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THE NEXT MILLENNIUM CONFERENCE:
Ending Domestic Violence
How to Conduct Appropriate Research
in Diverse Populations
August 30, 1999

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Moderator: ...if you so desire. I'll start with introducing our presenters, and I'm going to introduce them in the order that they can present since that will make it easier. Okay, we're going to start with Meiko. Meiko, I hope I'm going to get this right or you help me with your last name, Yoshihama. She's an assistant professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Michigan, and her research interest in the area of violence against women of color reflect her advocacy work with the Asian Pacific American battered women in Los Angeles over the past decade. She's also co-founded the domestic violence action and research group in Japan, and has been conducting a series of action oriented research projects so she'll be our first presenter. Our second presenter will be Dr. Rachel Rodriguez, and she's an assistant professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center, School of Nursing at San Antonio. Dr. Rodriguez is the Vice President of the Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International, and she's been working in the area of domestic violence since 1985 with a particular focus on migrant farm worker populations. Our third presenter will be Shamita Das Dasgupta. She's one of the founder members of Monavi, the pioneer organization focusing on violence against South Asian women in the U.S. She is on the advisory board at the

Battered Women's Justice Project, and a member of the applied research on domestic violence. Okay, I guess I don't need to say too much more, and our last presenter we hope will be Dr. Rodney Hammond who's the director at the Division of Violence Prevention and distinguished science fellow at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. He's done some extensive work in the area, he's also a fellow of the APA and a Chair of the APA board on convention affairs.

So that's the order in which we will present. Perhaps maybe someone can track down Rodney for us. He is here, I did see him, he was at the last session. Perhaps he doesn't know that there has been a room change, but we hope that he will arrive shortly. So we're going to start first with Meiko. Each presenter is going to present about fifteen minutes, and my task is to keep them on time. So I'll pass them notes, and I'll stop them if they keep going on and on and I may.

Meiko: Good morning. I just want to start with this picture because domestic violence cuts across all racial, cultural, ethnic boundaries. When we shift our focus on to the United States alone today, battered women of color face different experiences, different barriers to justice, and if you're really serious about any domestic violence in all communities, we really need to understand the experience of

battered women color. There's enormous diversity within battered women of color so what I wanted to do is instead of really focusing on all diverse communities when they're really cuing, and really talk about conducting research in an immigrant community especially an Asian Pacific American community, and especially I guess I'll get to the problem of aggregation, but I'm going to derive from a study, a recent study, that I did in Los Angeles because this study of domestic violence among women of Japanese descent both immigrant from Japan and those who were born in the U.S. But before I talk about my study, I want to start with sort of a dominant, conventional approach to studying domestic violence across race groups.

The recent national balance against women surveyed found that the rate of violence, rape and physical abuse, assault, among the Asian Pacific Island was the lowest of all the racial groups studied and this finding is consistent with our image of the model minority, but what this study doesn't tell us is what about the differences, the evaluations of rate of violence among some groups of Asian Pacific populations. What about Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Vietnamese immigrant, the refugees ___ from Laos? This study doesn't tell us that. This study does not tell us the valuations between the U.S. born population or Japan born or the ___ born immigrant within a single ethnic group.

So Asian Pacific American population in the U.S. is not among monolithic population and an enormous diversity exists among its ethnic sub groups, with ___ a very different socio cultural, socio historical context. So such a diversity runs against aggregation aggregating all Asian Pacific islanders in one group, and you compare that to another aggregated group of African Americans, white and Latinos doesn't make sense, however, this aggregation is so commonly done.

These evaluations are really, really studied except for those studies mentioned here, and studies that looked at ___ valuations usually found profound differences that have a lot of implications on the policy that we develop, services that we provide. So there are three premises that guided my study of domestic violence, very simple ones make sense. One, enormous variations exist in women's experience with domestic violence within a single racial ethnic group, I've been repeating myself. The second reason is women experiences gives meaning and response to partner's balance in her unique, socio cultural context. Three, culture values and norms in the country of origin have a profound impact on the perceptions and experience of domestic violence among ___. First generation immigrant, that also U.S. born offsprings, both generations and generations, and nothing really new but if you were really serious about

embracing these premises, you could do a different paradigm of research.

So what will this study look like if we embraced these premises? It means that we view the experience of immigrants and their offsprings in an interactive context of socio culture context and of the country of origin where they come from, and then their current socio cultural context, the U.S. So this thing might say, so for convenience which I refer to as immigrant one and in context. This guided the development of the study that I'm going to talk about. So applying this framework, this study was preceded by a series of investigations in both Japan, the country of origin, and the country of residence because I really wanted to understand the immigrant's experience in this country. So as you see in this slide, in order to figure out what are some of the unique, possibly unique experiences that Japanese immigrant women may experience, went back and did a series of investigation in Japan. So the preliminary studies in Japan found it identified some, possibly culturally based manifestations of domestic violence, such as, ___ liquid, overturning dining table, refusal to use contraceptives because their access to oral contraceptive is very limited in Japan. So these are very specific socio cultural context and then on the other hand, preliminary studies in the U.S. have picked up some again

unique socio cultural context where Japanese immigrant women and their offspring experience and respond to domestic violence. The immigration status is very poor in factor, and also their status as a racial minority has tremendously had impact.

So these findings, the preliminary studies suggested that using a standard measure of domestic violence is not going to capture some of the nuances and important, culturally based intricacies. If we're serious about understanding the complexity of this population's experience, we needed a more expanded and more culturally relevant measure of domestic violence so developed such a measure incorporating all the findings from the preliminary studies. Also what I want to talk about is when I named this thing, I was trying to capture two conjectural aspect, immigrant in the context, immigrant experience in the context of this country of origin and country of residence, and also I wanted to capture this women in context framework, that is, women do give meaning in a very unique, socio cultural and specific situational context. So you may experience a slob, but that meaning of that whether that is minor balance or a severe balance is really up to that woman to decide. Research has tended to create pre-defined, that is severe, what is minor violence, but it is the woman who experiences that act that can determine so I'll talk about

that in a minute.

