CONTESTED TITLES: GENDERED VIOLENCE VICTIM ADVOCACY AND NEGOTIATING OCCUPATIONAL STIGMA IN SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation employs a mixed-method approach to explore the experiences and perceptions of domestic and sexual violence victim advocates. Advocates are trained professionals who provide support, information, and resources to victims who have experienced gendered violence. Little research examines domestic and sexual violence victim advocates despite the thousands who work across the United States. The existing literature research primarily uses quantitative methods to examine the negative emotional impact of employment. Few, if any, studies ask questions about how external factors and experiences of every day life affect advocates, on or off the job.

As a result, this research investigates what it means to be an advocate in a socio-relational context by exploring advocates' experiences of occupational identity when interacting with strangers or new acquaintances. Occupational identity is a primary point of interaction within the social world, and advocacy is a complex, politically, and culturally situated occupation within the United States. Advocates are subject to a host of reactions when they introduce their jobs to strangers or new acquaintances—many of these experiences communicate stigma based on occupational choice rather than personal identity. Thus, this dissertation examines the presence and effects of occupational stigma on advocates, which is most clearly seen through the deployment of positive and negative stereotype and the relational process of Othering.

Using data gathered from 21 in-depth interviews with advocates as well as a survey with 221 respondents, this study uses cultural studies, feminist methodology, and sociological theory to demonstrate that occupational stigma experienced through short introductory interactions has

an effect on advocates' sense of self, sense of work, and willingness to share their occupational identity. Advocates and advocacy organizations have few resources to consider and prepare their employees for the experience of stigma. To assist organizations, this dissertation examines the relationship between experiences of Othering, stereotype, and stigma to feelings of burnout. Finally, this dissertation provides concrete suggestions on how to train advocates, provide support to organizations, and reduce the impact of occupational stigma on victim advocates. Such research offers new areas for consideration and exploration for those interested in victim advocacy, care-work, the micropolitics of occupational identity, and stigmatized occupations.

To Cleo

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I stood in the middle of the cellular phone store, the only customer at 10 o'clock in the morning, as the overhead fluorescent lights burned into my eyes with that yellow-white tinge. It made the store seem to glow. Two men parked in front of me as they worked to renew my phone contract: a skinny, pale-white, late teens boy with blonde hair who was seemingly made out of limbs and a shorter, fat man with clear olive skin and coarse, black hair. The older man was teaching the kid how to run simple functions on the computer for an existing customer. The older man, the manager, looked up and said, "Hey, where do you work? Maybe we can save you some money on your monthly contract." I smiled a bland, noncommittal smile reserved only for customer service encounters and replied, "I work at a Safe Place." Both of them looked up at me in confusion, squinting from the screen to my face. The boy piped up, "What's that?" I took on the posture I had begun to take whenever this conversation appeared in my life. I suddenly stood a little taller, as if someone pulled an invisible string that ran out of the top of my head. "It's this county's one and only emergency shelter for domestic violence survivors and their children. I'm a victim advocate." At the words "domestic violence" both of them seemed to start and then, avert their eyes for just a second. Then it came, as it always seemed to do so in this conversation.

"Oh."

I waited, held my breath, since the manager had not exhaled since I had spoken. Suddenly, the manager looked at me as my cat looks at prey she has trapped in a corner, and smiled a broad, shining smile. The words rolled out of his lips with unbridled jollity, "Well, you know, I beat my wife daily but I make sure she can't get to the phone to call people like you!" The two men both burst out laughing with sounds that filled every inch of empty space in the entirety of the store. The reverberations from their laughs took up residence in between all the

keys on all of the phones, around signs, surrounded the florescent lights, and rolled into the spaces of earphone jacks and charging ports. I stood there, a kid sibling who was the butt of the joke, a daddy-long-legs with three limbs torn off by vicious little boys. The manager's tears ran down his face as he asked with a tone reflecting irritation and confusion, "Don't you get it? It's just a joke." I stood there, unable to speak, as the rage boiled in my veins. I smiled that bland, noncommittal smile reserved only for customer service encounters, "No. I get it."

In May of 2012, I began working as a victim advocate at a local domestic violence shelter. Organizations working with victims of gendered violence, with a special emphasis on sexual assault and domestic violence, provide those seeking services with advocates—well-trained individuals who work directly with victims and their families—to help them negotiate cultural, legal, and social systems that are often stacked against women (Schechter 1982). Victim advocates operate as active support systems that normalize, empathize, and respond to victims' needs during times of crisis. Despite the extensive and thorough training I had undergone to prepare me for how to process the violence women experienced, no one told me during training or during on-the-job experience how I would have to negotiate my own identity as an advocate with strangers. There was no training to prepare me for the enormous range of reactions from friends, family, and *especially* new acquaintances/strangers when I told them my job title and a brief description of the work. The reactions swung from anger and hostility, to avoidance, to overwhelming praise. The story above occurred only six weeks after I began working as an advocate; when I went to work later that day and told my coworkers, many of them replied that I should be *glad* it wasn't worse. This group of women all joined in and laughed as they recounted tales of discomfort, hostility, disbelief, or awkward praise when talking to strangers about their work. These were war stories from the trenches of victim advocacy, and everyone seemed to

have one. Most of the women with whom I worked told me to start telling strangers—*especially* men—that I worked in social work or the ever vague "women's organization," if I wanted to avoid people "being weird." To me, it seemed that "being weird" was a direct result of disrupting patterns of patriarchal power and authority, but I did not have any solid research or more than a handful of anecdotes to support this idea. Yet, the intensity and frequency with which these experiences occurred for advocates suggested a cultural element that called for further consideration.

When I began to talk to other advocates outside of my organization about their experiences with strangers, I quickly found many shared similar encounters of praise, hostility, or avoidance. Nearly all the advocates expressed having little or no training on how to negotiate occupational stigma—the social process of differentiation and valuing based upon one's job—or how to respond to positive/negative stereotype—broad categorizations of groups applied with little regards for individuals. Being a researcher at heart, I investigated the academic literature, hoping for answers to questions for my fellow advocates and for me. I hoped to find rationale as to why my fellow advocates would warn me against telling people about the job, especially men.

Despite the crucial role advocates play within communities as they provide gendered violence prevention and education, there is little research on the individuals who perform this labor. More importantly, the existing literature overwhelmingly focuses on the negative emotional impact of employment. Few articles address any aspect of advocacy life outside of the negative outcomes of working in such a difficult profession or about the process of interaction with others. Further, there are few, if any, trainings, policies, or discussions outside of anecdotal conversations in organizations about how to handle the stigma of the job outside of the office. Thus, I undertook this project as a result of my experiences, the anecdotes of others, and the

failure of scholarship to address advocates' lives with breadth or an aim to provide practical suggestions for managing life outside of the employment context. Given that the issue of gendered violence is deeply embedded within cultural practices, this study was especially suited to a Cultural Studies lens using feminist and sociological tools and a mixed methods approach. Such a multi-disciplinary strategy more fully examines the present cultural moment, the social practices in play, and the larger cultural discourses embedded within social interaction.

Further, the following research fills some of the significant gaps within the scholarship by examining aspects of advocates' lives outside of the walls of their organizations through studying how, when, why, and to whom they reveal their occupations and how others respond to their job titles. I also provide some reflections as to why people respond with such intensity to the job title. Much of that has to do with disrupting cultural norms of masculine power and privilege, what is deemed "appropriate" women's work, and devaluing and diminishing the prevalence of gendered violence in our communities.

