

The RESOURCE

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NSVRC Newsletter

Fall-Winter 2008

Tools for Bystander Action:

Engaging Campus Communities in Sexual Violence Prevention BY VICTORIA L. BANYARD, PHD.

Campus communities continue to grapple with finding effective ways to prevent high rates of sexual assault. With mixed findings about the efficacy of traditional prevention efforts, they increasingly focus on the role of active and empowered bystanders. Bystanders are community members who may witness situations that are at high risk for assault, and may recognize early signs of inappropriate behavior. They may also be approached by a survivor in the aftermath of an incident. Bystanders have the opportunity to step in and safely change the outcome – to prevent an assault by helping to interrupt a risky situation, or to strengthen a safety net for a survivor by providing a supportive ear or a needed resource.

A bystander approach to sexual violence prevention began over ten years ago with Jackson Katz and the Mentors in Violence Prevention Program. Now numerous programs use a bystander framework and research has begun to evaluate its effectiveness. The campuses of the University of New Hampshire and the University of Massachusetts Lowell are embarking on a series of studies, funded by a grant from the Centers

for Disease Control, to examine bystander engagement and mobilization. We are particularly interested in the use of mutually reinforcing prevention tools (a community-wide social marketing campaign and an in-person educational workshop). Members of Prevention Innovations at UNH



(www.unh.edu/preventioninnovations) developed social marketing materials (e.g. posters, PSAs, products) and an educational program that trains participants as empowered bystanders. Emphasizing their critical role in ending sexual violence and the importance of modeling, the program teaches specific skills to intervene safely.

A sample of students will receive the “Bringing in the Bystander” education workshop and will complete surveys to assess the impact of the training on participants’ attitudes and behaviors. Each campus will also be exposed to the month-long “Bringing in the Bystander”

social marketing campaign which will include such things as visual messaging on campus shuttle buses and distribution of products (water bottles, jump drives, etc). The marketing materials include visual scenes of helpful bystanders modeling possible intervention behaviors and the tag line “Know your power: Step in, Speak up, you can make a difference” (www.know-your-power.org). The workshop provides information and also helps participants develop and practice strategies for safe intervention. The project’s goal is to change community norms about sexual assault and to model positive actions. The research will examine how social marketing campaigns and sexual violence prevention workshops may work together to change communities. 🌱

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Governor Schwarzenegger presents Ms. Brown-McBride with the Governor's 2008 Crime Victim Advocacy Award.

Coalition Director Recognized with Crime Victim Advocacy Award

The NSVRC congratulates Suzanne Brown-McBride, Executive Director of the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA) as a recipient of the Governor's 2008 Crime Victim Advocacy Award on April 15, 2008. This award is presented annually by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Ms. Brown-McBride received the award in recognition of her ongoing dedication to assisting victims of sexual violence.

In addition, Governor Schwarzenegger proclaimed April 13-19, 2008 as "Crime Victims' Rights Week" in honor of the award recipients and crime victims advocates throughout California.

Ms. Brown-McBride also serves on the Advisory Council for the NSVRC. 🌐



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NSVRC's New Branding

This issue of The Resource officially completes the NSVRC's comprehensive branding initiative.

We selected the design firm, Triple Strength, of Palmyra, PA to re-design our website and printed materials with a more professional and consistent look. The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) recognized Triple Strength's work by presenting them with awards for the NSVRC website design, overall branding initiative, and for our publication *Sexual Violence in Disasters: A planning guide for prevention and response*. We are pleased that so many of our friends and colleagues assisted in selecting our new logo. It contains an open book encircled by a globe, both of which glow from the center, symbolizing a comprehensive collection of quality information available to all. 🌐





Karen Baker *NSVRC Director*

**We are
committed to
freely sharing
information about
all aspects of
sexual violence
intervention and
prevention**

**The NSVRC
maintains a
large special
library collection
devoted to
sexual violence**

Director's Viewpoint

With the NSVRC's branding initiative we have had many discussions about our role and niche within the anti-sexual violence movement. Being a national resource center, by definition, requires a very broad scope; however we believe that we can now capture the essence of our work in the three areas of Collaboration, Prevention, and Resources.

Collaboration

We identify expertise and connect people who can help one another. It takes all of us working together and continually including new partners to accomplish our goals and strengthen our collective voice. We work closely with state and territory sexual assault coalitions, the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, The National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project, The National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault, Prevention Connection, VAWnet: The National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women and others.