Very quickly, what does this study look like? I was very interested in investigating the prevalence of domestic violence and the consequences of domestic violence in this population because there was no population based data. Without that type of data, it's very difficult to advocate for additional fundings and policy and instead of advocating all Asian Pacific American population, I really focused on this population as a pilot. If we can do this kind of study in the Japanese community, maybe we can duplicate and enhance this study in different Asian Pacific ethnic groups. So that was my hope and that's what I'm still working on.

So we used a community based random sample of 211 women of Japanese descent in Los Angeles, and both women who are born in the U.S. and Japan are included, and interviews were conducted in both Japanese and English, and U.S. women were younger and it indicated that Japan born women so when we compare the rates and other factors, those two factors are controlled in comparison. Let me skip a little bit and talk a little bit about this. What you see here is several types of violence identified in Japan, and these are more conventional forms of violence examined in this country. What I want to show here is that those type of violence identified in Japan are also experienced by immigrants and their offspring in the U.S. in Los Angeles as frequently as

some of common forms of violence and in terms of their perceived abusiveness, I asked women how abusive do you think this specific act was in your specific context when you experienced it how abusive it was. So many of them don't involve a conventionally perceived severe physical assault. This is not choking, it's not kicking, it doesn't involve a weapon, but those acts are rated as very highly abusive from one to four and as abusive as some of the physical violence.

Q: _____

Meiko: No, there's this big mistake I made, I forgot to ask. Okay, so using this very expanded measure of domestic violence, the proportion of women who have experienced violence was very, very high. As you see here, 80% of total respondents experienced some type of violence either physical, emotional or sexual, 57% physical violence, sexual violence 35%, and 79% emotional violence. Let's compare the U.S. born and Japan born.

In terms of the probability of experience physical violence and sexual violence, those two groups weren't that different. The difference was found, however, in the proportion of women who have experienced emotional violence. But when we look at the patterns of violence a little closer, this is what I found. So you look at the overall proportion of women who experience domestic violence, the

physical and sexual violence, no difference, but when they experience abuse, a little different. Here I classified the respondents a little bit differently, but you can look at the U.S. born and Japan born, the result are very, very similar so let me just use this to illustrate. We match one point five plus generation is a U.S. born who speak English and who have been culturated in this country. They start experiencing physical violence much earlier than Japan born immigrants. Many factors can contribute to this, one of which could be that Japan born women start dating later. So the risk is delayed but when we target, when we develop prevention programs, we need to know the patterns of risk, let's look at sexual violence. Again, different patterns emerged. For sexual abuse, again U.S. born experience a lot of violence, and then it seems to go down. Japan born women again delayed onset, and then it doesn't really go down, they continue to experience sexual abuse.

Alright, enough numbers for now, let's hear the voices of these women. I asked those women whether they thought the Japanese culture impacted their response to domestic violence, and these are just a few examples of their narratives. Frequently respondents related their responses to domestic violence to the culture value placed on endurance, enduring life's hardship with grace and the women said, I was taught ____, don't complain, make the best of

things, and both Japan born and the Japanese speaking and the English speaking respondents made a specific reference to determining Japanese. This person may not speak a word of Japanese, but they know this term, gaman, that again the value of endurance. This English speaking person stated that the Japanese culture teaches you the gaman, to tolerate the difficulties and as she continues, she talks about how this value impacted how she dealt with domestic violence. Even fourth generation, U.S. born respondents identified a strong cultural influence. She said, I think that being Japanese does influence the way I dealt with violence even though I am fourth generation. It still influences me on how I am supposed to act, it's important to sacrifice myself, and it always happen especially in a relationship with a man that you're to give in to him. For the English speaker still is profoundly influenced by the culture teaching of the old country or this country, it seems to happen in general, but what I want to show is here is at the same time, Japanese American women experience was profoundly influenced by the U.S. socio culture and historical context. For example, several respondents identified their parents intimate camp experience during the World War II as a factor which reinforced this value of endurance. This woman said that my family went through a lot of pain, the value was that I was going to persevere and succeed without being a

victim. My father's experience in the camp, high tolerance of pain affected my life. How he taught me to deal with life was by his camp experience, and this woman has suffered a severe case of domestic violence for years and years.

Okay, so culture values and norms of the country of origin and also the context of the U.S. society affect this population, immigrants and their offspring, but the U.S. born and Japan born women use different types of coping strategies and does it matter which coping strategies they use in terms of their psychological well being, and that's the next set of findings that I want to quickly present if possible. Respondents are asked whether they used one of these thirteen specific coping strategies including confronting the abuser, talking to friends, talking to counselors, and also some other strategies like trying not to think about it, try to look at the positive side of the relationship and things like that, and I hate to categorize them into passive and active, but the factor analysis showed that those two different types of coping. So for the lack of a better word, I'm going to just with the quote, active versus passive coping, but I want to refine that just the same with what these women have told through the data. Rules applies, Japan born respondents are less likely to use "active" coping, confronting, seeking help outside then U.S. born. They perceived this type of coping less effective on

average. For Japan born respondents, if they perceived active coping more effective, it was off psychologically, they had higher psychological distress. If they perceived passive coping, passive coping was perceived as effective, they're better off psychologically, their psychological distress was lower this interaction affect. And there are a lot of ways to interpret this, but one thing that I want to kind of ponder for all of us to think about is maybe the indication of this is that it would appear that the match between the kind of response you use is more important than which one you use or which one you think was effective especially among immigrant population, this match is important. If that's the case, the implication is very serious for us because the implication is that the intervention that require are willing to use cultural and congruent strategies maybe have limited the affect on women psychological well being, then and most available interventions in this country such as calling the police, and they mostly in congruent for many women.

