy or organizing, this is a difficult task. We talk about changing social norms as if it's easy, and it's not. And I'm reminded of a time not too long ago when the family violence prevention fund started, our first national domestic violence campaign. Those of you who have done public awareness campaigns know the story all too well. We created the advertising, we took the executions and the story boards to the national news media because we knew with the advertising council that we needed to get approval for these executions or they would not be aired. And I will never forget what one network executive told us, and it wasn't ABC News by the way. Well, let me tell you what they said, you'll be glad. He said, I think domestic violence is

a serious problem and I think we need to do something about it, and I am very pleased to participate in an advertising campaign, in a public education campaign on domestic violence, with one caveat. There cannot be any violence in the advertising. When we heard that we said, okay, there can be no violence in the advertising. There can be no violence on television? Changing social norms is a very difficult task. I say to you. We have to exercise our political muscle and challenge the elements of our culture that sanction abuse. Last year I got a call, as I'm sure many of you did, from one of our esteemed colleagues, extraordinary photographer, Donna Ferrada (sp.?) and she said what are we doing about Eric Clapton's concert tour? Any of you hear about this? Eric Clapton, and for many of us he's one of our favorites. It also dates us, I guess, a little bit. Released an album last year and he toured across the country with this song, and I can't sing, but I will just give you one stanza. I'm going to get me a shotgun, baby, and stash it behind the bedroom door. I may have to blow your brains out baby and then you won't bother me no more. Donna Ferrada was successful in making sure that by the time Eric Clapton arrived in California he wasn't singing that song, but think of the impact we could've had if everyone in this room, at this conference and each of our allies committed to protesting to the record

company, the music stores and the radio stations that played that offensive song. Think of the power that we can generate, the impact we can have and the change we can create. And think about what it would mean if we applied the same kind of organizing muscle to get guns off our streets and out of our homes and out of our schools. And think about what it would mean if we applied the same kind of organizing to protect every child who witnesses violence for a healthy start and a head start. And think about what it would mean if we used the same political muscle to organize, to insure, that every poor woman achieved economic security despite the globalization of this economy.

My friend, Irma Guevara, will tell you about the power of prevention and how a community-wide, political response in the Filipino community affected her life and her family and others. We need to generate that kind of political response every time a woman is abused, every time a politician or an analyst minimizes domestic violence, every time a singer or TV show glorifies violence against women and girls. We need to demand that everyone in our communities recognize that an act of domestic violence is a violation of our human rights. A violation that affects us all and in the end prevents us from being a free, just and democratic society. I am convinced that we can create this kind of sweeping societal change if we make prevention a

priority, and I ask you to do that. I ask you to join those people in Harlem who are working in the community, those people, the California Farm Workers, Minnesota Coalition Against Domestic Violence, their Hands Are Not For Hitting Campaign, Marin County, the community action teams, and all of the rest of what you're doing. If we can join together I think we can really make a difference. I wore a suit today that has very deep pockets. I want to make sure that every community organizing activity that is going on in America right now we know about and we publicize. If you give us your card and information about what you are doing we will make a commitment to every one of you that everybody will know what you are doing. Also, if you don't have a card and you don't have an activity that you're doing right now, take a hand out and let us know what you are doing and we make a commitment to you to let everybody know of your good work. And if we do that, and if we become more active and more political, and if we make prevention a priority we will see the end of domestic violence in the next millennium. But at the very core of our political movement we must have survivors, their leadership and voices from every community must be at the core of this political movement, because only then will their anguish, their private anguish, turn into public action, and their private pain into political power. Thank you.

(END SIDE ONE TAPE ONE)

IRMA GUEVARA: Domestic violence was a secret that almost cost my life, the life of my parents and the well being of my children. Eight years ago I run from my abusive husband to a shelter. After one month he found me in the bank. He go to my children, let's go to McDonald's. When my children got into his car I had no choice but to go with him. I found out that he had a shotgun in his car. While he was driving crazy and fast he told me that if I can afford to lose the father of my kids he can afford to lose the mother. I beg him to let my children go, but he would not. He asked me, while holding the gun, if I still love him and if I would go back to him. My only choice is to say yes or die. We were back together and he was still the same person, very violent to me and my children. I remember when my children was only three years old. He wet the bed while sleeping. Without even waking him up my husband hit him so hard in the face that blood came out of his nose and mouth. My son and I ended the night hugging and crying. For the second time I left and while in the shelter for battered women I joined the program for homeless women who wanted to start their own business. After some training and hard work I was able to open my own restaurant. One month after I opened it my greatest fear became a reality. My abusive husband showed up, stabbed my mother and my father and he tried to cut my

throat. But I used my hand to hold back the blade of the knife. My little children witnessed all of this and I am sure we would be dead today if not my eight year old son managed to call 9-1-1. My mother had two surgeries and so did my father. I had more than 100 stitches in my hands and wrist and required three surgeries. Three of my fingers are permanently deformed. He was arrested and charged with attempted murder but plead incompetent to stand trial. He since has tried to raise money from the people in the community for his bills and lawyer. There were some people who did not understand about domestic violence and they donated. There were some people who believed, as did his parents, that no matter what, he did bring me here to America and I should be grateful. Some of these people donated and came to the court hearing in support of him. But, through the help of the Family Violence Prevention Fund and the Asian Women's Shelter, I was given the opportunity and courage to speak out. I told my story to newspapers, magazines and on TV. I called other survivors and activists like Jackie Atuga(sp.?), the Filipino Advisory Committee. We organized the first ever conference on domestic violence for the Filipino community in San Francisco.

