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Abstracts of NIJ Family Violence Program Grants

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The Impacts of Arrest on the Social Control of Violence among Intimates
Jeffrey Fagan, Rutgers University
October 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994

Since the mid-1980s, mandatory or presumptive arrest policies for spouse assault have become common in state law and local policy. This trend resulted in large part from the uncritical acceptance of the results of the Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment. Yet contradictory evidence in five replications of the Minneapolis experiment has raised controversies among researchers, practitioners and legislators about appropriate police responses to violence among intimates. The proposed research is an aggregated and secondary analysis of the data sets from the six experiments on the deterrent effects of arrest on spouse assault. The results of the individual experiments offer conflicting evidence on the specific deterrent effects of legal sanctions and on the interaction of formal and informal social controls on subsequent spouse assaults. Comparing legal sanctions (in the form of official arrest) with non-arrest interventions by police, these experiments have produced diverse and at times conflicting results. In three sites, there were significant long-term increases in subsequent incidents while there was evidence of long-term deterrent effects with no evidence of escalation in three others. However, differences in the methods of analysis, measurement and reporting of dependent variables, effect sizes and their importance, variations in the arrest treatment, limitations in statistical power due to sample sizes and mis-assignments, and differences in the samples, may have contributed to the inconsistent results.

The proposed research will disentangle the conflicting evidence from the separate experiments through aggregation of the data from the experiments, standardization of measurement and analytic method, and testing of the original hypotheses with an expanded data set. The research will use the pooled data set to test additional hypotheses regarding contextual influences on the interaction of legal and informal social control in the recurrence or cessation of spouse assault. We will analyze interactions between the deterrent effects of official sanctions and individual social controls, using the improved sampling conditions offered by the pooled data sets. By pooling data and standardizing the measurement of independent and dependent variables, the research will enhance the external validity of the individual experiments with little sacrifice to internal validity, and provide a more valid and extensive analysis of specific deterrence. The results will bear directly on policy and law on police responses to spouse assault, the theoretical and practical dimensions of specific deterrence, and the practice of experimentation in the development of criminal justice policy.

Role of Alcohol & Drug Abuse in Domestic Violence
John Goldkamp, Crime and Justice Research Institute
September 9, 1993 through November 31, 1994

The establishment of a special Domestic Violence Court in Dade County's County Court is a judicial innovation situated conceptually at the intersection of two research traditions, a comparatively extensive literature dealing with the effectiveness of criminal justice responses to domestic violence and a very young literature focusing on the impact of non-traditional judicial approaches dealing with specialized criminal populations. The first body of research presents mixed, if not negative, findings about the ability of criminal justice interventions to deter domestic violence offending. Initial findings showing positive effects of arrest on reduction of less domestic violence offending gave way in subsequent research to mixed or negative findings regarding the deterrent effect of arrest. Prosecution of domestic violence offenders seemed to have some impact for persons involved in less serious incidents and having little or no prior history of domestic violence offending, but little effect or a potentially negative effect on more serious offenders (Fagan, 1989). The tiny literature examining the impact of specialized drug and domestic violence courts is preliminarily promising, perhaps, but it is only in its early stages with few experimental findings to report. In short, this genre of judicial innovation sets a new direction which both challenges the prior, admittedly incomplete research findings, and moves into new areas without a great deal of research evidence to inform its progress.

The research described in this proposal takes advantage of the opportunity offered by the establishment and ongoing development of Dade County's Domestic Violence Division (Court) to examine some basic assumptions about domestic violence offending in a major urban setting, including patterns of offending and the role of substance (drug and alcohol) abuse among offenders entering the court system. Knowledge of the patterns of domestic violence offending and the correlates of re-offending, especially drug or alcohol involvement, have important policy implications for the effectiveness of special, treatment oriented judicial approaches now being adopted or considered in a number of jurisdictions, and for their likely deterrent, incapacitative, and, especially, treatment-oriented impact on this type of violence.

The proposed study will also focus on evaluation of the impact of the specialized treatment court strategy on its misdemeanor target population. In a first evaluative component, outcomes of defendants/offenders undergoing the recently implemented court-based "batterer" treatment approach are compared with the outcomes associated with defendants/offenders who experienced prior approaches, using a non-experimental, before and after approach (because an experimental approach in this case is simply not feasible). The research will examine outcomes related to program participation and success and subsequent offending history (reduced domestic violence offending).

In the second evaluative component, the research will test the impact of a newly integrated treatment approach combining substance abuse treatment (the same treatment approach employed in Dade County's Drug Court) with the violence reduction treatment approach. The rationale for this new approach is that substance abuse plays an important role in this type of

offending and recent lessons about its treatment (derived from the experience of the Drug Court) should be integrated into an overall approach to domestic violence offending. Dade officials have agreed to consider testing the effectiveness of this newly proposed treatment strategy using an experimental design, which would compare program substance abuse and offending outcomes of a substance abuser experimental group with a control group of substance abusing domestic violence offenders who are not given the integrated treatment approach. In addition, the outcomes recorded by these two groups will be compared with a contemporaneous quasi-control group of non-substance abusing domestic violence offenders progressing through the former treatment approach (like the control group). If the experimental design is not adopted, a fall-back strategy is outlined.

