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Author: Barbara Owen, Ph.D., James Wells, Ph.D., Joycelyn Pollock, Ph.D., J.D., Bernadette Muscat, Ph.D., Stephanie Torres, M.S

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Final Report
November 2008

Gendered Violence and Safety:

A contextual approach to improving security in women's facilities

Part I of III

Gendered Violence and Safety:

Improving security in women's facilities

Barbara Owen, Ph.D.
California State University, Fresno

James Wells, Ph.D.
Commonwealth Research Consulting, Inc.

Joycelyn Pollock, Ph.D., J.D.
Texas State University- San Marcos

Bernadette Muscat, Ph.D.
Stephanie Torres, M.S.
California State University, Fresno

FINAL REPORT
NOVEMBER 2008

GENDERED VIOLENCE AND SAFETY:
A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH TO IMPROVING SECURITY IN WOMEN'S FACILITIES

PART I OF III:

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Barbara Owen, Ph.D.
California State University, Fresno

James Wells, Ph.D.
Commonwealth Research Consulting, Inc.

Joycelyn Pollock, Ph.D., J.D.
Texas State University- San Marcos

Bernadette Muscat, Ph.D.
Stephanie Torres, M.S.
California State University, Fresno

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For further information on the project, *Gendered Violence and Safety: A contextual approach to improving security in women's facilities,* please contact Barbara Owen at the Department of Criminology, CSU Fresno, barbarao@csufresno.edu.

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ABSTRACT

In response to the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA), this project investigated the context of gendered violence and safety in women's correctional facilities. Through a multi-method approach, including focus groups with female inmates and staff and survey development, we examined the context and correlates of both violence and safety in correctional facilities for women. The data support our original hypothesis that sexual violence is embedded in a broader context of violence and safety and that this context is gender-based. We argue that prevention and intervention, through inmate programs and education, staff training and other operational practices, are primary strategies in meeting the goals of PREA. Like all aspects of incarceration, violence in women's correctional facilities was markedly gendered and nested within a constellation of overlapping individual, relational, institutional, and societal factors. We found that many of the factors contributing to potential violence converge within living units and, thus, present an opportunity for measuring the relative degree of safety and danger of each unit. We also found that violence in women's jails and prisons is not a dominant aspect of everyday life, but exists as a potential, shaped by time, place, prison culture, interpersonal relationships, and staff actions. On-going tensions and conflicts, lack of economic opportunity, and few therapeutic options to address past victimization or to treat destructive relationship patterns contribute to the potential for violence in women's facilities. Our findings did not suggest that women's jails and prisons are increasingly dangerous. While some patterns that shape vulnerability and aggression exist in any facility, most women learn to protect themselves and do their time safely. We also found that most staff and managers are committed to maintaining a safe environment. Building on the focus group data, we developed a comprehensive battery of survey instruments to assess prisoner perceptions of violence and safety in women's facilities. The resultant battery is comprised of multi-dimensional instruments with specific questionnaire items and response categories designed to accurately capture women's experiences in correctional facilities. The operational implications of this model focus on prevention and intervention by addressing multiple factors that shape the context of violence in women's facilities. We offer this study as a way of increasing the ability to ensure all forms of safety for women offenders.

This report is presented in three parts. Part I summarizes our findings and provides specific recommendations for improving safety for women offenders. Part II provides a detailed analysis of the focus group data. Part III describes the development of quantitative measures of violence and safety in women's correctional facilities. Two bulletins regarding the applications of these findings were also developed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003, this project investigated the context of gendered violence and safety in women's correctional facilities. Through a multi-method approach, we examined the context and correlates that produce and support both violence and safety in facilities for women. The data support our original hypothesis that sexual violence is embedded in the broader context of violence and safety and that this context is gender-based. We also suspected that prior victimization often contributes to a cycle of future and repeated victimization among women. We have analyzed our data through an ecological framework suggested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in their 2004 report, *Sexual Violence and Prevention: Beginning the Dialogue.* This model provides both a framework for analysis and a foundation for prevention and intervention policies and practices in women's correctional facilities. We argue that prevention and intervention, through inmate programs and education, staff training and other operational practices, are primary strategies in meeting the goals of PREA.

EMPIRICAL GOALS

Our specific empirical goals included describing the dynamics and context of interpersonal sexual and physical violence in women's correctional facilities. To construct these descriptions, we developed a focus group strategy and interviewed specific groups of female inmates and staff in two state prison systems and three local jail systems. By employing open-ended, unstructured interviews, focus group methodology elicited multiple perspectives on safety and violence from the female inmate and staff participants. For the inmate focus group interviews, we developed a two-session interview protocol that yielded rich and detailed descriptions of women's experiences. Individual interviews were also conducted with the female inmate focus group participants at their request. A total of 40 focus groups, with 161 inmate and 30 staff participants, were completed by the research team during the course of the project. Overall, the profile of the sample resembled the profile of women nationally, with a slighter higher number of women who were serving longer than average sentences.

Four questions structured the core of the interview for the female inmate and detainee groups:

1. What do you know about violence or danger in this facility?
2. How do women currently protect themselves from the violence in this facility?
3. What are some things that can be done here to protect women from danger and violence?
4. What else should we know about violence and danger here?

The questions for the staff participants were:

1. What do you know about violence or danger among women in this facility?
2. What problems are associated with preventing and responding to female sexual and physical violence in this facility?
3. How do women currently protect themselves from the violence in this facility?
4. What are some things that can be done here to protect women from danger and violence?
5. What else should we know about violence and danger here?

The Ecological Model (CDC, 2004) was then used to frame these data. We also drew on an Escalation Model (Edgar and Martin, 2003) and found that most violence began with identifiable (and preventable) conflict that escalated over time. Multiple organizational, environmental and individual factors contribute to violence in women's facilities. Analysis of the focus group data found that the dynamic interplay between individual, relational, community, facility and societal factors create and sustain violence potentials in women's jails and prisons. Staff members play a critical role in creating the potential for violence and conflict. In a similar way, aspects of policy and practice also can support or mitigate such violence. In advocating this prevention and intervention strategy, we argue that these same factors can create and sustain safety as well.

Like all aspects of incarceration, violence in women's correctional facilities was markedly gendered and nested within a constellation of overlapping individual, relational, institutional, and societal factors. We learned that violence between female inmates occurred on a continuum, ranging from verbal intimidation to homicide. Violence was most prevalent at the lower end of the continuum and quite rare at the extreme end. While our research was consistent with prior findings that violence in women's prisons was not as severe or as prevalent as in men's institutions, we did find that some forms of violence were particular to women's facilities and required their own definitions.

We found that violence in women's jails and prisons is not a dominant aspect of everyday life, but exists as a potential, shaped by time, place, prison culture, interpersonal relationships, and staff actions. On-going tensions and conflicts, lack of economic opportunity, and few therapeutic options to address past victimization or to treat destructive relationship patterns contribute to the potential for violence in women's facilities. Four categories of conflict and violence are detailed:

- Verbal conflict
- Economic conflict and exploitation
- Physical violence
- Sexual violence

For female inmates, the most common forms of violence and conflict include verbal conflict and economic exploitation. Bullying and intimidation occur primarily over material goods or control over physical spaces, such as cells or dorms, especially when women exhibited vulnerabilities. We learned that any form of violence had the

potential for escalating into a more serious and dangerous form. Physical violence was typically the result of escalating conflict over debts or "disrespect," or occurred between women in an on-going difficult relationship. Sexual violence was rarely discussed in our interviews unless prompted, but when mentioned, was seen to be usually a product of these problematic inter-personal relationships. In an attempt to capture the complexity of sexual violence, we have constructed a "continuum of coercion" that describes the sexual victimization that occurs, which includes:

- Sexual comments and touching
- Sexual intimidation and pressure`
- "Fatal Attractions" (Stalking)
- Sexual aggressors
- Sexual violence in relationships
- Sexual assault

In our discussions with inmates and correctional staff, there was general consensus among inmates and staff regarding the causes of fighting and other forms of violence in the prison. Generally, both groups believed that jealousy, debts, and disrespect were the major catalysts for violence. We contend, however, that these factors are dynamic contributors to the potential for violence, and interact within the four levels outlined in the Ecological Model (individual, relationship, community, and society).

The women's jail and prison population is characterized by women with long histories of abuse and victimization and, for the most part, this past trauma remains untreated. These personal histories can result in intense and dysfunctional relationships with other women with similar histories. Women's relationships take on such importance that jealousy looms as a frequent trigger for violence. Other violence erupts when women respond to debts with violent retaliation. Women referred to unpaid debts as a form of disrespect, but disrespect also encompassed a wide range of other behaviors as well. "Disrespect" refers to interpersonal behaviors that impinge upon another woman's status, reputation, sense of self, personal space, or rights of "citizenship." The concept of disrespect is closely tied to the subcultural norms and values of the prison and jail world. Idle female inmates, either due to a lack of available programming or individual resistance to such participation, are most likely to participate in these risky behaviors and relationships.

With few exceptions, women told us that they became less worried about physical or sexual violence over the course of their incarceration. While again stressing that "anything can happen at any time," most women learned how to protect themselves from all forms of violence. Day-to-day tension, crowded living conditions, the lack of medical care and the potential for disease, and a scarcity of meaningful programs and activities were seen as more significant threats to a woman's overall well-being than physical or sexual attack. Some individual women said they did "not feel safe at all," but most said they learned to protect themselves. Health concerns eclipsed worries about sexual or physical safety in every focus group and these concerns were related to lack of medical care and cleaning supplies, deteriorating physical plant conditions, substandard food, and the lack of rehabilitative programs. Idleness and an inability to earn money were also said to undermine women's sense of well-being.

Women also expressed little confidence in the ability of staff members to protect them from violence, either from other female inmates or from staff. Women described staff as "just not caring;" "playing favorites" with aggressors; "enjoying their fears" or refusing to take their fears seriously; "covering up for their buddies;" and telling them "This is prison—deal with it." Women also stated that they were told by staff that they would have to "name names" if they went to staff for help in dealing with threats to their safety. Staff, too, remarked that they often felt unable to protect women, but their reasons differed from those offered by the women. Lack of knowledge about reporting practices, reluctance to "snitch," distrust of the entire investigative process, and concerns about retaliation from inmates and staff were mentioned frequently. Inmates had little confidence in this process even in facilities with well known formal policies and procedures to report such concerns. Staff felt that their abilities to respond to violence depended on inmate reporting, but there were tremendous barriers and liabilities surrounding reporting feared or actual victimization.

One point of agreement was a strong perspective on place. In every site location, inmates and staff were unanimous that some facilities were far more dangerous than others; and, within facilities, particular living units were also defined as particularly risky and dangerous. Contributing factors to any particular locale included an interactive combination of individual, relational, and living unit and facility characteristics. Living units function as "neighborhoods" and, as such, exist as the physical place where the processes that shape violence or safety converge. This insight about place led to our approach of creating an instrument that can empirically measure the context of violence and safety within these living units.

In terms of staff, the most common problem reported by the inmate participants was "down talk" or disrespectful and derogatory verbal interactions. Most of the staff sexual misconduct described occurred at the lower end of a coercion continuum. By far, the most prevalent form of officer sexual misconduct was inappropriate touching, comments and suggestions, or other non-physical assaults. However, we heard a wide range of staff sexual misconduct that we placed upon a continuum of coercion as follows:

- Love and seduction
- Inappropriate comments and conversation
- Sexual requests
- "Flashing," voyeurism and touching
- Abuse of search authority
- Sexual exchange
- Sexual intimidation
- Sex without physical violence
- Sex with physical violence.

Part II of the final report provides a complete description of the methodology and findings from the focus groups.

MEASUREMENT GOALS

Measurement goals included creating new measures of safety, danger, risk and violence that are specific to the behavior of women and can be used in the operation of women's institutions to improve safety and security. We developed a comprehensive battery of survey instruments to assess prisoner perceptions of violence and safety in women's facilities. The resultant battery is comprised of multidimensional instruments with specific questionnaire items and response categories designed to accurately capture women's experiences in correctional facilities. Initial survey items were developed from a preliminary analysis of the focus group data, pre-tested, and then piloted in one large prison system and three jails.

Surveys were administered to inmates or detainees housed in "low" and "high" violence housing units as identified by correctional administrators, supervisors and line staff via our structured interview and rating forms. Surveys were then administered to inmates and detainees in low and high violence units at six different facilities. The average response rate across all survey administrations was 83.20%. Response rates from the low violence units averaged 91.89% (544/592). Response rates from the high violence units averaged 73.76% (402/545).

This new instrument created and tested major constructs derived from the focus groups and included the following:

Problems in the housing unit

- Issues involving women inmates
- Issues involving staff

Violence in the housing unit, and policy, procedures, and climate in the facility

- Likelihood of violence
- Personal awareness of policies and procedures related to safety and violence
- Reporting climate (refers to the attitude of staff and inmates about grievances, complaints, or other reports of physical or sexual violence and misconduct; whether staff members are open to grievances and complaints or hostile to them.)

Potential factors leading to different types of violence and misconduct

- Inmate sexual violence
- Inmate physical violence
- Staff verbal harassment
- Staff sexual harassment
- Staff sexual misconduct
- Staff physical violence

Part III of the final report provides exhaustive detail on the construction and development of this battery of instruments.

OPERATIONAL GOALS

The third goal of this project is to improve policy and practice by applying what we learned about female offenders as a result of our empirical and measurement objectives. The prevention model advocated by the Centers for Disease Control was modified to frame our recommendations to address sexual and other forms of violence in women's facilities. Two short operational bulletins were developed from our empirical work. The first bulletin, *Violence and safety programs in women's prisons and jails: Addressing prevention, intervention and treatment,* written by Bernadette T. Muscat, applies a victim services perspective to these issues. Marianne McNabb developed a second bulletin, *Translating research to practice: Improving safety in women's facilities,* which examines our findings from a practitioner's perspective.

It is important to note that this study did not attempt to provide any measures of incidence or prevalence of individual-level violence and victimization. Instead, we focused exclusively on elements that contribute to a correctional climate that supports or undermines safety for female offenders. In our emphasis on place, specifically housing units, we explore a range of factors that impinge on these potentials.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The Prison Rape Elimination Act is intended to improve sexual safety in correctional environments. In this study, we argue that sexual safety has a gendered meaning. We argue that improving safety for female offenders requires a focus on both "kinds of person" and "kinds of places" in order to effectively prevent and intervene in violence in women's facilities. In presenting our findings and recommendations, we applied three different models discovered during our review of relevant literature. The Ecological Model, with an emphasis on the interaction of individual, relational, community, and societal factors, expands the targets for improving safety (CDC, 2004). The Escalation Model illustrates that early intervention can prevent the escalation of violence (Edgar & Martin, 2003). The Sanctuary Model proposes that definitions of safety for women must be expanded to address psychological, physical, social, and moral forms of safety (S. Bloom, 2008). We also draw on the field of victim services as adapted to women's correctional facilities.

The first step in meeting the goals of PREA is to recognize that safety and violence have different meanings for female and male inmates. Our data lead us to conclude that aspects of the overall context, including individual, relationship, living unit, and facility-based factors, either support or mitigate the potential for sexual and other forms of violence in women's facilities. While many individual-level risk factors can be addressed with individual-level treatment, we argue strongly that aspects of place, policy, and practice contribute to violence and safety. In many cases, the living unit may be the "place" where sexual and other forms of violence can occur, but we also found that any location in a facility has this potential. In a similar way, aspects of policy and practice either support or mitigate such violence.

We also argue that a prevention approach is the foundation for a gender-appropriate response to PREA. Just as the data in this study show that violence occurs in a multi-level context, we argue that safety can be maximized by addressing these

contextual factors. We also submit that, in order to meet the goals of eliminating physical and sexual violence in all facilities, systems and agencies must expand their approach beyond counting, investigations, and sanctions. We agree that these strategies are integral to a broad-based response to PREA but argue here that a comprehensive approach to PREA includes prevention, intervention, and treatment, as well as the more traditional responses of investigations and sanctions.

We suggest that correctional systems consider a broader definition of safety to include physical, psychological, social, moral, and ethical safety. Expanding on these broader components of safety for female offenders directs our attention not only to improving safety in women's facilities, but also supports successful re-integration and rehabilitation. For many women, jails and prisons do not address these multiple dimensions of safety. We suggest that investing in programs, education, and treatment that address interpersonal violence and its collateral damage will increase safety in the women's prison, and may reduce recidivism among female offenders by addressing their pathways to prison.

We continue to believe that improving all forms of safety is good correctional practice and has broader implications for meeting the goals of incarceration. We have proposed strategies for addressing these issues (in Part I of the report), based on an analysis of violence and safety using the framework of CDC's Ecological Model (in Part II of the report), and have begun to develop measurement strategies which can ultimately move the corrections field closer to improving safety in women's correctional facilities (in Part III of the report).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As in all correctional research, we depended heavily on facility staff throughout the country to complete our work. In every site, we received excellent cooperation and support. Facility managers and line staff assisted us in too many ways to mention here. We are particularly appreciative because we know that research projects often compete with the demands of daily operations and can challenge staff in accommodating the requests of outside researchers. We are grateful for their help.

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INTRODUCTION 1

REVISITING THE PURPOSE, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS PROJECT

In response to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003, this NIJ-funded project investigated the context of gendered violence and safety in women's correctional facilities. Through a multi-method approach, we have examined the context and correlates that produce and support both violence and safety in facilities for women. We originally hypothesized that sexual violence itself is embedded in the broader context of violence and safety and that this context is gender-based. We also suspected that prior victimization often contributes to a cycle of future and repeated victimization among women. Our research, described in this Final Report, supports these initial ideas.

We have analyzed our data through an ecological framework suggested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in their 2004 report, *Sexual Violence and Prevention: Beginning the Dialogue.* This model provides both a framework for analysis and a foundation for prevention and intervention policies and practices in women's correctional facilities. As we began to think about our data and its implications for practice, we became convinced that this model held the most promise for meeting our project's operational goals. In Part I, Chapter Four, we argue that prevention and intervention, through inmate programs and education, staff training, and other operational practices, are primary strategies in meeting the goals of PREA.

EMPIRICAL GOALS

This project had the specific empirical goal of describing the dynamics and context of interpersonal sexual and physical violence in women's correctional facilities. We developed a focus group strategy and interviewed purposive groups of female inmates and staff in two state prison systems and three local jail systems. By employing open-ended, unstructured interviews, focus group methodology elicited multiple perspectives on safety and violence from the female inmate and staff participants. Individual interviews were also conducted with the female inmate focus group participants at their request. These focus group narratives were transcribed, and then coded and analyzed using The Ethnograph©, a qualitative software package. The Ecological Model was then used to frame these data. We also note here that we had tremendous cooperation from the fieldwork sites and remain grateful for their support.