Once my hidden shame turned to public truth others spoke out, as well. My community's attitude about domestic violence did then, and continues today, to change. Some of

the people who donated to my ex-husband's fund have come to my restaurant and apologized. Once my ex-husband's case lingers in court for years for hearing after hearing support for me didn't die. When it was time to go to court many of the people from the community were by my side. When my husband was finally found guilty and sentenced to 11 years there were hundreds of wonderful people who were still by my side. They are here today and I would like to thank Lenny Marino Family Violence Prevention Fund and Jackie Misaki (sp.?) of the Asian Women's Shelter for all there help throughout my ordeal. My children and I have survived. My restaurant and catering business continues to do well. My children are healthy, happy and honor students. But fear remains a part of my life for I am afraid of the days he gets out. And we have scars. Scars on our bodies and scars on our heart. _____ means it is shameful. Only open truth can fight that shame and heal us all. I will continue to tell my story until domestic violence no longer exists in my community. Thank you.

CAROLE SIMPSON: She was nervous and she was so fabulous and so courageous, Irma. Thank you so much for reminding us why we're here. You know in the news business we always try to put a face on a problem and Irma certainly does that for us. Let's keep that in mind as our discussion continues. Now, I would like to call on Catlin Fulwood who knows about

community organizing on this issue.

CATLIN FULWOOD: Good morning. I want to thank Irma for her story, and my message today is a simple one. That, after 15 years of being a field organizer in the battered women's movement and 10 years of doing prevention work around HIV and Aids and other public health issues, I'm glad to hear from Mark that one of the principles of public health is that there is a cause and effect and we don't have to just take it. The work that I'm interested in and the work that I think is so critical that we're doing now in this movement is getting communities to the place, working with communities, not to take a message but going to communities to get the message about how we're just not going to take this shit any more. Not just that we, as women, are not going to take this shit any more, but we as communities are not going to take this shit any more. That there is a norm change a brewing, that there is a time a coming when we are just going to say, you know, that doesn't happen here. And that doesn't happen here because girls are an asset to this community. Because women are an asset to this community. Because we truly believe that real men are those that respect and love women and girls. And real men love men, too.

So, how do we do this? How do we do this? How do we go and leave our rhetoric at the door and leave some of our

history and leave all of the things that we know that we know so well at the door and go back into the community and say, you know what, it's time to talk. It's time to talk about what's happening for you. It's time to talk about what you believe. It's time to talk about how we look at what's going on in our neighborhood and say we want to change this world. We want to change this five block area. This is my home, this is my world, and this is the set of standards and principles that I want to exist in my home and my world. And how do we begin to map that out with community members? I believe there are certain sets of assumptions and principles that guide our work and need to continue to guide us in our effort to move the community and to work with the community. I believe that in order to interrupt the tradition of violence against women and girls in a community it is necessary to involve community members in a process of identifying and reconfiguring social norms of the community, in the community and with the community. Every culture has elements that supports violence against women and every culture has within it the elements that will break the cycle and the tradition of violence against women. There are men, women and youth, girls and boys, within the community who are eager to engage in activities to undermine violence against women. There are community members who have, and can, develop skills that lend themselves to

evaluation research activities necessary to conduct community assessment, mapping and planning. I believe that from my very short, about a half an hour in academia, my very short tenure in academia, that there is stuff they know that we need. There's stuff that they've been holding secret that we need. This whole thing around evaluation research, we do that. We can do that. We need those skills. We need to apply those skills to practice. We need to apply the skills of evaluation research, focus groups conducting community mapping, conducting community surveys, engaging community members in peer to peer community research, in peer to peer community planning, in peer to peer community education and engagement. Young people talking to other young people, women talking to women, men talking to women, women talking to men. I mean we really need to engage in this process together to see what is happening in our community, understanding the patterns and beliefs of what exists in the community, and understanding them in relation to what happens in that five block area. To look at our world as ethnographers. To look at what's going on in our community as community assessors, to look and be able to see and understand where are the traditions, where are the norms, what systems are they embedded in, how do we get into those systems, and how do we work together as a community team to do the kind of planning, to invest the

kind of resources necessary to change the world one block at a time?

The shelter system has done a tremendous, tremendous job of providing a safe haven for women in distress. Many women don't go to shelters. They stay in their communities. They don't know they're battered women. A woman said to me the other day, she came in for an interview, she said I didn't know I was a battered woman. Battered women go to the emergency room. I never went to the emergency room. He knocked me down, black my eye and then go buy me some beautiful sunglasses. So, for that woman, what she found, what she got connected with was other women in her community who would talk to her. Who didn't let her down, who wouldn't be complicit with the violence. Her hairdresser was her support system. The other sisters in her church, the other sisters in her community were her support system. There were people who were willing to listen and to say and to move. And my time is up, but I want to say what I hope we achieve over, through and into this next millennium is a community where if you go in to talk about violence, you can say, well, I don't know why it is but that doesn't happen here.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Thank you, Catlin, and we'll continue with Bernadine Dohrn, director of the Children & Family Justice Center.