Thus, in addition to testing assumptions about the attributes of domestic violence offending and the role of substance abuse, the proposed research will test the hypothesis that substance abusing domestic offenders undergoing the treatment approach integrating substance abuse treatment with domestic violence treatment will record more favorable outcomes than substance abusing offenders treated in the "normal" fashion, and that nonsubstance abusing offenders will record better outcomes than either of the two substance abuser groups. The research findings will have important implications not only for efforts address domestic violence, but also for the further development of the new genre of specialized court-based, treatment-oriented judicial strategies.

**Domestic Violence Research Project
Pamela Kelley, Boston Police Department
October 1, 1993 through September 30, 1994**

The Boston Police Department will conduct detailed data collection and analysis on domestic violence incidents occurring within two of its police districts in order to provide police officers, prosecutors and victim advocates with more comprehensive information on the domestic violence phenomenon. Thirty variables will be collected from the existing police incident report and organized and analyzed in the aggregate [using SPSS] to determine any patterns that may suggest a more specific system response to reduce the incidents of domestic violence. The data collected will be linked to court records to provide a more complete picture of the issues involved.

The data results will lead to the development of more effective problem solving by representative focus groups. It is anticipated that the findings will reveal information specific to the various segments of the population experiencing and perpetrating domestic violence, and yield a greater understanding of the dynamics and characteristics of domestic violence.

Moreover in collecting and disseminating the results of such research, we may develop more effective partnerships and solutions to domestic violence in Boston which may be transferred to other cities across the nation.

Prosecution of Domestic Violence in Rural Counties

Ann Taylor, Visiting Fellow

February 1, 1993 through July 31, 1994

In our rural counties domestic violence is a crucial issue for prosecuting attorneys and others within the criminal justice system. Some of the types of problems faced by the prosecutors in this area are:

1. Lack of effective procedures and/or personnel hours to provide a quick review of domestic violence cases in order to make prompt initial contact with victims to solidify his/her testimony and to instill confidence and trust in the prosecutor, as well as the legal system.
2. Most residents of the non-metropolitan areas have less of an awareness of psychological problems, a result of which is that the victim personality is grossly misunderstood by law enforcement and court personnel, as well as the community members.
3. Insufficient personnel hours and/or support systems to promote public education and awareness, to provide "safe houses", support groups or counseling services to victims, and to provide counseling services to perpetrators.
4. Even in the rural areas, victims have learned enough about domestic violence laws and, at times, have begun using the law falsely with ulterior motives.

These problems must be addressed with an aim toward helping rural prosecutors in the negotiation, trial preparation and prosecution of domestic violence cases. Mobilizing the prosecuting attorneys and seeking input from other sectors of the criminal justice system, in the area of domestic violence, will provide valuable assistance in the development of a program which will aid prosecutors, particularly in the rural areas.

This proposal addresses the need for the collection and analysis of data on issues of domestic violence which can be provided by prosecutors from all jurisdictional types and by others within the criminal justice system. It provides for a means by which such information can be gathered and organized. Finally, the proposal provides for the development of a handbook which will provide support to rural district attorneys in the various phases of the prosecution of domestic violence cases.

Justice System Process of Child Abuse Cases
Susan Wells, American Bar Association
October 15, 1992 through October 14, 1994

This project will combine the resources of the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law; Westat, Inc.; and James Bell Associates to track cases, victims and perpetrators through child protective services, law enforcement, prosecution, and the courts (including family and dependency proceedings, criminal case and abuse cases that may be handled via court approved alternative dispute resolution) to case disposition. In accordance with the study objectives outlined in the *NIJ Research and Evaluation Plan*, the project will accomplish the following tasks: 1) provide a synthesis of the most recent research and literature on child abuse case processing in the justice system; 2) develop a detailed design for conducting a prospective multi-site justice system case processing study; 3) conduct a multi-site study of child abuse case decision making and processing in the justice system; 4) develop a feasibility study for follow up on child abuse victims to determine their status since their cases were closed by the justice system; and 5) prepare a comprehensive report and policy-oriented summaries on the results and implications of the project for publication by the National Institute of Justice.

There are essentially four major components to the draft design. The first is the on-site review of policy, procedure and practice, including interviews with justice system professionals. The second is a prospective study of children from the time they are reported as abused or neglected through the justice system. The third and fourth components focus on cases which are difficult to pick up in a prospective study of limited duration. One type of case is infrequently found in the criminal justice system (non-fatal abuse and neglect) and the others are those that require years until final disposition. Specifically, in the third component, we will identify cases of abuse and neglect known to the court and track backwards to review their case records to determine the process of their referral to the court system. The fourth component will study case processing in a site which routinely prosecutes cases of maltreatment. This will enable us to describe case processing in such a site as well as compare and contrast activities and resources in this site with others in the study.