Specifically, I pose the following four arguments based upon this research: (1) Advocates experience stigma because of their occupational titles—the title/work disrupts normative cultural scripts about gender roles and patriarchal power; (2) stigma is expressed through conversational partners' use of positive and negative stereotype as well as avoidance—all of these are distancing techniques to produce the process of Othering; (3) these experiences have a negative impact on advocates' social self as they must negotiate difficult social terrain as the stigmatized Other, which also negatively affect the occupational self; and (4) the use of stereotype precludes the possibility of substantive discussion about how to assist organizations and advocates in anti-violence efforts, which reinstates normative social processes and cultural scripts about gender, power, and violence in the United States.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADVOCACY

As a direct result of feminist action in the 1970's to present, women's issues have come to the forefront of social and legal culture in the United States. Feminist and women-centered organizations have responded to the overwhelming need for access to basic services that provide aid for issues unique to women's experiences within a patriarchal culture. One major contribution from the 1970's feminist movement within the United States, as an essential part of the "Battered Women's Movement," was the establishment of domestic violence shelters and rape crisis hotlines and centers. By 1982, over 300 anti-domestic violence organizations and 48 state coalitions had sprung up in order to offer safety, justice, and a place to heal for women who had few other options (Schechter 1982). Grassroots collectives of primarily women-led groups established the earliest rape crisis centers in 1972 with a large growth in the 1980's (Fried 1994). Often, United States' communities saw gendered violence as a private matter and something that happened as a result of depraved individuals (Scully and Marolla 1985), and cultural discourses frequently named women as partially responsible for the violence they experienced (Amir 1971; Brownmiller 1975). Advocacy was a response to a system that failed to intervene or to bring perpetrators of gendered violence to justice.

Over the past four decades, the field of advocacy has experienced tremendous growth, shifting from loosely arranged grassroots collectives of politically invested individuals to more coordinated community responses, semi-permanent features of the criminal justice system, and successful local and national non-profit organizations. Despite these successes, advocacy remains on the fringe of United States culture, something from which many people remain removed, because of the political and hidden nature of the work (Pharr 1997). Culturally, gendered violence continues to be a significant problem. From the intense opposition to the legislation around the Violence Against Women Act (DeKeseredy 2011; Dragiewicz 2008), to

the leniency shown perpetrators of domestic violence (Lally and DeMaris 2012) and sexual assault (Bieneck and Krahé 2011), and the extensive amount of victim blaming within the media where victims are held accountable for their own abuse, assault, or homicide (Berns 2009; Taylor 2009), it is clear gendered violence remains a prominent—though often ignored—feature of culture and discourse within the United States.

The continued need for organizations and advocates who assist victims of gendered violence remains a pressing concern; violence against women is a systemic cultural issue. As the United States presses forward with efforts to defund organizations dedicated to helping women—such as Planned Parenthood—and devalue women's lives through cultural avenues such as coding women's work as "worth less" across U.S. labor markets (Cohen and Huffman 2003), the research on advocates is more important now than ever. Given the widespread occurrences of domestic and sexual violence as well as a culture of acceptance and silence, the need for victim advocates will certainly not disappear in the near future. As agencies increasingly rely upon private donations with federal, state, and local budgets shrinking (Kolb 2014), the issue of introducing ones' work with victims of gendered violence will be especially important. This is doubly so, as the profession of victim advocacy seeks not only to provide safety, healing, and justice to victims of domestic and sexual violence, but they also actively alter the cultural expectations and functions of masculine power and feminine subordination. Advocacy works to change the nature of the structural and interpersonal social processes that accord men more authority, respect, and bodily autonomy. Cultural change is difficult and the need for private and government funding is ever greater in this political climate.

As a result, we must better understand how the workers who perform this very necessary labor manage their experiences and continue to provide such desperately needed services.

Contextualizing the experiences of advocates through a Cultural Studies lens while using a feminist sociological methodology reveals how advocates make sense of their occupations, their own social locations, and the people around them on a daily basis. Additionally, this research demonstrates how various cultural conditions deeply inform the experiences of advocates as they manage their lives; patriarchal scripts and norms mired in stereotypes guide the conversations advocates have with those who do not work in the field. Advocates disrupt these social systems, which places them in a precarious position by virtue of their job title. As this work demonstrates, the cultural narratives that stigmatize advocacy and stereotype victim advocates have an impact on advocates' quality of life.

RATIONALE AND AIMS

The prevalence of gendered violence within the United States is overwhelming, and the rate of homicide between intimate partners is astounding. Intimate partners killed approximately 40-50% of all women murdered in the United States—aged 12 and older (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). Moreover, in 70-80% of all intimate partner homicides (regardless of the gender of the murder victim), the male partner physically abused the woman prior to the homicide (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). Further, the Bureau of Justice notes that of all those people killed by their intimate partners, 70% were female. These statistics have frightening consequences for different social identities; for example, intimate partners killed black women at four times the rate than that of white women (Fox and Zawitz 2007).

In considering the daily impact and enormity of domestic violence, every September, the National Network to End Domestic Violence conducts a 24-hour census in which shelters record measures of their labor, such as number of hotline calls taken, client services provided, number of people housed, or trainings provided. On September 17, 2013 a total of 1,649 shelters out of

an available 1,905 shelters within the United States participated in the census. The summary report revealed 66,581 victims received services, of which 36,348 spent the night in a domestic violence shelter. In just 24 hours, shelters and programs across the United States took 20,267 hotline calls (National Network to End Domestic Violence 2013). Most shockingly, there were over 2,000 *more* requests for services than in 2012, yet, the summary noted that 1,696 positions and 19 agencies were eliminated across the country as a result of lack of funding. This means there are more requests for help and fewer agencies and advocates to provide assistance; thus, information on how to help advocates be healthy and happy is crucial.

In addition, Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART) and rape crisis hotlines or programs number in the thousands across the United States, responding to the astounding number of sexual assaults that occur every year. According to the National Violence Against Women Survey, there is an average of 302,091 female victims of sexual assault (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). Hidden by these overwhelming numbers of victimization are the thousands of victim advocates at shelters, crisis lines, and programs: the trained individuals who work directly with victims and are safe, neutral confidants who respond to victims' needs by offering support, assistance, housing, and access to valuable resources around the clock.

As noted, despite the essential role advocates play in domestic violence and sexual assault intervention, prevention, and education in communities across the nation, very little research examines the individuals who perform this difficult but crucial labor. The limited scholarship that does exist focuses primarily on job stress, burnout factors, and organizational structures as they relate to secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma—which are conditions that leave advocates without the ability to continue doing their jobs effectively. For example, studies have examined how domestic violence and sexual assault

advocates work in poor conditions with limited resources, yet, if they identify with the concept of "good soldiering"—engaging in difficult labor that is deemed worthy because of both intrinsic and social value of the occupation—advocates have significantly lower rates of burnout (Bemiller and Williams 2011). Research has also found advocates with more education, experience, and higher workloads experience lower rates of vicarious trauma and emotional exhaustion (Baird and Jenkins 2003). For what this research does not fully account are the experiences of advocates outside of their place of employment. While it is essential to understand how advocates operate and manage their work, advocates are still advocates after they leave the walls of their agencies. Research, such as this, needs to consider how advocates cope with their work in their personal lives as well as their professional lives in order to better assist advocates as they help others in need.

The organizational culture of domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) agencies has a significant impact on reducing secondary stress and burnout among those working with these issues, particularly when employees have support from co-workers, supervisors, and work teams (Choi 2009). Organizational cultures that incorporate coworker support, clinical supervision, and shared power within the agency also promote worker well being and reduces rates of burnout among advocates (Slattery and Goodman 2009). Unsurprisingly, those who work with DV clients who have less organizational support experience significantly greater burnout (Brown and O'Brien, 1998) and those with higher levels of peer support or support groups see less burnout (Henderickson 2013). Domestic violence counselors who work with victims and perpetrators mitigate the negative psychological effects of the job by engaging in strategies such as debriefing and peer support while on the job (Iliffe & Steed, 2000). Other researchers have noted the link of two major factors, burnout and secondary victimization within

criminal justice or medical systems, as influencing rape crisis advocates' ability to perform their occupations effectively and deliver services to survivors (Ullman and Townsend 2007).

Scholarship also demonstrates that workers' individual personality characteristics, proper caseload management—especially having adequate staffing to manage high volumes of cases and clients—and higher levels of experience lead to a reduction in burnout and vicarious trauma as well as an increase in compassion satisfaction for domestic violence service providers (e.g., Kulkarni et al 2013). Finally, one ethnographic study discovered that simultaneous and cumulative factors surrounding personal abuse history, organizational factors, low pay, and long hours contribute to rates of burnout among victim advocates (Behounek 2011). While understanding the organizational characteristics that prevent the negative impact of employment, the literature does not fully consider how advocates' lives outside of their jobs impact their ability to provide services or stay in the field. Further, scholarship must consider the feminist cultural interventions that result from the act of working in a gendered violence victim advocacy organization.