Prevention

The anti-sexual violence movement originally organized around concepts of activism and social change. Our relatively recent partnership with the public health community offers us additional tools and strategies to create large-scale change. The 2009 Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign focuses on preventing sexual violence in our workplaces. We increasingly find opportunities to promote what we do want, such as respect, responsibility, consent, healthy sexuality, and safe communities.

Resources

The NSVRC maintains the largest special library collection devoted to sexual violence, including over 20,000 items; and accessible via our website. We are committed to freely sharing information about all aspects of sexual violence; and particularly to enhancing resources for underserved and multi-lingual communities. The NSVRC recently published guides about Sexual Violence and HIV; Sexual Violence in Disasters, and Engaging Bystanders in Sexual Violence Prevention.

We invite you to partner with us by posting events on our national calendar, submitting resources to our library and articles to The Resource; by participating in sexual assault awareness and prevention campaigns; and by sharing your ideas and successes. 🌍

Don't Call It 'RAPE':

Fighting A New Silencing Tactic

BY WENDY MURPHY, JD

In the summer of 2007, a Nebraska rape victim was threatened with contempt and potential incarceration after she refused to obey a judge's order forbidding her to use the word "rape" during her trial testimony. The judge had also ordered Bethany (Tory) Bowen not to use the word "victim" or "assailant" and said that the SANE nurse had to be described as a nurse with special training in

**"rape is never sex—
and sex is
never rape."**

"sexual examinations". The Sexual Assault Kit was to be called the "sexual examination kit".

That was actually the second trial in this case. During the first trial in 2006, the same judge, Jeffrey Cheuvront, had issued a similar order. The prosecutor objected and wanted to file an appeal but lacked procedural authority to do so.

As a result, Ms. Bowen attempted to comply with the language order, but struggled in her testimony to describe her victimization without using the prohibited words. Ideally, victims should testify in uninterrupted narrative style, but that was difficult because Ms. Bowen had to constantly consider the list of forbidden terms and search for replacement words as she described her experience. To

make matters worse, the judge had not informed the jury of his language order. This meant they had no idea why Ms. Bowen's testimony appeared so strange, or why she did not describe what happened to her as "rape". The jury failed to reach a unanimous verdict and the case ended in a mistrial.

On the eve of the second trial, in 2007, I agreed to represent Ms. Bowen in an effort to persuade the court to reverse its language order. I filed 'pleadings' explaining why the court had no authority to censor the testimony of a lay witness during a criminal trial. (Judges can, however, and often do, order government officials, such as police and prosecutors, to modify their language.) I argued that Ms. Bowen had a First Amendment right to testify fully and truthfully and that disallowing her to use her own words would distort the truth-finding function and hinder the jury's ability to assess Ms. Bowen's credibility fairly. The judge refused to reconsider his ruling.

He also made things worse by denying a motion by the prosecutor to forbid witnesses from using the words "sex" and "intercourse" to describe the rape. This motion was an attempt to balance the impact of the forbidden-words list by also excluding words that suggested erotic or consensual interaction. The Judge

rejected the motion and stated, "What else would we call it"? This ruling added an eroticization layer to the censorship problem, which inspired me to state the obvious in my brief: "rape is never sex — and sex is never rape". But Judge Cheuvront did not budge.

While trying to persuade Judge Cheuvront to change his mind, I simultaneously filed a special 'writ' with the Nebraska Supreme Court asking them to overturn the language restrictions, but it was denied without comment.

Then Judge Cheuvront ended the second trial by granting another mistrial on the grounds that there had been too much pretrial publicity.

While awaiting the third trial, I filed a case in Nebraska Federal Court with the generous help of (also pro bono) New York attorney, Jennifer Hoult and local Nebraska counsel, Sue Ellen Wall. Although some have characterized this filing as a "lawsuit against a judge", in fact, it was more like an appeal. Entitled *Bowen v. Cheuvront*, it sought only "declaratory relief"- fancy words to say that we weren't seeking money but only a federal ruling on the unconstitutional nature of the language order.

Understandably, the federal court was taken aback by the case. It was an unprecedented legal maneuver on my part. I understood before



I was raped BY TORY BOWEN

filing that the most basic rules of federalism discourage people involved in pending state court cases from filing federal claims. Or put another way, I was aware of the rule known as ‘abstention’. It provides that federal courts should generally stay out of the business of state courts.