Since this is not a policy workshop, I need to get back to the research and I know I'm running out of time so I want to summarize. So using this immigrant women in context framework focused on a single ethnic group. In order to really capture whether there are cultural influences from the country of origin and whether there are differences

between U.S. born and foreign born population the study found that the cultural values and norms of the country of origin do influence the manifestations and perceptions of domestic violence as well as women's response to domestic violence for both U.S. born and Japan born. When we look at closely, we found some differences not so much of the prevalent percentage of women who experience violence, but the patterns of risk are different. Selection and effectiveness of coping strategies are different too, and what is most striking here is that the relationship between the selection and effectiveness and the distress, there are differences between those two groups.

Okay, there you go, this is my pitch today, In order to develop policies and services to end domestic violence in the lives of all women, all battered women, every battered woman, we need to study and understand the unique experience of women of color including immigrant women. A difficult population to study, you need to do translation, you need to look at a lot of issues from the country of origin but if we're really serious about ending domestic violence in all women's lives, we need to understand their unique experience and hope that the immigrant women in context find out and there's attention to the living group differences and cover and understand the complexity of immigrant women's experience. Thanks.

Q: You said that her stress was higher ____, would you say that there's somehow a direct relationship to our stress increases when we feel there are things that we should be doing and those are difficult things to do.

Meiko: When I looked at the relationship, I controlled for the severity of domestic violence so this is above and beyond the kind of situation context. So controlling for the severity of domestic violence and current stress, kind the level of stress, this difference between the U.S. born and Japan born was still there, it was robust. So it seems to me at least at this point, there's a lot more going on now. Just the situation of context of violence who does what kind of abuse this culture where you are in terms of culture. I hate to use the term acculturation, but where you are in terms of how you identify yourself, your values and norms seem to have profound influence not only how you choose to behave, how you choose to cope, but also that translates to your well being level.

Q: So the further you have to come away from your norms or your feelings of who I am and what I need to do, further you have to reach past that. You're seeing a difference in terms of, I'm just trying to get a handle on not that I think it's a lot related to that they're having to reach far beyond what the norm is for that culture.

Meiko: Yeah.

Q: It becomes more difficult because you're making me do something that it's not part of who I am.

Meiko: Exactly. So active coping, for instance, confronting the abuser or leaving him or calling the police may be effective and she knows it intellectually, but then psychologically if you look at kind of psychological state, she's worse off. And again we need more studies and I wish I could have looked at a different generation, second, third, fourth, but again, this is a small study. So right now it's suspected that we need to do a lot more studies to really understand how this is really playing out, and we really need to seriously look at this when we develop services and policy, that was my pitch.

Q: _____

Meiko: Okay, I could just give you those later, in the interest of time.

Q: Is there some way we can write to you and get some written information about this?

Meiko: Also, I just had a paper out on *Violence Against Women Journal* which talked about the prevalence part that I presented, and then other differences being written up so I can send you those.

Rachel: I'm happy to be here, and I really am happy that I came after Meiko because a lot of what she said is really relevant to what I want to say as well particularly with

this population with migrant farm workers, just to give you a tiny, tiny, little quick history which is something I always feel like I need to do because migrant farm workers are in every state in the U.S., there isn't a state that doesn't have migrant workers in it. There may be people who think, well, I don't have any in Maryland or I don't have any in Missouri or something, but they're everywhere. So that's the first thing to understand, there's about three to five million migrant farm workers in this country, and it's very hard to know the numbers exactly because it depends on which federal agency's doing the measurement and which agency is defining what a migrant worker really is. And so because of the differences, I use the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of Migrant Health's numbers and that's about three to five million. It can go anywhere from one to five depending if you're talking about housing people or migrant ed or whoever but nevertheless, they're here and for many, many years, they were completely left out of the domestic violence movement, and I'm talking many, many years.

This is a population of people who are also called the invisible population because we drive constant as we're driving out in the country, but we can't ever eat a meal without thinking about them because they are the people that bring us food to our table. So they are part of our

everyday lives, but we haven't necessarily been a part of theirs, and they live on about \$7500 a year, five to eight thousand dollars a year is the average salary. They move around so much that many times they're classified as basically no one's constituents. Even though they do have homes, they have permanent homes, even in the South in Texas, California, Arizona and they migrate up North, and they used to be kind of defined as specific patterns of migration but because of changes in economy and etc., people tend to kind of go wherever the work is. And so people from Texas which is where I'm from would normally migrate up to the Midwest for the most part, but they go to Florida, they go to New York, they go to California, they're in Oregon, they go wherever the work is and they may go for a few weeks to one state and depending on how good the pesticides work, there may not be any weeds to pull so that means they have to go to the next state or with the floods and things that happen, there's no work or the drought, there's no work. I'm really wondering what happened to the migrants on the DelMarva Peninsula which is Delaware, Maryland and Virginia because of the drought, we don't know what happened to these folks. So they're going to move just about anywhere.

Relating this all to domestic violence, the reason I started doing this work years ago was because I realized that there was a population of women in this country, some

were born here, some were not, some are immigrants. Mainly migrants are Latinos but most of them are Mexican, come from Mexico and other parts of Latin America as well, a lot of them were born here on the border on Texas and California and Arizona, but they had been left out of the movement and people would ask me, -I guess it was probably ten years ago, some people from Texas asked me to help them do a presentation because they had never heard of migrant farm workers. It was a domestic violence organization and they didn't know anything about them in Texas, and so we figured this is really something we've got to focus on here, and I wanted to study them and in particular work with them, but the method that I use is called action research that I'm going to talk a little bit about, and participatory action research is kind of another way of doing it.

I was not trained in this method in my doctoral program. I was trained in the traditional quantitative, qualitative, may qualitative a little bit, method but mainly quantitative, counting member statistics and the things that I do, they kind of like make my brain, I just kind of like go flat, you know, when I hear that. So it's hard for me to relate to that, and it was real hard for me to relate to the research the way I was taught, and really I could have stumbled into action research knowing that I was doing something that didn't fit anything else but it was real

important I felt like to do it this way. And so in the beginning, I was criticized and told that I would never have a profession some days and this would never work, you can't do it, but it's really interesting how things kind of play out, and now this is all considered a new innovative paradigm or something, in my business anyway, but I think this particular quote really says it all, "There's no greater power than the right to define the question," and in research, who gets to define the question?