Through an examination of the limited literature available on victim advocates who work with survivors of gendered violence, several trends become quite clear. First, the overwhelming majority of these previous studies call upon quantitative methods for data collection; many use anonymous survey instruments distributed through the Internet and some mailing. Second, topically, few of these studies attend to questions regarding advocates' lives outside of employment. The scholarship stays focused nearly exclusively on the job experience and reducing compassion fatigue and burnout; while this is an important and worthy topic, it provides an extremely limited view of advocacy and does not account for a broad number of ways that advocates understand and experience their occupations. Finally, the current research

does not fully explore advocates' lives using qualitative methods, which limits the data itself to a more defined set of questions. The studies that employ qualitative methods often provide very localized ethnographies or interviews from a small regional area—while these are excellent tools for in-depth investigation into social processes, there as been little research that gains a national, qualitative sample to discover trends outside of localized regions. In short, as the literature currently stands, there are many topics unaddressed that have the potential to offer valuable information about advocates' lives, understandings of their work, and ways to positively change the culture around violence against women and advocacy within the United States.

As a result of the gaps in scholarship outlined in the literature review as well as a vested interest in seeing the work/life conditions of advocates improve, my research ultimately aims to accomplish a number of tasks with two primary purposes as a focus. First, I contribute to humanities and social sciences scholarship by providing new information to interdisciplinary fields of research through the use of feminist, sociological methodology and a mixed method design. This research intervenes in a number of academic fields—such as American Culture Studies, Women's and Gender studies, the Sociology of identity and stigma management, and social support—as well as provides a methodologically innovative approach to the research on victim advocates. My use of primarily qualitative approaches and secondarily, quantitative methods offers a more complete view of advocates' experiences. The second aim is as follows: I identify areas of concern as well as generating ideas and trainings for victim advocacy organizations in order to improve the lives of those who serve others.

National attention is being paid to domestic and sexual violence in the wake of public figures' acts of violence and other high-profile cases, and research on advocates is more crucial than ever, because of the impact they have on culture. Advocates do not only work with

survivors, they also lobby for local, state, and federal changes in laws, medical practices, and reporting. They provide safe, free, and confidential resources for those most in need and fight to change cultural norms that condone violence. This population serves a crucial function in every state in the country, as they shift the cultural discourses about violence and stratification across lines of gender, race, and class—gendered violence affects us all and permeates culture. Through the use of Cultural Studies as a primary site of investigation and through the tools of the mixed method approach, this research reaches across traditional methodological and disciplinary boundaries—crossing boundaries to critically intervene in contemporary cultural and social issues is both the project and strength of cultural studies (Grossberg 2010)—to investigate not only cultural phenomenon at the micro-level but also analyze larger issues at stake within the reproduction of cultural discourses found in stereotype and occupational stigma. As a result, this project uses the lens of Cultural Studies with an emphasis on feminist and sociological scholarship to craft rigorous scholarship and also, to contribute most effectively to numerous bodies of scholarship in order to intervene in this cultural moment.

Working to achieve the loftier goals of the second aim of this research is a bit more difficult—though they can be achieved through the project of Cultural Studies and a reflexive, feminist ethic. To that end, I am using this research to improve the lives of advocates. I will develop training materials to better equip advocates with tools to negotiate life outside of work; these will be proposed to upcoming national advocacy conventions. As advocates currently receive little or no training on issues pertaining to life outside of work, this research sheds light on practical issues that deeply affect advocates—the cultural moment impacts the experiences of all advocates. The results demonstrate occupational stigma has a negative impact on advocates by increasing feelings of burnout and emotional exhaustion in addition to preventing advocates

from developing larger social networks. The stories advocates shared during the research process have practical implications and will be used to improve the function of organizations through offering best practices protocols. More immediately, in the concluding chapter, I offer some initial suggestions and reflections about how organizations can begin to make small, inexpensive changes to better support their advocates as they change the cultural narratives of gendered violence through their daily interactions. Providing organizations and advocates tools to be healthier and happier also helps the lives of everyone who is or will be affected by the cultural problem of gendered violence.

NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY

In writing on the topics of shelters, agencies, and advocates, there is an intense debate on the importance of language and terminology. This is especially prevalent in language revolving around the person who harms and the person who is harmed in acts of gendered violence. As a result, a clear discussion of language choice is necessary for clarity and understanding in this project. For the purposes of this research, when I write about domestic violence, I choose to use “abuser” rather than “batterer” as a direct result of my training and experience as an advocate. In the Duluth Model, as developed by Ellen Pence, the term “batterer” reiterates, ideologically and literally, that when a person is in an abusive relationship, the only abuse that “matters” or “counts” is physical violence (Pence and Paymar 1993). However, I approach this work both as a practitioner and a feminist researcher. Thus, I use the term “abuser” to allow for the connotation of all forms of violence, oppression, and control used over victims. In considering the ways in which violence occurs, Pence and Paymar identified various forms of verbal, physical, emotional, and financial abuse, among other tactics and sites of inequality abusers use against women in their relationships. Though the language seems to be less hotly contested than in the

discussion of domestic violence, I rely on similar terminology in cases of sexual assault, referring to those who commit acts of sexual violence as “perpetrators.”

On the other side of the relationship and experience, there is further discussion regarding the use of the term “victim” or “survivor” to describe the person who has experienced the abuse or sexual assault. For the write-up of this study, I primarily use the term “victim” or “clients” because fewer outside of the advocate community use “survivor,” despite the fact that “victim” is a deeply stigmatized term (Dunn 2005). As a feminist practitioner, I recognize the importance and value of the term, “survivor,” yet, not every victim is a survivor, especially in cases of domestic violence. As a result, it is important to acknowledge that not every victim is a survivor; “victim” is the term widely used to convey a broad range of experiences with domestic violence as well as sexual assault, and as a result, I use the term “victim” in an effort to be more inclusive; though, I do recognize the stigma attached to the term and the disempowering position it suggests as someone acted upon rather than an actor.

Additionally, as a result of the deeply gendered nature of domestic violence, when referring to abstract labels such as “victim” and “abuser,” workers and I in the field use gendered pronouns: victims are identified using feminine pronouns and abusers are identified using masculine pronouns. Approximately 85% of all domestic violence victims are women abused by male partners (Rennison 2003). While men experience domestic violence at the hands of female and male partners, and similarly women experience victimization at the hands of other women, the vast majority of domestic and sexual violence cases consist of female victims and male perpetrators as noted in the statistics above. For the sake of brevity and readability, when speaking generally about these two categories, gendered language may be employed to reflect the overwhelming trends.

Another note on terminology focuses on how to describe the power and control abusers deploy over their victims within domestic violence relationships. Many use the term "Domestic Violence" (DV) and others encourage the usage of "Intimate Partner Violence" (IPV). Both terms have benefits as well as drawbacks; often times, publications use these terms interchangeably. For the purpose of this research, I use the term "domestic violence" while acknowledging all of the attendant issues that come with that choice. "Domestic violence" is the most widely known and used terminology among DV workers and the general public. The advocates I interviewed have a wide range of clients with whom they work. Some clients experience violence with intimate partners while other clients experience familial or other types of abuse. Thus, the term "domestic violence" seems the most logical choice to describe the majority of victims of gendered violence while keeping in line with best practices. Similarly with sexual assault, I use "sexual assault" instead of "rape" in effort to capture the wide range of experiences that occur for victims. "Rape" can conjure a very specific image, and until the end of 2011, the Federal Bureau of Investigation defined rape through the limited scope of forcible vaginal penetration. "Sexual assault" is a more comprehensive and appropriate language choice.