But there are many exceptions to that rule, including those that not only allow but encourage people to file in federal court when their constitutional rights are at stake in state proceedings, and there is no

“To make matters worse, the judge had not informed the jury of his language order.”

adequate remedy under state law. This exception applies particularly well to crime victims whose rights are threatened in state court because victims are only witnesses in criminal cases — not legal “parties” to the proceedings.

The federal court did not agree that this case was an adequate exception to the rule, and dismissed Ms. Bowen’s claims on the basis that the state court’s language order was not the federal court’s business. However, in one illuminating and

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All I have ever wanted in my case was to testify fully and truthfully under oath. But instead, the courts forced me to drastically change my testimony and use words that did not accurately portray the act of violence that I experienced. The ‘rape language ban’ has been a slap in the face to all victims.

I look to the Supreme Court to set a case precedent so that no other victim will have to go through the injustice that I faced. One day, I hope to stand in front of the Supreme Court and know that the words, ‘Equal Justice Under Law’ etched into its edifice are true. So far, the justice system has only failed me and discouraged other victims from coming forward. My court case sends

this message to victims: ‘you have not been raped until a jury says you have’. The courts have it all wrong. I don’t

need a jury to tell me that I was raped; it is my job to tell the jury I was raped. It is my duty as an American citizen to tell the truth, and to state in my own words what happened to me. After testifying for nearly 13 hours and traveling to Nebraska for two trials over the past three years, I have yet to say “I was raped” in my own rape trial!

How can the legal system determine whether a rape occurred without ever hearing from me that a rape occurred? If the courts continue in this manner, there will come a day when the already underreported crime isn’t reported at all.

The United States Supreme Court holds much more than a decision, they hold hope. 🌍



Governor of Puerto Rico signs SAAM Proclamation

BY MARIA REBECCA WARD, PSY.D

Governor Acevedo of Puerto Rico, along with four mayors from the US territory helped to draw attention to and promote awareness of sexual violence by signing a proclamation designating April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

As part of our SAAM campaign the Centro de Ayuda a Víctimas de Violación (CAVV) or [Rape Victims Support Center] marched in the rural municipality of Utuado, a region with a high rate of sexual violence. The mayor of Utuado also signed a SAAM Proclamation and two local radio stations covered the activity. CAVV distributed prevention materials during the event and other agencies, organizations, and the University of Puerto Rico at Utuado joined in the event. It was a great experience of solidarity and awareness!

In recent years CAVV has worked hard to develop programs and materials to raise awareness and promote prevention of sexual violence. 🌍



Dr. Maria Rebecca Ward of CAVV poses with Angie Flores Inglesias, Director of the Office of Women Affairs for the Mayor, Municipality of Caguas, to show the SAAM proclamation.

Focus on Workplace

SAAM Campaigns for 2008 & 2009

The NSVRC typically focuses its Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) efforts on raising awareness of sexual violence within communities while at the same time stressing the importance of its prevention. In 2008 and 2009, the NSVRC focused its campaign on the workplace. The 2008 campaign introduced sexual violence prevention efforts into the workplace; the 2009 campaign includes more information on respectful behaviors and healthy relationships as a way to prevent sexual violence.

Sexual violence within the workplace occurs on many levels. It can take the form of offensive emails, derogatory comments, sexist images, and other examples of sexual harassment. These behaviors are all precursors to more serious forms of sexual violence, like exposure, fondling and grabbing, and rape. Such violence is more likely to occur in workplace settings that are unsupportive of employees' rights and lack proper protocols and policies to protect customers, employees, and managers.

With so much time spent on the job, the work environment has a large influence on individuals and communities. The 2009 SAAM campaign emphasizes the workplace as a great way to reach individuals with messages about respect and

responsibility. The 2009 campaign slogan, "Respect Works!" highlights the importance of creating organizations and relationships that support employees and foster respect.

Prevalence of Sexual Violence in the Workplace

While working or on duty, U.S. employees experienced 36,500 rapes and sexual assaults from 1993 to 1999. In 2006, the Equal Employment Opportunity Council received 12,025 charges of sexual harassment (15.4% filed by males). Perpetrators of sexual violence in the workplace may be co-workers, managers or clients. Acts of sexual violence can range from subtle remarks or comments that create an uncomfortable environment and negatively impact an employee's work, to outright rape or violence.