In addition to the focus groups, we also reviewed one supplemental source of information to deepen our understanding of violence and victimization. We conducted a content analysis of letters received by Stop Prison Rape (SPR). These findings supplemented our data and informed our analysis.

As originally proposed, we found that organizational, environmental and individual factors contribute to violence in women's facilities. Analysis of the focus group data found that the dynamic interplay between individual, relational, community, facility and societal factors create and sustain violence potentials in women's prisons. We also found that staff members play a critical role in creating the potential for violence and conflict. In a similar way, aspects of policy and practice either support or mitigate such violence. In advocating this prevention and intervention strategy, we argue that these same factors can create and sustain safety as well.

Part II of this report provides a detailed and comprehensive description of the methodology and findings of the focus groups and qualitative data sources.

MEASUREMENT GOALS

Measurement in this project included creating new measures of safety, danger, risk and violence that are specific to the behavior of women and can be used in the operation of women's institutions to improve safety and security. Building on the rich and detailed data collected in the focus groups, we created new instruments that measured a number of interrelated factors that shape the context for all forms of violence. One prison system and three jail systems participated in the development of these instruments. We learned from the focus groups that living units shaped the context of violence and safety and decided to focus our measurement activities on living units rather than sampling from the facility at large. In consultation with facility managers, we determined that some living units were known to be "high risk" units for potential violence while others were defined as "low risk." We suspected that the factors related to violence and safety were best measured in these areas. We tested this approach by sampling six different prison living units and several jail living units. The instrument, now in the form of 11 batteries of items, was developed through a comprehensive instrument development process, including pre-testing, piloting, validation, and subject-matter expert assessment. Over 900 cases were used to validate these measures.

This new instrument created and tested major constructs derived from the focus groups and included the following:

Problems in the housing unit

- Issues involving women inmates
- Issues involving staff

Violence in the housing unit, and policy, procedures, and climate in the facility

- Likelihood of violence
- Personal awareness of policies and procedures related to safety and violence
- Reporting climate (refers to the attitude of staff and inmates about grievances, complaints, or other reports of physical or sexual violence and misconduct; whether staff members are open to grievances and complaints or hostile to them.)

Potential factors leading to different types of violence and misconduct

- Inmate sexual violence
- Inmate physical violence
- Staff verbal harassment
- Staff sexual harassment
- Staff sexual misconduct
- Staff physical violence

Part III of this report is a comprehensive and detailed description of the construction and development of these measurement tools.

OPERATIONAL GOALS

The third goal of the project is to improve policy and practice by applying what we learned about female offenders as a result of our empirical and measurement objectives. The prevention model described in Chapter Four of Part I is our first contribution to operational practice. Another contribution to operational practice is the creation of two short bulletins based on our findings.

The first bulletin, *Violence and safety programs in women's prisons and jails: Addressing prevention, intervention and treatment,* written by Bernadette T. Muscat, applies a victim services perspective to these issues. Marianne McNabb developed a second bulletin, *Translating research to practice: Improving safety in women's facilities,* which examines our findings from a practitioner's perspective.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Our analysis drew significantly from the Ecological Model advocated by the Centers for Disease Control (2004). The operational implications of this model focus on prevention and intervention by addressing multiple factors that shape the context of violence in women's facilities. Building on this empirical work, the prevention approach is the foundation for a gender appropriate response to PREA. We continue to believe that improving sexual safety is good correctional practice and has broader implications for meeting the goals of incarceration. As we analyzed our qualitative and quantitative data, we concluded that a model based on prevention and intervention is a critical step in improving safety in women's facilities. This approach to improving safety in women's facilities focuses on prevention and intervention at multiple levels. Just as the data in this study shows that violence occurs in a multi-level context, we argue that safety can be maximized by addressing these contextual factors. We also submit that, in order to meet the goals of eliminating physical and sexual violence in all facilities, systems and agencies must expand their approach beyond counting, investigations, and sanctions. We agree that these strategies are integral to a broad-based response to PREA, but argue here that a comprehensive approach to PREA includes prevention, intervention, and treatment as well as the more traditional responses of investigations and sanctions.

It is important to note that this study did not attempt to provide any measures of incidence or prevalence of individual-level violence and victimization. During our field work, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) issued their findings regarding these rates (Beck & Harrison, 2007). Instead, we focus exclusively on elements that correlate with a correctional climate that supports or undermines safety for women offenders. In our emphasis on place, specifically housing units, we explore a range of factors that impinge on these potentials. Fleischer and Krienert (2006) found that all inmates seek safe harbors as they negotiate their prison or jail term. We submit here that attention to safety in the housing units can promote and sustain such safe harbors.

Our findings did not suggest that women's jails and prisons are becoming increasingly dangerous. While some patterns that shape vulnerability and aggression exist in any facility, most women learn to protect themselves and do their time safely. We also found that most staff and managers are committed to maintaining a safe environment. We offer this study as a way of increasing the ability to ensure all forms of safety for women offenders.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS FINAL REPORT

This Final Report has been divided into three parts that may be examined independently. We do, however, encourage readers to review all three parts. In Part I, following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two offers a detailed discussion of relevant literature. We will briefly discuss the characteristics of female prisoners; the pathways model to crime and prison; women's prison culture; sex and sexual assault in women's prisons, including staff sexual victimization; risk instruments; and three models that we found helpful in analyzing our findings: the Ecological Model, the Escalation Model, and the Sanctuary Model. Chapter Three uses these models to frame our analysis and summarize our findings. Chapter Four outlines policy implications and offers our recommendations for increasing safety for women offenders. We argue that prevention and intervention, through inmate programs and education, staff training, and other operational practices, should be a primary strategy in meeting the goals of PREA.

Part II presents our focus group methodology and findings of the focus groups in greater detail. Chapters identify and describe the contextual factors and their correlates that contribute to female prisoners' conflict and violence. Focus group findings are framed by the Ecological Model and separate chapters are devoted to individual, relationship, community (group), and societal (facility and society) factors. A separate chapter is directed to staff issues and contains concluding remarks.

Part III is a comprehensive discussion of the development of a series of instruments designed to measure the social climate and context of housing units. The resultant battery is comprised of multidimensional instruments with specific questionnaire items and response categories designed to accurately capture women's experiences in correctional facilities.

LITERATURE REVIEW 2

In this chapter, we review the literature relevant to the study of violence and safety in women's prison. We begin with the demographic and background characteristics of female offenders. The pathways model is described, which emphasizes certain life experiences of women that contribute to criminal behavior. This review will then describe the subcultural elements of women's prisons that influence vulnerabilities, victimization, and violence. The types and prevalence of violence in women's prisons, particularly sexual assault, are also described. A review of attempts to develop risk instruments that may predict victimization follows. Finally, we offer a discussion of the Ecological Model, the Escalation Model and the Sanctuary Model and propose how these may be used to understand violence in women's prisons and jails.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE OFFENDERS

In 1990, there were 44,065 women incarcerated in state and federal prisons (Sourcebook, 2008). By mid-year 2007, there were approximately 115,308 women incarcerated, representing 7.2% of the total prisoner (state and federal) population (Sabol & Couture, 2008, p. 4). The number of women in prison varies from around 13,900 (Texas) and 12,100 (California), to fewer than 200 in states such as Maine, Vermont, and North Dakota (Sabol & Couture, 2008, p. 16). While the size of any given prison population is tied to a state's population, prison populations are also affected by the state rate (per 100,000) of incarceration. Massachusetts has the lowest incarceration rate for women (13), while Oklahoma has the highest (131). Texas and California, with the largest prison populations in the country, have rates of 99 and 65, respectively (Sabol & Couture, 2008, p. 17). The national rate (per 100,000) of incarceration for women has increased from 52 per 100,000 in 1997 to 69 per 100,000 in 2007 (Gilliard & Beck, 1998; Sabol & Couture, 2008, p. 4).

There were also 100,047 women in this nation's jails on any given day in 2007 (Sabol & Minton, 2008, p. 4). Similar to their counterparts in prison, the number of jailed women has increased over the last several decades. Between 2000 and 2006, the number of female jail prisoners increased about 40%, compared to an increase of only 22% for adult men. During this time period, women increased from 11.4% to 12.9% of the total jail population (Sabol, Minton & Harrison, 2007, p. 5).

Current research has established that female prisoners differ from their male counterparts in demographics and criminal histories (Richie, 1996; Chesney-Lind, 1997; Owen, 1998; Belknap, 2001; Pollock, 1998, 2002; Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003, 2004; Chesney-Lind & Pasco, 2004; Bloom, 2005). Female prisoners are typically low-income, undereducated, and unskilled with sporadic employment histories. Like male inmates, female inmates are disproportionately African American, although, according to recent federal statistics, black women were

incarcerated at a rate six times that of white women in 2000; however, by 2007, that ratio had declined to 3.7 times higher (348 vs. 95) (Sabol & Couture, 2008, p. 8).

Female offenders are much less likely than men to have committed violent offenses. Women were responsible for only about 10% of all convictions for violent crimes in 2004, 26% of all property convictions, and 18% of all drug offenses (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008; note that 2004 seems to be the last year for which these data are available). Violent offenders receive longer sentences so they "stack up" in prison, and, in 2003, violent female offenders made up about 35% of the total female prisoner population in this country, with property offenders (30%) and drug offenders (30%) making up the remaining two-thirds (Harrison & Beck, 2006).

Although some researchers believe that women and girls are becoming more violent than in the past, their contribution to murder, robbery, rape, and kidnapping has been remarkably stable (Pollock & Davis, 2005; Chesney-Lind & Eliason, 2006). Women's contributions to the total numbers of arrests for assault and aggravated assault do seem to be increasing; however, many argue that these increases are largely due to reporting and system practice changes, i.e., girls and women are more likely to be arrested today than in past years for the same behaviors (Steffensmeier & Allen, 1988, 1996; Pollock & Davis, 2005; Steffensmeier, et al., 2006). When women do commit violent crimes, their victims tend to be family members, acquaintances, and intimates, especially in the context of intimate partner violence. Some research indicates that female violent crime is moving away from these victim groups into more distal targets. These violent female criminals are influenced by poverty stricken communities and the endemic drug trade (Kruttschnitt, Gartner, & Ferraro, 2002; Sommers & Baskin, 1993).

Researchers have documented widespread drug and alcohol abuse among female offenders. According to some research, female offenders may be more likely than male offenders to be drug abusers (Jordan, Schlengler, Fairbank & Caddell, 1996; Brewer-Smyth, Burgess & Shults, 2004). In a national survey of prison inmates conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 1991, findings indicated that female prisoners were more likely to have used drugs than male prisoners, and were more frequent users of drugs. In this study, it was reported that 65% percent of female inmates had used drugs regularly before their incarceration (Snell, 1994).

Female prisoners are likely to suffer from mental health disorders. Estimates suggest that 25% to over 60% of the female prison population require mental health services (see review in Pollock, 2002). For example, Teplin, Abram, and McClelland (1996) reported a 33% lifetime prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for incarcerated women. Others have also reported that about a third of incarcerated women have experienced violent trauma and exhibit signs of PTSD, and that women who have experienced abuse are about twice as likely to exhibit signs of mental illness (Jordan, Schlengler, Fairbank & Caddell, 1996; Powell, 1999). Researchers who survey jail inmates report similar findings (Veysey, 1998; Haywood, et al., 2000). For instance, Green et al. (2005) found in their jail sample that 98% of women had experienced trauma exposure, 36% reported some current mental disorder, and 74% had some type of drug/alcohol problem.

PATHWAYS TO PRISON

Daly (1989, 1992) was one of the first researchers to argue that the differences between male and female offenders are related to different pathways to crime. Researchers have noted the following differences between male and female offenders that result in different pathways to crime for women:

- women are more likely to be primary caregivers of young children
- they are more likely to have experienced childhood physical and/or sexual abuse
- they are more likely to report physical and sexual abuse victimization as adults
- they are more likely to have drug dependency issues
- they are less likely to be convicted of a violent crime
- they are less likely to have any stable work history and, therefore, experience greater poverty
- they are more likely to indicate psycho-social problems
- they are more likely to have an incarcerated parent
- they are more likely to come from a single parent household
- they are more likely to suffer from serious health problems, including HIV/AIDS

(Triplett & Meyers, 1995; Pollock, 1998, 2002; Bloom, 2004; Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003, 2004; Chesney-Lind, 1997, 2000; Belknap, Holsinger, & Dunn, 1998; Covington, 1998, 2000, 2001).

In the following paragraphs, we will detail findings in four key areas:

(1) the importance of relationships, (2) victimization (especially childhood sexual victimization) and its effects, (3) the nexus among victimization, drugs, and high risk behaviors, and (4) the nexus between victimization and adult violence.

The importance of relationships

Covington (1998) describes the "relational model" of development for women. The premise is that the primary motivation for women throughout life is not separation, but connection. Women's emotional development is dependent upon relationships and when women feel disconnected from others, they experience disempowerment, confusion, and anxiety. Dysfunctional families where emotional support is weak or non-existent and where relationships with primary caregivers may be rife with violence or exploitation dramatically affect a woman's ability to have healthy relationships in her adult life. Patterns emerge where the woman may form a sequence of intense, but dysfunctional relationships (Covington, 2000).

If one accepts the premise that male and female emotional development follows a different path, then it makes sense that victimization in childhood dramatically affects the relational development of women (perhaps even more so than men) and creates trauma that has long term consequences.

Victimization and its effects

One of the most consistent findings has been that female offenders are more likely than male offenders to have experienced violent victimization in childhood, and much more likely to have experienced violent victimization than non-incarcerated women. This finding has been replicated in probationer samples, jail samples, and, especially, female prisoner samples (Snell, 1994; McClellan, Farabee & Crouch, 1997; Pollock, 2002; Owen, 1998; Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003).

Browne, Miller and Maguin (1999), for instance, found that in their sample of 150 New York female prisoners, 59% had been sexually abused and 70% had been physically abused as children, 49% had been raped as an adult, and 70% had experienced severe intimate partner abuse. The most comprehensive national study was conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics researchers with Harlow (1999) indicating that 47% of women in state prisons reported physical abuse and 39% reported sexual abuse at some point in their lives; 25% and 26% reported experiencing physical abuse and sexual abuse before age 18.

Childhood sexual victimization has been linked to a wide range of physical and psychological consequences, including personality disorders, depression, suicidal and self-destructive behaviors, eating disorders, anxiety, feelings of isolation and stigma, poor self esteem, poor social and interpersonal functioning, trust issues, substance abuse, sexual problems, and high risk sexual behavior (Breitenbecher, 2001; Islam-Zwart & Vick, 2004; Easteal, 2001; Ketring & Feinaur, 1999). Such victimization has been linked to later prostitution and drug abuse as well (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). Cathy Widom (1991, 2000) argues that childhood experiences of victimization contribute to the multiple problems female offenders have in adulthood, including lack of intellectual performance, inability to cope with stress, suicide, abuse of alcohol and drugs, sensation seeking and anti-social attitudes, and lower levels of self esteem and sense of control.

Finkelhor and Browne (1985, see also, Browne & Finkelhor, 1986) describe several consequences that may occur from childhood sexual abuse. The first is that the girl becomes prematurely sexualized and learns to use sex to manipulate others and views herself primarily as a sexual commodity. A second consequence is that the girl feels betrayed by someone who was a trusted caregiver leading to dependency, impaired judgment of the trustworthiness of others, and vulnerability to abusive partners. A third consequence is a pervasive feeling of powerlessness that extends into adulthood. The fourth consequence is that the girl grows up with a feeling of shame and guilt with a self image that incorporates a feeling of "badness" that, in turn, translates to self destructive behavior.

Maeve (2000) chronicles the high prevalence of childhood abuse among female prisoners. She explains that such abuse can lead to symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), such as "over-remembering," which may lead to lashing out in violence to inappropriate cues; "under-remembering," a type of disassociation, which may lead to reacting with passivity to an external threat; cyclical re-experiencing, which may lead to becoming involved in successive intense relationships that are "unstable" in a continual reenactment of "rescue, injustice, and betrayal;" and a pervasive feeling of self blame, which may lead to self-hate and self-destructive behavior.

Maeve (2000) further argues that a prison sentence sometimes recreates trauma and aggravates the symptoms of PTSD. The experiences of pat-downs and strip searches are recreations of childhood sexual abuse, especially when the authority figure abuses his or her position. Maeve argues that female prisoners' violence, dissociation, depression, and self-mutilating behaviors could be predicted based on their prior histories. Women's violence in prison relationships can be understood by recognition of PTSD symptoms. For some women, erupting in violence reduces anxiety. Partners in prisons are also likely targets of abuse. She described one prisoner with an extensive history of childhood abuse who became increasingly anxious when a relationship was too peaceful; her comment was that "…I don't like it, it's not real—something's got to happen" (Maeve, 2000, p. 485).

Even greater numbers of female offenders have been victims of victimization in adulthood. Studies report that between 40% to 88% of incarcerated women have been the victims of domestic violence, also referred to here as intimate partner violence, and sexual or physical abuse prior to incarceration. This compares to lifetime prevalence rates of non-incarcerated women of about 18% for rape and 52% for physical assault (Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 1996; Tjaden &Thoennes, 2006; Carlson, 2005; Batchelor, 2005).

Cook, et al. (2005) found that, in their sample of incarcerated women, 99% reported experiencing at least one traumatic life event, 81% reported five or more. Some evidence indicates that white women in prison are even more likely than black women to have these experiences (Keaveny & Zausniewski, 1999). The data is clear that women in prison have experienced more traumatic events than non-incarcerated samples, and especially trauma that involves violence, either as a victim of violence or the loss of a loved one through violence.

Nexus: Victimization, drug use, and high risk lifestyles

The nexus among childhood victimization, substance abuse, and sex work has been identified by several researchers (see, for instance, Siegel & Williams, 2003). In one study of sex workers, for instance, nearly half reported physical abuse and half reported sexual abuse as children (Surratt, et al., 2004). Note the explanation of one sex worker:

> I think people who have been abused, like from childhood, sexual, or physical … I think they become co-dependent [on it]. Like my first boyfriend ... I was like co-dependent on him, even though he was violent, a drug dealer, a drug addict, and, you know, I was used to that kind of lifestyle anyway cause that's what I had in my parent's home (Surratt, et al., 2004, p. 53).

Drug use has consistently been associated with sex work and high-risk sexual practices (Mullings, Marquart & Brewer, 2000; Mullings, Marquart & Hartley, 2003). Childhood sexual victimization seems to be a precursor to this type of lifestyle (Mullings, Marquart & Brewer, 2000; Mullings, Marquart & Hartley, 2003; Mullings, Pollock & Crouch, 2002; Pollock, Mullings, & Crouch, 2006). In a study of homeless women and exotic dancers by Wesely (2006), more than half of her small sample experienced horrific sexual and physical abuse as children. Their adult lives were also filled with violence from intimate partners, customers, and strangers.