BERNADINE DOHRN: Good morning everyone. I'm going to begin with a fragment from a terrific poet who I commend to all of you, many of you know her, Lucille Clifton, who wrote these lines. "Listen. When I found there was no safety in my father's house I knew there was none anywhere. But listen, the girl in me is rousing, not willing to be left to the silent fingers in the dark and you are right. She is asking for more than most men are able to give but she needs to have what she has earned. Sweet sighs, safe houses, hands she can trust." Those lines inspire me always to look at the challenge before us. The great _____ movements of the 60's, the Civil Rights and Black Liberation Movement, the Chicano and Puerto Ricina and Native American Movements, the Anti-War and Peace Movements, the Anti-Poverty and Welfare Rights and Labor Organizing Movements, the Student and Youth Movements before us I believe we have much to learn from. But it is worth remembering, all of us who are organizers then, that we confronted in our daily work constantly the fundamental cleavage of equity and justice around violence against women. We saw, I saw in uptown here in Chicago, people we were organizing for justice and equity and against the war come in the next morning with the women battered, bruised, cut and bleeding. And that dilemma of _____ unleashed the powerful women's movement, many forms of which we see here today. I believe that our massive

accomplishments lead us now to the possibility of shifting the paradigm and I propose with great respect and humility that we launch, at this time, a massive teach in. A popular campaign, a five year organizing drive to change hearts and minds at the grass roots. This is necessary to bring the young into our movement, to inspire the young, to infect them with the belief that nothing less than a vast anti-violence and peace movement at the core location where we work, the core location of loved ones, of friends, of an expanded and redefined family can be transformed. That people can be better. That we can ask for, demand and insist on what the great poet called sweet sides, safe houses and hands she can trust. I think that this notion of popular organizing drives is risk filled. It asks people to choose, to debate, to discuss, it gives away our ideas that people can be transformed, that people can be better, that we can tap the human potential, that we can spark the young to become activists, to challenge the taken for granted, to protest, to demand and to refuse.

Why do we need to do this now? Why do we need to set a new standard and to act at the front end, upstream, as well as continue this powerful work that's been done? One reason, I believe, is the extraordinary limitations in law as a blunt instrument. I say that as someone who works in a law school, who works with law, who believes powerfully in

the legislative changes we've done. But we can look to other areas, voting rights, civil rights, choice and abortion rights and see the limits when we stop organizing of a thorough reliance on law. We can see the dilemma this movement refuses to accept the terrible racism and class bias of the prison and law enforcement system in this country today. We have no part of police behavior that oppresses some and lets others go free. We want people accountable but we want them returning to the community transformed and we will not put all of our social equity into the basket of punishment, prison and caging because we know who that affects. So, what do we need to do? Two things. We need new constituencies and partners. We need to expand our horizons. This is dangerous terrain. I have no illusions that this is not dangerous. One of the singular passionate cores of our work has been our intense focus on women. Others focus on children. Others focus on family. But risking that singular focus to include children, youngsters, youth and families, I believe with the leadership of this group we can build bridges, we can change the world, we can make it safe for everyone and we must do that. We must reach the youth if we are to change and grow.

I think we need new partners, and in those new partners we have messages, we have materials, we have great ideas, we have projects and safe havens, we have institution building.

In fact, we also must give it away. We must have democratic discussion with other institutions. We must let them digest and struggle with and come to their own conclusion that people can be better, that we can eradicate violence in our households and in our families. And how do we do that? I think we need to rely on the community eyes and ears, as has been said here, we need to go back to the faith institutions, to the schools, to ethnic and cultures, we need alliances with the peace movement and the anti-gun movement and anti-war movements because these are our issues, too. We need absolute clear voices about poverty and economic justice for all people. This is the wealthiest country in the world, this is the wealthiest country in human history. It is intolerable that children are the poorest Americans in the wealthiest country in the world. So we can and we must organize drives to change the hearts and minds. We can do these teach ins, we can recruit, we can have summer projects, we can focus on certain communities, we can have teach ins in prisons, in schools, in churches, in boys and girls clubs and in the parks. We must be in these places and we must let the debate flourish. We have the leadership. You can see the powerful leadership here, but our goal is to educate, agitate, protest and protect. To raise the bar, the ethical standard, and the possibility of human transformation and to give it away to a

new generation. Thank you.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Thank you, Bernadine. And now Barbara Shaw, director of the Illinois Violence Prevention.

Authority.

BARBARA SHAW: Thank you, Carole. Such wonderful words from such wonderful women. All inspiring us, I think. My message here is also simple, I hope, and that is that in addition to the very grass roots kinds of efforts that we've all talked about here and all know that we need to do more of, we also need to seize opportunities that are right in front of us in terms of infusing our knowledge and our wisdom and our caring and our approach and our message about how to stop all forms of violence through stopping domestic violence and violence in the home. And those opportunities are right in front of us, many of them.