Employers have a specific responsibility to ensure the safety of employees in every aspect of the work experience – from facilitating a respectful work environment to installing and maintaining safety features within the workplace.

Creating a Respectful Work Environment

The responsibility for creating safe environments does not just lie with employers, however. Employees and other individuals help contribute to a respectful work environment with

their everyday actions. Both employers and employees can help create a healthy workplace:

- Establish an emotionally safe environment by training staff on ways to prevent sexual harassment.
- Encourage any witness to inappropriate or demeaning behavior such as sexist jokes, sexual harassment, or other insensitive behavior to report it or speak up.
- Support sexual assault survivors if they confide in you. Realize the difficulty her/his specific situation creates and offer flexibility and encouragement.

For more information on this campaign visit the NSVRC website at www.nsvrc.org or call toll free at 877-739-3895. 

Michigan

'Beyond Taking a Stand' Includes Men in Ending Violence Against Women

The Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV) recently launched a groundbreaking initiative entitled 'Beyond Taking a Stand'. The initiative incorporates an important commitment to increasing the visibility and role of men in ending violence against women and children.

Historically, men have been discussed as perpetrators or potential perpetrators

The initiative was launched at MCADSV's annual meeting in 2006 with a keynote address by Anthony Porter of 'A Call to Men'. Mr. Porter shared his organization's mission of a national movement of men committed to ending violence against women and challenging social norms that support sexism and violence in our communities. Historically, men have been discussed as perpetrators or potential perpetrators. 'A Call to Men' focuses on working with non-violent, well-meaning men who need to be explicitly and even individually invited to join with us in our work.

In the spring of 2007 MCADSV


co-hosted a keynote presentation by Ted Bunch, also of 'A Call to Men'. More recently MCADSV hosted national presenter and activist Rus Funk, author of *Reaching Men: Strategies for Preventing Sexist Attitudes, Behaviors, and Violence* (Jist Publishing, 2006). This training helped participants discuss why men should be involved in prevention work and encouraged dialogue on specific roles and responsibilities, as well as strategies for engagement.

Through these and other efforts, MCADSV is working to support local and statewide organizing, building on successes in local communities and encouraging other communities to launch "men as allies" campaigns. A MCADSV staff member and two volunteers will participate in the national 'Training Institute for the Mobilization of Men' project, beginning more than a year of focused training and technical assistance in supporting a workgroup of women and men to lead the 'Beyond Taking a Stand' initiative statewide. The membership of this group is expanding and will assist MCADSV in providing additional training and support to new and existing local collaborations, developing recruitment strategies, providing leadership and support to local efforts, and helping communities identify concrete tasks for these

newly active and visible allies.

MCADSV is proud of their role as a public policy and social change leader in Michigan and across the country, and are excited about the

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support and enthusiasm they have received for this initiative. The engagement of men as allies in the work to end domestic and sexual violence acknowledges that these are not just women's issues, nor even community issues; these are also men's issues. For more information about 'Beyond Taking a Stand' please contact MCADSV Program Manager Tammy Lemmer at (517) 347-7000, ext. 27 or tammy.lemmer@mcadsv.org. 

West Virginia

Intercollegiate Council Against Sexual Violence Assists West Virginia's Colleges

The West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services (FRIS) coordinates a statewide council comprised of nineteen residential colleges and nine rape crisis centers. Formally organized in 2002, The West Virginia Intercollegiate Council on Sexual Violence was established as a forum to share ideas and resources among the campuses, view model policies, and provide trainings. An early Council project was the development of a 'Welcome to Campus' brochure that addresses sexual violence victimization in a college setting. The campuses feel they can distribute the information with less

The Council agreed that increased RA training could be a preventative measure for sexual victimization

administrative scrutiny as it comes from the Council and not from their specific school.

Two recent Council projects address the training and awareness needs of West Virginia colleges. Last year West Virginia University developed a film, "Welcome to the


Party," that depicts acquaintance rape and alcohol on college campuses. The Council assisted in providing feedback for the editing of the film,

The Coalition is providing a copy of the film/curriculum to each campus and rape crisis center for their freshmen orientation sessions in the fall

provided focus groups for viewings prior to the final editing, and provided input into the film's curriculum.