Sexual victimization, in childhood or adulthood, seems to be correlated with re-victimization. Studies consistently demonstrate that women and girls who are raped are more likely than non-victims to experience subsequent sexual victimization (Breitenbecher, 1999; Messman-Moore & Long, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). This certainly seems to be true for incarcerated women, although exactly why such women are vulnerable to re-victimization is unclear. For incarcerated women, it is most probably due to a variety of risky behaviors and their tendency to become involved with abusive partners and engage in high-risk sexual behavior. However, one study identified a greater vulnerability to sexual harassment and coercion from authority figures for those women who had experienced prior sexual victimization (Messman-Moore & Long, 2000).

The use of drugs or alcohol to "self medicate" is a pervasive theme in research on female prisoners (Maeve 2000; Battle et al., 2003). Green et al., (2005), in a study of jail inmates, reviewed a number of studies that linked childhood and adult sexual and physical victimization to drug and alcohol use, mental disorders, and criminality. In another study of female prisoners, drug use was found to be related to a disordered home life (Batchelor 2005). Most of the female prisoners had started drinking at an early age and had histories of self injury, suicide attempts and traumatic loss. Batchelor suggests that drugs and alcohol use can be seen as a way to cope with grief, and anger.

Nexus: Victimization and violence

The most obvious and direct example of the nexus between victimization and violence is when a victim of intimate partner violence kills or injures her attacker. Several researchers have shed light on the issues of women imprisoned for killing an intimate aggressor (Ewing, 1987; Browne, 1997; Browne, Miller & Maguin, 1999). Women may be arrested for intimate partner violence more frequently today because of mandatory arrest policies and officers who do not attempt to sort out who was the initial aggressor and who was acting in self defense (for a review, see Miller & Meloy, 2006).

Despite much evidence to the contrary, some researchers propose that women are just as likely as male partners to be perpetrators of intimate partner violence (for a review, see Robertson & Murachver, 2007). It may be the case that there are two types of female domestic assault offenders: the first type is the "classic" battered victim who strikes back in self defense; and the second might be called a "mutual combatant" who has developed violent behavior patterns in domestic relationships as (perhaps) a consequence of childhood abuse. There is anecdotal evidence to support this assumption. For instance, almost all of the women in Wesely's (2006) sample of homeless women and exotic dancers had been victimized in childhood. They described their violent resistance to sexual assaults and harassment, using their fists, heels, knives and guns. Their lifestyles exposed them to an almost constant potential for sexual and physical violence. Their anger and frustration from years of abuse made some women erupt in violence against others who were not necessarily physically victimizing them. Some of the participants in this study noted that when they were in relationships with partners who did not abuse them, they were the ones who initiated abuse (Wesely, 2006).

Widom (1989a & b) linked early victimization to criminality for both sexes, although she found a correlation between early victimization and later violent crimes during adulthood only for men, not women. She did find, however, that early victimization was correlated with violent delinquency by female juveniles (Widom, 1991). Other researchers reported that while early victimization seems to be correlated with violent crime for male victims, the relationship is not so clear for female victims, who seem to be more prone to drug/alcohol and other crimes (for a review, see Holsinger & Holsinger, 2005).

In a study that examined the later lives of a sample of girls treated for child sexual abuse and a control sample, Siegel and Williams (2003, p. 79) found that the sexual abuse was a significant factor in later violent criminality, but so, too, was familial neglect and abuse. The women in the victim sample were over twice as likely to have committed a violent offense as a juvenile and five times as likely to have run away as a juvenile. As adults, they were twice as likely to commit any crime, about twice as likely to commit a violent crime, and about seven times as likely to commit a drug crime.

Other researchers, looking at incarcerated populations, have found that violent female offenders are more likely to have experienced childhood victimization than property offenders (Brewer-Smyth et al., 2004; Pollock, Mullings & Crouch, 2006). Brewer-Smyth, et al., (2004) link early violent victimization to neurobiological effects. In this proposed relationship, early abuse leads to either brain injury or adverse brain development because of elevated levels of cortisol (the stress hormone). A variety of behavioral effects may result, including reacting in violence to stressors or triggers that would not create a violent response in non-traumatized individuals.

Pathways and Race

A complete pathways model would include race and ethnicity to better understand how women come to prison. For instance, Henriques and Manatu-Rupert (2001), Richie (1996), and Simpson (1991) add race to the discussion of pathways to prison. Holsinger and Holsinger (2005, p. 227) discovered that race complicates the relationship between gender and violence. In their study of incarcerated female juveniles, they found that black girls were less likely than white girls to report both physical (70% compared to 90%) and sexual abuse (46% compared to 62%), although both groups reported very high levels. White girls also reported more substance abuse overall. These researchers also found that white girls' victimization seemed to result in a greater likelihood of suicide attempts while black girls' victimization seemed to more likely result in violent crime. Looking at the relationship in another way, they found that violence was correlated with abuse only for black girls, and with anti-social personality for white girls. They also found that substance abuse and self-esteem were also correlated with violence. Holsinger and Holsinger (2005) conclude that any study of the relationship between victimization and criminality, especially violent criminality, should be disaggregated by race.

WOMEN'S PRISON EXPERIENCE

There is a great deal of research indicating that the prison culture of men and women are different and reflects, to a certain extent, differences between the sexes in the outside world. Men's prison culture has been described as a "jungle" where the strong prey upon the weak and both expressive and instrumental violence is not uncommon (see Johnson, 2006; Pollock, 2004). Sexual assault is only one type of violence found in prisons for men, albeit, perhaps, the most feared. Sex, in men's prisons, seems to equal power, control, and violence.

The subculture in women's prisons has been described as very different from that found in prisons for men (Pollock, 2002; Owen, 1998). While all researchers note that some violence does occur, it has been perceived as relatively rare. Women's sexual relationships are described as usually consensual rather than coercive; unlike men, women sometimes develop pseudo-families as a result of these relationships. These affiliations mimic familial relationships in society, with mothers, fathers, siblings, and children acting in general accordance with their role (Owen, 1998; Pollock, 2002; Girshick, 1999). While some more current research disputes the presence of familial groupings (Greer, 2000), others note their continued existence (Keys, 2002). Inconsistent findings may be due to type of institution, regional differences, or methodology.

In general, older studies of women's prison subculture portrayed it as less violent and victimizing than the subculture in men's prisons. Unlike men's institutions, women's prisons were described with remarkably low levels of racial tension and violence (Kruttschnitt, 1983; Pollock, 2002). Owen (1998), in one of the more comprehensive examinations of the women's prison subculture, describes "the mix" as the activities women engage in that are likely to get them into trouble with each other and with prison officials. The "mix" included involvement with homosexuality, use of drugs, and fighting. Owen's respondents advised new inmates to stay out of "the mix" in order to do their time with less trouble. There was little mention of violent sexual assault or coercion, especially for those women who stayed out of "the mix." In contrast, Alarid (2000), Greer (2000), and Pogrebin and Dodge (2001) suggest that this culture is changing, and sexual coercion and victimization does occur quite often in women's prisons.

WOMEN'S PRISON VIOLENCE: TYPES AND PREVALENCE

Generally, women's prisons are considered safer than men's prisons. Organized conflict related to gangs and ethnic strife is extremely rare in women's prisons (Owen, 1998; Harer & Langan, 2001). Research shows that many female prisoners express feelings that prison is safer than the streets (Covington, 1998; Davino, 2000; Owen, 1998; but for contrary findings, see Bradley & Davino, 2002, p. 357).

Official reports indicate there are more "incidents" or disciplinary infractions in women's prisons than men's. In her comparative study of Texas prisons, McClellan (1994) found that women were cited more frequently, but for petty offenses, not major misconducts. The conclusion of this study was that there tended to be more rigid and formalistic rule compliance expected of women. Pollock (2002) and Bosworth (2007) also suggested that staff expectations and differential responses to

the behavior of women and men accounted for the greater number of disciplinary infractions for women.

Edgar and Martin (2003) found, in their study of prison violence in Britain, that female prisoners used weapons less frequently than males. If used, weapons were "at hand" rather than fabricated in advance. The female respondents in this British study reported almost never using violence to settle their differences and indicated that the female prison community disapproved of violence in most circumstances.

While serious physical violence between female prisoners is infrequent, especially assaults involving weapons, some research indicates that to characterize women's prisons as less violent than men's prisons is inaccurate. Wolff, Blitz, Shi, Siegel and Bachman (2007, p. 592), in a comparative study of violence in men's and women's prisons, found that 20% of women and 25% of men reported being physically assaulted by another inmate during their current sentence. In this same study, about 29% of male inmates, compared to about 8% of female inmates reported physical violence by correctional officers. However, consistent with Edgar and Martin's research, women were much less likely to report being victimized with a weapon than male inmates (Wolff, Blitz, Shi, Siegal & Bachman, 2007, p. 592).

Similar to findings from prisons for men, female prisoners who commit violence in prison tend to be older, have longer prison sentences, and are more likely to be committed for violent crimes. Researchers have found that while short-timers committed more minor infractions, female inmates who are serving long sentences were more likely to be disciplined for assaultive acts (Casey-Acevedo & Bakken, 2001). Other researchers note that situational factors may be more important than individual factors when explaining or predicting female violence in prison (Shaw, 1999).

In her study of women found guilty of serious prison infractions, Torres (2007) examined case records of 142 women who were placed in disciplinary housing. Typically, serious rule violations are considered to be violent infractions, with inmates who commit them regarded as a threat to the safety and security of others and the institution. Women in disciplinary housing differed from general population inmates: They were more likely to be women of color; more likely to be convicted of a violent offense; and more likely to have a documented mental health diagnosis prior to their placement in disciplinary housing. The most frequently recorded rule violations included battery on staff, threatening staff, possession of a weapon, battery on an inmate with a weapon, and battery on an inmate. No sexual assaults were recorded in the disciplinary records reviewed. Women's violent offenses were found to most often be preceded by a verbal escalation leading to the physical conflict. Rule violations were found to escalate from past or earlier unresolved ongoing personal disputes, exchanges between staff and inmates, or during controlled movements of inmates by staff.

Some research indicates that the prison culture in women's prisons may be changing and becoming more similar to that found in men's prisons. For instance, Batchelor (2005) discovered that female juvenile prisoners placed a high value on "respect," similar to young men. The author pointed out that this emphasis stems from economic and social marginalization. Belknap, Holsinger and Dunn (1997) noted that young women in the juvenile system objected to the way they were "disrespected" and placed a high value on respect. The concept of respect was also noted in a

study of adult women by Kruttschnitt and Carbone-Lopez (2006). They found that, in their sample of violent incarcerated women, disrespect and jealousy were mentioned almost equally as the primary motivation for violent acts, with self defense a close third. They argue that "violent responses to disrespect may have relatively little to do with gender and more to do with social locations" (Kruttschnitt & Carbone-Lopez, 2006, p. 340).

Batchelor, et al.,(2001) noted the prevalence of violence in young female prisoners' lives. Almost all respondents had been verbally intimidated by offensive name-calling, threats, taunts, or ridicule. Gossiping, bullying and threatening behavior were identified as a very real form of violence that they had fallen victim to and, in some cases, employed against others. They noted that the young women often did not view certain behaviors or experiences as violent, such as attempted rapes by acquaintances or physical fights with siblings, even though objective observers would define these as examples of violence. Violent acts were more likely to be defined as such when they occurred in public with strangers, rather than in private with family or acquaintances. This indicates that violence is defined partially by one's culture and perspective. What may be seen as violence to one person is not necessarily seen that way by another. Another important finding of this research was that the female offenders could not be neatly placed into victim or offender categories. They often had experienced both roles and were quite comfortable with the notion of violence as a solution to problems, especially when someone disrespected them. This study illustrates that violence is both an individual and a situational or cultural factor and it is "imported" to prison and juvenile facilities as part of the cultural socialization of some female offenders. It also emerges as an element of the prison environment even for those who do not share the same socialization to violence (Batchelor, et al., 2001).

SEX AND SEXUAL ASSAULT IN PRISON

Most of the literature on sexual assault in prison concerns men's prisons. Although it has been assumed that sexual assault occurs more frequently in men's rather than in women's prisons, researchers report difficulty in describing the scope of the problem in men's prisons. Gaes and Goldberg (2004), in an exhaustive review of prior studies, found that this research is fraught with methodological difficulties. They show that the various studies have "used different questions," that definitions "vary from rape to sexual pressure," and studies use different time-of-exposure making any comparisons very difficult. Multiple factors affect reporting victimization to researchers and to authorities, including:

- the disinclination to admit socially undesirable behavior,
- a feeling that privacy is invaded by answering such questions,
- fear of repercussions, and
- a fear of loss of status/reputation (Gaes and Goldberg, 2004, p. 2).

Existing studies report a wide range of prevalence rates. The lowest numbers are attached to official reports, the highest numbers occur with anonymous surveys. Hensley (2000; also see, Hensley, Struckman-Johnson, & Eigenberg, 2000), in a review of the literature, reported prevalence rates in men's prisons ranged from 1.3%

to 28%, although these percentages were from different studies, different states, and asked different specific questions. Struckman-Johnson, et al. (1996) reported that 22% of male prisoners in a maximum security prison reported sexual assault. In Hensley and Tewksbury's 2002 study of three facilities for men in Oklahoma, they found about 13.8% of inmates had been the victim of a sexual "threat" with only two actual rapes reported amongst the 174 respondents. Gaes and Goldberg's (2004) meta-analysis found that the average prison lifetime sexual assault prevalence rate was only 1.91%. Wolff, Blitz, Shi and Bachman (2006) report a prevalence rate for male inmates of 4.3%, with 3.5% reporting "any abusive sexual contact" and 1.5% reporting nonconsensual sex acts. Importantly, the rate was higher for staff-on-inmate sexual victimization than it was for inmate-on-inmate (76 per 1,000 compared to 43 per 1,000) (Wolff, et al, 2006, p. 843)

Research on male sexual assault has identified the typical victim as a young, white property or drug offender who is physically small or weak. Other factors associated with being a victim include: mental illness or developmental disabilities, being middle class, not gang-affiliated, known to be homosexual or overtly effeminate, convicted of sexual crimes, those who are labeled as "rats," disliked by staff or other inmates, and previously sexually assaulted (Dumond, 2000).

Austin, et al. (2006) examined over 2,000 reports of sexual assaults between 2002 and 2005 in the Texas prison system and reported the following findings:

- Reported assaults increased substantially after Texas began a "Safe Prisons Program" that promoted broader definitions of sexual victimization and encouraged reporting.
- There were a large number of unsubstantiated cases where the victim and/or assailant were transferred anyway.
- Both victims and assailants represent only about 2% of the prison population.
- Reported victims were most likely young, white, with a non-violent crime of conviction. They were also more likely to have a sexual offense as a crime of conviction, and there is some evidence to indicate that mentally ill inmates are a greater risk of victimization.
- Reported assailants were more likely to be black or Hispanic, gang-affiliated, and convicted of a violent crime.
- Incidents were most likely to occur in the daytime in housing cellblocks. Other locations for assaults were showers or bathrooms, followed by dorms.
- Injuries were noted in only about 10% of the reported assaults.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (Beck & Hughes, 2005) offered findings from official reports in 2004 from 2,700 correctional facilities holding 79% of all incarcerated adults and juveniles. In this study, BJS utilized very specific definitions of both inmate-on-inmate and staff-on-inmate sexual victimization, however, only about half of all reports they examined from the correctional facilities could be placed in these four definitions:

- Nonconsensual sexual acts: contact between penis and vagina or penis and anus or mouth and penis, vagina or anus, or penetration by hand, finger or other object.

- Abusive sexual contacts: touching of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks.
- Staff sexual misconduct: any behavior of a sexual nature, including consensual and non-consensual sexual acts, including touching, indecent exposure, invasion of privacy, and voyeurism.
- Staff sexual harassment: repeated verbal statements or comments of a sexual nature by staff, including demeaning references to gender or body or clothing or profane or obscene language or gestures (Beck & Hughes, 2005, p. 3).

Findings indicated that the allegation rate of sexual violence was 3.15 per 1000. Beck and Hughes (2005, p.4) note that the substantiation rate of these allegations was only about 18%. The authors also noted wide variations in both the rate of allegations and the rate that allegations were substantiated by authorities between states, and even between facilities in the same state. These findings call into question all past prevalence studies that utilized single states or single prisons in studies of prevalence.

Fleischer and Kreinert 's (2006) qualitative research on sexual violence in men's and women's prisons indicated that while sexual assault was very rare, stories and myths about rape were very common. Twenty-two percent of the male respondents reported they were certain that at least one rape had occurred in a prison where they have served time. Almost that same number reported some worry or threat of rape. Sexual behavior in the prison did not fit neatly into categories of consensual and coercive, and included a range of utilitarian, manipulative, and exchange aspects. Their findings also included the following:

- Inmates indicated that they policed themselves to reduce sexual violence and rapists are unwelcome in the prison community.
- Protective social arrangements provided safety and social support.
- The definition of sexual violence as rape hinged on the relationship between the parties.
- Men's and women's prisons share a prison culture which results in similar interpretations of sexual violence.
- Debts sometimes led to sexual services being demanded as payment.
- Generally prisoners found that there was less sexual violence than staff threats indicated (Fleischer & Kreinert, 2006).

Jones and Pratt (2008) placed sexual violence in the context of all prison violence. They noted that the range of prevalence rates may be at least partially explained by the different definitions employed by researchers. While reports of completed, forceful rapes were rare, the number of reported victimizations increased when the researchers expanded the definition of victimization to other forms of sexual assault, coercion, or harassment. Another methodological problem noted is that some authors report incidence (the number of victimizations), others report prevalence (the number of inmates who report one or more victimizations). These two numbers are not comparable. Finally, the measure of time varies from incidents of sexual violence in the last year to at any time during a prison sentence.

It is clear that our understanding of male sexual violence in prison has suffered from lack of consistent methodology. The disagreement regarding prevalence between studies can be largely attributed to the definition of victimization. Lockwood (1983) was one of the earliest researchers who argued that forcible rape was rare, but sexual harassment was endemic in prisons for men. More recently, Keys (2002) noted that inmates argue that "turning out a punk" is a skill and much more common than physical rape. Submitting to sex was described by Keys' respondents as "accommodation," "a favor," "a relief of anxiety," "fulfillment of an obligation," or "solidifying alliances" (Keys, 2002, p. 268). Trammell's (2006) respondents also described the participation of "wives" or "punks" as something less than consensual, but short of being physically coerced. They struggled to find an accurate term and settled on "business arrangement." The question as to whether or not the resulting relationship is actually consensual or coercive remains unanswered.