Importantly, in discussing the experiences of domestic and sexual violence, I frequently employ the term "gendered violence" rather than "violence against women." While some may argue this has the possibility of removing the impact upon women or the feminist roots of anti-violence efforts from the conversation, I argue there is more possibility to incorporate discussions of accountability into the name. "Gendered violence" as a term suggests there is a clear source of the violence, and it is a result of a socialized process within the culture. To gender something is to invest in it qualities of masculine or feminine, though these are not bound to bodies but rather categories of expected behavior (West and Zimmerman 1987). Further, I

contend that “gendered violence” holds those who commit violence more accountable than the term “violence against women.” Gendered violence implicates the socialization process and those who commit the acts by insisting there are clear trends in who acts upon whom. Additionally, “gendered violence” provides a more open definition of who is a victim—rather than closing the categories to “violence against women” which relies upon a binary construction of the body and gender identity—there can be a more broad and inclusive discussion of victims that include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals or male victims. I hold that such language reflects a feminist commitment to hear the voices of all those marginalized and hurt by the socialization processes that afford more authority, respect, dignity, and bodily integrity to masculinity (as well as men, though not exclusively men) that exercises power by dominating and oppressing others (Pascoe 2008). Thus, “gendered violence” works further to disrupt masculine access to unquestioned power, as advocates do in their daily work in assisting those affected by the cultural norms of patriarchal violence.

Finally, when discussing practitioners who work to assist victims of gendered violence, I use the term “advocate” as a blanket label. While there are many types of advocates, such as legal, community, on-site, hotline, for clarity and brevity, I discuss all practitioners within this study as advocates. This includes those who volunteer as advocates rather than engage in paid employment of advocacy work—though all participants had to have been a victim advocate in recent years to participate in the study. Interestingly, this approach seeks out the general trends from the particulars of each individual job title—all have the core act of advocating on behalf of victims of gendered violence. In this study, there can be a more clear discussion of the overall experiences of advocates as a result of terming all participants “advocates.” If the specific labels

or job titles are essential to understanding the context of the analysis, I provide those specific titles within the discussion.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

This dissertation has been organized through a total of seven chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction and rationale for the topic of advocates' experiences with positive and negative stereotype in new social interactions; these applications of stereotype culminate into occupational stigma. Additionally, this chapter provides a clear history of advocacy work and the depth of gendered violence within the United States. Finally, this chapter considers the goals of a project—both academic and practical.

Chapter Two outlines the literature and theory that explains how and why advocates experience occupational stigma when introducing their work to strangers and new acquaintances. Specifically, the notions of dirty work, stigma, stereotype, and Othering are outlined to provide a holistic portrait of the cultural and interpersonal factors that contribute to occupational stigma. This chapter also begins to more deeply consider how and why advocates receive the responses they do with strangers by implicating the disruption of cultural power afforded more to men and masculinity within the cultural scripts of the United States.

Chapter Three discusses the process of data collection with a specific emphasis on the process of gaining access to a relatively hidden population. I provide substantive discussion on how I recruited participants. This chapter also explains the various methods of analysis for both the qualitative and quantitative portions of the study. Finally, Chapter Three also presents the demographics and details of those who participated in the both quantitative and qualitative portions of the study.

Chapter Four addresses advocates' experiences of positive stereotype. Here, I present the experiential processes of what advocates identify as "good" or "positive" outcomes when

discussing their occupational titles with strangers. For these encounters, advocates describe their conversational partners as expressing positive stereotypes through sentiments that rely on idealization or sympathy. Idealizing responses place the advocate as somehow superior to the conversational partner, emphasizing *how* special an advocate must be to work with victims of gendered violence. Sympathetic responses are those that express condolences for the type of work in which advocates engage. This chapter further explores advocates' responses to the application of positive stereotypes within conversations with strangers.

Conversely, Chapter Five illustrates the "negative" responses—the application of negative stereotype—that often appear in the form of avoidance or outright hostility towards advocates. Interestingly, advocates specifically gender the identity of the conversational partner in those instances. The partners are consistently identified as men, which leads to a larger discussion of how negative responses—those that are avoidant or hostile—impact the advocate in their future interactions with strangers. This chapter considers the gendered nature of such responses and implicates the replication of patriarchal culture in these interactions. In addition, this chapter concludes with a discussion of the strategies advocates employ to cope with hostile conversational partners.

Providing an in-depth look at the impacts positive/negative stereotype and the resulting occupational stigma has on an advocate's willingness to reveal occupational identity, Chapter Six explores the long-term consequences of consistent exposure to occupational stigma in social interactions with strangers. This section examines how advocates respond to and cope with the impact of stigmatizing interactions as a result of, both, positive and negative stereotypes; reduced ability to be honest in initial interactions has the possibility of hindering the development of social support networks. Consequently, this chapter also evaluates the impact of occupational

stigma on advocates' feelings of burnout. Through quantitative analysis, this chapter considers traditional factors of burnout such as age, hours of training, as well as positive and negative experiences of occupational introduction and external social support in relationship to burnout. Of these potential factors, experiences with occupational stigma are the most influential on burnout.

The final chapter considers the implications of this study for both academics and practitioners. Chapter Seven also considers directions for future research given the limitations of this exploratory work. In addition, this section provides concrete suggestions for changes to be made in trainings for advocates as well as in the larger movement against gendered violence. These considerations are given in order to better support local advocates while they continue the life saving work of advocating for victims of domestic and sexual violence, as well as contribute to the second goal of this research which is to provide concrete ways that organizations can help support their advocates.

The data demonstrate that occupational stigma has an effect on victim advocates at each step of social interactions with strangers. Importantly, advocates lives outside of the walls of their work must be considered in order to continue to improve their lives. Now more than ever, support for advocates must continue to grow in order to reinforce the cultural, legal, and social progress in how victims and DV/SA organizations are treated within the United States and globally. From this study, it is clear that organizations must account for preparing advocates on how to negotiate occupational stigma in their daily lives. Further, those around advocates must work to support them by overcoming the cultural narratives that reiterate masculine power, privilege men's experiences, and devalue marginalized lives.

CHAPTER II:
REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORY

The daily work of a victim advocate is complex and often varies from one agency to the next. For example, some advocates may engage in legal advocacy, social work, responding to police calls, grant writing, cleaning, and others in licensed therapy. Despite the complexity and uniqueness of each advocate and the organizations' work, in the present study, several bodies of literature help to inform the analysis of advocates' experiences with positive/negative stereotypes and the resulting stigma in social interactions. Most saliently the concept of *occupational stigma-*—derived out of the conception of "dirty work"—provides a clear understanding of the position advocacy holds within the larger social context. Additionally, the concepts of stigma and stereotype offer a framework through which we may understand *why* advocates receive the responses they do within the larger social world. Finally, the relational process of Othering plays out between individuals to allow for the use of stereotype and the resultant stigma. As such, understanding the cultural context around domestic and sexual violence victim advocacy as an occupation and why stigma and stereotype is attached to those who do the work becomes much easier.

LITERATURE ON VICTIM ADVOCATES

There is a wealth of information on domestic and sexual violence victims and their experiences in a variety of capacities—personal, legal, social, or media analyses. Additionally, contemporary literature provides a rather robust discussion on the operation of the criminal justice system—police, courts, offender sentencing and recidivism—in gendered violence. However, the literature on the identities of victim advocates—those who assist victims of domestic and sexual violence—is rather scant. The following review of literature contextualizes this work and relies upon the scholarship surrounding human services field as well domestic and

sexual violence victim advocates. Some of the research on advocate's identity has approached the subject through the lens of psychology and sociology, and research on victim advocacy falls into several major themes: advocates' experiences at work, advocates in legal and medical settings, and research on the negative psychological impacts of advocacy work. The final category is the most well developed area with the field.

Studies of Victim Advocates and Their Experiences

There are very few long-term, in-depth studies on victim advocacy and even fewer that employ ethnographic approaches to understand the operations of shelter employment. One in-depth, sociological study conducted by Kenneth Kolb (Kolb 2008) analyzed victim advocacy work and the negotiation of the demands while working with victims. The dissertation closely examined the daily operations of a North Carolina shelter serving domestic and sexual violence victims through a symbolic interactionist approach and addressed three primary areas: the empowerment model and emotion management among staff members, constructing professional identities in the management of sympathy for clients, and finally, advocates' responses to the devaluation of women's labor and care-work within the shelter setting. Kolb recently published his book, which developed out of the dissertation, and it covers many of the same topics regarding the emotional dilemmas advocates faced in their daily work (2014). In examining the role of identity management in constructing competent institutional identities despite unanticipated outcomes of client's cases, such as when a client "goes back" or is murdered, Kolb demonstrated how advocates must position themselves in the rhetoric of empowerment to be able to relinquish blame or responsibility for the negative outcome (Kolb 2011a). Another article considered how advocates negotiate their moral identity when clients behave in ways that agencies deem "difficult"; Kolb highlighted numerous strategies –such as deflecting blame,

reconstructing client biographies, or enforcing micro-hierarchies—advocates rely upon to be able to continuously provide sympathy for victims who behave "badly" despite the frustration advocates may feel. Kolb argued that this allows advocates to maintain their sense of being a "good person" who cares for others despite the negative feelings they have for "difficult" victims (Kolb 2011b). Kolb's work on the subject of advocacy is one of the most comprehensive works on the subject of victim advocacy and identity while at work. The research pushes the discussion towards examining advocates' lives and experiences as valuable sources of information; yet, this research stayed focused on the experiences of advocates while on the job.