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Through a variety of conversations, the Council was surprised, and troubled, to learn most campuses do not have a standard format for the material they presented to resident assistants (RAs) and at most only thirty minutes was spent with RAs on the topic of sexual violence. With staff turnover comes the increased likelihood information would be sporadic at best. The

Council agreed that increased RA training could be a preventative measure for sexual victimization and is currently working on an on-line training module for RAs that can be a mandatory part of their training and available through FRIS' website. Still in development, the on-line training module will have scenarios, an overview on basic issues such as drug facilitated sexual assault, risk reduction behaviors, and evidence collection concerns. 

A Collaboration to Write About NSVRC Partners with the Poynter Institute

BY SUSAN LEWIS, PH.D.

The stars seemed to be in particularly fine alignment the day we embarked on our collaborative journey with the Poynter Institute. At least this is the feeling I have every time I think about our partnership and media training initiative. Beginning in late 2005, the NSVRC and Poynter, an institute for media training, developed a unique approach for training journalists about sexual violence that has been nothing short of remarkable. It has evolved into a multi-year project whose central focus is presenting small, intensive, week-long seminars that bring together pairs of journalists and advocates.

In truth, it is not so much about ‘training’ as it is about ‘transforming’. This seems to be especially the attitude of the participants. They have described their seminar experience as ‘life-changing’ or say things like, “it will definitely help make me a better writer and more sensitive reporter,” or “we left allies in truth-telling.”

Developing this approach

In planning this initiative the NSVRC began with the basic challenge. How do you get journalists to come to a seminar? We knew that it is often difficult to get journalists to the training table, so we wanted to offer them something really positive. We also knew that journalists nearly universally regard Poynter as the gold

standard for journalism. This fact enticed NSVRC to collaborate with the Poynter Institute. The idea of being part of something associated with Poynter would surely attract journalists.

The learning environment we create in these seminars is built upon the Poynter educational approach. Located in St. Petersburg, Florida, the Poynter Institute is an internationally respected organization dedicated to journalistic integrity and quality. Much of their work involves week-long seminars that allow journalists to learn in-depth about a range of journalism topics. Kelly McBride, Poynter faculty, encouraged the adaptation of much of the Institute’s educational philosophy for our seminars.

The seminar model creates a particular environment and maintains the importance of certain details. For example, participants all stay in the same hotel and are required to have some meals together. Typically, they spend much of their off time together. Daily their seating is changed, and they have assignments and work that require much interaction and involvement among all participants.

Poynter and NSVRC entitled the new seminar, *Reporting and Writing About Sexual Violence*. The truly unique thing about this seminar is the pairing of journalists with advocates. It consists of eight pairs

of journalists and advocates. When pairs come together, a number of important things happen. First they learn about many aspects of sexual violence from the same vantage point – as students. Journalists and advocates learn about each other as people and the jobs they do, while developing mutual appreciation. They also improve their relationships for the future so they can be more proactive in the work once they return home.

The courses cover a range of topics about sexual violence and writing about victims that we believe are most relevant and needed. In regional seminars, the NSVRC and Poynter work to arrange and add relevant topics and current issues for the journalists and advocates of that region.

The faculty includes experts from across the country, with approximately half being journalists and the other half, advocates. Typically some of the faculty stay most of the week, thus becoming part of the group.

Another important enticement for participants is a cost-free week. We recognized that it is costly enough for professionals to leave their jobs for a week and that they would likely not be able to bear the expenses of travel, lodging and meals. So we made the seminar cost-free for the participants and

view this as an essential element of this successful training.

Trying out a new type of seminar - Phase I

We began by testing the idea in our first phase. We were eager to see if this approach could work. The idea of having journalists and advocates in the same seminar for five days was rather radical. Many skeptics wondered whether this could work.

We scheduled the first seminar for February 2007 at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg. Its scope was national. We selected eight pairs from across the nation – including Puerto Rico.

Poynter and NSVRC sent invitations to advocates and journalists who could apply online if they were interested. Each applicant needed to gain the agreement of someone in the other profession to partner with them.

The first seminar surpassed our wildest expectations. Participants were thankful, excited and truly transformed. One participant said, “It was a great experience in many ways. One of them was humanizing the people behind their professional backgrounds.” Another said, “We delved into what motivates us to do our work and discovered a lot of common ground.” They returned to their jobs invigorated and committed. Participants and faculty stayed in touch on a listserv, using it as a forum

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Seminar Journalist Wins Two Awards

Puerto Rican award-winning journalist writes about sexual violence

Firuzeh Shokooh Valle attended the Poynter/ NSVRC seminar, *Reporting and Writing about Sexual Violence* in February 2007. Since then she has won two national awards from the National Association of Puerto Rican Journalists.