The prospective design and number of sites to be included will not be defined until the design is finalized, as per the NIJ announcement. It is proposed here, however, to link the NIJ study with the National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS) to take advantage of Westat's presence in 40 Primary Sampling Units (representing 42 counties). Having the sites recruited and personnel on-site for the NIS, will enable this project to include more sites and/or cases with a more rigorous methodology than would otherwise be possible. In addition, using the NIS case definitions will enable the study to accurately compare case processing across sites for like cases, something that heretofore has not been possible.

The tension in selecting the final design will be balancing the desire for a maximum number of sites, in order to describe a variety of systems, with the objective of following abuse and neglect cases through the justice system. Because the proportion of physical abuse and

serious neglect cases that reach the criminal justice system is very small, it would be necessary to have a large number of cases in order to find physical abuse or neglect cases that are prosecuted. For purposes of this discussion, we have currently elected to present an option which would limit the on-site inquiry to three sites in order to maximize the number of cases that can be followed, and more adequately insure the inclusion of physical abuse and neglect cases in the examination of the criminal justice system (they are already well represented in juvenile court). Using three sites would allow us to follow 450 cases prospectively and track 125 cases retrospectively in each site. Any of these design components can be reconfigured based on the outcome of the final discussions with the design team and NIJ project officer.

The final report will consist of a synthesis of the literature; data collection; case studies from each site that illustrate case processing and an analysis of case decision making; case flow diagram; identification of data elements and sources for a case tracking system; a report on the feasibility of the a victim follow-up study; and recommendations for improving justice system processing of child abuse cases. The executive summary, for the policy maker and practitioner, will summarize project findings and outline concrete recommendations for improvements in legislation, policy and practice. *Object is jointly supported with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.*

Evaluating Domestic Violence Training Programs
William Holmes, Massachusetts Commission on Criminal Justice
October 5, 1993 through October 5, 1994

This project will evaluate domestic violence training programs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and build state capacity for evaluating criminal justice programs. It will collaborate with NIJ technical assistance to identify strategies for reducing problems in the design and measurement of evaluations of these programs.

Six programs for dealing with domestic violence funded by state and federal money in Massachusetts will be considered for study. Information on training conducted by these programs and their results will be collected. Procedures used by each program for their internal evaluations will also be examined to identify ways of strengthening this process. The proposed project will document how better quality information can be produced on this subject and how use of the results by policymakers can be facilitated.

Coordinating Criminal & Dependent Courts in Child Maltreatment
Debra Whitcomb, Education Development Center
October 1, 1992 through March 31, 1994

Many allegations of intrafamilial child maltreatment involve simultaneous criminal and civil proceedings, each pursuing different goals. Criminal prosecutions seek to punish the alleged offenders; dependency proceedings, in juvenile or family court, seek to protect children from further abuse and to preserve families. These missions are not only separate but, in many cases of intrafamilial child abuse, incompatible, inefficient, and deleterious to the child and family.

Education Development Center, Inc. and the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law propose to conduct a national assessment of the problem of coordinating criminal and juvenile court actions in child maltreatment cases. In this eighteen-month study, we propose to

- conduct a nationally representative telephone survey of court officials to determine the range of approaches that are presently being taken to balance the missions of the criminal and dependency courts
- explore in-depth the legal issues surrounding the sequence of criminal and dependency cases
- identify and describe promising approaches that appear to be effective in coordinating the courts in four different jurisdictions
- document the research findings, recommendations for improvements in policy and practice, and future research questions in several products designed for widespread dissemination to a diverse audience

As a result of this research, judges, attorneys, and other court officials and policymakers will gain a better understanding of the legal and practical issues surrounding the interface between criminal and juvenile courts in child maltreatment cases. By identifying strategies that work to coordinate court actions in a range of jurisdictions, the study findings will help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of court practices while balancing the courts' interest in protecting children, preserving families, and upholding the constitutional rights of defendants.

Evaluation of Family Violence Prevention and Services Act
Adele Harrell, The Urban Institute
October 1, 1992 through September 30, 1994

This evaluation of law enforcement training, technical assistance, and dissemination of information provided under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act includes case studies, process and impact evaluation. Data collection will include review of project documents, staff interviews, and surveys of participants, police officials and victims. The case studies would consist of retrospective summaries of all the projects supported by the grant. The process evaluation of three projects will include detailed analysis of procedures, staffing, budgeting, products, implementation issues and promising strategies. The impact evaluation will compare the information provided to victims and to shelters and social service agencies acting with the consent of victims, law enforcement practices and policies, and information dissemination at these sites to those at three carefully selected comparison sites. Questions on project impact will include:

1. Did project training or material development activities affect the knowledge and behavior of those who participated in the project? What project strategies were effective in bringing about these effects?
2. Did the training, technical assistance and new materials contribute to change in law enforcement policies or handling of criminal or civil complaints in participating communities? What activities were effective in bring about adoption of new policies?
3. Did changes in dissemination of information by law enforcement agencies to victims of their advocates occur? How were changes linked to training?
4. Did project activities influence the distribution of information to family violence victims by community agencies? What information was disseminated by hospitals, social service agencies and schools? What project strategies were used to affect changes in dissemination of information by other community agencies to victims and their advocates? How was interagency coordination and dissemination organized and maintained?
5. Did family violence victims and their advocates receive information from law enforcement and community agencies as a result of project activities? What kinds of information from what sources did victims find most helpful? What kinds of problems in getting information did victims or their advocates encounter?
6. Did family violence case handling procedures different as a result of participation in the demonstration projects by local law enforcement agencies? How did the procedures differ? What effects on victims did differences have?