The recent Bureau of Justice Statistics prevalence study is the largest and most comprehensive study available on sexual assault and victimization in prison (Beck & Harrison, 2007). The survey was administered in 146 state and federal prisons via laptop computers assisted by recorded instructions. About 4.5% of total respondents (men and women) reported they had been sexually victimized, representing about 60,500 inmates across the country. Sexual victimization by staff members was slightly more frequently reported (2.9%) than inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization (2.1%), and a small number (.5%) reported victimization by both groups. Staff sexual contact was equally likely to be reported as unwilling (1.7%) or willing (1.7%) participation by the victim. Reports of victimization varied among the BJS study sites. Ten facilities had prevalence rates of 9.3% or higher; with the highest number of reports occurring in the Estelle Unit in Texas where 15.7% of inmates reported victimization. In six facilities across the country, inmates reported no incidents. When looking only at the most serious types of sexual victimization (non-consensual acts among inmates and unwilling sexual contact with staff), three facilities had rates of 10% or higher.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics has also published a study of sexual victimization in jails (Beck & Harrison, 2008). About 40,419 inmates in 282 jails participated. About 3.2% reported some form of sexual assault; 1.6% reported an incident involving another inmate and 2% reported their assailant was a staff member. Less than one percent (.7%) of jail inmates reported inmate-inmate victimization that involved non-consensual sexual contact (oral, anal, or vaginal penetration). Another .9% said victimization occurred that involved non-consensual touching of the breasts, buttocks, or genitals in a sexual way. An estimated 1.3% reported unwilling sexual contact with staff as a result of physical force, pressure or offers of favors or privileges. About 1.1% reported sexual acts and .3 reported only touching. An estimated 1.1% of all inmates reported willing sex or sexual contact (.9% reported sexual acts and .2% reported only touching).

Prevalence surveys of sexual victimization are in their infancy and there are problems to overcome. In the BJS jail survey, response rates ranged from 40% to 100%. Reported victimization ranged from 13.4% to percents indistinguishable from zero. In fact, nearly a third of sampled jails had a reporting rate indistinguishable from zero (Beck & Harrison, 2007).

SEXUAL ASSAULT IN WOMEN'S PRISONS & JAILS

In their review of prison sexual assault studies, Gaes and Goldberg (2004) stated that the few studies that have considered sexual assault in women's facilities find that the prevalence of sexual victimization appears to be lower than sexual victimization in men's prisons. Austin, et al., (2006), in their study of reported sexual assaults in Texas, indicated that prison staff held the belief that sexual behavior in women's prisons was more often consensual and not coercive as in the men's facilities. However, these researchers stated, "We are not persuaded that this is indeed the case. Clearly a separate and more detailed assessment of sexual assault among female prisoners is needed" (Austin, et al., 2006, p. viii). In their study of official reports of sexual assaults in the Texas prison system, researchers found that assailants in women's prisons were likely to be black, and that both victims and assailants in women's prisons were likely to have violent crimes of conviction (Austin, et al., 2006).

Hensley, Castle, and Tewksbury (2003) administered surveys to all female inmates in one facility, with 4.5% of the 245 respondents reporting victimization by some form of sexual coercion. These numbers referred solely to inmate-on-inmate assaults while Austin's study included both inmate-on-inmate and staff-on-inmate assaults.

In an early study of three men's prisons and one women's prison in Nebraska, using anonymous mail surveys, Struckman-Johnson and colleagues found that 22% of the men and 7.7% of women reported being "pressured" or "forced" into sexual contact (Struckman-Johnson, et al, 1996, p. 74). A later study, conducted in seven men's prisons and three prisons for women, found that prevalence rates varied by the institution (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2002). In the three prisons for women, the prevalence rates for rape ranged from zero to five percent; and "sexual assault" (which included more behaviors than forced genital sex) ranged from 6% to 19%. The reports of sexual coercion ranged from 11% to 21% between the institutions. Another finding of this study was that, while the majority of sexual victimization (between 55% and 80%) was perpetrated by other inmates, there was a sizeable percentage perpetrated by officers or staff (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2002).

Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (2006) also reported that female victims in their sample were less likely to identify their perpetrator as black than were male victims, and that male victims were more likely to report a completed rape than were women, whose worst victimization was more often something less than a completed physical rape.

Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (2002) compared the perceptions of inmates and staff concerning the prevalence of sexual coercion. In every facility, staff's perceptions of prevalence were dramatically lower than those of female inmates. In the first facility, inmate-respondents reported that 21% of inmates were sexually coerced (staff reported 10%), the second facility's respondents reported 11% (and staff reported 2%), and in the third facility, inmates reported 13% (and staff reported 4%).

Wolff and her colleagues have published a number of articles from their survey of sexual assault in prison, with a sample of 6,964 men and 564 women (i.e., Wolff,

Blitz, Shi, Bachman, & Siegel, 2006; also see Wolff, Blitz, & Shi, 2007; Wolf, Blitz, Shi, Siegel, & Bachman, 2007; and, Wolf, Shi, Blitz, & Siegel, 2007). The authors argue that their study improved on the previous studies in representativeness, validity, and reliability. The researchers asked about nonconsensual sexual acts (forced sex acts, including oral and anal sex), and abusive sexual contacts (intentional touching of breasts, buttocks, groin areas). They found that rates of sexual victimization varied significantly by gender, age, perpetrator, facility, and the way the question was worded. They found that the reported rate of inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization in the previous six months was four times higher for women than for men (212 per 1,000 compared to 43 per 1,000) (Wolff, et al., 2006, p. 842). Prevalence rates over the course of a prison sentence for inmate-on-inmate sexual assault was two times higher for female inmates than male inmates (39/1000 vs. 16/1000), and staff-on-inmate was about one and one-half times higher (53/1000 vs. 34/1000) (Wolff, et al, 2006, p. 840). In large part, the increased number of reports by women was accounted for by abusive sexual contacts, not sexual acts. Women were six times more likely to report abusive sexual contacts and twice as likely as male inmates to report non-consensual sex acts. There were no statistically significant differences between men and women in their reports of sexual victimization by staff (Wolff, et al., 2006, p. 840).

Using a broad measure of in-prison sexual victimization, which included completed and attempted sexual assault as well as unwanted touching and sexual abuse, Blackburn (2006) conducted a study utilizing self-report surveys among 436 incarcerated women in Texas. She found that 17% of the inmates reported such victimization, with 3% of the sample reporting a completed sexual assault, or rape, while incarcerated. The majority of the sample (86%) believed that in-prison sexual assault occurs and 72.7% indicated that they would officially report an in-prison sexual assault if they were so victimized. Blackburn (2006) found no significant demographic differences between victims of in-prison sexual victimization and non-victims indicating that it may be difficult to identify those women most likely to be sexually victimized while incarcerated.

As more studies have been completed, it has become apparent that researchers must separate sexual assault (a forced sexual interaction involving genital contact or genital/mouth or hand contact) from sexual misconduct, which involves unwanted touching and verbal sexual harassment. Furthermore, Hensley and Tewksbury (2002) have argued that sexual coercion rather than sexual assault in prisons for women is by far the most neglected topic of prison researchers.

The recent Bureau of Justice Statistics national survey of sexual victimization in prison included 15 women's correctional facilities (Beck & Harrison, 2007). As shown in Table 1 in this chapter, inmates' reported victimization ranged widely between facilities, from 3.4% to 10.8%. Reports of staff victimization ranged from 0 to 5.3%. The national survey defined sexual victimization as any type of sexual activity, including sexual activity, touching, and consensual or non-consensual sexual activity. Non-consensual sexual acts were defined as unwanted oral sex, anal sex, vaginal sex, "hand-jobs," or other sexual acts with a staff or inmate. Abusive sexual contacts were defined as touching of the inmate's buttocks, thighs, penis, breasts, or vagina in a sexual way (Beck & Harrison, 2007, p. 8).

Table 1

Selected Findings From BJS Sexual Victimization Study:

Women's Correctional Facilities

Sexual Victimization (Percent Reporting)

Women's Facility	Inmate	Staff	Total
Julia Tutwiler (AL)	5.0	1.7	6.3
Central (CA)	5.7	1.7	7.0
Valley (CA)	7.9	5.3	10.3
High Plains (CO)	2.2	3.8	5.9
Lowell (FL)	5.7	1.8	7.0
Metro (GA)	7.6	1.6	8.0
Rockville (IN)	10.2	2.0	10.8
Baltimore Pre-Release (MD)	6.0	0.0	6.0
Florence McClure (NV)	6.6	1.7	7.7
Fountain (NC)	3.8	0.4	4.3
Cambridge Springs (PA)	4.4	0.0	4.4
Women's Div (RI)	4.4	3.1	7.5
Tennessee Prison for Women (TN)	1.1	4.3	4.8
Hilltop (TX)	3.0	1.5	3.4
Mt. View (TX)	8.7	3.4	9.5

Non-Consensual Sexual Acts (Percent Reporting)

Women's Facility	Inmate	Staff
Julia Tutwiler (AL)	4.0	1.7
Central (CA)	3.5	1.1
Valley (CA)	1.4	1.5
High Plains (CO)	1.3	3.1
Lowell (FL)	2.4	1.8
Metro (GA)	3.6	1.2
Rockville (IN)	4.6	2.0
Baltimore Pre-Release (MD)	2.8	0.0
Florence McClure (NV)	2.8	1.7
Fountain (NC)	1.9	0.4
Cambridge Springs (PA)	2.3	0.0
Women's Div (RI)	2.2	3.1
Tennessee Prison for Women (TN)	0.0	3.7
Hilltop (TX)	1.0	1.0
Mt. View (TX)	2.7	2.3

Non-consensual Sexual Acts = unwanted oral sex, anal sex, vaginal sex, "hand-jobs" or other sexual acts with a staff or inmate. Source: Beck, A. and Harrison, P (2007). *Sexual Victimization in State and Federal Prisons Reported by Inmates, 2006.* Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Data Taken from Table 2 (p.17-20), Table 4 (p. 25-28), and Table 5 (p. 29-32).

The most common location for sexual assaults by inmates is in cellblocks, according to Wolff, Shi, Blitz, and Siegel (2007), Austin et al. (2006), and Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (2006). In contrast, other researchers have found that sexual assault and coercion was more likely to occur in open dormitory style housing that contained female offenders convicted for crimes against persons (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2002). Alarid (2000) also identified dormitory style housing as the more likely location of sexual victimization. Restricted housing where women did not receive as much access to programming or privileges was also seen as high risk. These conflicting findings could be due to counting different types of victimization. It may be that while physical rapes occur in cells, other forms of sexual coercion and harassment occur in dormitory settings.

Emerging research indicates that distinguishing consensual from coerced sexual relationships in women's prisons may be more difficult than earlier researchers assumed. Some research indicates that a little less than half of female prisoners have participated in sexual relationships with other prisoners, with age (younger) and length of sentence (longer) being most predictive of participation (Hensley, Tewksbury, & Koscheski, 2002). Most of the women who engage in homosexual relationships in prison did not have that sexual orientation outside of prison. Inmates refer to this sexual involvement as "gay for the stay." In a study of 35 female inmates in Midwestern correctional institutions, Greer (2000) found that, although the majority of female inmate respondents did not wish to become involved in an intimate relationship with other female inmates, such relationships were extremely prevalent. The motivations for such relationships included economic manipulation, sincere attachment, loneliness, curiosity, sexual identity, peer pressure, sexual release, and diversion from boredom. Greer (2000) also found that over 71% of female inmate respondents believed that sexual relationships were based on manipulation rather than genuine affection or attraction.

Fleischer and Krienert (2006) explored the "socio-sexual" nature of prison culture for both incarcerated women and men, and suggested that women may experience sexual violence and coercion in ways not previously described. Both Owen (1998) and Fleischer and Krienert (2006) found that female prisoners could decline participation in sexual relationships, but that fear and lack of knowledge about "how to do time" often compromised their ability to say no to requests or pressure for sex.

Alarid (2000) suggests that some passive female inmates submit to verbal sexual coercion. In a case study, she reported the first person observations of one incarcerated woman who detailed her experiences of prison sexual victimization. According to this respondent, women were approached early in their prison sentence, but if they were "prison Christians" or made it clear that they didn't want to "play," they would be left alone. Alarid's respondent argued that it was the "stud" women who play the masculine role who were more likely to be the target of sexual aggression from "femmes" (those women who did not display masculine characteristics) because there were fewer of them. She also observed that many women, because of previous victimization and lack of healthy relationships on the outside, did not recognize the coercive nature of their prison relationships. Because most women capitulated to sexual coercion, force was unnecessary. Women entered into relationships because they wanted to "belong" to somebody to combat loneliness. Another reason, however, was that they were intimidated by threats of violence, or being "set up" (i.e., with contraband). Types of sexual coercion described

by Alarid's respondent included verbal sexual harassment, genital exhibition, and masturbation.

The concept that the "stud" or masculine woman was more likely to be the victim of sexual aggression seems to run counter to intuition as the general assumption has been that the "masculine" or "stud" inmate initiates the relationship (see a critical review of this assumption in Chesney-Lind & Eliason, 2006). Some support for the idea that "studs" do not necessarily act in a dominant or predatory role compared to "femmes" is given by Keys (2002) who found that there was no power differential between the two roles. He especially noted that this egalitarianism was quite different from the relationship between the "punk" and "wolf" role found in prisons for men.

In contrast, Trammell (2006) did describe the "stud" as the one who "calls all the shots" and several inmate narratives explained how weak women would "hook up" with a stronger, bigger woman who controlled her. On the other hand, one inmate narrative described an assault of an stud/masculine woman. The inmate described a woman who said she was a "dyke" and then refused to give oral sex to her "girlfriend" because she "really liked guys." This resulted in the girlfriend and others raping her with a curling iron, although the inmate respondent explained it was not rape because she "deserved it" for lying.

Alarid's (2000) respondent described preferential treatment by correctional officers toward "femmes" who looked more feminine. If no other evidence was available, "femmes" were more likely to be considered the victim rather than the aggressor, and "studs" spent more time in punitive segregation for fighting. Alarid concludes that unreciprocated love, jealousy, and sexual pressuring are the causes for most violence in women's prisons.

Greer's (2000) respondents also described sexual jealousy and the attempt to control partners as one of the main factors in prison violence. In fact, some of her respondents characterized the nature of the violence as similar to domestic violence on the street as this quote indicates:

> They fight … and it is jealous like…hollering at her, "you don't do this, you don't talk to her, you don't give her nothing, you don't take nothing, you do what I say, I am here for you." I don't think so. You know, I mean personally, I ate enough shit off men [not] to have a woman check [control] me (Greer, 2000, p. 458).

Smith (2006a & b) points out that a potential result of the PREA focus on sexual assault and victimization in men's and women's prisons is that consensual sexual activity between inmates will be targeted and punished by correctional authorities. She notes that sex may occur between female inmates for trade, freedom, transgression, safety, and love. According to Smith, sex is considered a fundamental right and, even though a prison sentence involves a great deal of limitations on one's freedom, it may be that individuals should retain this particular self expression. This principle should be kept in mind in developing policies and procedures designed to reduce sexual victimization in prison.

Staff perspectives

Owen and Wells (2005), two of this project's authors, conducted a series of structured focus group interviews with correctional staff regarding sexual victimization in women's prisons. Findings from these interviews include the following:

- Sexual assault training typically focuses on male-based information and staff receive very little information about the dynamics and prevention of sexual assault within facilities for women. Many staff from mixed or facilities for women indicated that they had had very little training on working with female inmates in general.
- Staff felt that sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence were relatively infrequent, but most felt that the actual occurrence was difficult to count.
- Staff in every facility discussed the role inmate culture plays in sexual violence in prison and jails. Definitions of "weak" and "tough" inmates shape the context of victimization and strong prohibitions against informing on another inmate inhibit staff response.
- Staff were aware of the processes known as "protective pairing" and "grooming" for sexual activities. Many suggested that a large part of sexual victimization was tied to "domestic violence" in both male and female institutions and rooted in relationships that may have begun as consensual and turned coercive over time.
- Staff in both facilities for men and women discussed the difficulty in distinguishing between consensual and coerced sexual relationships.
- Staff in both facilities for men and women also suggested that women with histories of prior victimization, either through incest, molestation, or other forms of sexual assault, were more vulnerable to in-custody assault.
- Many staff members described their experience with female "predatory inmates" and acknowledged that some women are aggressive in their pursuit of a relationship with other female inmates that may or may not involve coerced sexual acts.
- Staff acknowledged that while male staff involvement with female inmates was the more common occurrence, misconduct between female staff and inmates was also a possibility. Staff sexual misconduct was seen as a safety violation and contrary to the purpose of the job itself.
- Staff also expressed great concern over the validity of claims of staff sexual misconduct and the damage such false accusations could create. Credibility was also an issue in reports of staff sexual misconduct. Staff in every facility was very concerned that co-workers would be damaged by falsely accusations (Owen & Wells, 2005).

Staff sexual victimization

From the early 1900s to the late 1970s, female officers guarded most female prisoners in this country. Since the late 1970s, most states have allowed male officers to work in prisons for women. Today in many states, over 50% of correctional

officers in prisons for women are men (Pollock 2002). This has led to female inmates being patted down, and, in some cases, strip searched by male officers. When female inmates have challenged such treatment, utilizing the right to privacy and Eighth Amendment arguments, some courts have agreed that women and men are not “similarly situated.” Courts have acknowledged the fact that many women in prison have experienced sexual abuse by men, which arguably makes them different from male prisoners who are not as likely to have this history of victimization and, therefore, do not experience the same level of anxiety or violation as do women when undergoing a search conducted by a guard of the opposite sex (for a review of cases, see Pollock, 2002; Flesher, 2007). Standard policies and procedures in correctional settings (e.g., searches, restraints, and isolation) can have profound effects on women with histories of trauma and abuse, and they often act as triggers to re-traumatize women who have PTSD (Maeve, 2000). However, not all courts accept this argument and pragmatic concerns force prison administrators to utilize male officers for supervision in housing units, for transportation, and other duties that put them in positions of direct supervision over female inmates.

A few male (and female) officers have used their positions to perpetrate sexual abuse and exploitation of women in prison. The problem of correctional staff sexual misconduct in women’s correctional facilities has been identified by the media, the public, and human rights organizations. Almost every state has had a “sex scandal” involving officers and female inmates. In fact, the United States has been criticized in several international reports on the use of male guards to supervise female inmates and the documented incidents of sexual assault and coercion that have resulted (Amnesty International, 1999; Human Rights Watch, 1996). The policy of utilizing male officers to supervise, pat down, and strip search female inmates puts the United States in conflict with international treaties and the United Nations Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners (Flesher, 2007).

Misconduct can take many forms—including inappropriate language, verbal degradation, intrusive searches, unwarranted visual supervision, using goods and privileges to coerce cooperation in sexual activities, the use or threat of force, and physical rape (Human Rights Watch, 1996, Dumond, 2000; Siegal, 2001; Baro, 1997). Disrespectful, unduly familiar or threatening sexual comments are the most common forms of abuse, but women have been subject to coerced and forced assault as well.