Work on sexual assault victim advocates has noted that many advocates feel anger and fear when coping with the work; however, the workers routinely cite the importance of emotional reaction management within their line of work. Scholars have demonstrated how anger and fear provides advocates with connection to their clients and how advocates view the reactions as a necessary part of the job, contrary to what previous studies on burnout and vicarious traumatization have argued (Wasco and Campbell 2002). Research has also studied the self-care routines of sexual assault victim advocates and found that advocates cope with a heightened sense of sexual violence by calling up personal resources, developing psychological coping mechanisms, and relying upon organizational support to manage emotional responses (Wasco, Campbell, and Clark 2002). Few studies have done similar work with domestic violence victim advocates in order to study their self-care routines or how advocates make sense of the violence they encounter in their daily labor.

Advocates within Legal and Medical Systems

The information on victim advocates, their roles and perceptions within the legal system is another robust area of the limited scholarship on advocates. Several studies examined the role

of the victim advocate while participating within the legal system. One such work provided insight into the rates of successful conviction and determination of case outcome following a domestic violence incident when a court advocate worked with the victim to testify and showed advocates serve a much needed role in the court system (Camancho and Alarid 2008). In domestic violence cases, the role of the advocate has been shown to be critical in negotiating the interface between civil and criminal courts, especially within the context of assisting the civil-criminal courts in getting necessary information by providing resources and support for the victim and her family throughout the process (Robinson 2007). Despite this important role, scholars have discussed how advocates become susceptible to liability claims if they tread too closely to the line of providing unauthorized legal services, as most victims have no formal credentials pertaining to legal expertise (Brown 2001). Researchers have also addressed victim advocates' roles within international court systems and issues surrounding various atrocities, arguing there are unclear roles for the advocates; yet, the studies maintained advocates are a necessary element of international court proceedings in order to protect victims during the trial process (Mekjian and Varughese 2005).

Another aspect of the literature on victim advocates has examined the advocate's notions and understandings of the system survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault must negotiate upon entering the legal and medical system. In the case of sexual assault, Maier's (2008a) interviews with 47 victim advocates revealed the strong perception of re-victimization by medical and police personnel as a result of power imbalance between victim and legal/medical authority figures. Another study investigated the collaboration-based barriers present within current medical and mental health relationships to victims; this study used the perspectives of victim advocates who must relay information and champion the victims with

various health care professionals (Payne 2007). Police responses vary by locale, as victim advocates were surveyed to collect a more holistic picture of police responses within both urban and rural settings; the study found that domestic violence response agencies reported different elements impacted police response to calls: whether the police station responding was urban (pro-arrest policy) or rural (no arrest policy), whether a threat was the reason for police involvement, and if a weapon was involved in the altercation (Belknap and Hartman 2000).

Restorative justice–an approach to legal justice that values the victim's wishes as well as the community's wishes for punishment in an effort to have the offender repair the damage done in whatever way possible—has been a recent trend within the study of legal systems and gendered violence victim advocates. Advocates have argued for the positive outcomes possible with the use of restorative justice despite the dangers of re-victimization (Curtis-Fawley and Daly 2005). Other examined restorative justice strategies from a feminist perspective as it directly pertains to victims of physical or sexual violence. One such argued restorative justice is a pathway to reparation for victims of gendered violence rather than retribution-based punishments courts currently use as the standard (van Wormer 2009). Some research considered the practices and challenges involved for domestic violence advocates in creating substantive change and concluded that in order to reduce domestic violence, agencies must use collaborative, community-based approaches while maintaining feminist commitments to empower women who have been victimized. This will optimize community and legal responses to domestic violence (Nichols 2011). In relationship to gendered violence, restorative justice holds both potential and challenges for victims and their advocates.

Researchers have observed persistent issues of social identity and victim advocates' perceptions of clients; these perceptions have created some challenges for developing effective

programs of assistance for victims across lines of gender and race. Specifically, Dunn and Powell-Williams found advocates make sense of women who stay with their abusers through the dual lens of victimization and agency, which contradictorily constructs victims as choice-less and yet, making choices (2007). As a result of the United States' cultural emphasis on individualism, the authors argued advocates over-emphasize the "choice making" lens which problematically denies some of the real constraints victims face. Additionally, issues of race permeate the field of victim advocacy in cases of sexual assault, as advocates stated a difference in responses to sexual assault across racial lines—specifically victims of color are more likely to stay silent about their victimization, receive less support from their community, and experience higher rates of blame from families for bringing shame on the family (Maier 2008b). There are significant barriers present when working with Latina survivors as linguistics used by advocates present as gate-keeping mechanisms and re-victimize Latina clients. Latina clients are frequently denied the ability to fully recount their stories and experience more intense scrutiny that can result in reduced services for Latina victims of domestic violence (Trinch 2001).

Some work exists on rural advocacy. One such study examined the perceptions of victim's perceptions of the efficacy of a telephone based, United Kingdom organization Independent Domestic Violence Advocate; service recipients discussed the importance of the organization, particularly for rural users who would not otherwise have access to advocacy (Madoc-Jones and Roscoe 2011). Using an ecological model of understanding rural victim advocacy, several scholars sampled victim advocates perceptions and experiences within the rural Mississippi delta region and argued that an ecological model provides a positive model for re-centering advocacy strategies to be most helpful to victims (McGrath, Johnson, and Miller 2012). Finally, scholarship on legal/medical systems has analyzed the interactions between rural

law-enforcement and feminist-based advocacy organizations within the framework of domestic violence and provided some strategies for overcoming stigma and barriers in a rural setting such as developing conflict resolution, cross-training, and acknowledging philosophical and procedural differences between the two agencies (Sudderth 2006). The challenges and success of social identity and rural advocacy remains an area needing further exploration, as it may reveal insights into systems of violence and domination that are unique to specific populations and communities.

Negative Effects of Advocacy Employment

Burnout, as well as secondary stress and vicarious traumatization, remains the most robust area of research for work on victim advocates and the helping professions. These studies often highlight the negative impact of advocacy work on employees. Germinal scholars studying human services fields named the concepts of "burnout," (Maslach 1982), "compassion fatigue," (Figley 1983) later named "secondary stress traumatization" (Figley 1995), and finally, "vicarious traumatization," (McCann and Pearlman 1990), which have been applied to advocacy work in different ways. Each of the above terms describes responses to long-term or intense exposure to trauma that ultimately leaves advocates psychologically fatigued and incapable of performing their jobs effectively. One of the foundational works by Charles R. Figley aptly opened his widely cited chapter, "Compassion Fatigue as Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder: An Overview," with the simple yet deeply impactful sentence, "There is a cost to caring" (Figley 1995:1). He argued this cost is paid by those who undertake emotional labor, and especially so of those working directly with victims to heal their trauma.

In the subsequent years since studying these phenomena, numerous scholars have examined the signs, causes, and prevention strategies regarding burnout, secondary stress, and

vicarious trauma in many of the human services and emotional labor fields; these studies have had a particular emphasis on occupations in which the primary labor performed works with traumatized victims in human services fields (Cherniss 1980). This is particularly true of social workers in direct contact with violent and traumatic experiences through their clients (Bride 2007). Mental health providers' experiences with compassion fatigue were often dependent on rural/urban settings and personal feelings of job satisfaction or burnout (Clark, Sprang and Whitt-Woosley 2007). The literature in this area focuses both on individual level and organizational level burnout and secondary stress, as a single worker and/or an organization can experience burnout.