Managing Special Populations: Sex Offenders
Kim English, Colorado Division of Criminal Justice
January 1, 1993 through December 31, 1994

We propose to conduct, for the National Institute of Justice, a three phase project to determine how the nation's probation and parole agencies are responding to the increased demand for supervision and management of sex offenders. We know from our work with policy makers and line staff that, for most criminal justice agencies, only part of the struggle is managing the increasing numbers of sex offenders. An equally challenging task is acquiring and managing community resources and obtaining support from the state legislature. These are often prerequisites to replicating model programs. Obtaining resources takes information and know-how. Accumulating both is the purpose of this project.

First, we will conduct a content analysis of state statutes that define sex offenses and legislate sanctions. This will provide an understanding of "selection biases" that occur in local programs as a result of state-level mandates. Second, in collaboration with the National Probation and Parole Association, we will survey probation and parole agencies in all 56 states and territories to obtain baseline data on how departments are targeting and managing limited correctional resources for use with the specialized sex offender population. Third, we will conduct on-site assessments of three model programs which have faced and overcome significant program implementation problems.

To maximize the usefulness of this project to policy makers and probation/parole agency staff, we will work closely with an advisory council whose membership reflects the diverse perspectives of policy makers and practitioners with a stake in this public safety issue. This collection of very accomplished criminal justice professionals, program evaluators and government officials will detect and delineate points of system confusion and conflict, and will identify programs that have overcome difficult implementation problems.

The final product a series of publications that (1) present data from the national surveys so agency staff can assess and compare their operations with other states' definitions, legal sanctions and correctional programming for sexual offenders, and (2) aim at providing solutions the multitude of implementation issues faced by agencies with varying access to resources.

Effectiveness of Civil Protection Orders
Susan Keilitz, National Center for State Courts
January 1, 1994 through December 1, 1995

The National Center for State Courts proposes to conduct a \$204,462 two-year multi-court study of the effectiveness of civil protection orders in preventing domestic violence and assisting the victims of domestic violence. Two courts, the Denver County Court and the Family Court of Delaware (Wilmington), have provisionally agreed to participate in the proposed project. A third court will be selected after the project begins.

Although civil protection orders are one of the major remedies the justice system provides to victims of domestic violence, there has been little empirical evaluation of their effectiveness. The proposed study will build on the pioneering studies of civil protection orders by examining and documenting how protection orders are processed, what types of relief are encompassed by the orders, what ancillary services are available to the victims, the extent of coordination of those services by the court, and how orders are monitored and enforced. Empirical data gathered from 300 case records and interviews with 300 petitioners for protection orders will be used to evaluate whether particular terms of the orders are more effective than others in preventing further violence, whether particular services provided to the petitioners are associated with greater effectiveness of the orders, and whether particular monitoring and enforcement practices lead to greater success in preventing further violence. Project staff also will conduct observations of hearings for protection orders and on-site interviews with judges; court, prosecution and law enforcement personnel; victim advocates; attorneys; representatives of social and mental health services; and others involved in the civil protection order process.

The findings from the proposed study will assist judges, court administrators, prosecutors, law enforcement officials, and providers of ancillary services to victims in improving practices and policies relating to granting, monitoring, and enforcing civil protection orders. In addition, the study findings regarding the effectiveness of anti-stalking terms in protection orders will inform on-going efforts of the National Institute of Justice to develop model anti-stalking legislation. Among the six products resulting from the project will be a comprehensive final report, an executive summary appropriate for publication in the National Institute of Justice's Research in Brief series, an article appropriate for publication in the Juvenile and Family Court Journal, and a curriculum guide for an education program on civil protection orders. The curriculum guide will address the critical need for judicial training in assessing what types of relief are most appropriate in individual civil protection orders. Each of these project products will be presented in formats that optimize their utility to criminal justice policy makers and practitioners and will enhance the ability of the various components of the justice system to build effective coalitions with social services and mental health agencies, shelters for battered women, and other community programs and ancillary services to address domestic violence in a more coordinated manner.