In 1999, the General Accounting Office published a study on sexual misconduct by correctional staff in women’s prisons (GAO, 1999). This report noted that state laws and correctional policies changed in the 1990s in response to a perceived growing problem of staff sexual misconduct. The study examined the prison populations in California, Texas, the District of Columbia, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, finding that between 11% to 18% of the inmates’ allegations were substantiated and in very few cases were any staff member prosecuted. The study also noted that it was widely believed that staff sexual misconduct is underreported. Between 1995 and 1998, 506 allegations were recorded in the four correctional systems studied; however, report authors found that some states did not record all allegations.

It should be noted that female officers working in both men’s and women’s prisons have also been found to be involved in sexual misconduct. About half of all verified staff sexual misconduct is perpetrated by female staff members guarding male inmates (Marquart, Barnhill, & Balshaw-Biddle, 2001). However, the problem of more

coercive and/or assaultive offenses appears to occur between male staff and female inmates. The problem can be aggravated by poor grievance procedures, inadequate investigations, and staff retaliation against inmates or parolees who "blow the whistle."

Kubiak, Hanna, and Balton (2005) describe three case histories of women who were raped in prison by correctional staff members. The women had histories of sexual victimization and their reaction to the officers' sexual aggression could be described as passive acceptance. As one woman said in response to the male officer telling her he was going to have sex with her, "Yeah, right. Whatever." (Kubiak, Hanna, & Balton, 2005, p. 164). This fatalistic acceptance of sexual assault seems to be related to their histories of childhood sexual violence, reflecting their fear that the correctional officer—like the male adult when they were children—was omnipotent and would punish resistance. In their eyes, acceptance was simply the best approach in order to ensure overall safety. These inmates believed that if they reported the incidents, the officers and other staff members would retaliate.

Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson's (2000) findings indicated that 45% of reported incidents by inmates of sexual coercion involved staff as perpetrators. Wolff, et al. (2006, p. 840) found that staff-on-inmate sexual victimization was about one and one-half times higher (53/1000 vs. 34/1000) in the women's prison than in the men's prison. They also noted that younger inmates were significantly more likely to be victims of sexual victimization by staff. The Bureau of Justice Statistics found that the reported instances of staff sexual victimization ranged from 0 to 5.3% and reported non-consensual sexual acts ranged from 0 to 3.7% (Beck and Harrison, 2007).

Calhoun and Coleman (2002) studied staff-inmate sexual conduct in a female correctional facility in Hawaii. The authors argue that staff-inmate sexual contact is not a rare occurrence, but not publicly recognized. Their female respondents described three types of sexual abuse in prison: "trading," "love," and "in the line of duty." It is reported that female inmates engage in "trading" sexual acts to gain access to material goods or services regularly denied to inmates such as food, clothes, or drugs. Calhoun and Coleman (2002) suggest that inmate "trading" does not constitute consensual sexual acts because of the unequal power relationship between staff and inmates in the prison setting. As for the other two types of sexual misconduct, their respondents suggest that "love" between staff and inmates can occur but it is rare. The "in the line of duty" misconduct involved abuses during searches or pat downs. Female respondents indicated these searches often made them feel humiliated, sexualized, and powerless.

One important point to note is that female inmates are not a homogenous group of passive victims. Some do fall in love with correctional officers, some actively exploit male or female officers who fall in love with them, and some willingly participate in sexual banter. One female inmate describes one male officer's daily experience in the women's prison as characterized by "wolf whistles" and women "licking their lips, or "offering open mouths and tongues" while "flirting shamelessly with him." This officer was later indicted and convicted for sexual misconduct (Petersen, 2000). According to this inmate, female inmates use sex with staff members for physical affection, to secure lighter work details, special privileges, money, or contraband. Trammell (2006) also provided narratives of female inmates who described situations where male correctional staff members did not engage in sexual misconduct until

women started to flirt with them. According to these reports, most sexual contact between female inmates and staff members was consensual. If it is true that female inmates actively seek out sexual relationships with male staff members, it may be the case that such relationships are truly consensual; or it may be that such relationships can be understood as the tactics of the oppressed, a result of sexualized identity and low self image because of childhood sexual abuse, or a result of gender socialization. Regardless of motivation, sexual relationships with inmates are unprofessional, against policy, and, in most states, illegal, regardless of consent.

Official reports of sexual victimization (inmate-inmate or staff-inmate) are almost certain to be lower than the actual number of incidents. Inmates indicate in most studies that they would be unlikely to report any but the most extreme cases of sexual victimization. Calhoun and Coleman (2002) found that the female inmates in their study agreed that the consequences of exposing sexual assault are too costly to both the inmate and the staff, and therefore underreported. Hensley, Tewksbury, and Koscheski (2002) suggest that the lack of female inmate's reporting sexual coercion may be due to fear of repercussions, and wanting to protect their social image or reputation to other inmates because being a victim may be seen as a sign of weakness.

RISK INSTRUMENTS

One of the objectives of prison sexual victimization research is to identify predictive factors of assault. There are a few instruments that are currently used to assess the risk of general violence in prisons (Austin et al., 2006), but the goal of predicting who is likely to be violent or, alternatively, who might become a victim is far from being achieved. On-going research continues to improve all types of risk instruments (e.g., instruments predicting recidivism), however, there is considerable controversy whether risk instruments developed for men can successfully be used to predict risk for female offenders.

The *clinical approach* to prediction employs interviews, social histories, and psychological tests given by psychologists or psychiatrists, to make predictions on future offending. Typically, such characteristics as anti-social or anti-authority attitudes, pro-criminal associates, egocentric thinking, weak problem-solving, family conflict, risk-seeking, early misbehavior, below average verbal intelligence, poor school performance, troubled relationships, drug or alcohol abuse, and other characteristics are noted in an attempt to predict future violence. The *actuarial approach* predicts risk based on prior behavior and the behavior of those with similar characteristics (Van Voorhis, 2004). Both of these approaches have been used to predict offender recidivism. For instance, the Hare Psychopathy Checklist, the Violence Risk Appraisal Guide, and the Lifestyle Criminal Screening Form are some of the instruments that have been used to predict future violent crime (Kroner, et al., 2007). Risk instruments for sexual offenders, such as the Static-99, the Rapid Risk Assessment for Sexual Offense Recidivism, the Minnesota Sex Offender Screening Tool-Revised, and the Sexual Violent Risk-20, also attempt to predict the likelihood of recidivism (Kroner, et al., 2007).

In general, actuarial approaches have been found to be better predictors of recidivism than clinical assessments (Morgan, 1994; Sims & Jones, 1997; Hanson &

Bussier, 1998), but improvements are still needed. The *risk/need assessments* approach combines the two approaches by utilizing risk instruments that utilize static factors (demographic, file and historical information) and dynamic factors (as identified by personality tests and clinical interviews). Types of information collected include: physical health, vocational/financial situation, education, family and social relationships, residence and neighborhood, alcohol use, drug abuse, mental health, attitude, past and current criminal behavior. This approach (also called third generation assessment) of utilizing both actuarial and clinical assessments offers the greatest potential for accurate and useful assessment (Van Voorhis, 2004). Three instruments that are considered "third generation" are the Wisconsin Risk and Needs Assessment Instrument, the Community Risk-Needs Management Scale, and the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) (Van Voorhis, 2004).

Critics note that the current assessment approach ignores special issues of women and minorities, personal strengths, and justice concerns (Byrne & Taxman, 2005). Risk factors may or may not be the same for men and women. The pathways approach argues that different factors seem to be salient to women's crime, violent crime, and recidivism (Covington, 2001; Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003). Few studies have attempted to validate or replicate the risk instruments described above with female offenders. Earlier studies indicated that classification systems in use in prisons that were developed and validated with samples of male offenders "over-classified" female prisoners, meaning they indicated women needed more secure settings than probably necessary (Farr 2000; Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). It has been found that factors such as child abuse, mental health, substance abuse, and employment were stronger predictors of institutional behavior for women than were factors that were strong predictors for men, such as age, time to serve, crime of conviction and prior offenses (Van Voorhis & Presser, 2001). Other factors may also be risk factors for women, including marital status and suicide attempts, family structure of childhood home, childhood abuse, depression and substance abuse, single parenting, reliance on public assistance, dysfunctional relationships, and victimization (Van Voorhis, 2005; Blanchette, 2002).

In the few studies that have examined the predictive ability of instruments such as the LSI-R for female offenders, some researchers have found that it effectively predicts recidivism for women as well as for men (Coulson, et al., 1996; Lowenkamp, Holsinger & Latessa, 2001; Bonta, Pang, & Wallace-Capretta, 1995). Other actuarial instruments have also been found to predict future violence equally well for male and female offenders (Loza, et al., 2005). However, Holtfreter, Reisig and Morash (2004) found that the LSI-R was *not* effective in predicting women's recidivism among a community corrections sample of 134 female probationers and parolees because it did not factor in women's economic marginality. In a longitudinal study, they found that women who were given state support were 83% less likely to recidivate than those who did not receive economic support. Risk scores did not predict recidivism when poverty status was taken into account.

Reisig, Holtfreter, and Morash (2006) reported that the LSI-R was highly accurate in predicting recidivism for some women, but not others. This research follows Daly's (1992) "pathways" approach which identified several different pathways to crime for women:

- *street women* (who left abusive homes only to become addicts, prostitutes, drug dealers or thieves to survive);
- *drug connected* (who used drugs through significant others);
- *harmed and harming* (who had chaotic living situations with abuse),
- *battered women* (whose crime was only toward intimate partners); and
- *other* (women who were economically motivated, and lacked any notable abuse history; they were not violent, and had no identifiable problem with drugs or alcohol; some were economically marginalized, but not all).

Findings indicated that the LSI-R was successful in predicting recidivism for the economically motivated group in the "other" category, but over-classified the harmed and harming group of women, and under-classified drug connected women (based on their subsequent recidivism) (Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2006).

Current research, funded by the National Institute of Corrections (Van Voorhis, 2005), is concerned with testing whether the risk factors and needs identified by the LSI-R are predictive of women's behavior. The researchers have added a special addition to the LSI-R, to be completed only by female offenders, that includes measures assessing self-efficacy, self-esteem, parenting, relationships, abuse, and other factors. The study also collected additional information from female offenders such as children, marital status, education, public assistance, and other factors (Van Voorhis, 2005). Findings from this additional instrument indicate that the pathways approach is helpful in several ways. Wright, Salisbury, and Van Voorhis (2007) tested whether the pathways factors could predict prison misconduct. They found that the pathways model did predict prison misconduct, although this research did not separate violent from non-violent misconduct reports. The authors found that factors such as substance abuse, mental health, self concept, and relationship issues better predicted prison misconducts than using criminal history alone. This study used the gender-responsive addendum developed from the pathways literature, asking questions regarding self esteem, self efficacy, parenting problems, childhood and adult victimization, depression or anxiety, psychosis, and involvement in unsupportive relationships, in addition to more general prison classification items that measured antisocial attitudes, high family conflict, low family support, mental illness, and low anger control (Wright, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2007).

The researchers examined the relative predictive strength of pathways factors versus traditional factors. They found that in their sample of 272 female prisoners, with six month and 12 month measures of misconducts, many gender neutral and gender responsive factors were highly correlated with institutional misconduct, and coefficients for the pathways or gender responsive factors were as strong as or stronger than the gender neutral factors. The authors reported that, upon entry, women who reported more conflict in relationships exhibited less misconduct in prison. Wright, Salisbury, and Van Voorhis, 2007) speculated that these women had been in abusive relationships and found stability in prison away from the abuser. The researchers also found that self esteem, self efficacy, adult emotional abuse, and adult physical abuse were not significantly related to institutional misbehavior (note that this measure includes all forms of misbehavior, not just violence). The significant gender neutral needs were antisocial attitudes, employment and financial difficulties, family problems, mental illness, and anger. Factors that were not predictive of

institutional misconduct were antisocial friends, low education, and substance abuse (Wright, Salisbury, & Van Voorhis, 2007).

In another study of 156 women, researchers examined serious prison misconducts six months after intake, and also followed the women into the community 44 months after release (Salisbury, Van Voorhis, & Spiropoulos, 2008). The researchers had female inmates complete the LSI-R, the gender responsive (pathways) addendum, and the institutional risk score instrument, which included such items as history of institutional violence, severity of current offense, multiple convictions, severity of prior convictions, escape history, current or pending detainers, prior felony convictions, and duration of sentence. They found that, while the LSI-R more accurately predicted recidivism, it did not predict institutional misconducts as well as the gender responsive addendum. Further, the gender responsive needs scales were correlated with prison misconducts *and* recidivism. While mental health did not predict general misconducts, it did predict aggressive prison misconducts. Salisbury, Van Voorhis, and Spiropoulos (2008) identified pathways or gender responsive factors as:

- extensive traumatic and abusive histories;
- experiences of acute mental illness (depression, anxiety, PTSD);
- issues with self esteem and self-efficacy;
- overwhelming parental responsibility;
- dysfunctional relationships with intimates; and,
- substance abuse and the use of drugs as self medication.

These researchers pointed out those women who had relationships that were characterized by high co-dependency incurred more disciplinary infractions while incarcerated. Interestingly, higher self efficacy (confidence in achieving specific goals) was associated with a greater incidence of prison misconduct.

While the LSI-R is used in prison and community settings to predict prison misconduct and recidivism upon release, the Risk Assessment Scale for Prison (RASP) was specifically developed to measure the risk of violent incidents in prison (Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007). This instrument is based on an actuarial model, looking at such factors as age, education, prior prison confinement, offender type (property or violent crime), and sentence type (life without parole). It has shown modest success in predicting which inmates commit violent disciplinary infractions. The two strongest predictors of who is likely to engage in violent infractions is age (e.g., younger offenders are more likely to engage in violence) and education (e.g., those with higher than 9th grade level are *less* likely to engage in violence) (Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007). Having a violent crime of conviction was not found to be predictive of violent infractions, but having a short sentence was. Both of these factors run counter to typical prison classification systems. The authors admit, however, that the classification system itself may be the reason why these inmates did not commit more violent infractions. According to the researchers, the scale was developed using exclusively male offenders, but in a replication study in another state with both male and female prisoners, the scale predicted violence better for female prisoners than for male prisoners (Cunningham & Sorensen, 2007, p.261).

The Prison Adjustment Scale (PAQ) measures prison adjustment (Warren et al., 2004). This scale defines adjustment, not only by infractions, but also by a range of

other measures that target "distress" and "conflict." The instrument measures the extent to which inmates report discomfort around inmates or correctional officers, feelings of anger, fear of being attacked, illness and injury, trouble sleeping, physical fights and arguments, and instances of feeling taken advantage of by others. This instrument also includes questions on exercise, food, activity, privacy, understanding prison rules, presence of good friends, and opportunities. Warren, et al.,(2004) evaluated whether this instrument can be used to predict violent victimization in prison by constructing a prison violence inventory. This measure included whether and how often the inmate had been a victim or perpetrator of a range of violent incidents including: threats, throwing objects, pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping, kicking, biting, or strangling another inmate or guard, hitting with a fist or beating someone, forcing someone to have sex, or threatening someone with a weapon. Researchers obtained this violence inventory from a female inmate sample, along with the Brief Symptom Inventory's (BSI) scales of Depression, Anxiety, and Somatization, and the DSM-IV Personality Disorders Screening Questionnaire (Warren et al., 2004).

In this research, it was found that, for almost half of the female inmates, many of the measures, including the fear of violence measures, were no worse in prison than when they were in the community. For instance, 95% of the women said that fighting, 94% said fear of being injured, 77% said fear of being attacked, and 77% said heated arguments were the same or worse outside of prison (Warren et al., 2004, p. 634). The researchers developed a Conflict Scale (comprised of items measuring feelings of anger, arguing, fighting, and being injured), and a Distress Scale (comprised of items for discomfort, sleep problems, sickness, and fear of being attacked or taken advantage of). Findings indicated that high scores on the conflict scale were associated with high scores on the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) Hostility scale and low scores on the BSI Phobic Anxiety scale, presence of a personality disorder, having been married, being the victim of threats and physical assaults before age 18, time served, and being incarcerated for a violent crime (Warren et al., 2004, p. 639).

Thus far, designing an instrument to specifically predict the risk of sexual assault in prison has not been attempted. One of the problems of predicting sexual violence is that low base rates make any predictions of who is likely to assault or be assaulted extremely problematic. Some characteristics of male victims are fairly well-known (young, white, small, effeminate, homosexual, convicted of a sex crime, non-gang-affiliated), as are the characteristics of male assailants (black, older, gang-affiliated, serving a second or third prison term) (Austin et al, 2006). However, there is a high risk of false positives when predicting assailants. Also, because these profiles have been developed with male inmates, they are not applicable to women.

Another concern with risk instruments is that institutional factors may be as important, or even more important, than individual characteristics. Austin et al. (2006) noted that the varied rates across prisons in the same state indicated that perhaps management "style" might influence the amount of sexual victimization. Cunningham and Sorensen (2007) also reviewed research that indicated that institutional factors, such as type of staff, produced stronger correlations than did individual predictors.

It should be noted that a risk instrument may be directed at the individual level or an institutional level. Some instruments may measure whether any given inmate has a high potential for being an aggressor (or victim). These risk instruments need to

measure static (actuarial) and dynamic (personality and social) factors that have been associated with violence. Each individual is accorded a "risk score" that can then be used to assign custody level and the like. Another type of risk is whether a particular prison or housing unit within a prison has a high potential for violence. These instruments may collect measures of individuals in that environment, but also will measure environmental and institutional factors. The focus is on the climate or level of potential violence in the institution. The Moos Social Climate Scale is an example of this type of instrument (Moos, 1968). At this point, correctional authorities have no validated empirical instrument that measures risk of sexual violence for women's prisons or jails. One thing that seems clear is that any instrument should include both static and dynamic factors of individuals, and also include environmental factors that may contribute to the risk of violence. Support for this proposition comes from a variety of models of violence and safety summarized in the next section.

THE ECOLOGICAL, ESCALATION, AND SANCTUARY MODELS

Our approach suggests that violence, including sexual violence, is an interaction between two individuals, both of whom are influenced by environmental factors that support or suppress violence. In each of the models described below, there is an attempt to provide an analysis of how aggressive victimization, including sexual victimization, occurs.