Traditionally, it's us who sit in our little offices of the university who decide what we want to study and who we want to study and how we're going to ask the questions. In a traditional research, we pretty much, we have a hypothesis, so we pretty much decided how this thing is going to play out anyway. We've had a lot of discussions about this in my own university with an anthropologist that I used to work with because in South Texas, they study diabetes a lot and we called it ethnicity is pathology because the consequences or the complications of diabetes happened because you were Mexican American, and that sort of hypotheses were written. What could we give good people who wanted to do a conference on culture as variable, said culture is not a variable, that's not something you can put in that context, it is what it is. And so the way I've approached the research is that it is what it is, and it

happens the way it happens and that to me is the critical thing and defining the question should really be left up to the women. And I tried to do participatory action research which really focuses on the women defining the questions and I'm working on that. I mean I'm trying to get better at it all the time, but really we're trying to do action research which is research really with the intent of creating social change which is very different than what I was taught and the work of research, you know, it is biased and contrary to what anybody would say, it has to be. I mean it comes out of a human person's head so the fact that you thought of it, there's an inherent bias there, but this is very open and it's with the intent of creating change.

We knew that because migrant women had been left out of the movement for so long, we didn't know anything about them. There was nothing in the literature about migrant farm workers. We knew nothing about what they went through, what they experienced, how bad it was, nothing, and what we had to do was really kind of push the feds quite honestly into taking this problem and looking at it. The migrant health program knew that violence existed, we had a lot of conversations about it, but everybody was scared to ask if this was a problem because they said, well, but if we ask the question, there's nothing we can do about it, we don't know anything about it. The violence people quite honestly

and really with no malice or anything just didn't even remember, didn't even know that they existed. So we needed to do something that was going to create change, and going to put some money into what we were doing because honestly you can't do anything without money and these women needed to be brought to the table. And I'm really happy at a conference like this and listening to the people talk about migrant workers because they are, if you think about five million, say there are five million farm workers, there's two a half million women in this country who are migrants who were left out so we need to create a lot of social change.

Traditional research, at least the way I was taught to do it, adds to the body of knowledge and we all want to know more about the topic so we can spend many years researching the dynamics of this topic. The day to day lives of the women don't change, and the biggest lesson that I learned from this and I'm glad that I learned it early on is I was at a conference in Seattle and I was meeting with some of the farm worker women that I'll tell you about later, but I asked them if I could do this. I said is it okay with you because we're going to do a survey which we had to do first because we didn't know the prevalence of the problem and I said, is it okay with you if I do this? And this one woman stood up and she said to me, she said, it's alright, we'll

help you with your research, but statistics equal dead women and we don't have time. So we'll help you, but you have to do something that helps us. So we started doing the description of the problem and the action to deal with it at the same time which was the point of critique of it I got from people. Traditionally, the track would be that you study the problem, you find out all the dynamics of it, you learn about it and then a few years later, you do an intervention and then you evaluate it, and so we're talking like many years and the women didn't have that kind of time, they had been living with this a long time. So that's one of the differences that we're talking about with the kind of research that probably the three of us are looking at reasonable to say.

An important point about action research and it really rejects the idea of separation of the research and the research, we're all working together on this. So I don't want to do a lot of like didactic clatching stuff, but there's point that I think are important to understand. So it kind of follows qualitative research to some point where the researcher is the instrument and you're part of the project, this actually takes it a little further because there's a real partnership in here. The researcher is not the expert, the women are the experts and it rejects the idea that research is value free, it's not and particularly

action research is not value free, we went into it knowing we had to make some changes. So that's where we came from and that's how the research evolved, and one of the things that we did early on about five or six of us in the country actually went to the Office of Migrant Health and said, we need to know what's going on, and they said, well, yes, this is very important but we have no money. And we said, well, that's okay, we got frustrated and we said, that's okay, we'll do it without money, and I have to say most of the research I've ever done has been without money or without much. I used all my frequent flyer miles, people have done a lot of work. There's people in the audience here who've worked on these first projects from Minnesota, Maria's right there, who did work because it needed to be done and we did with very little money. Later on you'll see people focus, we transcribed tape after tape of focus group data for nothing, for free for us because we knew it needed to be done. And then finally when we said, okay, we're going to do this whether you give us money or not, well, they said, okay, okay, we'll give you a little bit of money. So they got a little nervous I think that we were going to do this anyway.

So we did a few things and this is really just kind of a story of the evolution with a little bit of data thrown in here, but we had to get a handle at least beginning on what

the scope of the problem was. And so we worked with several clinics for a couple of years around the country of migrant health centers, and we did what we called a practice based research network. This was in '95--

(SIDE 2)

Rachel: If you can kind of couch net in with something else, it works pretty well then she'll say yes. The other thing we love with migrant workers which is a real important point is that if we frame things in third person, they tended to then talk about it much easier and then as the conversation evolves, then it becomes their story. So what I said to the woman is if a woman was getting hit, what would you tell me to tell her? And the same woman who told me, no, that never happened to her directly, said, well, when it happens to me, this is what I do, or they'll start talking about someone else, someone else and then before you know it, it's evolved into them. The men did the same thing when we did some interviews with them. So the third person really has worked well for us, and other people have tried it in our same population and it's worked.

So when we asked the four questions, we had to sort of frame it with a little bit, the other thing, language I think is a critical piece. For us working with migrants since they're mainly Mexican in Mexican Americans, we have the word ____ in Spanish for abuse because ____ literally

translated means mistreated but if we say ____, and those are some little nuances that I think are real critical to doing research with diverse populations, if you say ____ and we're talking with migrants, ____ in South Texas in particular means that you're kind of sneaking in, conniving and whatever, you're not-called a good woman. So we can't say are you ____ because she's going to say, of course not, and she'd actually be insulted, so we say ____ and it works a lot better.