Prosecution of Domestic Violence Cases
Don Rebovich, American Prosecutors Research Institute
November 1, 1993 through January 31, 1995

In the recent past, local prosecutors were thought to be insensitive to the needs of domestic victims and neglect in the consistent prosecution of these cases. Public pressures for the aggressive prosecution of domestic violence offenders and the continuing evolution of the local prosecutor's role have dovetailed to produce a dichotomy of a select group of local prosecutors' offices that have developed innovative programs for effective domestic violence prosecutions and a larger collection of offices that desire to establish such programs.

For this project, the American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI) proposes to: 1) clearly identify and explain the domestic violence prosecution needs, accomplishments and obstacles for local prosecutors' offices across the nation (distributed by jurisdictional size and region); 2) comprehensively describe three established domestic violence programs that represent divergent approaches to domestic violence prosecutions (i.e., particularly with regard to the use of "no-drop" policies, the treatment of the victim, the use of prosecutorial alternatives to victim cooperation and the treatment of cases involving children in the dwelling in which domestic violence occurs); 3) explore and report on the prosecution program-related experiences of domestic violence victims; and 4) identify independent factors that are the most significant determinants of domestic violence prosecution success.

APRI will conduct a national mail survey on domestic violence prosecution that will involve a representative cross-section of local prosecutors' offices from all regions of the U.S. Three case study sites will be selected from a total of four sites that have operating domestic violence programs and have committed to serve as case study sites for the project (i.e., Duluth, MN; King County, WA; Pima County, AZ; and San Francisco County, CA). Intensive interviews will be conducted with program staff to provide organizational analyses of each of the sites focusing on differences in program approach, pitfalls to avoid in the development of these programs and methods to overcome common developmental problems. Mail surveys will be administered to samples of domestic violence victims at each of the sites to study perspectives that these victims have of their involvement with respective domestic violence prosecution programs. Finally, a multivariate analysis will be conducted on a sample of domestic violence cases prosecuted and disposed at each of the sites to isolate those individual independent variables and/or combinations of independent variables that are the most reliable predictors of prosecution success (i.e., guilty plea, guilty verdict) in the prosecution of domestic violence cases.

Children of Battered Women
Karen McLaughlin, Education Development Center
October 15, 1993 through September 30, 1995

There has been a substantial amount of research documenting the serious, adverse effects of domestic violence upon children. According to this research, children of battered women display a range of somatic complaints, psychological disorders, and a propensity to rely on violence as a primary conflict resolution strategy. Much of this research has focused on children who reside with their mothers in emergency shelters after leaving home. Of the few interventions that have aimed to ameliorate the negative impact of domestic violence on children, most are located in emergency shelters.

This work is limited, however, because only a small proportion of battered women utilize shelters. Furthermore, not all shelters can accommodate their children, especially adolescent males. To extend the reach of therapeutic interventions and other services to a wider population of children of battered women, it is important to know where they are located and what social institutions may be involved in the delivery of services to them.

Education Development Center, Inc., a non-profit research and development firm with headquarters in Newton, Massachusetts, proposes a study to extend our knowledge of the needs of the children of battered women, regardless of where they are living. Our work will focus on the children of domestic abuse victims in Lawrence, Massachusetts, a large, demographically diverse community north of Boston. Working with the Lawrence District Court and the Domestic Violence Unit of the District Attorney's Office, we will gather population-based data on mothers who apply for temporary restraining orders over a six month period. Second, for a sample of cases that proceed to criminal prosecution, we will track the whereabouts of the children over a 12-month period through telephone contacts with their mothers at six-month intervals. At that time we will also gather extensive data on the medical, mental health, and social services that have been provided. And, at the final, 12 month contact, we will conduct in-depth personal interviews with a smaller sample of mothers to learn their perceptions of the adequacy of services provided to their children. Through these measures, you will develop a comprehensive picture of the service needs of the children of battered women, thereby suggesting interventions that can be made available to children regardless of where they are living. We will also analyze patterns of placement and service delivery for children of varying ages, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

This research will provide a solid foundation for exploring the impact of domestic violence on children. We plan to submit a separate proposal to the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect under which we will carry out interviews with the children and their mothers to determine the nature and extent of violence that the children actually witnessed, and to assess

the children's psychological status and perceptions of violence. This component of the study will advance our knowledge by including children who do not reside in shelters, and especially adolescents, who are minimally represented in the literature. This proposal to NIJ will generate the sample for the project to be submitted to NCCAN, so that the latter the project is entirely dependent upon the NIJ component being funded.

Effects of Child Hearsay on Jurors
Gail Goodman, University of California-Davis
October 1, 1993 through September 31, 1995

Children's hearsay statements play a vitally important role in domestic violence cases, particularly in child abuse litigation. This research attempts to answer important questions about hearsay statements in such cases: 1) When children's hearsay statements are admitted into evidence, how do jurors evaluate the credibility and probative worth of the hearsay? 2) Do jurors employ different criteria to judge children's live testimony from the witness stand in court than they employ to evaluate children's out-of-court hearsay statements related by adults? 3) Some hearsay statements are captured on videotape. Do jurors employ different criteria to evaluate videotaped hearsay than they employ to evaluate hearsay that is not on videotape? 4) During deliberations, should jurors be permitted to review a child's videotaped hearsay statements, or does such review lead to exaggerated reliance on the videotape? Answers to these questions will shed important light on effective ways to introduce children's testimony in domestic violence cases and on juror decision making regarding the reliability of hearsay versus live trial testimony. The research has important implications for the administration of justice in criminal, civil, juvenile, and domestic relations courts.