The Ecological Model

An Ecological Model of violence presumes that individual factors interact with environmental factors to create the potential for victimization. Although there are a number of researchers who have developed slightly different Ecological Models, all of them separate out individual from external factors that contribute to violence. Models typically differ in the number of layers of external factors and where specific influences are placed (i.e., whether family dysfunction is placed in individual or relationship levels; or whether patriarchy is placed in societal or group level categories). Heise (1998), in a discussion of violence against women, utilizes an Ecological Model that is comprised of the following elements:

Personal History

- Witnessing parental marital violence
- Child abuse
- Absent or rejecting father

Microsystem

- Male dominance and control of wealth in family
- Use of alcohol
- Marital/verbal conflict

Exosystem

- Low socioeconomic status/unemployment
- Isolation
- Delinquent peers

Macrosystem

- Male entitlement
- Masculinity link to aggression and dominance
- Rigid gender roles
- Acceptance of interpersonal violence
- Acceptance of physical chastisement

The value of such models is that the various factors that are associated with the likelihood of any type of victimization can be better understood as operating in relationship to each other. Abuse in the family, for instance, has a different effect when it is coupled with a cultural acceptance of male dominance. Addressing individual factors of violence alone may not be successful if underlying group and societal influences are ignored.

The Ecological Model of sexual victimization prevention promoted by the Centers for Disease Control (2006, also see World Health Organization, 2002) applies an ecological approach specifically to the likelihood of sexual assault. In this model, the following factors are discussed as influencing potential victimization (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004):

- *individual factors* (such as attitudes and beliefs that support sexual violence, impulsive and antisocial behavior, childhood history of victimization, and alcohol and drug use);
- *interacting with relationship factors* (such as unsupportive, violent or patriarchal family environments);
- *in the context of community factors* (tolerance of sexual assault, with weak sanctions); and
- *societal factors* (inequalities based on gender and race, and cultural beliefs about sex).

The value of this model is obvious in that it includes factors that may influence the likelihood of victimization that extend beyond individual characteristics. We utilize this model as a framework to analyze and present our findings.

The Escalation Model

Edgar and Martin (2003; also, see Edgar, O'Donnell, & Martin, 2003) examined violence in prison by researching the "dynamics of interactions that lead" to the violent incident. They found that violence resulted from an interactive process between two prisoners and argue that the following factors comprise this interactive process:

- deconstruction – of the accounts provided by participants;
- spark – the trigger that immediately preceded the use of force;
- interests – what each party wanted to gain;
- interpretations – evidence of how each saw the other's intentions;

- catalysts – behavior and language that aggravated conflicts;
- motivations – feelings driving the behavior;
- environment – situational influences, including peer pressures;
- relationships – between the participants before and after the incident;
- purposes – intended purposes of injurious force; and
- prevention – what each could have done (or did) to prevent violence.

Edgar and Martin found that fights, assaults and other disputes can be analyzed in terms of the following variables: the structural setting, interests, catalysts, interpretations, purposes, and the power relations between prisoners. These six factors, forming the basic components of every conflict, are inter-related so that each influences the others. Interpretation by the participants is critical in determining if any conflict results in physical violence. More specifically, these researchers found that elements of the prison social structure created the potential for violence, including material deprivations, competition for scarce resources, restrictions on movement inhibiting one's ability to avoid other prisoners, and the lack of overall privacy. Prison culture and its norms regarding respect and "not backing down" also contributed to violence.

In their study of a woman's prison, Edgar and Martin found that about half of the conflicts involved a material interest, such as drugs, personal possessions, games, food, tobacco, and phone cards. Non-material interests (self-respect, honor, fairness, loyalty, personal safety, or privacy) were important in all incidents (Edgar & Martin, 2003, p. v).

One of the many insights that can be gleaned from the Escalation Model is that victimization can be better understood not as a solitary event, but, rather, a dynamic occurrence arising from a history between the two individuals who are both influenced by elements of their environment.

The Sanctuary Model

S. Bloom (1997, 2008) argues that prior life experiences and trauma affect present behavior; traumatized individuals have difficulty staying safe, controlling their emotions, and may be so numb that they cannot access their emotions. In order for change to occur and victims to move beyond trauma, they must find "sanctuary." She further describes the four levels of safety or sanctuary necessary. These levels are:

- Psychological safety
- Physical safety
- Social safety
- Moral/Ethical safety.

Psychological safety is defined as the ability to feel safe, to rely on one's own ability to self-protect against any destructive impulses coming from within oneself or deriving from other people, and to keep oneself out of harm's way (S. Bloom, 2008). She further notes that trauma victims, particularly those who have experienced such violence as children, have a diminished sense of self and a loss of self efficacy. She

also sees that relationships become sabotaged as a result of the profound tendency to reenact in the present, relational patterns from the past (S. Bloom, 2008).

Physical safety is defined by an absence of any kind of violence (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual, or verbal) including suicidality and self-destructive behavior; freedom from substance abuse and other addictions; healthy, safe, sexual behavior; the avoidance of unnecessary risks; and maintaining good health practices. However, physical safety alone does not constitute a safe environment for growth (S. Bloom, 2008).

Social safety describes the sense of feeling safe with other people. In the Sanctuary Model, traumatized individuals are seen as recreating the relational patterns they have learned as children until they are afforded an opportunity to change these patterns. Social safety involves being around people who are not victimizing and, preferably, do not have issues themselves which would lead to the creation of unhealthy relationships (S. Bloom, 2008).

A morally safe environment is one that permits an ongoing ethical dialogue and a search for higher meaning and purpose. A morally healthy environment is one were power-holders do not abuse their power and the environment is one that promotes "learning, growth, and change" (S. Bloom, 2008).

As evidenced by multiple studies, the typical woman in prison has experienced a high level of violence and trauma. Therefore, we see that the Sanctuary Model is extremely applicable to female prisoners. Improving safety for women includes support and respect, and providing opportunities for healthy relationships with appropriate boundaries and healthy resolution of conflict. Once again, the value of this model is that it places the individual in a context and recognizes that for individual change to occur, the environment must be conducive to personal safety and growth. In contrast, environments that do not provide moral, social, or even physical safety will result in the traumatized individual recreating negative relationships. The application of this model to prisons is clear. Since many women in prison have experienced trauma, the ability to move past their victimization and create healthy relationships is compromised by the lack of safety in the prison environment.

CONCLUSION

Female offenders are different from male offenders in family background, criminal history, drug and alcohol use, and prior sexual and physical victimization. Their current lives are shaped by their past history. Violence in women's prisons is rarely stranger violence and, more often, takes place within relationships. Prior histories of intimate partner violence seem to be repeated in the prison environment. Cultural and subcultural factors also affect the potential for violence, i.e., living in a subculture where "respect" is given extraordinary emphasis can affect women's tendencies to use violent means to protect their self-image.

As demonstrated here, the prison and jail environment also seems to be a factor in the potential for violence. Prisons for men and women are different. Early studies indicated that women's prisons were much less violent than men's prisons, although this may be changing today. The most recent prevalence study for sexual

victimization showed a fairly large range of reported victimization. In the 15 women's prisons surveyed, between 3.4 and 10.8% of women reported sexual victimization by other inmates, and between 0 and 5.3% reported sexual victimization by staff members (Beck & Harrison, 2008).

As this review suggests, individual factors alone are not sufficient to understand vulnerabilities and victimization. While they may have a significant effect on any given woman's potential for violence and conflict, individual factors such as pre-prison victimization are mitigated or aggravated by contextual elements in the environment, including relationship, group, and environmental factors. Our detailed findings from the focus group and our preliminary validation work describes and attempts to measure these correlates of violence and safety in women's correctional facilities. In the next chapter, a summary of our major findings is presented.

GENDERED VIOLENCE IN WOMEN'S PRISONS AND JAILS 3

In this chapter, we will detail the types of violence described by our focus group participants, review and adapt the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC, 2004) model of sexual victimization, and identify focus group findings as they fit within this model of victimization. As such, this section overlaps significantly with the detailed presentation of the focus groups described in Part II of this report.

PERCEPTIONS OF VIOLENCE

Women enter jails and prisons with a range of expectations about their safety and vulnerabilities. Our sampling procedure allowed us to capture this range of experience by including women who were coming to prison or jail for the first time, those who were serving a second or a third term, as well as those who had lived in prison for decades. In the jails, we also interviewed women who were awaiting trial and those who had been convicted and were serving time in the jail or were waiting for transfer to a state prison. Within these varied focus groups, we collected detailed descriptions of the factors that contribute to the creation of violence and safety in the jail and prison environment.

There was little consistency in inmate or staff perceptions of prevalence or changes over time in the rate of violence. Opinions varied across the states and different facilities, and even within a facility. This inconsistency was apparent in inmate focus groups as well as staff focus groups. Some inmates felt their facility was safer now than in the past; others said the facility was increasingly dangerous. Staff also voiced this mixed perspective. We concluded that perceptions of safety were most influenced by immediate experiences and housing (or duty) assignments. No general consensus emerged as to whether prisons and jails for women were safer or more dangerous today than in the past.

We found that violence in women's jails and prisons is not a dominant aspect of everyday life, but exists as a potential, shaped by time, place, prison culture, interpersonal relationships, and staff actions. As we will argue throughout the report, on-going tensions and conflicts, lack of economic opportunity, and few therapeutic options to address past victimization or to treat destructive relationship patterns contribute to the potential for violence. We also found that "place" has a significant role in perceptions of safety. In every study site, some facilities and living units were seen to be more dangerous than others.

In our discussions with inmates and correctional staff, there was general consensus among inmates and staff regarding the causes of fighting and other forms of violence in the prison. Generally, both groups believed that jealousy, debts, and disrespect were the major catalysts for violence. We contend, however, that these three contributors to violence exist within the framework of the four levels outlined in the

Ecological Model (CDC, 2004) and are affected by the Escalation Model (Edgar & Martin, 2003).

Jealousy was a pervasive theme when women talked about violence. The women's jail and prison population is characterized by those with long histories of abuse and victimization; most of this past trauma remains untreated. Few programs or services exist that address these personal histories, which can result in intense relationships with other women with similar histories. As detailed in the literature review, untreated trauma contributes to symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and exacerbates inabilities to have healthy relationships.

Debt and its connection to conflict was also a pervasive theme in all study sites. Hustling and participating in the prison economy of "trafficking and trading" can lead to conflict and escalate to violence. The haves and the have-nots in prison create economic crimes in the same way they do on the outside: There is theft, fraud, and extortion by offenders who want what others have. Economic exploitation and debts are common in a jail or prison environment where many women have no outside support, minimum options to earn money, and desire both legitimate and contraband goods and services.

The third major factor discussed by our participants was disrespect. This concept, also identified in the literature review, concerns a wide range of behaviors and refers to interpersonal behavior that impinges upon another woman's status, reputation, sense of self, personal space, or rights of "citizenship." Disrespect is closely tied to the subcultural norms and values of the prison and jail world. Idle female inmates, either due to a lack of available programming or individual resistance to such participation, are most likely to participate in risky behaviors and relationships that contribute to the potential for being victimized or being a victimizer.

Staff behavior toward female inmates also contributes to a context where violence is either a greater or lesser possibility. In terms of staff, the most common problem reported by the women participants was "down talk" or disrespectful and derogatory verbal interactions. We found that the Escalation Model (Edgar & Martin, 2003) fit our findings of both staff-to-inmate and inmate-to-inmate violence, with verbal conflict sometimes escalating to physical violence.

CONTINUUMS OF VIOLENCE

We learned that violence occurred on a continuum, ranging from verbal intimidation to homicide. Violence at the lower end of the continuum was most prevalent and the type of violence found at the extreme end was quite rare. While our findings were consistent with prior research that indicated violence in women's prisons was not as severe or as prevalent as in men's institutions, we did find that some forms of violence were particular to women's facilities and required their own definitions. In the following sections, we describe the four forms of violence found in women's facilities:

- Verbal conflict
- Economic conflict and exploitation
- Physical violence
- Sexual violence

VERBAL CONFLICT

Verbal conflict over “anything and everything” was the most commonly reported form of conflict throughout the interviews. Sometimes the focus group participants' descriptions seemed stereotypical, e.g., verbal arguments were often explained as the inability for women to “get along” or related to the “female” nature.

Verbal arguments can be placed into five general categories: 1) those grounded in the everyday tensions of living in close and often uncomfortable surroundings; 2) those that derived from other forms of conflict, such as gossip, debts, “room politics” or “disrespect”; 3) troubled relationships that involved on-going conflict; 4) those based on establishing or confirming a reputation as “one not to be messed with”, or protective coloring as a way of “standing up” or “pushing back” to a perceived threat; or 5) those that were an indirect means to another end. This last category can be seen as “instrumental arguments” and included “dry-snitching” (drawing staff attention without actually informing) as a means to change housing or get removed from an undesirable program or job; or verbal intimidation or pressure to obtain goods or favors. Unlike conflicts in male prisons, where verbal arguments often lead to physical violence, most of these verbal fights remained as unpleasant situational skirmishes. Threats of physical violence, however, often accompanied other forms of verbal intimidation, as in the case of “bullying” to control the room, for example. The interviews contained few reports of verbal coercion relating to sexual pressure.

The frequency of these arguments also contributed to a normalizing effect (“It is an everyday thing around here”), with most inmates and staff routinely ignoring them. This was particularly true of relationship-based arguments and those where women were trying to “prove a point.” The focus group participants did acknowledge that if one was not a direct participant in a verbal argument, it was important to stay out of it and “mind one's own business” for personal protection. The women also recognized that every argument had the potential to escalate into a more severe form of violence.

Verbal conflict was also said to be part of everyday interactions between female inmates and staff. Few women seemed bothered by their experiences with insulting or demeaning conversations among inmates. This was not the case with staff verbal abuse, with the power differential between inmates and staff shaping much different outcomes. Yelling and screaming by staff members was seen to be a too-common occurrence that, in addition to being unpleasant and unprofessional, was potentially damaging to women who had not recovered from prior abuse, violent victimization, and trauma. Threats, profanity, name-calling, sexual jokes, and misanthropy were forms of verbal abuse frequently committed by staff. This disrespectful, demeaning, and derogatory language was seen by almost all women as the most common—and the most disturbing—form of verbal conflict in these facilities. To be sure, not all staff were said to engage in insulting and damaging commentary. Those staff members who approached women in this unprofessional manner were seen to have a negative effect on the facility's social and emotional climate disproportionate to their numbers.

The uneven power relations between inmates and staff also shaped more serious outcomes related to verbal conflict. Verbal jousting between women and staff often took an ugly turn when staff members stopped “just playing” and the event escalated into a disciplinary incident. A verbal conflict over complying with an order could lead to a use of force by a staff member. The focus group findings indicated that most

serious physical violence between inmates and between inmates and staff escalated from verbal conflict. This was consistent with prior findings by other researchers (Edgar and Martin, 2003; Torres, 2008).

ECONOMIC CONFLICT AND EXPLOITATION

The second most common form of conflict reported in the interviews was economic exploitation. While not typically defined as a form of violence *per se*, such economic conflict contributed both to a diminished perception of safety overall and to the potential for more serious forms of violence. Economic exploitation took multiple forms: Theft was a common occurrence and included stealing possessions when the owner was absent; "borrowing" without any intent to return; or boldly commandeering a possession by directly confronting the owner. The interviews provided some evidence of women avoiding other forms of conflict by "buying their way out" of trouble, but there were few reports of paying for protection from sexual or other forms of violence. Extortion of women who were more materially advantaged and vulnerable, either through demands or through exploitative personal relationships, was more common. Verbal actions, such "begging" or "sweet-talking," "pressuring," or "intimidating" another woman out of her belongings, commissary purchases, or packages was also frequently mentioned.

Known in some systems as "trafficking and trading," the inmate economy and corresponding debt contributes significantly to potential violence and conflict. Debts were very frequently mentioned as the source of violence among women inmates. Debts can occur over failure to pay for services, such as braiding hair or laundry, over commissary items, or borrowing. Debts over contraband, such as tobacco or drugs, were seen to be very serious. Gambling debts were seldom mentioned overall, but common types of debts differed somewhat between the various focus group locations.

Debts also escalated through the rules of the prison economy; "doubling" requires exponential payment when deadlines are not met. Women who accumulated this type of debt were seen to have "put themselves in that situation" and there was little sympathy when describing the physical punishments that some debtors experienced. Some interpersonal relationships were also seen as economic exploitation, although which direction the exploitation developed was unclear; some descriptions identified women with resources as exploiting those without for friendship and affection, while others described exploiters as those without resources who targeted "rich" women for intimidation, coercing them to enter into relationships to gain access to their commissary.

Like verbal conflict, economic conflict also had a potential for escalation to more severe forms of violence. Retaliation for theft, reacting to extortion, or settling debts was said to lead to verbal threats and physical violence. Sexual violence as punishment or payment was rarely mentioned in the interviews.

Staff economic exchanges occurred in two general forms. In its milder form, staff would offer women desired goods, such as "street" food or coffee, or increased privileges, such extra phone calls, to entice them to do extra work, or as a show of favoritism. The more severe form involved a continuum of sexual exploitation which ranged from having women show their breasts to sexual acts in exchange for scarce

material goods, contraband, or additional privileges. Women told us "the going rate" for certain items or privileges, and often said that these were fair exchanges where they did not feel exploited. In the economic scarcity of the jail and the prison, we were told that limited opportunity to earn money and procure both necessary and desired goods was one primary reason women participated in these sexual exchanges with staff.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Most women felt that the potential for physical violence and the fact that fights "could kick off at any time" was more worrisome than actual combat. Physical violence most often took the form of fights between two women. These fights included slapping, pushing, hair pulling, punching, kicking, or gouging. Often, fights were brief and those that occurred in public areas or in the view of staff were seen as symbolic, much like the verbal conflict described above. These types of physical fights involved "making a point" or "taking a stand" so one would not appear "weak" or vulnerable. Also, similar to verbal conflict, instrumental fights were sometimes motivated by a desire to change housing units, get "kicked out" of a program, or in extreme cases, join a romantic partner in disciplinary housing. Serious fighting was almost always said to occur away from any staff member's view and took place in private, such as cells, rooms, showers, or isolated locations on the recreation yard.

Most fights did not involve weapons and rarely involved more than two women. Unlike men, the use of prison made weapons, such as "shanks," was rare with "weapons of convenience" used in the rare case of weapon-involvement. Staff members were likely to characterize the majority of fights as "mutual combat," between two equally matched opponents. Both the inmate and the staff participants acknowledged that fights were most likely to occur between women in troubled relationships, although fights could also occur between cellmates or others who had some type of conflict. Participants suggested that "weak" women "who did not know they were supposed to fight back" were also threatened and sometimes physically assaulted.

Random physical attacks by strangers were said to be very rare; but again, women told us that the potential for random violence was part of prison life. Like conflict related to economics, women also suggested that most women involved in fights "put themselves in that situation" through their own behaviors and actions. Although extremely rare, our interviews contained descriptions of serious and extreme physical violence between female inmates that resulted in injury, disfigurement and, atypically, death. Across the different study sites, we heard accounts of high-profile cases that were offered as precautionary tales about the potentially violent relationships that can occur among women offenders.