Now on the contrary I work with a good friend of mine in Washington, D.C. who works with the Salvadoran population. They're very comfortable with ____ as abused, Puerto Ricans when I worked in Milwaukee are very comfortable with ____ as abused. So you need to understand the nuances of the language as well when you're asking the questions. And then we did focus groups because one of the other things I think is critical particularly and we talked about that earlier as well is that you have to put context into the numbers. The numbers without their context anyway I think are lacking, but particularly in these populations if, holy cow, I've been going like crazy here, particularly in these populations if you're going to use numbers, they can be misinterpreted or they can be misused or they're aggregated so you need the context.

I'll just go through these, ____ is a group that we

started in California, and we did some work with the men. I got cool quotes in here so we got to go through the whole thing. But anyway just real quickly, we did some surveys in '95-'96 and we found when the numbers increased, we had about a 20% or one out of five women reporting abuse. This was not a random sample because only about 12-15% of migrants actually ever make it to a clinic. We took a look again quite frankly and so we interviewed people in cars, we interviewed them in the clinic, we interviewed them, you know, Outreach workers did it, we interviewed women where we could find them because we needed a beginning and we had to qualify it. Another thing that is something you need to qualify, I need to qualify with the data but you need to consider because it's probably researchy, not the best thing that would be a credibility, but I think it deserves a lot of credibility is when a woman who had been helped before, the year before had been helped, and they got in a shelter and they had done all these things and she had gone back, well, when we asked the question on the survey form, she said, no, I've never been hit, and this is the same person who interviewed her had helped her shortly before that. That's a real important piece so we researching it, it may have some lack of credibility but in practice and in action research, it had a lot of credibility, you know, what happened here, there's something about asking this question

that is impacting that. So if there's any bias in these numbers, I'm sure they'll lower them in reality.

We did focus groups once again to try to find out what the context was to all these numbers we were getting, and we did them up in Wisconsin and just the themes that we found and this is the most-important one, there's two of them actually and this one we're working on still, what happens is they're talking about the relationship and they're going along and all of a sudden, it doesn't matter how much violence is happening, all of a sudden the light bulb goes off and they said something is horribly wrong with this relationship, and it can be a myriad of events that happened. There's nothing you can pinpoint out and say, okay, this is the key that turns it, it doesn't. All of a sudden one day they woke up and said, oh, my God, something's really wrong, and then leaving isn't a choice and for farm worker women, leaving isn't always the choice for them. What they asked us to do is they said, we're glad you're helping us, we're glad you're working with us, but you have to work with the men. From other reasons, leaving isn't even realistic for them. Farm worker woman can really get housing on their own, the sexual harassment just skyrockets if a woman is by herself in the fields. So there's a lot of dynamics that go on with her leaving which is also why some of the traditional mainstream approaches to

battered women don't work.

I want to spend time studying good battered women versus bad battered women because I do think there's a real thing there between good and bad because the good battered woman does everything she's supposed to do, and bad battered women don't do that.- You know, they don't want a divorce, they don't want to leave, they just want to be safe and they wanted the violence to stop and they want to help each other, but leaving isn't the option and they need some preparation if they do decide to go. This is an article, it's a Townsend article that is in the Health Care for Women International that I just got published a couple of months ago, it's called the "Parented Collective" which really describes the whole process of how the farm worker women in California evolved into this powerful collective. The power that farm worker women have is together, not individually, and in this country where individualism is so valued and pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, etc., is so valued, when you see how the women work together to create power, that's the story. And so that's in that article but this is another quote that I think really describes what they did and how we came together, "If you have come to help me, you're wasting your time but if you've come here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together," and that's really the framework that we've tried

to set up this le compesenus. Millie Travino Santana is here who is the organizer that I've worked with for the last five years. If you get a chance to hear her speech, she'll talk more about this group, but they knew that the services weren't available to them, they weren't accessible to them, and so we created our own options and that was action research to create the options. When I wrote the article, I had to do all these data collection methods as such, and we talked about field notes and conversations and observation, all these are like a traditional lingo you would use, but what it really was was working, traveling, eating, sleeping, laughing and crying because we spent five years together. We would take these long road trips and we would just be together, and that's how you get field notes and how you get participatory observation and how you get narrative is being together, and so that's what makes action research so exciting and I think so meaningful or at least to me.

With the males, I got to finish up here, with the males, we did it because it was a recommendation from the women. We did focus groups with them and they learned a few generations, and the differences in violence I think are a little bit worse because of the differences when they come to the U.S. I'm done, and so we can't get into all those details, but just so you get like an evolution of how this happened. And we've got another project we just finished

about six months ago, but this last quote I think is the best to describe the type of research we need to do and the direction we need to take if people are going to have the power to do their own research, to partner with researchers. And so I would take it a step further than advocates and researchers, but the women and advocates and researchers so that's that. Thank you.

Moderator: Do we have a few questions for Rachel?

Q: Something that I find so amusing in both of you, when I was a shelter, probably ten to twenty percent of the women said that they were sexually abused in their relationship, and then we decided why are we asking women that question because when we ask most of us that question, we all say no, but we started asking it in a different way and 98% of the women who came through the program was sexually abused. I don't think that statistic is different in the groups of people that you're suggesting, and I would wonder when we talk about research bias and even the way the questions are asked is that both of your statistics were incredibly low, that if about sexual abuse were asked in a different way, would your numbers have been very different?