Prevalence & Consequence of Child Victimization
Ben Saunders and Dean Kilpatrick, Medical University of South Carolina
October 15, 1993 through October 14, 1995

Children and adolescents are at significant risk of being victims of violent crime. Furthermore, criminal victimization in childhood and adolescence appears to be associated with emotional and behavioral problems, including mental health difficulties, substance abuse, and delinquency. Most of the studies conducted examine the relationships between victimization and negative outcomes have been retrospective studies with adult subjects and many have significant methodological problems. Furthermore, adequate nationally representative information describing the prevalence and case characteristics of direct and indirect victimization of children, including sexual assault, family violence, and community violence, is lacking. Thus, the primary goal of this study is to provide the most complete information to date about the extent, nature, and consequences of direct and indirect victimization of children and adolescents in America. The project has three activity components: 1) develop a comprehensive, critical review of the literature that reviews and synthesizes the extant research on child victimization, substance abuse, emotional problems, and behavior problems; 2) conduct a survey of a nationally representative sample of adolescents and their parents assessing victimization and its consequences; and 3) develop a series of reports describing the findings of the study and their relevance to public policy and professional practice. The National Survey of Adolescents will assess a nationally representative household sample of 3,000 adolescents and their parents living in households, and an oversample of 1,000 adolescents and their parents living in households in central cities. Respondents will be selected using random digit dialing methodology and will be interviewed by telephone. Extensive pretesting will be conducted with the interview schedule and will include qualitative analysis of the interview content by adolescents and parents, a reverse record check to assess its sensitivity to detecting victimization history, and a study of test-retest reliability. The interview will gather information regarding lifetime exposure to violent crime (including sexual assault, physical assault, witnessing violence at home, in school, and in the neighborhood), specific emotional problems (including Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Major Depression), substance abuse, and delinquent behaviors. The study will assess important descriptive characteristics of child victimization incidents and their aftermath. Additionally, a multivariate theoretical model that hypothesizes relationships between victimization experiences, emotional problems, delinquency, and substance abuse will be tested. The results of this study should provide the best national estimates to date about the prevalence of victimization among children under the age of 12. The study also will provide information about the prevalence of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder among a national household probability sample of adolescents. Finally, the results of the study should improve our understanding of factors associated with the development of serious behavioral problems among adolescents, including substance abuse and delinquency. The information generated by the NSA coupled with information gathered in the extensive review of the literature will be presented in final technical reports and in a series of summary reports designed for several target audiences including criminal justice professionals, policymakers, program managers, mental health and social service professionals, the media, and the public.

Childhood Victimization & Adult Violence
Cathy Widom, SUNY at Albany
October 1, 1993 through March 31, 1995

Childhood victimization and violent offending represent two serious social problems confronting our society today. Recent research (e.g. Widom 1989) has begun to document the relationship between child abuse and neglect and later violent criminal behavior in a way that researchers, practitioners, and policy makers recognize and are willing to accept. While no single factor by itself is likely to account for the development of violence, childhood victimization has been found to increase risk for violence significantly (Widom, 1989; Rivera and Widom, 1990). The proposed research will have accumulated approximately 22 years of information on arrests for delinquency and adult criminality for a large sample of 1,575 individuals, approximately half of whom were exposed to childhood victimization (physical and sexual abuse or neglect), documented risk factor for criminal behavior. The other half are controls who have been matched on widely recognized risk co-factors (age, sex, race, and approximate social class). In Widom's earlier NIJ research, official criminal histories were collected in 1987 and 1988. At that time, only 65% of the sample had passed through the peak offending years (ages 20-25). Thus, figures published to date on the child abuse and violence connection may be underestimates of lifetime arrest rates for violence, or the true extent of criminality and violence. In 1993, less than 4% of the sample will be under 25. The overall purpose of the proposed research is to gather complete current criminal histories on the 1,575 individuals who were in the sample in the original NIJ study of childhood victimization and later violent offending. Within this general purpose, there are several specific goals: (1) to document the prevalence of criminality and violence in this sample of previously abused and/or neglected children and controls; (2) to determine the extent to which childhood victimization influences characteristics of offending, including chronicity, age of onset, continuing of violent offending (from adolescence to young adulthood), and patterns of violent offending; (3) to determine the extent to which these individuals have arrests for child abuse and spouse abuse; (4) to determine the extent to which different types of maltreatment (physical and sexual abuse and neglect) are associated with the development of later violent criminal behavior; (5) to examine the extent to which there are race-specific differences in the relationship between childhood victimization and violent offending; (6) to examine the extent to which there are sex-specific differences in the relationship between childhood victimization and violent offending; and (7) to address several questions raised by the recent National Academy of Sciences report on *Understanding and Preventing Violence* (Reiss and Roth, 1993) about the development of criminal violence.