We also need to learn from our own experience that in addition to community based efforts, that state _____ systems and resources and support are necessary for us to carry out our work. I learned that in the Battered Women's Movement. I learned that creating state coalitions and state law and partnerships with state agencies were essential to support and help the work we need to do move forward. I want to talk very briefly about one major opportunity that I think is right in front of us that we must seize or we will miss a big boat. And that is the

Youth Violence Prevention Movement. The school safety movement. All around us in communities people are worried about gang violence and young people with guns and they don't recognize how much that is the tip of a huge inter-personal family violence iceberg. It's our job to be there and to infuse into all of that work the very necessary perspective that only we bring. And that doesn't mean we include them, that means we go there. We participate in youth violence prevention committees, we go to the community policing meetings when gang violence and youth violence are discussed, and we remind people that we need to talk about youth as victims, as much as we need to talk about youth as perpetrators. We need to remind people that violence begins at home and that young people are more likely to be injured by other young people in inter-personal exchanges, not in drive by shootings or shootings at school that are so horrific in their numbers, but do not in any way speak to the daily pain that young people experience in their homes and in their communities. That's our job. We must be there.

School resource officers are a huge, new network. Actually they're not a network. They're a huge new personnel basis out there in schools all over the country. Hundreds of them in the State of Illinois placed in schools to try to promote peace and maintain order. What better

group to start with in terms of trying to train those who are responsible for maintaining peace in a school environment? What better group to start with in terms of training them about teen dating violence, about domestic violence and then brought to school? All of those issues. We must be there.

Secondly I want to talk about this whole issue of state support. There are a number of us in this movement who have learned that we have to go beyond working directly in the movement to also try to take our message to make change. And I'm proud to be part of a very unique effort in Illinois designed to bring the many state agencies, public health, public safety, human service, senior citizens, elderly, children and family services, department of corrections, state police, all of those many agencies, public and private, together to create a vehicle for taking a coordinated approach to the prevention of all forms of inter-personal violence. We have to go outside of ourselves, take our work into a broader construct and we have to build institutions to do that. Three years ago the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority was a concept. We're an 18 million dollar agency right now, making grants to community based efforts to schools, to senior citizens programs, to youth agencies, to domestic violence programs, to prevent all forms of inter-personal violence. And don't

you think that our messaging when we spend our money with schools is going to include information about teen dating violence and domestic violence? You bet it is. That's why we, those of us who know this work, need to go into new roles. We need to be at the Illinois and state courts. We need to be in our senior citizen agencies. We need to be in our human service agencies and our public health department. We need to cultivate new structures at the state level. I mean, the build it and they will come can work. We really did not have a coordinated approach to violence prevention in our state. Every state agency that had anything to do with preventing violence was working independently and working on different target populations. We now have a vehicle not only for state support, but for citizens to contribute to that effort. We have a prevent violence license plate in Illinois that initially financed the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority. Finding a way, finding vehicles to help people be able to contribute and to be able to sit around common tables and figure out how we can take a coordinated approach to this effort is essential, and we can do it. We are doing it. We are builders. We know how to make new institutions and to make change. Let us move forward into new areas to do that.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Thank you, Barbara. And now last but not least, Susan Schechter.

SUSAN SCHECHTER: I want to make my first set of comments and recommendations to the domestic violence service community. To prevent domestic violence we have to care about and do something about poverty. We have, for 20 years, said violence affects women of all classes, and we have said all women are at risk of violence. And I want to be very clear that is absolutely true, but some women are at greater risk. And when poor women are victimized they have fewer resources to deal with their victimization and are left more vulnerable to violence. I bring this up because I think if we don't face this fact and talk about it in our organizations and as a movement, we will never design prevention and intervention campaigns and strategies to help those women. Battered women and their families, including the many women we will never see, the hundreds of thousands of women who live in communities and never see us, need housing, decent income, decent health care and child care. They can't end the violence in their lives if we only work on violence.

For me this suggests two strategy changes about what we're doing. The first is that we need to talk to other people working, as everyone else has said today, in other progressive movements and struggles around housing and health and raising minimum wage and organizing and work. We need to talk about violence against women to those

constituencies and think about what is safety and well being for battered women in those worlds, but we also now need to go back and look at our state coalition agendas and our local agendas and think about how those issues are integrated in a way into our work. It doesn't mean we do every single thing but it means we think seriously about the linking in integration of people's agendas.

The second thing is that if 10% of all battered women somehow get to our programs and we're already constantly full and overworked, I want to raise the question of how do we reach more women with prevention and early intervention strategies? The research tells us that women go to their families and friends first. Women want to stay in their communities for help. And as we design the next generation of prevention, health promotion messages to women that where ever they go, to the doctor, to their day care center, to their child's school, people are talking about health promotion. What does that mean to have a respectful relationship? What does it mean to be abused? That when the way we think of our work, for me, is to think about where ever women go in their communities, there is someone there in the sites they're comfortable with, to talk about these issues. I think it partly means that some of us have to think about the messages we often give in training. For instance we say to other professionals we train, identify

battered women and send them to us. And I think we need to have a different vision of what we're asking people to do and what we're asking people to talk about in terms of health promotion. It also may mean sharing resources, our slim resources, with people who have even slimmer resources about feeding the development of programs in communities where they do not exist.