Violence involving staff was also described in the interviews. A few staff members described serious assaults by female inmates and a few inmates described serious physical assaults by staff members. Again fitting the escalation pattern, most violence perpetuated against staff began with an inmate's refusal to comply with an order, but occurred after a build-up of interpersonal or verbal conflict.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence can also be placed upon a continuum. Consistent with the BJS prevalence data (Beck & Harrison, 2006), violent sexual attacks were said to be rare, with abusive sexual language or contacts more prevalent for both inmate-inmate and staff-inmate victimizations. While women new to incarceration said they were initially worried about sexual assault, the majority of those interviewed found this worry to be unfounded over time. One woman captured this view by saying, while she had seen many incidents of (non-sexual) physical violence, it was "nothing like the rapes and stuff in the movies." We did collect multiple reports of mild forms of sexual coercion, involving flattery, verbal pressure and unwanted touching. Verbal threats of sexual violence were also described to us. Most women indicated that they eventually learned how to avoid these situations and those women known to be sexually aggressive. Accounts of sexual violence between female inmates were almost always grounded in personal relationships, following the pattern of interpersonal violence in the community. Our focus group participants reported that, while sexual violence was rare, it was most likely to occur in the context of an on-going, violent relationship.

We could not determine the level of "protective pairing" present in jails and prisons. Generally, participants did suggest that young, naïve, or scared offenders entered into relationships with more aggressive women, offering commissary and sexual intimacy in return for protection. Yet, female inmates typically saw these relationships as consensual.

We have constructed a "continuum of sexual coercion" that describes the sexual victimization that occurs in women's facilities. In this continuum, no activity is necessarily exclusive of any other. It was more often the case that a range of escalations and "grooming" behaviors coerced a woman into the victim role. Once she became the submissive partner, the aggressor may move on to another victim.

A continuum of sexual victimization can be constructed as follows:

- Sexual comments and touching
- Sexual pressure or intimidation
- Stalking and "Fatal Attraction"
- Sexual Aggressors
- Sexual Violence in Relationships
- Sexual Assaults

Sexual comments and touching

The least serious form of sexual victimization described in the interviews was verbal, e.g., referring to another woman's body or making sexual innuendos. The BJS data found that abusive sexual contacts were the most common form of sexual violence reported by women in their national sample. Sexual "horseplay" or touching a woman's body in a non-violent (but uninvited and unwanted) manner is also a relatively mild form of victimization. Note, however, that unwanted hugging, and other forms of touching, were described and interpreted by our participants as a form of

aggression, leading to feelings of vulnerability. A custody staff person from a prison described this behavior:

> *[The aggressive inmate] will get very close in, very close. Then, they will touch their leg and give them an embrace. There are two types of embraces. Here, an open embrace is fine. It is not so much that it is mutual, but that it is open. The other is one arm around the neck. Then they bring them down, almost into a head-lock. I do martial arts and that is one of the controls. [The aggressor] can smell you and you are either going to cock back and pound on them or you are going to submit. It is real subtle.*

An inmate participant offered this description:

> *Sometimes I've seen girls who don't like to be touched and [the aggressive inmate] will touch them in certain ways. They might slap them in the ass, or they grab their titties. The woman feels violated. We might be afraid to take showers [because] we are going to be looked at.*

Sexual pressure or intimidation

Sexual pressure occurs when a woman is asked repeatedly to become involved romantically or sexually with another inmate. Some women described incidents where the target feared that she would be hurt or "set up" if she didn't enter into the relationship. At first, most of our participants said that sexual intimidation was very rare. But, in further discussion, some women ventured that it was "hard to know" if women were coerced or entered into such relationships voluntarily. As mentioned previously, many of the relationships might be considered an exchange where each party benefits in some way. It may be, however, that intimidation was used to convince the other party to agree to the exchange. We did note that in those facilities that had PREA inmate education, women were much more cognizant of the possibility of coercion in such relationships.

One woman said:

> *I've basically seen everything from simple physical assault to being cut. I've never seen any type of rape or sexual violence. Well, in some sense, [I have seen] sexual intimidation.*

Even relationships that appear consensual may have some element of coercion as suggested in this remark:

> *It can be a consensual relationship but you really aren't ready to go that far. But they keep pushing it. I was in a situation where several inmates were trying to force me to be in a relationship that was more than friends. Then she said, "Girl, we are going to hit you with a cup." She is always trying to come at me real aggressive like and she is trying to bump and run with me all the time*.

Staff also recognized that some women may be coerced or pressured into relationships, as suggested in this staff comment:

> *In the female setting, you don't have a lot of direct actions, but there is a lot of coercion. It is implied coercion and not a lot of direct threat.*

Stalking and fatal attraction

A particular type of sexual pressure or intimidation occurs in so-called "fatal attraction" cases or "fatals," named after the movie of the same name that involved a stalker who would not give up her quest for a love interest. In these cases, one woman is enthralled with another and seeks a sexual liaison at any cost. Our participants distinguished these "fatals" from "hustlers," "bullies" or sexual aggressors who target vulnerable inmates for gain. This inmate offered her observation of the "fatal":

> *[The fatal] said first she was going to beat her up and then she said she was going to take her to Seg with her. That is real easy to do. I don't think that this is fair because this lady [being pursued] is trying to break away, and this fatal one is trying to take her to Seg.[The fatal] probably figures that if she takes her to Seg, she can take time to talk to her and, at the least, she can keep her away from everyone else back there, too*.

Sexual aggressors

In some instances, women described certain individuals in the prison as "predators" in the same manner that the "booty bandits" exist in men's prisons. These descriptions were not common, but they were mentioned. In one system, staff were asked what percent were violent aggressors. The estimates were fairly consistent at about 5% to 10% of the female population belonging to the aggressive category, with victims (sometimes called "rabbits") being 10% to 25%. Again, however, the word "predator," "aggressor," or similar terms referred to all forms of victimization, not just sexual victimization. A few of our participants described situations where aggressive women forced themselves on unwilling partners solely for sex, rather than primarily for access to commissary or other goods. In responding to another participant who said, "There is no forced sex here," another woman remarked:

> *I am going to disagree with that. There is this lady that forces herself on people. But she knows who to pick. But it is not prominent because it's not like the men.*

One staff member said that sexual aggression was worse in the women's prison than in the men's prisons:

> *I locked up an inmate for being a sexually violent predator. One inmate was holding the other down and sexually assaulting her with objects. She was just really bad. But good at getting people to help her. Here, these sexually devious ones seem to get together. I know that sexual deviance here far outweighs the men's facilities. It is bad.*

Sexual violence in relationships

Most of the descriptions of forced sex took place within an intimate relationship. Although two women may be involved in an on-going, seemingly consensual sexual relationship, violence was possible when one partner is not interested in sex at that moment, and the other partner becomes abusive. This comment illustrated this situation:

> *A lady was getting beat up, because she did not want to have sex with her girlfriend that night. Her girlfriend said, "Suck on me," and she did not want to suck on her.*

At another site, this explanation was offered:

> *You have a lot of women in here who think they are men. They want to be dominant over everything. Maybe she wasn't feeling it that night [sexually interested], but the other will say, "Who are you to tell me 'No'?"*

Sexual assaults

At the most serious end of the coercion continuum, forced sex occurs. Most women had only heard of rapes or assaults in prison; very few had seen a rape personally. In most situations, women said the motivation for the sexual assault was unclear. Victims were usually described as young or small. We did hear rare reports of sexual assault for retaliation for some personal, social or economic transgression. Our participants believed that a sexual assault was often the result of the victim's actions, as suggested in this example:

> *It is always behind [caused by] something. They stick a plunger in you or whatever. [Because] you stole something; [because] you messed with someone's girlfriend.*

Most often, descriptions of sexual assault were presented as occurring in other prisons and jails or in the past. Like Fleischer and Krienert (2006) found, most of these accounts had the character of stories or prison myths rather than first-person reports. As one woman said, "I've heard that women got raped with the toilet brushes. It's not fiction, but it's in the past."

Many women agreed with the view that sexual assaults were about power, control and humiliation, as described here:

> *There was one incident two years ago. They humiliated the girl. They made [her] give two or three of them oral sex. But it is about power and humiliation.*

STAFF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND VICTIMIZATION

As mentioned above, the most common form of misconduct by staff seemed to be verbal abuse (referring to women in derogatory terms and yelling or screaming at them). We also received a few descriptions of staff members who seemed to have a pattern of utilizing greater than necessary force; however, the focus group discussions most often centered on sexual victimization involving staff members. Such victimization was perceived as not as common as what had occurred in the past. In their descriptions, our participants mentioned verbal harassment, such as inappropriate but seemingly flattering remarks ("You are too pretty to be in prison."); unprofessional conjecture ("What I'd like to do with a body like that."); and sexual solicitation "("You know you want it"). These interactions had an unnerving effect on women's overall well-being and contributed to a generalized feeling of vulnerability. Like sexually aggressive inmates, most of the sexually aggressive staff members had public reputations as "perverts" whom women took pains to avoid. Sexual relationships between staff members and female inmates, while acknowledged to be "wrong," were perceived as a commercial exchange, with both parties often seeing them as a fair trade.

Our findings show that staff-inmate relationships are interrelated with other forms of victimization. For instance, situations described included cases where a staff member in a relationship with an inmate became jealous over her relationship with another inmate and so used excessive force on her; a staff member in a relationship with an inmate was married to another correctional officer, who found out and retaliated against inmate; and, a staff member had relationships with two inmates who found out and assaulted each other.

In the same way that inmate-on-inmate sexual victimization can be described as occurring along a continuum of coercion, so, too, can staff misconduct. We present here a continuum of staff sexual misconduct that includes:

- Love and seduction
- Inappropriate comments and conversation
- Sexual requests
- "Flashing," voyeurism and touching
- Abuse of search authority
- Sexual exchange
- Sexual intimidation
- Sex without physical violence
- Sex with physical violence

Love and seduction

In any setting where adults are in close proximity over time, there is the possibility for mutual attraction, even when one party happens to be an officer. It should be noted that love relationships were described with male and female officers. Instances were described where an officer had fallen in love with an inmate, an inmate fell in love with an officer, or the two parties fell in love with each other. In the first two situations, the individual in love may be used and exploited by the other person.

Even in the rare case where both parties are sincere in their feelings, relationships between staff and inmates never end well, as described here:

> *They had a five year relationship. He would key her out at night and then he started dating a girl from the free world and she got mad. He got walked off and now she is filing a lawsuit.*

Inappropriate Comments and Conversation

As with inmate-on-inmate sexual violence, the least serious type of victimization, and the most common as reported in our inmate focus groups, is inappropriate comments and conversation. Sexual banter between officers and between officers and inmates was said to be prevalent in every study site. It was not clear to us whether staff members did not understand the inappropriateness of these comments, or if such comments were intended to test female inmates to explore the possibility of a sexual relationship. Typical comments included:

> *I was in the front row [of the shower] and someone [staff member] came in and said, "Damn, that should be illegal" [referring to her body]. I felt very uncomfortable.*

> *There was this officer who called me out. He gave me a note one time about how I was sexy. I did not know what to do, who to tell. I had just got to prison. I felt like he just could do that because I was a prisoner. When he would come in to do a cell check, he would come over to my bunk and stand there over me. He would make little comments … sexual comments … stuff he should not be saying. I threatened to tell the lieutenant.*

It is also true that some inmates participate in sexual banter because they either enjoy it; they think they may get something from it; or, they do not know any other way to interact, as expressed in this inmate observation:

> *There are a lot of socially immature women who come in and do engage in a silly banter and don't know the boundaries. One staff supervisor who worked with many kitchen workers would continually ask them, "Would you ever consider having sex with the CO?" Then this inmate, she asked me if that was unacceptable. He was definitely coming on to those gals.*

Sexual requests

It was frequently reported to us that sexual requests were covered up as jokes or, when reported, dismissed by supervisors as insincere and "just kidding." These comments represent only two examples of those reported to us by study participants:

> *If you tell an officer that you are being sexually harassed, they will tell you that the officers are just joking. They say just because the other officers asked to see your titties doesn't mean they really wanted to.*

> *This man last month said, "Oh, I wish I could take you in the room and you know what." I said, "What?" He says, "You know, so you could give me some head and then I could do you." I was, like, "What?" I couldn't believe he said that and I was, like, "You nasty bastard, you mf-er." I got embarrassed.*

"Flashing," Voyeurism, and Touching

More assertive sexualized behavior included looking at women in inappropriate ways, asking a woman to expose herself, and inappropriate touching. Women described various situations where officers would look at them, or ask them to "flash" for the officer, as in this example:

> *He likes for you to bend down [to show your breasts], and then he rubs his hands on his pants and says, 'Look! Look!" to show you that you are turning him on.*

Our focus group participants discussed the practice of male officers "peeping" in on them when they were sleeping, showering, or going to the bathroom, as seen in these quotes:

> *The two women would sleep in short shorts and a sports bra and she would wake up every night and the CO would be standing outside looking at them. Watching through the [window]. She and her roommate changed clothes, and he didn't do it anymore.*

> *There was this one officer. When I got in from work, he would fix hot chocolate and ask me to stir it. While I was stirring it, he would stare down my shirt. One time I got a soda and I was going to put ice in it. He stuck his tongue out for me to put ice in his mouth [stuck her tongue out in a sexually suggestive manner to demonstrate].*

Inmates explained that sometimes women would cooperate in the "peeping" by not wearing underwear or otherwise giving the officer a "show," usually for some compensation. Again, these comments were representative:

> *The male officers watch the girls. They prey on those girls that are in their area. They go around at night. They peep.* (Laughter) *They [inmates] give them a peep show. They lay there naked. [The inmates] give them their eyes full so they [officers] give her a trinket*

> *The officers go around and they single in on the weak woman and they boost her up. Then when they get caught, the female says [staff] promised me this or that, and then they write up the woman.*

> *I would always wonder why are the cops always hanging around and looking at our window. And she would be flashing the tits or being naked for him to watch. This is just sick.*

Some inmates mentioned incidents where officers touched them inappropriately. In the incident described below that occurred in the hospital, it is important to note that the woman did not object to the assault, we suspect, because she had been used sexually all her life and it was just another incident in a long history of sexual victimization.

> *I had to go to hospital for surgery. So I was prepped for surgery. They had me in a room with empty beds. They left me in there with a man for four hours. I had no clothes on. So he was there when they were doing my blood work. He was listening [to make sure] that I didn't have AIDS, that I was*

> *clean. I was drifting off to sleep and I felt his hand was feeling my tits. I could see the nurses' station, and here he is by me, watching for them too, but with his hand on me. He was running his hands under my gown, on my breast. I said, "No. No." I ended up not having the surgery, but I couldn't believe it. He like said, "You're OK with this, right?" I said, "Whatever. Whatever."*

Abuse of Search Authority

The literature on cross gender supervision has described the problem of male officers physically searching women who suffer from PTSD from past sexual victimization. For these women, the experience of being under the control of and touched by a man in this situation is frightening and may trigger feelings of anxiety and seemingly irrational reactionary violence. In some locales, male officers are prohibited from patting down female inmates unless it is an emergency. In other locations, there are no such restrictions. What became clear to us, however, was that female inmates were just as likely to feel victimized by female officers who abused their power of physically searching. It may not be the gender of the officer that is the central issue in abuse of search authority, but, rather, training and management in order to ensure that the power is not abused. These comments convey this view:

> *One girl has this white tee shirt that she has had forever and it is getting thin and she wears a black bra. The officer had his hands all over her tits when he patted her down.*
>
> *The female staff search me so thoroughly that I think they owe me dinner. I am glad that the men do not search, but the women have become very bad.*
>
> *They will touch your private parts and she will grab you up all up in here [touching her privates].*

A few of our participants indicated that they preferred male officers to search them. Some women object to being searched by female officers they perceived as gay:

> *It's a couple or few who are gay. One girl told me one of the guards said, "I feel like I'm going to strip someone. I ain't seen no such and such lately." Then there's this one lady. Lord help me! Please don't let this lady have me down. This lady goes up in your crotch and goes up and grips your stuff [crotch]. [Demonstrates grabbing genital area] And then [she] goes up and lifts up your breasts [Demonstrates by squeezing breasts]. And you can't say anything to them. Then you'll get in trouble.*

On the other hand, it was noted by a few inmates that gay officers (who arguably are afraid of being accused of inappropriate searching) don't perform searches in a way that ensures the security of the facility.

> *I know two gay officers in my dorm. And in all the years I had known them, they would not pat search us. Anyone that is openly gay would not pat search us and a lot [of inmates] would be glad [because they could sneak things into the dorm]. When you get the straight ones, they most likely are going to touch you.*

Sexual Exchange

As indicated by the pathways model, many women in prison and jail have had lives where sexual victimization and inappropriate sexualization occurred very early in life. Thus, it is not surprising that they may use the offer of sex to get what they feel they need in a prison. Whether or not this offer means that the exchange is non-coercive is almost a philosophical question; women who have nothing but their bodies to offer are hardly in a position to make free and voluntary decisions. These examples were offered:

> *One cup of coffee can get (an officer) whatever you want in here. The men and female officers know that and they use that to manipulate and degrade us.*
>
> *She did that for him and all she gets is a pen. He gets to watch her take a shower. I want more than a pen and a phone call. You better bring me some Coca Cola. I have a list.* (Laughter)
>
> *You have those where an officer promises you something, like to call your family, put something under your mattress, or write you a recommendation to parole. The young ones, they don't know any better. They will do oral or whatever, because they don't know [that it is not possible] when the officer says, "I'm going to get you out of here." It wasn't forced, but it was manipulated. We are vulnerable.*
>
> *I think that young women would do this [have sex with staff] because they think that they can get gratuities from it. Whatever the reason, it is their business, but these men can take advantage of us because they have power over us.*
>
> *Sexual favors are good for everything from a double cheeseburger to a couple of hundred dollar bills to a pack of gum.*
>
> *Let's be real. You can get a couple of cigs for a peek-a-boo, a side show [flashing genitals or breasts], hand jobs, lap dance*.

Exchange relationships, even when women actively participate, are clearly outside the realm of appropriate conduct. The constraints and deprivation of the prison world place women in a weaker negotiating position. However, some women clearly see the situation as a business transaction, and, in fact, use the language of sex work to describe it, e.g., calling the COs "tricks."