In 2007 the Association honored Ms. Shokooh Valle with **The National Award for Best Investigative Reporting** for a series on the Sexual Offender Registry. She also received a scholarship from Eli Lilly allowing her to attend the Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Conference in Miami, FL (June 2008).

The following year (2008), the Association again selected her to receive the same national award for her series about the backlog of rape kits at the government's DNA laboratory. She also received a scholarship from the Teacher's Association of Puerto Rico to attend a journalism workshop.

Ms. Shokooh Valle explained that the NSVRC/Poynter seminar truly increased her understanding of sexual violence issues. She added that the excellent workshops, panels and faculty offered her the

theoretical and practical tools to continue her coverage of violence against women at the daily newspaper *Primera Hora*, San Juan, Puerto Rico. She said “I share these awards with my professors and colleagues of the seminar because our joint experiences have been a fundamental part of my work.” 🌍



A Collaboration to Write About

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for discussion, questions, support and friendship. Many of the participants wrote and published thoughtful pieces on sexual violence as a result of the experiences at the seminar.

Regional seminars enhance and develop the seminar approach - Phase II

The success of the first seminar encouraged us to look for the best way to continue the process while casting a broader net. Ultimately we would like to offer similar training to many more journalists and advocates across the nation.

We decided to develop a second phase of the initiative that could help us hone our approach and test certain aspects of the training. For example, does it work as well or better to have the training as four and a half days rather than five and a half? Or, we wondered just how large a region would need to be in order to offer sufficient diversity of participants, an essential element in creating a stimulating learning environment.

Looking down the long road, we also hoped to find ways to move toward regional sustainability. The regional approach held promise as a way to provide both the needed diversity of participants while promoting commitment from area organizations and agencies. So for our next step, we decided to do two to three regional seminars in 2008-2009.

Seminar in Oklahoma City for a Midwest Region

Our first regional seminar involved bringing in participants from the four state region of Oklahoma, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. The actual seminar took place in Oklahoma City in April 2008.

The Oklahoma Health Department heard about the success of the earlier seminar and approached the NSVRC about giving support to this regional seminar, and soon the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence added their support.

Pleased with this turn of events, the NSVRC then approached the health departments and coalitions in each of the four states, asking for some measure of support. Fortunately, either the health department, coalition, or both in each of the four states offered some funds and their well-wishes. The NSVRC deeply appreciates this support. Their assistance truly enhanced the success of the Oklahoma City seminar.

The results of this second seminar convinced us that we had developed a strong design and approach. We immediately began planning for another regional seminar.

Seminar in Seattle for Western Region


NSVRC and Poynter chose four western states to be part of the next regional area: Alaska, Hawaii, California and Washington. Each of these states

has a foreign border and native populations. We decided to add courses that delve into human trafficking and native issues, topics that would particularly impact the advocates and journalists in this area. The seminar took place in September 2008 in Seattle, WA.

Again we approached the health departments and coalitions in these states and found important financial and moral support. Again one or both of the organizations in each of the states offered support. We appreciate their support and commitment.

Collaborating beyond our own field

We all know that collaboration can be fruitful. Ideally the right partnership facilitates the ease and efficiency of our work and enhances the results. Certainly the NSVRC's collaboration with the Poynter Institute on a media training initiative does that, but it is really something more. The success in reaching the press with important information about sexual violence, and improving the working relationship of advocates and journalists is essentially a positive move toward a stronger and safer society.

For more information about this initiative call 877-739-3895 or write to resources@nsvrc.org. 



Reception Draws Attention to Sexual Abuse of Women Farmworkers

On April 29, 2008, the NSVRC hosted a reception to focus greater attention on the sexual abuse of farmworker women. It highlighted the “Bandana Project”, a campaign of Esperanza: The Immigrant Women’s Legal Initiative of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC).

The project adopted the bandana as a symbol of solidarity. Farmworker women often use these scarves on the job to cover their faces and bodies in an attempt to ward off unwanted sexual attention and rape. The reception featured dozens of colorful bandanas, hand decorated by individuals, students, advocates, organizations and agencies.