Then, the second thing I want to talk about is children and this comes up over and over again. Millions of children witness, and I think witness only begins to capture a tiny bit of what they experience, witness assaults against their mothers. About 1/3 to 1/2 of those kids are also abused themselves. Millions of other children experience violence on the street, on their way to school and in their communities. And we know that in most communities, except for the kids that go to a domestic violence program, or a sexual assault program, there is no response. There is no public response to these children. My vision is that we start putting forward a vision about the right to safety and well being for these children and their care givers, so that the vision we're putting forward does not separate children from their mothers, does not say children should be safe and not think about what it means for their mothers to be safe, but put the vision together of the right of everyone in the family to safety and well being. And when I think about how

to turn this into strategies, which is what we were asked to do, I would love it if many of you could return to communities and go talk to the people who do youth violence work, as Barbara suggested, and talk to people who work on child abuse, and talk to people who work on guns, but also bring together parents, battered women, teachers, early childhood educators and health providers and say, let's finally talk together. What would it look like in our community if we, not only had services and supports for kids exposed to violence, but we had prevention campaigns about violence in all it's forms. Because I think people are so eager to do something now about violence, and so for every intervention strategy we start to design I will challenge us to design a prevention strategy. Bring people together and talk. There are communities around the country who are beginning initiatives for the police when children are exposed to violence. The police, schools and mental health providers and battered women's advocates. These are the kinds of coalitions and groups that we need to form to do something, and at the state level put forward a vision. We put forward a vision that women have the right to safety. We have the capacity to put forward the same kind of visions for kids, and in the next generation that's what I hope we'll do. Thank you.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Thanks, Susan. Okay. My job is to be

the skeptical reporter. And I have listened to your rhetoric, and I have heard all your suggestions and they all sound wonderful, but there's the real world. Nobody addressed the issue of sex and violence on television and what impact that may be having. I didn't hear anybody. I'd like to find out if you think that is key. The exposure of children to games like Doom and Mortal Kombat and the desensitization to the images of violence, blood, the movies are more and more gory. I think there's been a desensitization. How important do you think that part of your effort should be to talk to my network and to others, cable, Hollywood, to deal with this issue of violence so prevalent in our lives coming into our living rooms. Who wants to take that question? Yes, Barbara.

BARBARA SHAW: I would say it's so critical that in our case we established clear guidelines for funding that include that any project that is trying to prevent inter-personal violence has to also deal with the issue of violence in the media as part of their community education plan. People resist this concept a lot. They don't want to accept that their children watching violence, or themselves watching violence contributes to a violent culture. And it takes a lot of public education and patience and time to help people understand how that cultural support really glorifies and reinforces and connects sex and violence, too, in a way that

is just unacceptable. And I think we have to be just as intentional about that work, the City of Chicago, Department of Health violence prevention plan has a media committee. Their whole goal is to both help us be media literate, as well as to work with your industry to try to change how violence is covered, as well as how it's produced. So, I think it's way up there on our list.

ESTA SOLER: Carole, that's one of the reasons we're very glad you're here.

CAROLE SIMPSON: I don't run the network. I wish I did.

ESTA SOLER: We were hoping that you would. But, I do think it's a critical issue and it is an issue that really requires us to do the political work that I think we know how to do. We're not going to be able to change, we couldn't get a PSA on the air that had depictions of violence and a resolution in a good way because the TV station said, or a TV station, not yours, said that they didn't want to show violence. And obviously, the very contradiction is so difficult for us to grapple with, but I do think that it makes a big difference if we organize. And when Donna Ferrada started to organize, what she did was she made it so that Eric Clapton, by the time he got to L.A., didn't sing the song. Now, was the song still on the album and is that album still being sold? Yes. And does that record company, Time Warner, know that we're pissed? No.

And do we need to let them know? Yes. And I think that's what this is all about.

CAROLE SIMPSON: The gangster rap, which 80%; I was doing a story on gangster rap, and it turns out that 80% of the rap music is bought by white teenage males. Not bought by black people, but you hear those words, bitch, whore throughout all of those. I think this is critical and I don't know what you all can do about that, but I think that's a big part of it. The human race enjoys violence. I was just in Rome at the Coliseum and throughout history man has enjoyed games of violence, we've enjoyed looking at that stuff. What are these new extreme violence sports that are happening now on TV? Is it something in human nature that we will never overcome? That we are just a violent prone species? That there's no help? No hope?

SUSAN SCHECHTER(?): This may be a slightly unpopular view here. I think that the United States culture is soaked in blood and violence. I think it is such a profound thread and it does appeal to a part of human beings. Maybe it's that that is not us, it's them. Why do we watch murders on the nightly news before going to sleep and so on? I don't understand all of the dimensions of it, but what I do know is that the protest of it, the objection to it, and I have three boys who are consumers of gangster rap I can tell you, the protest must come from the young. This is why we have

to organize. We can't be the center. We have to _____. We are saying to the society, to kids, here's what's bad. Sex, violence and drugs. Now what's wrong with that list? Why is sex on that list? It's so weird to me that we have kind of coupled this and _____ as exactly what youth are caring about and wanting to know how to do and wanting to know how to cope with their feelings, we've put it in the no-no category instead of in the, this is the fundamental human thing and it can be caring and it can be fabulous. I think we need to be careful to not be saying no, no, no and we need to use to say here's what we're saying yes to. That's why we need to go to organizing drives, we have to recruit youth organizers like the Peace Corps., like Americore, like Teach for America, but to be doing these kind of teach ins where media violence is a piece of it but it is them analyzing it, dissecting it.