Rachel: I can give you an example, when we did the first meeting with _____, we were all together in a little room like this and we just started talking, and I don't know how you measure, I haven't figured that part out yet how I would

have counted but of the 26 women in the room, 24 of them said they had been abused in their own way. And so there's something like dialogue and narrative or maybe other ways of not even asking the question, but kind of teasing it out in conversation. That may be the more appropriate way, but it's very time consuming when you're sitting there having to fill out forms, but that's something that we all need to work on because these numbers are phenomenally low. I know that, we all know that, these numbers are very low, but what we felt like is if we don't something, no one's ever going to listen to us so we have to have something to take back to people to say, yes, this is a problem, and yes, we need money to keep working on it and in my Department of Health, we're probably twenty years behind in what we know because we started so late.

Q: _____ five years or was it just random?

Rachel: The women in California, we were together about five years. There's a core group of us, women coming in and out. We don't have any rules in our groups and so people can come in and out. Those were pretty much though, there's a cohort of women, everybody else is fairly random you happened to be there at the time we were there, and would agree talked to us safely.

Q: What was your focus group size?

Rachel: Once again, people kind of came in and out because

we did it outside at a picnic table in the camps, and you had to get away from the men, you have to get away. So it's hard, we had about thirty to forty people thought over time because we did several of them, and so over time people would come in and out.

Q: Thirty or forty at a time or--

Rachel: No, kind of all total. We used just five, at random, we did five of them. And so people would come in and out, but it's hard because if the baby starts crying, that's probably the problem doing action research is really doing it in the field. If the baby starts crying, she's got to get up and go and if the men come home, they'll get up to go, but I think the day that you get is really rich and we didn't have time to do a lot of that.

Q: What about the men in terms of, I've always heard grabbling with you're doing so much effort on the women where you need to be focused more on the problem of the man, and this to me is such a reality of you really need to help us with that end, not so much this end. When you started with them, worked with them and did you actually collect information and some research on sort of what some of the issues are so that we could start working from that end?

Rachel: We do have some, but we ran out of money and that involved a lot of traveling, and all this work involves a lot of traveling going to them because we don't bring them

to us, we go to them. And so it's a lot of and it's a lot of expense to travel to people, but we did get little bits and pieces of generational, you know, I'm doing what my father, I know it's wrong, but I'm doing what I saw him doing, what I know. The one thing that I think is a critical piece is when they come to the U.S., and I think maybe because you said that the violence is higher in the U.S. born Japanese women, and I don't know if it goes up when they immigrate but when the family is immigrated, they said something like, I used to be in complete control of my family. I was a provider, I was a protector and when you come here, both people have to work, she has to work to survive so the power dynamic changes and then the violence escalates. And so they kept saying, that's the cause, that's the problem is that she changes, but the situation changes as well because he's not in complete control any more, economically or any other way. If we ever get any more money, we'll do something. Thank you.

Shamita: I'm Shamita Das Dasgupta, and I feel that they said it also. It's just wonderful to listen to both of you. I'm going to talk about actually some of the ethical issues that come up, and my profession to be here is because I happen to be on both sides, and that is as an activist, I've worked within the foundation community for as long as the foundation community developed, and I also happen to be

trained as a psychologist and started working in the _____
doing "the types of research" that everybody wants to do
once they are out of graduate school. I think we all have
that experience.

I think my experience was the first time, I was just
out of graduate school and I moved from the Midwest where I
went to school to New Jersey, and there's this huge, big
community of South Asians and I was so excited and there's
this huge, big festival that was going on, I said, I'm going
to talk to these women. Up to this point, I was working
with prison population in the Midwest, and I said, oh, this
is my community, I have to do research and make these huge,
big surveys and take them to these women, and they were all
so nice to me. You're new here and talking to me and
feeding me and everything else, and so I gave one to
everyone. I said, please fill this out and here's a box,
just it's an anonymous, no one's going to know what's
happening. Just when you're going out of the door, just
drop these in this box, and I got everything back blank,
completely blank. I said, oh, my God, what have I done?
Nobody talking with me, what's going on here?, and it taught
me a big lesson, taught me an extraordinary lesson and I
think to a certain degree, the result of that and still
trying to integrate in my life that quick academic position
from this master and feel much happier about that.

I'm really going to talk to you about really the research work that all of us do as activists or researchers, academic researchers, and try to point out some of the issues that come up, and I think Rachel and Meiko both have covered some of these, but I'm going to try and put these together in a little-bit different way and see what some of the experiences I have had in doing work or working within my community as an activist. I do research, but I identify myself as a community worker so that is my identity and is very dear to me so I want to continue from that position. On Saturday, we had an Asian Institute here and there was a research group, working group, that we came together and you could see that immediate sparks that flew. We all started yelling at each other, I was definitely one doing that, and we were screaming at each other, really a lot of tension, a lot of anger came out and it was really hard. I mean we went away from that and we don't have to go over and speak to each other any more, it's very bad I must say, and this _____ that we have between the activists and researchers has been very long standing and the tension is just, this tension I think the deepest division is of one's mistrust and total distrust between the two groups.

The activists or activism by definition is based on experiential knowledge whereas academic research tends to take pride and that's what I was taught, tends to take pride

in the objective, having scientific vigor and all of these kinds of things. The experiential knowledge has no pretensions, right?, of the unbiased or objective and when somebody asks me, why don't you work with me?, I tell them I am biased. This is what I do, I work with women and that's my bias. So there's no pretension of being unbiased or objective, and basically the knowledge that activists have coming in to work have experience from our experiences as working in the field, and it comes really from the living experiences of the experienter whoever is experiencing what is going on. Now what Rachel said, I think it's very important to recognize that there is no unbiased research. No matter what we say and how we say it, how many times we say it, there is no objectivity in research. From the point of starting, from the point of set go, research investigation is biased as it's fraught with investigative prejudices from the question, the way we develop methodology, the way we go out and seek participants, all of that is completely biased and in fact, I think it was ___ said that already that I really believe there is no such animal as objectivity, that just doesn't happen.