As a result of the vast body of literature on negative effects of employment in care-work, there have been a number of studies that analyzed various aspects of burnout for victim advocates. One in-depth, qualitative study found simultaneous and cumulative factors surrounding higher levels of burnout. For example, personal abuse history, poor organizational factors, low pay, and long hours contributed to rates of burnout among victim advocates (Behounek 2011). Other work demonstrated that low levels of communication anxiety, in combination with higher levels of communication competence, social and informational support, and higher position within the agency were all factors that contributed to reducing burnout, because advocates had more interpersonal confidence and control over their work days (Babin, Palazzolo, and Rivera 2012). Further, advocates with more education, experience, and higher workloads experienced lower rates of vicarious trauma and emotional exhaustion (Baird and Jenkins 2003). The organizational culture of agencies had a significant impact on reducing secondary stress and burnout among those working with domestic and sexual violence, particularly when employees had support from co-workers, supervisors, and work teams (Choi

2009). Organizational culture such as higher levels of coworker support, clinical supervision, and shared power within the agency also promoted worker well-being and reduced rates of burnout among advocates (Slattery and Goodman 2009).

Based upon the current work on advocates, it is clear that few address the lives of advocates outside of their time while on the job—this is a significant gap, as several fields of literature reiterate the importance of occupational identity within the social world. Further, examining the negative impact of employment reiterates that negative consequences are a direct result of the care-work performed. As a result, this study begins to fill in the gaps regarding external factors by evaluating how occupational stigma—experienced while not on the job—affects advocates' identities, their occupations, those with whom they work, and feelings of burnout.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Importantly, this study contributes to the growing literature on victim advocates through both the methodological and conceptual elements. The use of multiple data collection methods and the focus on advocates' lives outside of the work context provide important new ground to better understand the demands of advocacy labor. Despite the lack of focus on experiences outside of the work context, the importance of occupational identity informs all of advocates' interactions with new acquaintances, strangers, and loved ones. The results of this work are grounded through the major concepts of dirty work, stereotype, stigma, and Othering. When taken together, these elements provide a clear view of how stigma operates within the daily lives of advocates, how occupational stigma is generated through stereotype, how Othering creates the conditions for stereotyping, and how managing Othering informs advocates' interactions within the social world.

Understanding Dirty Work in the Context of Victim Advocacy

In this study, the advocates often experience occupational stigma when introducing their work to new acquaintances—this stigma comes in the form of positive or negative stereotype. The notion of stigma attached to an occupation or its title began with Everett Hughes' conception of "dirty work." In his work, Hughes argued our social identity is closely tied to our occupations; certain occupations are described and discussed using disparaging, "loaded value" language, thus stigmatizing those who work the necessary but unpleasant, undesirable jobs (1951; 1958). Further, Hughes held that occupations in the United States have a peculiar position of determining the majority of the self and social identity:

> Work is one of the more important parts of his social identity, of his self; indeed, of his fate in the one life he has to live, for there is something almost as irrevocable about choice of occupation as there is about choice of a mate (1958: 43).

Here Hughes demonstrates the importance in choice of occupation, and likens it to the ways in which we are able interact with others through our chosen mates. The occupational identity is the primary conduit through which social identity is transmitted; thus, the choice of advocacy work communicates a great deal of information to conversational partners.

Throughout his work, Hughes delineated between different types of "taint" associated with an occupation—*physical*, *social*, and *moral*. Taint is the source of marking another person's occupation as undesirable, which in turn, marks the person as undesirable. While he did not fully explain or expand upon these ideas, in his later essay, "Good People and Dirty Work," Hughes used Nazi Germany and those engaged in the act of killing or harming others as a case example to illustrate how a person can be a "good" person—conceiving themselves in a positive light—and still perform various "dirty" work—work that is devalued or considered undesirable to others (1962). Thus, the notion of doing "dirty" work does not inherently trump a person's self-

conception as a "good" person—though few cases are as extreme as Nazi Germany; however, it does allow others to displace their discomfort or disgust onto easily identifiable figures that engage in "dirty work" for their paid employment—more typically, a refuse collector. This social process fundamentally relies upon a construction of an in-group and out-group classification. There are those who engage in the "dirty" work and those who do not; those who do are, thusly, deemed undesirable. In considering the relevance to advocacy work, the connections are quite clear. Acts of and victims of domestic and sexual violence are regarded as dirty. To engage with such undesirable issues, then, places advocates in an out-group—those who are willing to work with "dirt." The stereotype and stigma attached to victim advocacy, then begins to make more sense within this understanding of the importance of occupational identity and the classification of dirty work, even if "good" people participate in the undesirable labor.

Similarly, Mary Douglass wrote of the symbolic and social importance of "dirt" in a culture. She noted that dirt is a natural by-product of ordered systems, and described the socially constructed nature of dirt as:

> [A] set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements. (Douglas, 1966: 35)

Dirt and dirty work, thusly, provide a clear system in which there are those occupations which signify "goodness" or "cleanliness," and those that are "dirty" or "bad" occupations. Yet, regardless of the classification system within the social world, dirty occupations are quite necessary to sustain the function and order of a society. Domestic and sexual violence are elements that are "inappropriate"—though expected and condoned in a violence-prone patriarchal culture—to the order of modern society, as violence is generally regarded as vulgar. This means that domestic and sexual violence victim advocates engage with dirt and are involved

in the broad categorization of dirty work; they engage with the worst parts of society, such as violence on the most intimate level, and yet, many acknowledge the necessity of this work. This places advocates in a unique position to do morally "good" yet tainted work in assisting victims of gendered violence, which exposes them to unique types of stigma as a direct result of occupational identity.

In understanding the types of taint to which advocates are susceptible, it is necessary to consider how *physical*, *social*, and *moral* taint are understood. Ashforth and Kreiner complemented the early work on occupational stigma as they developed clear definitions and examples of the three types of taint within the labor system (1999), a project left incomplete by Hughes and later, by Goffman. Ashforth and Kreiner explained *physical taint* is anything that requires coming into contact with "contaminated" materials such as bodily fluids or garbage as well as any labor that is performed under difficult or noxious conditions. *Social taint* necessitates the laborer regularly come in contact with stigmatized populations or holds positions that place them in a servile relationship. Finally, *moral taint* applies to occupations that engage in morally dubious actions or jobs where deception and intrusive communication are routinely used. In a later study, Kreiner, Ashforth, and Sluss further analyzed various theories to explain occupational stigma and provided a more nuanced analysis of occupational stigma. The authors claimed all occupations carry some stigma, but we must evaluate occupational stigma by depth and breadth of perceived dirtiness. Some jobs are "dirtier" than based on length and severity of exposure to taint (2006). For example, they held a debt collector experiences a different level of perceived dirtiness than a sewer worker based on severity and type of exposure to taint.

When examining the various types of taint, it becomes clear that advocates operate in a space primarily of social taint. This is two-fold: first, advocates regularly work with populations

who are stigmatized, and second, advocates work in a servile position. While some may argue advocacy work is not fundamentally servile, when reviewing the basic requirements and operations of the occupation one does not need special credentials, education, or skills in order to be an advocate—there are no federal regulations or requirements and few states have rigorous or uniform standards for advocacy. More particularly, advocacy labor emphasizes the "empowerment model" which stresses victims know more about their own lives and needs than the professional who assists them (Kolb 2014). Advocates, then, are neither in positions of power and decision making over clients (as a therapist or psychiatrist would be) nor do they possess highly specialized knowledge; this creates a position that, while extremely important, is one of disempowered service to a stigmatized population.

Yet, to claim social taint as the singular source of dirt in the occupation of victim advocacy is not sufficient. Scholars, Robert McMurray and Jenna Ward, have recently contested the tripartite classifications of physical, social, and moral taint as the only types of occupational taint. In their work, McMurray and Ward contend previous scholarship failed to account for the shift in work from manual labor to service-based work that centers on emotional labor. With the focus on emotional labor, they argued *emotional taint* is a contaminant that many contemporary occupations experience through their work with others (2014). McMurray and Ward provided the following definition for those who—through employment—engage with the strong and negative emotions of others:

> We define emotional dirt as expressed feelings that threaten the solidarity, self-conception or preferred orders of a given individual or community. To be clear, the attribution of dirty status is not a matter of empirics. It describes a subjective state assigned by either the individual involved or outside observers through which emotions are deemed to be in some sense polluting. Such pollution is repellent to the extent that it threatens a sense of solidarity, stability or order (1134).