(END SIDE TWO TAPE ONE)

FROM THE FLOOR: ... on a daily basis to the core and the death penalty in this country, including against juveniles, the co-violent is represented by the more than 30 year old blockade against the people of Cuba depriving women and girls there of the needed food, medicine and education is essential to address the issues of violence in this country. Media violence begins with the Saturday morning cartoons. Let me say that again. Media violence begins with the

Saturday morning cartoons, including PBS, and if you haven't sat down on Saturday mornings and watched TV with your children, you need to do it. Not only is it reflected in one character driving another character off the side of a cliff, but in the presentation that the guy in the white hat is not only good but always wins. Racism as well as sexism is violence.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Okay. Your statement is wonderful, but do you have a question? There are lots of people waiting.

FROM THE FLOOR: Yes. At what point do we begin to talk, to challenge the United States government about structural violence? That we begin to talk about the establishment of a revolution of values which is manifest in a life affirm and standard of ethics and code of conduct on a personal, as well as global basis?

CAROLE SIMPSON: Anyone want to respond? No? Okay, thank you for your statement. Let's go over to this mike.

FROM THE FLOOR: Actually, structural violence was the word I was hoping we would hear because that really is something that I was thinking about, as well. But, in really looking at this government and the policies that deny universal access to health care and keep people from getting minimum wage and it's not just government, but it's corporations as well. And that leads to the next piece that I would like to ask you all about, is you talk about joining

progressive movements. Do you see joining progressive movements for corporate responsibility as well? And to look at corporate funders who may fund our work here but oppress women in other parts of the world. Those are things we need to look at. A response?

CAROLE SIMPSON: Anyone?

PANELIST: I think both speakers point to exactly what we were trying to say, which is to look at the bigger picture here to see ourselves as an engine and a force to build those bridges. To me, transforming consciousness comes when you connect the issues. The issue of family violence and domestic violence and women's ability to be free in their homes and safe, and to raise their children that way, is utterly tied to a government that now has on page 23 just a random bombing of civilian populations in Iraq. I think these issues are connected and I think it is up to us to point those out and to build those bridges.

FROM THE FLOOR: I agree. And I think that the real challenge that a number of you have all talked about during the course of this conference, and the panels have talked about is the relationship of this issue to poverty and how difficult it is for us to really talk about ending poverty in the midst of the globalization of the economy that takes real jobs out of our communities. And I think that that's an issue that we all have to work together with the people

who are struggling for economic justice.

FROM THE FLOOR: And I think that in our efforts to be multi-cultural in our work and what we do, I think we need to think in this global manner, in this internationalist manner, about violence against women. And as we bring women together that we do it UN style, that we do it in relationship to women speaking in their own voices, in their own language and from their own communities, and from the perspective of the work that is being done in their own countries. And that we notch it up one in terms of how we think about coming together at a regional level with the Cambodian community and women from African countries and women from Thailand and how we make that an international discussion that is tied to the international human rights work that is being done in those countries, as well as the discussion about what's happening with women here.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Do I see Dr. Rosenberg there?

MARK ROSENBERG: You do. In the dark back here, Carole. I do want to thank and commend the panel. I think your energy, your vision and your ideas are extraordinary, they're wonderful. So, thank you for that. And I want to thank and challenge the moderator. I think you are in a good position, Carole. This notion of media violence. You began this session with two extraordinary accounts that had a life long impact on you and on your sister. Have you ever

seen anything on TV or heard a record that had an impact anywhere near those real life events?

CAROLE SIMPSON: No.

MARK ROSENBERG: I think we forget that all too often. There is so much emphasis, so much emphasis on media violence. There are industries that are built up around media violence and I think at the same time we tend to forget the relative proportion of the impact of what we see live and in our families. Thanks. Thanks for telling us those stories.

CAROLE SIMPSON: It's true, it's true. I remember after Columbine, taking a group of young high school males from a suburban Washington, D.C. high school and asking them about the violence and what impact, and as my own son does, he dismisses it. It's just play. It's not real and so I thank you for pointing that out. But yet you still hear people, the drum beat, it's the media's fault, the media's fault. We're blamed for everything, so, thank you. Question?

FROM THE FLOOR: To our courageous survivor, and to all of your supporters. You shared with us several pointers for prevention for youth and things that we can do now. What pointers can you give us to take back for that dreadful day when he comes out, after the 11 years, for prevention for you and for other survivors? And she doesn't have to answer, anyone on the panel. Because that's the fear that a

lot of us survivors have.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Irma, would you like to?

IRMA GUEVARA: He is already out, last May. But he's being held by the INS. I think he will not be released where I am. He will be released in some place because I asked his parole officer to do that, and we're working on that right now to have more protection. We asked the chief of police in our place to give more protection to me, so they are coming every day and checking in my store and we put some security system also in my store and in my house, and a lot of people are helping me right now.

CAROLE SIMPSON: It's 8 years later and she's still in fear.

CATLIN FULWOOD: I think this again points to the critical need for neighborhood organizing, so that the people who are watching and listening and making sure that Irma is safe are people who surround her in her world so that she can live in her world as a full person.