Parental Drug Testing in Child Abuse Cases
Lisa Newmark, The Urban Institute
October 1, 1993 through March 31, 1995

The study will examine the use of parental drug testing to aid judicial and social service system collaboration to prevent further maltreatment in child abuse and neglect cases. The goal is to provide information on the procedures, costs, outcomes, and legal and policy issues in using urinalysis to monitor child maltreatment cases in which a parent is involved with substance abuse. Interviews with court and social services personnel will be used to document the testing procedures and process, to describe how candidates for testing are identified and how test results are used, to describe system collaboration issues, to assess the resources required to administer the program, and to identify important implementation issues. To assess the impact of drug testing on parents' compliance with drug treatment, the use of in-home services and out-of-home placements, and on repeated charges of neglect and abuse, a sample of 200 cases referred for testing will be compared to 200 similar cases involving allegations of drug abuse, but not referred for testing. This quasiexperimental comparison will be based on a retrospective review of the County Clerk's legal and social services automated and hard copy records on cases entering the Washington, D.C. Family Court from October, 1988 to December, 1990. This procedure will document the preexisting case characteristics and court and social services activities, and assess the outcomes associated with the use of drug testing in child maltreatment cases in which parental substance abuse involvement was a factor.

The products will include a full report, an executive summary suitable for publication as a Research in Brief, and a copy of a cleaned automated data set and documentation submitted to NIJ. The study's results will also be disseminated through publications in professional journals and presentations at professional conferences.

Divorce Mediation and Spousal Violence
Jessica Pearson, Center for Policy Research
January 1, 1994 through December 31, 1995

The proposed research would address an issue identified in the NIJ 1993 Program Plan regarding "the effectiveness of court-advised or court-mandated counseling in protecting spouses from domestic violence during the process of separation and divorce" (NIJ Program Plan, 1993: 66).

Mediation has become a widespread approach to resolving custody and visitation disputes. In many domestic relations courts, it is mandated in all contested cases; in many more it is "strongly" recommended by the judges. Mediation proponents note that the process is faster and more cost-effective than litigating all disputes. In addition, they believe that mediation is less likely to exacerbate conflict and more likely to result in mutually satisfactory agreements with which parents will comply.

However, when the family has a history of domestic violence, the use of mediation is exceedingly controversial. Critics claim mediation in such cases endangers women and will frequently result in the woman being coerced or intimidated into a settlement.

Several domestic relations courts around the country have begun to adopt approaches that they hope will allow mediation to continue as the preferred option, while better protecting the interests of abused women. This research will document each of the screening and mediation practices that have been developed to meet the needs of abused women; determine how widespread the adoption of these innovation practices is throughout the nation; assess the degree to which the policies and practices are perceived as effective and efficient; and identify recommended methods for better serving these women.

The research will involve: 1) the analysis of approximately 200 mail surveys completed by mediation program administrators around the nation to identify current policies; 2) the completion of approximately 30 telephone interviews with program administrators to collect more detailed data about actual implementation of policies; and 3) visits to four sites to collect in-depth detail regarding the effectiveness of the approach adopted, obstacles to policy implementation and effectiveness, and recommendations for refining and improving service provision to abused women. Interviews at each of the sites chosen for in-depth study will also be conducted to explore the impact of domestic violence on the family court and to document the costs and benefits associated with each of the major innovative procedures developed to date.

The telephone and personal interviews will be selected to represent the range of current family court practices related to divorce mediation and domestic violence.

Violence & Threats Against Women in America
Patricia Tjaden, Center for Policy Research
January 1, 1994 through December 31, 1995

Using telephone interviews, this study will survey a large national probability sample of adult women in the United States to gather information on the extent, nature, and consequences of various forms of violence and threats of violence against women. The study will be conducted by the Center for Policy Research with input from consultants from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics and the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, Boulder. The study will accomplish the following goals: 1) provide reliable national estimates on the prevalence and characteristics of different types of violence and threats of violence against women by both strangers and non-strangers; 2) provide empirical data on the characteristics and histories of victims and offenders of violence and threats of violence against women; 3) examine the links between threats of violence and actual occurrences of violence against women; 4) examine women's general fear of violence and their responses to specific victimization; and 5) prepare a comprehensive report and policy-oriented summaries on the results and implications of the study for publication by the National Institute of Justice.

The target population for the survey will be 2,000 women over the age of 18 residing in households throughout the country. Households will be selected by means of random digit dialing. Within households, the number of adult women will be determined, and an adult woman randomly selected. Respondents to the survey will be asked to describe their fear of personal safety and measures taken to reduce risk of violent victimization; their experiences with sexual harassment stalking, threats or actual occurrences of physical or sexual assault by strangers and non-strangers, and power and emotional abuse by husbands/partners; the impact of these experiences on their physical, emotional and mental well-being; their knowledge and use of community services for victims of violence; and their involvement and satisfaction with the criminal justice system. Rates of victimization will be presented in terms of prevalence (i.e., number of women reporting a victimization) in the previous 12 months in addition to an adult lifetime rate. The survey will not address issues related to childhood victimization.