From this working definition, it is clear victim advocates fall under the purview of those who experience emotional taint as a result of their occupations. Advocates listen to feelings of rage, frustration, helplessness, violation, depression, and a whole host of other "out of place" or "polluting" feelings when they work with victims of domestic and sexual violence. Further, victim advocates are paid to manage their own emotions while at work and continuously provide empathy and support regardless of circumstances around them—this, too, is arguably a set of polluting feelings that must be managed and contained. As such, advocates' work often leads other people—out group members—to the principal question that indicates emotional taint in McMurray and Ward's study: why would you want to do that?

Stigma, Stereotype, and Othering in Social Interactions

While dirty work provides a great deal of understanding and insight into the experiences of victim advocates, three concepts are especially prominent in the analysis of victim advocates' experiences with occupational stigma in new social settings: stigma, stereotype, and Othering. Erving Goffman and Walter Lippmann provide sustained treatments of stigma and stereotype, respectively. Using these theoretical conceptions in conjunction with one another provides a clear foundation upon which we can better understand the responses advocates receive as a result of the perceived social and emotional taint when discussing their occupations with new acquaintances. That is to say, we can understand advocates' occupational stigma as a result of the intersections of stigma and stereotype in daily life as reflections and reiterations of the relational process of the psychological distancing technique of Othering.

Goffman and stigma

Goffman's work on identity management and stigma is especially salient in discussing occupational stigma for victim advocates. Goffman's treatise on the subject, Stigma: Notes on

the Management of Spoiled Identity, illustrated the social aspect of traits considered as "discrediting" in the eyes of others. He held a particular focus on the moments of "mixed contacts" which he defined as, "The moments when stigmatized and normal are in the same 'social situation,' in a conversation-like encounter or in the mere co-presence of an unfocused gathering" (1963, 12). Advocates and their interactions with strangers are considered mixed contacts, as advocates must encounter those without the same occupational stigma. This is the very definition of Goffman's "mixed contact" situation wherein stigma is likely become a part of the interaction. Advocates are the stigmatized out-group while others occupy an acceptable in-group orientation—they do not engage with "dirty" materials or clients in their occupations.

Further, Goffman asserted stigma consists of individual "blemishes of character" that a person cannot avoid, lest they be invisible; these fall along three patterns of *abominations of the body*, *individual character*, and *tribal stigma* (1963:4). Individual character flaws can be anything from mental illness, addiction, dishonesty, or radical political behaviors (4). For advocates, stigma occurs as a result of individual character blemishes for their associations with "radical political behavior," as disrupting patriarchal norms and power is, indeed, radical behavior. Goffman held that the blemishes have the potential to result in low self-esteem and usually require the stigmatized individual to engage in information management to prevent further stigmatization in mixed contacts. He wrote, "The very anticipation of such contacts can of course lead normals and the stigmatized to arrange life so as to avoid them" (12). However, when these contacts do occur, "The stigmatized individual is likely to feel that he is 'on,' having to be self-conscious and calculating about the impression he is making" (14). Advocates in this study provide clear discussions of the experiences of impression and stigma management during

their interactions with strangers, thus indicating further the importance of Goffman in understanding advocates' experiences outside of the employment context.

Of note, victim advocates are able to conceal their work—their discrediting characteristic—in most new social interactions. Yet, concealment is difficult, as the stigmatized group must manage social tension and the visibility of *stigma symbols*. Stigma symbols are, "Signs which are especially effective in drawing attention to a debasing identity discrepancy, breaking up what would otherwise be a coherent overall picture, with a consequent reduction in our valuation of the individual" (44). For advocates, their job titles or the titles of the organizations for which they work serve as stigma symbols, indicating a disruption in the expected gendered and cultural roles of women. This can lead to learning to "pass," which is purposefully concealing or distorting a stigma symbol by the stigmatized person who actively protects the secret to suggest there is no discrediting characteristic (73-80). As demonstrated later in the study, advocates frequently obscure their occupational identities to avoid stigmatizing encounters.

A final element to aid in understanding the experience of advocate in engaging with occupational stigma, Goffman wrote at length about the situatedness of all stigma and stigmatizing markers. That is to say, stigma is a direct result of social interactions; these interactions are historically and culturally located, and Goffman's final thoughts on the subject of stigma in society provides clear insight into this matter:

> Stigma involves not so much a set of concrete individuals who can be separated into two piles, the stigmatized and the normal, as a pervasive two-role social process in which every individual participates in both roles, at least in some connection and in some phases of life. The normal and the stigmatized are not persons but rather perspectives. These are generated in social situation during mixed contacts by virtue of the unrealized norms that are likely to play upon the encounter (137-138).

Through his analysis, he held that stigma is a result of social location and position; these are roles we learn to play as a direct result of the unspoken, "unrealized" norms inherent within most social encounters. Therefore, we can conclude advocates' experiences of occupational stigma are a direct result of breaking an unspoken, but deeply engrained, cultural and social norms. Yet, there has not been a discussion of how and why these populations become stigmatized. Through using Walter Lippmann's analysis and consequent naming of stereotype, we can see how interactions, occupations, and bodies become stigmatized. Further Lippmann provides the tools to understand how norms and values remain in place regardless of the changing times leaving out-groups stigmatized long after there has been education or change on the issue. Arguably then, there can be no stigma without stereotype to reinforce notions of dirt and in/out group status, and there can be no stereotype without stigma—the social processes that maintain differences between individuals.

Lippmann and stereotype

In order to more fully understand advocates' experience of occupational stigma, the concept of stereotype plays a significant role. For without stereotype, stigma does not hold the same strength in social situations. Similarly, stereotype rarely occurs without stigma (either positive or negative). Stigma marks individuals as different from a normative identity; stereotype marks groups as different, non-distinct, and almost inhuman and provides the framework under which stigma can occur. Thus, in the case of advocates, stigma and stereotype inform one another to ensure a continued marking of difference from normative, "clean" occupational identities.

To demonstrate the interconnectedness of stigma and stereotype, Walter Lippmann's foundational book, *Public Opinion*, offered a clear definition and purpose of stereotypes in our

every day lives; Lippmann asserted stereotypes are a way to quickly and effectively categorize information. He claimed, "For the most part we do not first see and then define, we define first and then see" (1926, 54-55). Lippmann further examined the role culture and thus, socialization has in this process:

> In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture (55).

For Lippmann, just as for Goffman in his final pages on stigma, the role of culture is inseparable from the process of stereotyping others in an effort to reduce the amount of confusion one has in the social world. Stereotype informs and maintains the boundaries of who ought to be considered an outsider—this stems out of Othering discussed below. This process allows for people to create patterns and build archetypes upon the preconceived, cultural notions. As Lippmann asserted, "We notice a trait which marks a well known type, and fill in the rest of the picture by means of the stereotypes we carry in our heads (59)." Thus, in a world where feminism is deeply stigmatized, where victim blaming is especially prominent in gendered violence, and women are expected to be passive and subservient, a disruption to masculine power is especially subject to broad stereotypes with deeply negative connotations. The culture around advocates is dismissive at best and hostile at worst; this culture informs stigma, which in turn, informs stereotypes, because stereotypes are broadly used stigma symbols.

Stereotypes are not passively carried around with us or blindly accepted through cultural osmosis; rather, people rely upon certain stereotypes or dispel others in order to maintain a semblance of control over a chaotic world. As Lippmann explained, "They are an ordered, more or less, consistent picture of the world, to which our habits, our tastes, our capacities, our comforts, and our hope have adjusted themselves" (63). Thus, individuals will identify with or

against the broad selection of stereotypes in order to adjust a sense of position and self in society. Lippmann illustrated this notion when he penned:

> A pattern of stereotypes is not neutral. It is not merely a way of substituting order for the great blooming, buzzing confusion of reality. It is not merely a short cut. It is all these things and something more. It is the guarantee of our self-respect; it is the projection upon the world of our own sense of our own value, our own position and our own rights. The stereotypes are, therefore, highly charged with the feelings that are attached to them. They are the fortress of our tradition, and behind its defense we can continue to feel ourselves safe in the position we occupy (63-64).