PANELIST: I want to second what Catlin just said, and also talk about we have done a job over and over again about saying institutions in our communities are responsible and accountable for creating safety, or creating violence, by their lack of response. I think it's both an issue of institutional responsibility and community and neighborhood support. The final thing is that so many women lose contact

with the people and the people who are trying to think about protection and safety lose contact with the women over time, and thinking about what it means to stay connected over time, because safety doesn't disappear as an issue for so many women.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Thank you. I have been told that we have time for two more questions, so we'll take. Where was that last one? From this side? So, this side I should go to. Okay.

MARIE FORTE (sp.?): I'm Marie Forte and I work for the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, and I'm also a minister in the United Church of Christ, and I just wanted to remind us that our social norms are established and reinforced by values and belief systems that are often powered of our religious traditions. For many years, many of us in religious communities have been deconstructing the religious belief systems which have promoted the subordination of women and violence against women, and we've been reconstructing and retrieving the stories, teachings and doctrines which Catlin referred to in terms of the values of our traditions, which affirm women and affirm our lives free from violence. But as an organizing tool one of the few remaining institutions in our communities are our religious groups. Youth groups, children's programs, women's groups, men's groups, ready

audiences every week in all of our communities. The youth report on the first day named as it's third priority that we work with faith communities to address their concerns as youth dealing with violence. They are reminding us of the importance of religious institutions in their lives. Now I know that we've had an historic ambivalence in our movements towards our religious traditions, and for good reason. But we cannot afford any longer to overlook those systems and to leave out the religious issues and the role of the religious communities in responding to domestic violence. So, I want to challenge each of us to include religious leaders who are allies in this work in our analysis, in our strategizing, in our organizing. How many of you here, either in your childhood experience or in your adult experience, have had affiliation with organized religion? Please raise your hands. Okay. These are our communities, not somebody else's community. These are our communities and we are the wings from the battered women's movement to those communities to bring the challenge and also the support for the work that can go on there. So, I just want to remind each of us that it's a very important part of changing the social norms that we're here to do.

CAROLE SIMPSON: I'm sorry, this is going to be the last question. Group question.

CARLENE JOHN (sp.?): My name is Carlene John. I'm proud

to say that I served on the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence for seven years from 1991 to 1998. I'm a formerly battered woman, I have grown up with this since I was a little kid until now. As a group we have something that needs to be said, and for this movement that was started by formerly battered women and battered women, it is important for all of our voices to be heard. So, if you could take the time to listen to us.

FROM THE FLOOR: Catlin, you said that there are boys and girls in the community that are eager to undermine and decrease violence. Barbara, you said we need to seize opportunities to stop all forms of oppression. Bernadine, you said that protest must come from the young and we must recruit youth organizers. Each one of you had said that we must start in our homes and our communities. We would like you to respond to what happened in the community of this conference. We ask your response to the following statement.

FROM THE FLOOR: We first want to acknowledge and honor the work and success of the Millennium Conference organizers in bringing together so many diverse people on the issue of domestic violence, and as advocates for our communities we feel we must speak.

FROM THE FLOOR: Last night a culturally, religiously and ethnically diverse group of over 50 lesbian, bisexual,

trans, gay, queer and questioning individuals came together to meet each other and share our experiences and reactions to this conference.

FROM THE FLOOR: Many of us learned there that a group of young people from an organization called SMILES, Sexual Minorities Youth Assistance League, had been treated in a manner that we feel is inconsistent with the goals, objectives and philosophy of this conference. It is our understanding that conference organizers made decisions that effectively excluded and censored the efforts, vision and voice of these youth through the following actions.

FROM THE FLOOR: SMILE was initially invited to come and participate in a youth and action track. In response the youth members designed a play about lesbian dating violence, specifically for this conference.

FROM THE FLOOR: Approximately two weeks prior to the conference the SMILE contact was told that their workshop could not include the play because it was perceived by the conference organizers to be too controversial for the sponsors. Despite the obstacles, more than 10 people were able to view the play and found that these concerns were invalid.

FROM THE FLOOR: SMILE traveled here to present the workshop and discovered that they were not listed in the conference program or addendum, despite the fact that

conference organizers were faxed a workshop description several times. They were not assigned a room until they requested one and then were placed where no other conference activities were occurring.

FROM THE FLOOR: These actions silenced, objectified and marginalized the members of SMILE. What is particularly painful is that these youth in addition to being queer teens, were also all people of color and were presenting a story based on one member's experiences as a survivor.

FROM THE FLOOR: Members of SMILE found this treatment disheartening and that it rendered their realities invisible. Not only do we empathize with their reaction, we share it. A number of us have observed and experienced that LBGT issues were not integrated into the language, spirit, celebratory and educational events of the conference.

FROM THE FLOOR: We stand before you today to say that as long as LBGT youth voices are silenced, the sovereignty of each of us is compromised. Therefore, we expect that the conference organizers and sponsors will do the following:

FROM THE FLOOR: Acknowledge that without lesbians there would not have been a battered women's movement, that they are our founding mothers and sisters from _____.

FROM THE FLOOR: Recognize that each of us were deprived of the full value of the conference by missing the opportunity to view the incredible work of SMILE. We,

therefore, expect the Millennium Conference to pay for the production and distribution of a video tape of the play to all conference attendees.