The proposed study will use a questionnaire that has been developed by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics for a Violence Against Women Survey currently being conducted in Canada. The Canadian questionnaire, which was developed through extensive consultation with government representatives, academic experts, victims of violence, and front-line service providers, will be modified to address policy and research issues announced in the *National Institute of Justice Research and Evaluation Plan 1993*.

The final report will consist of a synthesis of the relevant research and literature; a description of data collection strategies; a presentation of the survey's findings; and recommendations for improving government responses to violence and threats of violence against women. Executive summaries for the policy maker and practitioner will summarize project findings and outline concrete recommendations for improving legislation, policy, and practice.

Adjusting the National Crime Victimization Survey's Estimates of Rape and Domestic Violence for "Gag" Factors
Ann Coker, University of South Carolina

Wide variations in the rates of rape and of domestic violence have been reported in the literature. Rates of both rape and domestic violence reported using the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) are thought to be under estimates. Annual rape incidence rates range from 0.7 per 1,000 women, reported from the Uniform Crime Report (UCR), (US Justice Department, 1986), to 9.0 per 1,000 in a San Francisco area study (Russell 1983). Rape incidence rates were 1.2 per 1,000 from the NCVS (1986). A recently published study conducted by the Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center (1992) reported a rate of 7 rapes per 1,000 women. Annual domestic violence incidence rates ranged from 2.2 per 1,000 women (NCVS data - BJS 1986) to 160 incidents per 1,000 reported using the National Family Violence Survey (1985).

This research will adjust estimates of the annual incidence rates of both rape and domestic violence against women for "gag" factors in reporting these incidents. We propose using the NCVS, a population-based victimization survey of approximately 120,000 individuals conducted by the US Census Bureau and the US Justice Department, Bureau of Justice Statistics, as the extant data source for this analysis. Hypothesized "gag" factors for this analysis include whether the woman was interviewed in her home over the telephone or in a personal interview, and for the personal interview, who was present during the interview.

A preliminary analysis of the rates of rape and domestic violence reported by the mode of interview and person present during the interview clearly indicates the potential for under estimating these rates on the basis of each parameter or "gag" factor. Rates for rape and domestic violence were three times higher for personal interviews compared with phone interviews. Among those conducted in person, when a spouse was present the rates for both rape and domestic violence were 5-8 times lower than rates for women interviewed alone or with another person present for the interview.

Our analyses will use modeling techniques to estimate the incidence rates of both rape and domestic violence adjusting for the conditions of the interview or "gag" factors. Additionally, we will evaluate factors associated with (a) reporting the incident and (b) conditions of the interview. The NCVS questionnaire (in Appendix A) has recently been redesigned to specifically ask about rape (sexual assault) and to define the term for respondents. Our analyses will also include a comparison of the crude estimates of rape derived from this new questionnaire with our adjusted estimates using the earlier NCVS questionnaire from the same time period. The same modeling techniques will be used to adjust for "gag" factors to determine whether this adjustment is needed given the newly added rape questions (1991).

Building on an existing, well-designed survey to improve estimates of both rape and domestic violence is a cost-effective approach which has direct relevance for criminal justice professionals in crime prevention efforts.

Evaluation of the Virginia Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program
Richard Kern, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

The grant (\$50,000) is designed to increase the ability of state level criminal justice agencies to perform program evaluations. In this case, NIJ will provide technical assistance to the Evaluation Unit of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services' (DCJS) Criminal Justice Research Center, as it evaluates the performance of Virginia's local Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs.

CASA is a term used to describe citizen volunteers who are trained to act as or assist guardian ad litem (GAL) in cases of child abuse and neglect. In Virginia, the GAL must be an attorney. Thus, the CASA, who is appointed by (and is accountable only to) the juvenile court judge, works to provide the court with information that will allow the judge to make decisions in the best interests of the child.

CASAs may only work with three cases (children) at a time, and generally have more time to investigate the case, interview all parties, and monitor the environment of the child as the case proceeds to settlement. GALs often consider such work to be an inefficient use of their skills, and Child Protective Service Workers (CPS) or Foster Care Workers are often too busy to do such work in as thorough a manner as they would prefer.

Only thirteen of the 20 local programs have been in operation or more than one year. Eight have been in operation since FY 1988-89. The programs average one full-time and one part-time staff member, and serve about 1500 children per year.

The evaluation will focus on program impact and will attempt to isolate the benefits and costs of utilizing CASAs in abuse and neglect cases. Several research strategies will be utilized, though "CASA-Sample versus Non-CASA Sample" comparisons will be basic to each. We hope to go beyond previous CASA evaluations by building objective measures of case complexity and case severity as control variables. We also intend to make use of case data stored in our statewide registry of abuse and neglect cases.