Honored speakers at the reception included Commissioner Stuart J. Ishimaru of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Ishimaru stressed the importance of cooperation between anti-sexual violence advocates and agencies such as the EEOC. He explained that through these partnerships, farmworker women who are victims of sexual abuse can find not only a voice, but respect and validation for their experiences.

Mónica Ramírez, Project Director of Esperanza: The Immigrant Women’s Legal Initiative of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) said “It is our goal to send the message to workplace abusers that we will fight to stop the abuse of farmworker women, because no one should be

forced to give up their dignity in order to feed their family.”

The NSVRC’s support of the Bandana Project reflects its own commitment to preventing sexual violence in the workplace. Its 2008 Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) campaign theme was Prevent Sexual Violence... in our workplaces. 🌍

*The Heart Leaf,
by Andrea Ramsey*



*Bandana by Kristen
and Heraldo Kane-Osorto*



Don't Call it Rape:

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relevant footnote, the Federal Court indicated its view of the language order stating: "there is also something profoundly disturbing about a judge telling a citizen that she cannot say she was raped when testifying as a victim in a criminal case, particularly when the victim is presumably trying to do nothing more than describe what happened to her".*

Because the federal court dismissed Ms. Bowen's claims on jurisdictional grounds, it did not directly address the constitutionality of the language order. And although some would see this ruling as totally disheartening, I see it as providing at least a ray of hope because of the judicial comment on the troubling nature of court orders that censor victims' testimony. The Federal Court's reference to the language order as "profoundly disturbing" was more than a passing statement and in my mind should be embraced as important and relevant to our continued efforts to protect victims' constitutional rights.

As a next step we filed an appeal with the 8th Circuit Federal Appellate Court. That effort, too was unsuccessful and we are working on an appeal to the United States Supreme Court. With literally no precedent allowing judges to issue language orders against victims, our hope is twofold: first, that Ms. Bowen's rights will be protected and second, that a federal court will provide

desperately needed guidance to state court judges that will help them better understand the critical importance of allowing victims to testify fully and truthfully during trial.

In an amicus brief filed by the North Dakota State's Attorneys' Association in support of Ms. Bowen's

In April 2008, the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression awarded Judge Cheuvront its annual ignoble Jefferson Muzzle Award

federal claims, prosecutors expressed the need for guidance from the court. Written by the Denver-based law firm, Arnold and Porter, the Association pointed out that language orders are a growing and serious problem in criminal trials across the nation and that these orders undermine the integrity of the truth-finding process. The brief also noted that a ruling in Ms. Bowen's case was necessary because prosecutors typically lack procedural authority to file appeals even from unlawful language orders.

Perhaps the substantially negative publicity surrounding Judge Cheuvront's language order will deter him and other judges from issuing similar orders in the future. Indeed, in April 2008, the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression awarded Judge Cheuvront its annual ignoble Jeffersonian Muzzle Award, criticizing him for inhibiting Ms. Bowen's free-speech rights. This award, coupled with the federal court's footnote characterizing the language order as "profoundly disturbing" should sound an alarm that discourages all judges from censoring victims' testimony in future rape cases.

No person who suffers a horrible act of sexual violence should be denied the freedom to use their own uncensored words in describing the experience fully and truthfully in a court of law. Thanks to Tory Bowen, who dared to refuse to follow one judge's language order - this idea may soon become a legal reality for all victims. 🌐

*[US District Court for the District of Nebraska
Case No. 4:07CV3221]

Maze of Injustice

The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Violence in the USA



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International investigated the high levels of sexual violence among indigenous women in the United States and offers its findings and recommendations

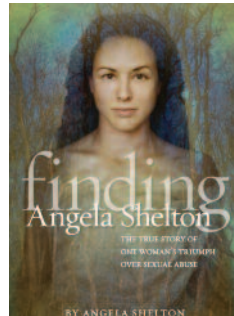
in its recent publication *Maze of Injustice*. Amnesty uncovered an atmosphere of distrust and lack of confidence through discussions with sexual violence victims in Standing Rock Sioux Reservation (North and South Dakota), Oklahoma and Alaska. The report notes that more attention is often paid to jurisdictional issues than finding justice and healing for the victims who may live for months or even years in fear and insecurity. Amnesty International recommends a prompt response to reports of sexual violence, increased resources and greater cooperation between jurisdictions.

Price - **\$14.95**

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www.amnestyusa.org

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The True Story of One Woman's Triumph Over Sexual Abuse



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