FROM THE FLOOR: That a formal apology will be offered to the youth members of SMILE, and finally...

FROM THE FLOOR: Insure the integration of lesbian, bisexual, trans and gay voices and issues into the development into the social action agenda being set by this conference.

FROM THE FLOOR: I also would like to encourage for everyone here who would like to support SMILE and what was said in this statement to consider signing on to this statement as individuals. It is available at the MCADV table in the exhibit hall. So, please do come by and sign it. We also have copies of it available.

CAROLE SIMPSON: Well, thank you for your presentation. I guess I should turn it over to the conference organizer who, perhaps, can give you an answer, Vickii Coffey.

VICKII COFFEY: There are only a few things that I want to say because I think your position is well taken. If there is anyone to apologize for what has happened with SMILE, it should be me. However, I think that I, I want to share with you the understanding that it was not a planned decision in the way that it was presented, and I'm very sorry that all of you feel that way. Unfortunately, I don't have the time

at the podium to explain all the circumstances involved. Many of you out there know me and know that I am committed to every aspect of this movement. I am sincerely hurt that this happened to SMILE, and I am sincerely hurt that I could not do anything to change the circumstances, but I will tell you that this was not the plan. That there was never a plan to intensively exclude SMILE from the conference. In fact, I worked very hard to include every aspect of our youth community in the conference and I understand that something happened here that we could have handled better. So, I apologize for that. Some of the requests that you've made I will try to, in the best way that I can, respond to and value. I thank you for giving us the opportunity to reflect on the way that we knew to do our job better. And, again, I hope you understand that this was never intentional. That there are lots of other considerations that I cannot explain at this moment.

One of the things that I want to say is that this is one of the conferences that we've had an opportunity to come together and vocalize our collective concerns. And so I will never silence the voice of our collective concerns in any way in the work that I do. I was asked this morning to make that announcement. And I think one of the things we have to do as a movement is listen to each other and understand each other, and be willing to accept that we all

are human, and that we make mistakes, but those mistakes are not fatal. That there is an opportunity for all of us to change and improve our lives and the importance of the work that we do by talking to each other. I came up here to make announcements about important issues around this conference, and that unfortunately the time will not allow some of the things that have happened. I hope you don't mind me changing the subject matter at this point, but I would like to meet with the individuals from SMILE following this presentation to have a one to one conversation. If you can, would you please meet me at the right hand side of the stage and we'll go somewhere and talk.

Changing the page, the Women's Resource Center from Scranton, Pennsylvania, was displaying the memorial exhibit for battered women at this conference, called Empty Place at the Table. Sometime between Sunday night and Monday morning the exhibit was vandalized. Several very personal items were taken, items that belong to the women that were killed. As a survivor of domestic violence, I am appalled that such a thing could happen at a conference gathering like this. Please, if you have any information that can help locate these stolen items, contact Frank Brown at the hotel security. Again, Frank Brown at hotel security. The items that were stolen were photos of women who were killed, an ashtray, a napkin ring, Mickey Mouse glass and a figurine of

a kitten. Who would do this?

To change from a more sovereign notice, I'd like to let you know that the National Network to End Domestic Violence is pleased to announce it's fourth annual training and leadership institute being held in Phoenix, Arizona November 11 through 13, 1999. They are asking that you come by their table in the exhibit hall because there will be a raffle to win a free trip to the conference. Please stop by and see them.

I'm very sorry. I'm taking up too much time here. The Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International is holding it's next annual conference June 1 through 3. I'm sorry, but I just want to say something here. We don't have to hurt each other. We don't. I'm sorry.

PANELIST: There are a number of announcements. The Nursing Network is holding it's next annual conference June 1 through 3 in Vancouver. I'm just doing this quickly, Vickii. I hope I'm honoring what you wanted. The next announcement is bus service for mayor's event. Busses will leave the Hyatt starting at 12:30 p.m. Busses will be designed for spill over. The busses are out there. Trust, I'm sure they'll be out there. The National Network _____, we've already done that. Great.

I want to say thank you to all of you. Thank you to all of the wonderful panelists, and thank you to Carole

Simpson from ABC News. Thank you.

Oh, there's another raffle? Wait a minute, the busses aren't leaving yet. Just quickly, for those of you who want to stay here and listen to the raffle, it's like many of the _____, if any of you have seen our booth in the exhibit room, one of our public awareness efforts is to unify the tribe's efforts in bringing a message about the sacredness of women. And the message that's on our T-shirt is one that we want to promote, so for those of you who are willing to stay, Sheila Wellstone has agreed to honor us by reading off the names of those who have won the T-shirts from the raffle, and I just want to read off the proverb. The message about women is that if the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being of the woman is intact, so too is that of the family, community and society. Susan Robinson, Jack Laird, Jennifer Kuhn, Rev. Catherine Johnson, Bee Lombray, Regana Barjava, Kathy Kuna, Rashma Adi, Pat Holloway, Linda Berger, Stacy Susa, Maxine Stigma, Blonee Dedolfay, Char Blodgett, Wiletta Dolfice, Sharon Burner. Thank you all. The T-shirts and the cards of the winners will be at a booth in the exhibit room. Thank you.