Now I want to, I'm been saying I want to qualify research, the types of research that happens in universities or with graduate students coming out of schools, I want to qualify that it is academic, and distinction is very

important and I think developing you have to make it and there is activist research that is going on, and the activists are conducting research every day, but it may be devoid of logical, scientific jargon that is taught in schools. And it is experientially based, therefore, it has its own equality and its own texture that needs to be dealt with. Activists on the other hand and I'm going to play both sides really, the activists tend to believe that research is fragment and profession ___ from an experience and definitely women's experience in the field that we are in, domestic violence.

So the complexity of the problem that we have, for example, myself as an immigrant, salvation woman, woman of color salvation, Indian, Bengali, a particular middle class, from lower middle class in my country, and what happened here in coming to this country as an immigrant with eight dollars in my pocket, all of these things make me as a complex human being. Now when the researchers look through to it, they don't see me as a complex person. My immigration goes up here, my ___ goes up there whatever that means, my culture comes up here, all of these fragmentations keep happening and then turn up to be numbers and somehow the professionization of the experiences that we have and that comes out on paper as these numbers don't speak to us any more, don't speak to women any more. And I think the

reason is because the pieces that we work for, the institutions that we work for, are constantly in quest of control studies or valid, whatever valid means, and reliable methodologies and so on and so forth and we end up dissecting human experience in a way that it dehumanizes the experience ultimately and the investigation literally becomes meaningless masturbation, I'm sorry to say it, but it does, whereas researchers on the other hand are blaming activists as emotional which is not rationale, no methodologies, so on and so forth.

So this kind of stuff goes on and I'm afraid with a lot of pain at this point because our group, ___ which is a salvation women's group, it's been there for almost fifteen years now, in the beginning nobody cared. You know, who are these people, whatever they were doing nobody was interested, but now, now that we have become labeled as under served population, we have been labeled as "ethnic" culture group. We get requests for investigative coming in to research as I would say at least maybe one a month, at least I would say, and these are large research, these are grant funded so there's a lot of ___ that has happened already. And if you say no, we just don't have time or what are you doing, come on and let's see your proposal, what's in it for us, what's in it for the women that you're going to investigate, they get really angry with us, very angry,

and then write up in their books that ___ was very uncooperative and believe me, that has had happened so there are problems that needs to be looked at.

Now what we need to recognize and give some kind of credit to that academic research into the domestic violence field are johnny come lately. This field has been fueled by battered women's energies and really their vision, their force, and so researchers have come and want to ___ become available in the area. A few I would say, a few were there because they were already very involved in the field. Now the separation that has happened between academic researchers and activists is really detrimental to the movement, and it has to come together in some way if we have a vision of ending violence which the Millennium Conference has. We need to pull these two together in such a way that the women themselves new meaning and the women who are battered, who are seeking violence which is all of us are safeguarded because of that research so that there's some amount of accountability to the women themselves from the researchers or the researchers need to be accountable to the women.

The other thing, the gap is artificial, no doubt, but we still need to bridge it with, we still need to think about it. And one thing I want to say is these ___ are issues that are true for all kinds of research study that is

happening here in the domestic violence field but when researchers go to the field of looking at an ethnic population or a population that they're not comfortable with, that's when the problem becomes really, really complex, and believe me I say from experience when people who are asking ____ to or they want to come into ____, and I think they need to understand our salvations or women of color. Most of these are from another community who have very little understanding of the salvation community, of the dynamics. They ask us to send them bibliographies so that they can read up and come and do their research in our organization.

So where is the question of ethics here that we need to look at and we need to think about? So what is ____ except that before anybody gets into our remarks and any kind of research project, we really need to think about a few issues before we grant that grant frankly. One is conceptualization of the problem and the conceptualization has to be based on the real experiences of the women in a particular community. For example, Meiko gave the example that tearing up the passport or immigration papers went number four in that group. She didn't think about reproductive and not usage of contraceptives, and that to me in an older community which has extraordinarily strict rules about usage of birth control, we can't use it, actually

women can go to jail if they have an abortion or if they, well, not if they use contraceptive, but if they're open about it, it would carry a totally different meaning to the men and women in the ___ community even when they are here. So you really have to understand how you conceptualize domestic violence in that particular community which by the way doesn't come from the checklist that is going around in the general community.

Motivation, what motivates you to come into this community and do the work? The ability to advance? Are you really dedicated to the community? Is it tenure? Are you assisting the advocates by giving them information? What motivates you to come to the community? Knowledge as domestic violence that is in the context of the community must have that, and also by the way, you also need to know how to form the questions, what kinds of language you could use. Rachel gave the example of the difference in how abuse can be used in two different ways, totally different nuances. I found stated and conducted in the general community in the U.S. and India, and ___ said that's a religious group which is basically founded on total non-violence. These are people you have seen pictures of them, they wear a mask on their face because they don't want to inadvertently kill organisms that fly into their mouths so it's basic total non-violence. So here I was, I wanted to

find out if there was domestic violence in that community. Interestingly though, that's the bottom line, but I could not ask them, ask the women, have you ever seen anybody being mistreated in your community? Has anybody done this, that, or slapped or pushed or yelled, all of this is totally new in that community because ___ depends on being non-violent yet when I presented them small anecdotes in this situation, a little story in this situation, what could this person do, what would be okay? Really scolding the person and perhaps some physical punishment, the person will be surprised after this ___ I got, that there was such high approval of physical punishment. I used language in a very direct language but sat down and talked to women for hours, hours, and after all of these kinds of couched questions same down to, have you ever seen anybody being hit or mistreated in your family, your neighborhood? First it was, no, no, no, then after all these story telling when it came down at the bottom, then there was, yeah, you know, now that I think of it, it did happen to me once. So you have to really know how to and you have to be generous with your time. Researchers really have trouble with time, they're not willing to give it.