Intimidation

In the unequal power relations of prisons and jails, there is a fine line between economic exchange and intimidation. If a female inmate says "no," the officer may threaten with a sanction rather than persuade with a reward. Women expressed the view that they would do whatever they needed to not get moved to less desirable prisons or not to be given a disciplinary "ticket" or write-up, as suggested in these comments:

> *We put up with the abuse because we don't want to move to [another facility]. If the price of staying here is to get down on my knees, then I will get my knee pads.*

> *Back in the day, they would come in your cell and forcibly take it. But now, I don't know, they have a little more finesse. But they will threaten you to do stuff with your room. The cops are known to set women up with drugs and let them get caught. Let the woman go down for the count.*

> *He'd say, "You don't want to mess around? I'm going to cross you out [write a disciplinary report]." He got caught with his dick in her mouth. He was walked off. Fired. Some girls said, "It's about time he got caught; he's been doing it for about 20 years."*

Sex Without Physical Violence

As women have little power to object, differentiating between consensual and non-consensual sex in the prison environment has little utility. Many women told us that they cannot refuse these advances because of their powerless position. We also learned that there are some women in prisons and jails who enjoy sex with men and are willing participants in a sexual relationship. They may not "love" an officer, but they do not feel they are intimidated into a sexual relationship either. This neutrality was expressed by women, as shown in these examples:

> *Many of us were aware that there was a mattress that was frequently used in the loft of the arts room. There was also a girl that was having sex in the back of my housing unit and when she became pregnant there was [internal affairs] here and it was the beginning of the end.*

> *The officer would fake some transport orders, go to the housing unit and get her, put her in a transportation van, take her out of the facility, and pretend he was transporting her to court. At the time, it was considered consensual and he got fired.*

In the following account, a woman was in a consensual relationship that she thought was romantic until she discovered that the officer perceived her as a prostitute rather than girlfriend:

> *She consented to have sex with one of them, but then the other [staff member] came in and said, "You're going to take care of me, too." And she was liking the [first] officer, and she thought he loved her and stuff, but this was the way he treated her. Basically saying that he could get the same thing from anyone else. So the other officer did it in her anus and she was bleeding and she was mad and she reported it.*

In this narrative, we see how officers may be involved with several women at the same time:

> *When you are vulnerable, when someone says he loves you, and cares about you, you let things happen to you. He said he was going to help me restore my relationship with the family. That was the open door that let down my walls and that led to the other things-- rubbing my breast, touching me,*

kissing me. And there were other girls too. They were already suspicious of him 'cus there were two other girls that said "He sucked my finger." "He kissed me."

Everybody thought he was so wonderful. They thought he was caring for them. He did things for them that he shouldn't have, so they had a secret. Like my friend. He was making a phone call for her and she had a piece of candy. But then when she put the candy in his mouth, he sucked her finger. She instantly went crazy over him and she was so in love with him. She would get jealous whenever anybody was talking to him. But, see, he instigated that. Then he turned the tables on her and said she was stalking him and stuff. And he told them they needed to get her away from him, and so she was transferred off the unit. That's one of the girls that they didn't believe.

Sex with Physical Violence

We heard very few stories of officers or other staff members physically forcing a woman to have sex. We could not determine whether this was due to the relative rarity of the event or the focus group method we used to collect these accounts. By providing an opportunity for private interviews, and through the analysis of letters sent by female inmates to the advocacy organization, Stop Prison Rape, we did obtain some information on this most severe sexual violence committed by staff. These sources, presented in Part II, Chapter 5, portray the worst of staff sexual behavior, and while perhaps infrequent, demonstrate the potential for sexual harm delivered by those expected to protect women in their custody. We also learned that, in a small number of incidents, staff who were involved in misconduct also used other female inmates to intimidate their inmate victim when she threatened to report their misconduct.

In several locations, women said that policies and sanctions regarding staff sexual misconduct had curtailed the most extreme forms of this sexual victimization by staff. Staff, too, recognized increased attention to the problem of sexual relationships between officers and inmates and new policies, prompted by PREA. They observed that sexual relationships were less likely to occur today than in the past, but also expressed their concern with the potential for false allegations by "manipulative" and "cunning" women.

PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

With few exceptions, women told us that they became less worried about physical or sexual violence over the course of their incarceration. While again stressing that "anything can happen at any time," most women learned how to protect themselves from all forms of violence. Day-to-day tension, crowded living conditions, the lack of medical care and the potential for disease, and a scarcity of meaningful programs and activities were seen as more significant threats to a woman's overall well-being than physical or sexual attack. Some individual women said they did "not feel safe at all," but most said they learned to protect themselves. Health concerns eclipsed worries about sexual or physical safety in every focus group and these concerns were related to lack of medical care and cleaning supplies, deteriorating physical

plant conditions, substandard food, and the lack of rehabilitative programs. Idleness and an inability to earn money were also said to undermine women's sense of well-being.

Women also expressed little confidence in the ability of staff members to protect them from violence, either from other female inmates or from predatory staff members. Women described staff as "just not caring;" "playing favorites" with aggressors; "enjoying their fears" or refusing to take their fears seriously. Women described staff members' reactions to their reporting as "covering up for their buddies" and telling victims "This is prison—deal with it." Women also stated that they were told by staff that they would have to "name names" if they went to staff for help in dealing with threats to their safety.

Staff members also remarked that they often felt unable to protect women, but their reasons differed from those offered by the women. They admitted that it was hard to keep reports of victimization confidential and this fact prevented victims from coming forward. Staff also told us that they were concerned with inmate "manipulation" when requests for help were tied to requests for room or cell changes. Indeed, inmates also told us that they would manufacture arguments, and even physical fights, in order to bolster their requests for housing changes, so the officers' fears were evidently justified. It became clear, however, that real victims were also not believed and were left with potential abusers in housing units.

Staff felt that their abilities to respond to violence depended on inmate reporting and acknowledged barriers to reporting victimization incidents that included lack of knowledge about reporting practices, subcultural sanctions against "snitches" (by inmates and officers), distrust of the entire investigative process, and concerns about retaliation from inmates and staff. Inmates had little confidence in the reporting process even in facilities with well-known formal policies and procedures.

One point of agreement was a strong perspective on place. In every facility where we conducted interviews, inmates and staff were unanimous that some facilities were far more dangerous than others. Within facilities, particular living units were also defined as particularly risky and dangerous. Contributing factors in any particular locale included an interactive combination of individual, relational, and living unit and facility characteristics. Living units function as "neighborhoods" and, as such, exist as the physical place where the processes that shape violence or safety converge. Women perceived themselves as safe when they were comfortable in their living unit. Many participants expressed fear regarding other units in the same facility or other facilities because of the reputation such places had for increased violence and victimization.

We argue here that violent victimization occurs as a combination of inter-related factors within the ecology of the prison or jail and often escalates from an initial conflict to increasingly violent acts. To varying degrees, specific to time and place, each of these factors contributes to a climate of potential violence or safety.

THE ECOLOGICAL MODEL AS APPLIED TO WOMEN'S FACILITIES

Recall that in the CDC (2004) Ecological Model, individual, relationship, community, and societal factors were described as interacting to form the risk of violent victimization. We have adapted this model to address the experience of imprisoned women by using community factors to refer to issues of the housing unit the woman lives in and the prisoner subculture. We also perceived societal factors as referring to factors associated with the facility itself as well as free-world influences (such as gender roles) that are imported into the facility. Below, we will review the findings from the literature review, as they appear to relate to each of the factors in the Ecological Model and briefly offer our findings. In Part II of this report, our findings related to individual, relationship, community and societal factors of victimization are presented in much greater detail.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

In the CDC Ecological Model (2004), the individual level influences include personal history factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or perpetrator of violence. Research on sexual assault indicates that factors associated with being a perpetrator or victim of sexual violence include:

- alcohol or drug use
- attitudes and beliefs that support sexual violence
- impulsive tendencies
- a childhood history of sexual abuse, and
- relationships with peers and family

Whether these factors also predict victimization in the prison is not yet clearly established. Wolff, Shi, Blitz, and Siegel (2007) reported that targets of sexual victimization in women's prisons were young, white, female inmates, new to the facility, with a history of sexual abuse before the age of 18 years. Those inmates who reported sexual abuse before the age of 18 were three to five times more likely to report an incident of sexual victimization while in prison (Wolff, et al., 2007, p. 548). Targets of sexual assault were considered both socially weak and attractive, and included those who were younger, and with a higher education. Women with a history of mental disorder also seemed to be more vulnerable to sexual victimization, with slightly over a quarter reporting victimization compared to about a fifth of those women without mental disorders (Wolff, Blitz, & Shi, 2007). Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (2006) reported that female victims shared many characteristics with male prisoner victims, but may be more likely to self identify as homosexual than non-victims or male victims. In contrast, Blackburn (2006) found no differences between victims and non-victims.

Because the body of knowledge regarding sexual victimization in women's prisons is just now beginning, we should be cautious about any conclusions regarding who is at risk or who is likely to perpetrate violence. Given that caution, our findings tentatively suggest the following factors supporting or mitigating victimization in women's facilities:

Individual Factors Associated with Victimization

- Being younger
- Having a history of sexual victimization (childhood and adult)
- Poor self esteem and poor interpersonal functioning (perhaps due to prior victimization)
- Tendency to engage in co-dependent relationships
- Having anger control issues (perhaps due to prior victimization)
- Having other psycho-social problems (i.e., PTSD)
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Having a history of self destructive behavior
- Early sexualization and having negative attitudes toward sex (due to prior victimization)
- Being involved (or perceived to be involved) in prison homosexuality
- Being an attractive target (physical appearance; or commissary resources)

Individual Factors Associated with Being an Aggressor

- Being younger
- Having a history of sexual victimization (childhood and adult)
- Poor self esteem and poor interpersonal functioning (perhaps due to prior victimization)
- Tendency to engage in co-dependent relationships
- Having anger control issues (perhaps due to prior victimization)
- Having other psycho-social problems (i.e. PTSD)
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Having a history of self destructive behavior
- Early sexualization and having negative attitudes toward sex (due to prior victimization)
- Being involved (or perceived to be involved) in prison homosexuality
- Having a violent crime of commission
- Having a longer prison sentence

As noted, many similar factors may influence both sexual victimization and being sexually aggressive toward another (e.g., prior sexual and/or physical victimization, poor self esteem and poor interpersonal functioning, or alcohol or drug abuse). For instance, in a prison intimate relationship, a woman might be a "classic" victim in one prison relationship, only to become the aggressive partner in a subsequent relationship. Pre-prison alcohol and drug use may predict use and while incarcerated and may be associated with both victimization and violent aggression. There are also individual factors shared by only victims, such as certain factors that make victims attractive to aggressive inmates (i.e., physical appearance or commissary

resources). It is harder to glean from the literature any particular factors that might be associated with a risk of victimization by staff members, although the factors below seem logical:

Individual Factors Associated with Being a Victim of Staff Sexual Misconduct

- Being younger
- Having a history of sexual victimization (childhood and adult)
- Poor self esteem and poor interpersonal functioning (perhaps due to prior victimization)
- Tendency to engage in co-dependent relationships
- Having other psycho-social problems (i.e. PTSD)
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Having a history of self destructive behavior
- Early sexualization and having negative attitudes toward sex (due to prior victimization)
- Being an attractive target (either because of looks or lack of commissary resources)

Both inmates and staff members described some inmates as more likely to be victimized. The characteristics of a "victim" were demographic factors (such as age, attractiveness, and body type), but, also, personality and carriage were considered important (i.e. not "acting like a victim"). Our participants were also very astute in the parallels they drew between women who had been the victims of interpersonal violence on the outside and their tendency to get involved in abusive relationships inside the prison. Both inmates and staff members described some victims as "knowing nothing but being a victim." Inmates also mentioned mental illness and whether one had financial resources as contributing to the potential for victimization. While our findings show that individual factors are salient in understanding the potential for sexual victimization, we also found that multiple other factors shape the outcome of how these individual factors affect the potential for victimization. These dynamic factors include the climate of the facility and the behaviors of the staff.

RELATIONSHIP FACTORS

In the CDC model (2004) of sexual assault, relationship factors that increased sexual victimization included family characteristics (such as a patriarchal family structure and intimate partnerships that were with high risk partners). It seems clear that prior experiences influence present relationships. Large numbers of female inmates have come from families characterized by abuse and dysfunction, with significant involvement in pre-prison co-dependent, and/or abusive relationships. While incarcerated, these patterns may be repeated with prison or jail intimate relationships often (but not always) involving violence, including sexual violence. The following relationship factors can be gleaned from prior research:

Relationship Factors Contributing to Sexual Victimization

- Family history of abuse and dysfunctional relationships (no healthy relationship models)
- Women's primary focus on relationships which leads to overdependence
- Pattern of co-dependent, violent relationships (characterized by patterns of violence or "flipping")

As mentioned, our participants seemed well aware that many female inmates had been victimized as children, had experienced abusive relationships outside of prison, and were continuing to engage in abusive relationships inside prison. Some inmates were quite eloquent in their explanations of why relationships are so important to women ("because it's all we have") and the violence that ensues when jealousy occurs. Some of our participants were the violent partners in prison relationships and they struggled to explain why they exploded in violence toward partners they loved. A few indicated that they had decided to stay away from prison relationships because they couldn't control their violence. Their descriptions were extremely consistent with the propositions of the Sanctuary Model (S. Bloom, 2008) in that they were not in a position of psychological safety where they could learn to control their emotions or feel good about their ability to protect themselves. The descriptions we heard also were very reminiscent of Maeve's (2000) description of the PTSD symptoms of female prisoners who would "flip" and become violent toward partners for irrational reasons. We must again mention, however, that our study found that individual factors alone do not alone account for or predict sexual and other forms of violence in women's facilities. These individual factors must be understood within the context of the community, facility, societal and staff factors described below.

COMMUNITY FACTORS

We interpret community factors for prison and jail sexual victimization to be those factors unique to the women's prison or jail housing unit and the prisoner subculture. Although findings are mixed as to whether violence occurs more often in dormitory settings or cellblocks, it does seem to be the case that sexual and other forms of violence occur more often in certain housing units in any particular prison or jail. To understand why, it is important to consider social or group factors of these housing units, including the tolerance level for sexual violence, staff members' behaviors and interactions with the inmates, and even the architecture of the units. Alarid (2000) reported that when staff ignored allegations of sexual assault and victimization, prevalence was higher. In some cases, staff may actually encourage and contribute to a sexually charged atmosphere and downplay the seriousness of sexual victimization. Further, correctional officer attitude toward prison homosexuality can affect victimization. If staff members display a judgmental condemnation of homosexuality, this response will discourage reporting of sexual violence. If staff members display a prurient, unprofessional interest in prisoner sex, evidenced by joking, casual observation of, and tolerance for sexual harassment, this would also discourage reporting.

If these patterns occur in certain housing units, then we would characterize the influence a "community" factors. If, however, such attitudes and interactions occur

across the prison as a whole, then we would classify the effect as a "societal" factor. Because we did find quite distinct differences between housing units in a single prison, we categorized prisoner-staff interactions as a community factor.

Community Factors Contributing to Sexual Victimization

- Prisoner value placed on "respect" and approval of violence as a response to disrespect
- Prisoner norms of "mind your own business" and "no snitching"
- Prisoner norms of ignoring or tolerating sexual violence within relationships
- Norms (both inmate and staff) approving of sexual interaction between staff and inmates
- Staff members beliefs that women in prison are highly sexed (thereby almost all sex is believed to be consensual)
- Staff member's attitudes and behavior toward so-called "femmes" and "dykes"

As mentioned earlier, "respect" was one of the most often mentioned triggers for violence by our focus group participants. We also heard that, except in rare circumstances, inmates were expected to "do their own time" and not interfere in the relationships of others. Another finding that fits here is the general acceptance of violence by female inmates (and officers). Many women were socialized to consider violence an inevitable part of life and, therefore, levels of violence that might be shocking to an outsider were considered the norm and even the source of humor for prison inmates.

Strong stereotypes of female inmates were displayed by both staff members and the inmates themselves. Inmates also described certain staff members as having values, beliefs, and behaviors that sexualized female inmates.

FACILITY & SOCIETAL FACTORS

Prevalence studies indicate that the reported rate of sexual victimization varies significantly between correctional facilities, suggesting that institutional culture may affect the risk of victimization. Prior research has identified correlates of general prison violence that include overcrowding, management style, and availability of programming (Wolff, et al., 2006, p. 840). It is not clear yet whether or not these correlates also relate specifically to sexual violence. We also propose that "free world" societal factors, such as sexual stereotypes and socio-economic realities, influence prison sexual victimization. Most women in prison are poor and many have used sex as a commodity, both before prison and in prison (Keys, 2002). Further, it is a commodity that is not controlled by prison authorities as is the money on inmate books or visible contraband, such as cigarettes.

Other societal factors include the devaluation of women in society which could lead correctional staff to treat women's issues with less concern. Lack of understanding women's pathways to crime can result in few programs to help women deal with issues of childhood victimization, co-dependency and drug addiction. Female

offenders are stigmatized perhaps even more so than male offenders and their self esteem and efficacy are dealt hard blows by societal condemnation, especially when their crimes involve sexual behavior or injury to children. These attitudes also contribute to the context and potential for sexual victimization. Factors such as "gender inequality, religious or cultural belief systems, societal norms, and economic or social gaps" shape the context and the climate for physical and sexual violence in women's facilities as well as the free world (CDC, 2004, p. 5).

Facility & Societal Factors Contributing to Sexual Victimization

- Idea of women offenders as "doubly deviant" and stigmatized by their past
- Racial stereotypes that predict who is likely to be victimized and who is likely to be an aggressor (e.g., "white girls are always victims" and "black women are always aggressors")
- Sex work economy which makes sexual relations a commodity to be bought, sold, and stolen
- Sexual stereotype of women as liars (that discourages reporting or sanctions against aggressors)
- Sexual stereotype of women as seductresses (that discourages reporting or sanctions against aggressors)
- Sexual stereotype of "dyke" as always aggressor (that encourages victimization of these women)
- Sexual stereotypes that result in different expectations and responses to women (e.g., "good girls can get raped, but bad girls can't")
- Lack of programming that addresses gender specific "pathways" factors such as prior victimization, children, and low self-efficacy
- Facility factors (crowding, lack of sanitation, poor operations) that contribute to general violence potential
- Lack of training for staff related to pathways approach

These factors are not an exhaustive list but are offered as a starting point for an effort to construct an ecological, or contextual, model of prison and jail sexual violence for women. Our findings were also consistent with most of these factors. Specifically, participants indicated that many staff members devalued female inmates and referred to them as "whores" or "crackheads." Both staff and inmates described the general culture of the prison as holding the belief that "inmates always lie." Inmates ruefully admitted that, in many cases, that perception was based in fact when they described the convolutions women would undergo to be close to romantic or sexual partner. Both inmates and staff observed that operational issues of the prison could contribute to the potential for violence, especially when reporting procedures were ineffective.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a summary of our findings from the focus groups were presented and placed within the Ecological Model. We found that the model was contributed significantly to our understanding of violence and safety concerns in women's facilities. Specific findings were also consistent with the Escalation Model, in that more serious physical violence tended to escalate from a history of interpersonal conflict. The Sanctuary Model is also applicable to the situation of imprisoned women in that prisons and jails do not offer psychological, physical, social, or moral safety to prisoners, many of whom were damaged from past trauma. These findings are more carefully and comprehensively detailed in Part II of this report. In the next chapter, we present the policy implications of our findings and make recommendations for improving the safety of women in prison.