So with knowledge of domestic violence in the context of the community becomes extraordinarily important. Clarification and Rachel has done a beautiful job, I won't

belabor the point, but clarification of the role of the people you are there to study. What role are they playing in your research? Who's controlling the research question? Do they have any role in developing it? Do we have a role in publication? Can they tell you, yeah, you found this out, I don't want you to publish it in a research journal? This is in our community, we don't want it to be published. You can use it in my organization so that it helps women, but no publication. Do they have the right to do so? Look into it very carefully thinking that if that will make it. Are we really there? What if your motivation comes right there? Is it finding out about domestic violence and helping advocates or is it publication? The other thing is in the motivation by the way, also this idea of funds becomes very important in what's going on. The moment we look at funding, one of the things that we're finding nowadays is if we do a study with, I'm talking about South Asians, I'm sure there are other groups also, you put the word culture in there, you're going to be funded more readily and easily than if you didn't put the word culture in there. So those are the key words that you put in. So are you ___ the community? Keep that question in mind, and of course methodology, inclusion of verses of women, qualitative versus quantitative, women in context, action research, all of these are methodology that you need to look

into. My department hated my study because it didn't have numbers. They were constantly saying you have these narratives, we need to see numbers, they didn't get it so. And of course leadership and accessibility, who is your leader? Are you giving it back to the community that you have used for your study? Can we read the language that you have used and understand it? Do you promise that, yeah, you're going to get a paper in the language that you speak, and not jargons that I have trouble understanding which is often true?

The next point that I would say is collaboration, true collaboration. Are you looking to true collaboration and coauthorship for battered women that you are studying, and/or the organization that you are getting into to get your data? Last of course what's very, very important, mounting contributions to the ___ and needed ones to the women themselves. How are you going to help and support these women that you've studied now that you've finished your study? Are you ready to do what the impact of your study is going to have on these women and the organizations? I think that becomes such a big issue not about follow up. We need to talk about abuse, some of them may need follow up help, are you ready to give it? What if after your research she says, gee, I realize I'm abused, I'm going to lose him. Can you go find me a job and you're going to find me a house

and tell me, are you going to teach me English? Are you ready to do that, take that on? When we worked with salvation women, we find that a lot of times when they speak about all of these issues or the second generation when they're talking about abuse, they feel like cultural traitors or community traitors and it devastates them, devastates them feeling that they have betrayed, and how do they deal with that? Are we ready to deal with those kinds of feelings that women bring or it comes to them when they are dealing with us.

So when we're speaking about research, really you have to look into good research and bad research, the best of research and worst really. And I really feel the best research is grounded and grounded so that there is a feedback loop continuously going on, and an active feedback loop between the theoretical part and the active part, the real life experience and the concepts. So it has to be there, it must feed that kind of relationship. Now what I would really like to see, of course, is that research being conducted in one body and that is perhaps the activist researcher as an individual or the activist researcher as an organization, but both of these parts which have so long have been artificially separated coming together in one body. Thank you so much.

Moderator: We have a few minutes for a couple of questions

but before we go to our questions, I'm going to start to pass out the evaluation form. I'm sure you all got one without pulling it out, I would greatly appreciate it and if anyone has any questions for Shamita or any of the other panelists, you can give them at this time.

Shamita: I just wanted to remark on something, yesterday I was in this room for an activist on advocacy, and the room was filled. This shares the division so clearly and it's so unfortunate.

Q: Could you elaborate a little bit on the last thing that you said because I'm interested in the part about sort of the one body between, I'm from California and there's a tremendous amount of expertise in the field and yet we try to encourage partnerships to do evaluation and research. Can you talk a little bit about sort of recommendations on because in my mind, it's creating that partnership between you work within the agency or with those who are doing the work and bring in some expertise on how to build that within the agency, could you just talk a little bit about that?

Shamita: Basically what you're doing is bringing in somebody. Other than that, I would like to see it happening and if you come in tomorrow in the organization, let's say you come in tomorrow, I want you to take ownership of mine, I want you to be a part of my research and that you can understand the salvation community, and then see what

evaluation questions are important.

Q: Because I still see that division as you bring that person in, but they can't really understand and they impose and sort of back to the no payment plan is sort of what I think the question should be rather than, it's just the question of how to build that ability within the organization while it has the expertise to ask the right questions and to do that.

Shamita: I truly believe to a large degree the researchers have that responsibility of coming and then training and working together so that there is no division any more. It's not that I went from the ___ worker saying, okay, tell me what questions would be interesting to you, and then write it up in much more formal language. But rather than that or trying to pick the brain and then write it up something that the ___ would understand, but choose the people, choosing the language. One of the prudent issues are in the field that women addressed it in their ___ is to really look into the ___ keepers. I had a talk with a young lady yesterday who's a researcher and was saying, we have to confront it to division objectors that are in X, Y and Z while it begins to ___ to certain institutions and leave me understand all of these languages. In my situation, that would be why. Let's challenge that, and that means we challenge everything else in the world, why not challenge

that? Who sets these rules? Okay, so we're not going to play by your rule.

Q: Well, you were. You said you submitted narratives and things that was really discussing the issues rather than following--

Shamita: Yeah, this way everybody hates me on that.

Rachel: Can I add something? To answer that, one of the things that we've done with a project that was funded by the CDC is that the project ____, the women have done their own questioning. When we had to define like what it means, what does violence mean and what do you do and how have you done it, for a couple of years, we didn't have any numbers. We had what we call, I think I made up some kind of phrase like, what did we use? Lynn Shore is here, we worked together, some sort of little vignettes or something about how we talked about it but anyway, what we wanted to know is what the women had done and what was happening, and so we gave tape recorders to people and said, just tell us what's happened over the X number of times, what have you done or what do you do? And so they would tell us then so we never came up with like a case definition of a battered woman, we never came up with all these kind of traditional things and actually when it comes to the agencies, probably maybe they weren't used to that but they loved it, I mean it really meant something to them and ____, but they need to see it.

And so if I ever won the Lottery, I would give every woman a tape recorder because that's the way we've gathered. I've done very few of my own interviews which hopefully the next president I'll have to do my own, but really the women have been interviewing each other for years and that's what we take. So we get the language, we get whatever it was came up in conversation that they thought was important. We redid a form, the project we just finished is an icon form, --