Thus, the in-group/out-group distinction of stigma is the interpersonal applications of stereotypes that people hold in order to maintain their sense of position and the positions of others within the social world. Importantly, this can be either positive stereotype or negative stereotype and both serve the same purpose—to function as a mechanism of social control of certain populations. Thus, when considering the victim advocate who disrupts cultural narratives of "appropriate" women's work, masculine power over women, women's obedience, feminism as destructive, and occupational choice, it is clear the results of interactions are likely to be unpredictable, as people must shore up the stereotypes they *already know* to maintain their positions within the normative cultural context.

When encountering new information or information that challenges currently held stereotypes, Lippmann argued there are several approaches to the content. If a stereotype confirms the ideas we already held prior to the encounter, it strengthens the stereotype for future use in stigmatizing interactions. If the stereotype challenges the pre-existing information, the person can do the following: discredit the other who has challenged the stereotype; modify the pre-existing information to incorporate the new information; or feel a deep shift in the trustworthiness of everything around them and the information they had previously relied upon to make sense of the world (65-66). Lippmann concluded people most often choose the path of

finding the challenge to be untrustworthy and thus, discredited—this means they have no need to examine their own values or positions in the world. This applies to the work of introducing stigmatized occupations in social setting; the conversational partner must choose between the options available: deny, confirm, or adjust the preconceptions contained within the information they feel they already know.

Importantly, the information that structures the stereotype is saturated with meaning, "Stereotypes are loaded with preference, suffused with affection or dislike, attached to fears, lusts, strong wishes, pride, hope. Whatever invokes the stereotype is judged with the appropriate sentiment" (78). Further, he analyzed the moral codes we build through the judgments made, which are inherent in the stereotypes people hold, "Neither justice, nor mercy, nor truth enter into such a judgment, for the judgment precedes the evidence…We adjust ourselves to our code, we adjust the facts we see to that code" (79). Thus, when people encounter victim advocates, they will use the general cultural and personal information at their disposal in order to assess the advocates and determine their worth, goodness, their political affiliations, and all other manner of personality traits without regard to the individual advocate. This is the work of the stereotype in the social world—to uniformly manage a wealth of information based on preconceptions that determine in/out group status.

Moreover, this is the hallmark of the relational process of distancing through the technique of Othering. Stereotyping and Othering is especially relevant when thinking about occupational identity and occupational prestige; a person's value becomes determined by what we think we know about the kind of work in which they engage. We determine this worth through the use of stereotyping about occupations. Advocates, as a result of occupational taint and the resulting stereotypes are interpellated within this system to be a stigmatized group—

often leaving them in disadvantaged positions with little prestige for their difficult but deeply necessary work.

Othering as relational process embedded in stereotype

Othering holds a long history in traditional Western philosophy reaching back to the Hegelian master/slave dialectic and continues to influence more modern theorizing of psychoanalysis (Lacan 1955). Especially useful to contemporary Cultural Studies scholarship, the Other allows for the construction of the self. More importantly, that which is outside of the self, as Stuart Hall states, defines the Other:

> It is only through the relation to the Other, the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks, to what has been called its constitutive outside that the 'positive' meaning of any term – and thus its 'identity'–can be constructed (1996:4–5)

This conception of the self as opposite appears in the works of critical cultural scholars (Bhabha 1994; Butler 1993; Derrida 1981; Said 1978) as well as sociologists/anthropologists (Douglass 1966; Jaworski and Coupland 2005; Leach 1976). These works approach the process of Othering an interpersonal as well as cultural phenomenon that aids in distinguishing the self and desired groups on all levels of interaction in society. Examining Othering, on both micro and macro levels, frames the more recent literature on Othering as a process and product. The theoretical framework of Othering as process and product is especially helpful when considering the experiences of advocates with stereotype and stigma.

For stigma and stereotype to function at the interpersonal and cultural level, there exists a system of signs and symbols that indicate value within the interactional experience—that is to say, there are specific scripts of connection between two individuals that ascribe value and place at the interpersonal and cultural levels. This means there is a concurrent set of values in play about worth in the micro and macro sense. In the case of victim advocates, stereotyping is

grounded in the relational distancing technique of Othering. More recent scholarship contends that Othering is defined as a social process of demarcation and differentiation, but further, that Othering often results in morality codes applied to specific social positions (Lister 2004). This translates into a labeling of inferiority/superiority as a relational mechanism by which cultural power remains with the "dominant" group (Schwalbe et al. 2000); traditionally, literature identifies the Other as the one marked as "inferior" as compared to the person engaging in the distancing technique. This disempowers the Other, serving to rationalize inequality and social distance (Holden 1997). Succinctly stated, "The oppressive power of Othering derives from the impassable barrier it draws between 'us' and 'them' and the social distancing it creates" (Krumer-Nevo and Benjamin 2010). However, there are interesting variations on this pattern in the case of victim advocacy, as the conversational partner does not always mark himself or herself as superior to the Other.

When advocates introduce their occupations, conversational partners mark the advocate as morally superior (positive stereotyping) or morally/politically/social inferior (negative stereotyping), dependent upon the conversational partners' worldview. Thus, the traditional approach of marking the Other as consistently inferior does not always apply to the advocate. Yet, Othering and the application of positive stereotype achieve the same outcomes as negative stereotyping for the conversational partner: to create social distance that ensures demarcation and differentiation from advocacy. The conversational partner, dependent upon the situation, is either morally inferior to the advocate and thus, cannot engage in advocating against domestic and sexual violence or they are morally superior to the advocate/profession and thus not required to engage with advocacy and the realities of gendered violence in their communities.

In short, Othering is a powerful psychological technique that ensures the Other is viewed as inhuman (DeBeauvoir 1949), easily categorized, and thus, it becomes a basis for rationalizing inequality and stigma (Holden 1997). In both cases of positive or negative stereotype, the advocate becomes the Other. These are the grounds upon which the conversational can distance themselves, apply stereotype, and ultimately, perpetuate occupational stigma. Yet, some argue that stereotyping *is* Othering, which reveals the anxieties and concerns of the person who employs the stereotype (Bernasconi 2011). However, more frequently, Othering maintains its own distinct category within the literature as a relational tool of subordination and distancing at both the micro and macro level. The use of Othering to distance and then further apply stereotype is reflected in the words and experiences of victim advocates within this study. Thus, the foundational relational process to achieve stigma and stereotype about advocacy is grounded in Othering.

OCCUPATIONAL STIGMA IN THE SOCIAL WORLD

When evaluating the ways in which the concepts of dirty work, stigma, stereotype, and Othering operate within the social world, the cyclical nature of the relationships become quite clear. Cultural values and norms determine which types of occupations are dirty and therefore un/desirable, un/acceptable, and clean/tainted. The concept of taint determines which jobs will be considered discredited or will be attributed to discrediting characteristics of a person. These daily stigmas in interactions cooperate to inform the larger public, thus, creating stereotypes about the nature of the person engaging in tainted, stigmatized labor. This results in Othering during interpersonal interactions, which encourages the use of stereotype to further solidify the social distance. This stereotype then informs the cultural values and norms around occupations and results in stigmatized interactions with the group member, which begins the cycle again.

For advocates in the United States, who operate within a deeply patriarchal system in which authority, power, and desirability are given over to occupations that reflect culturally masculine values, they contend with social and emotional taint. Their work with victims of domestic and sexual violence constantly shines a light onto a cultural issue and political subject (gendered violence) that many do not wish to see or discuss. Further, the types of work in which they engage—emotional labor, non-standardized and non-specialized assistance, association with victims, disruption of traditional patriarchal values through feminist interventions, and a focus on women—are tainted, which informs stereotypes and the cultural context and that results in stigmatizing interactions.

In short, it benefits a patriarchal, masculine centered culture to keep occupations invested in challenging gendered violence and those engaging in the work as outsiders who ought to be distrusted, dismissed, and distanced from others. Thusly, both positive and negative stereotypes serve to ensure that the culture does not need to change and stigma remains in place. Victim advocates become outsiders who are either extremely special—and are therefore distanced from the general population—or unreliable, political radicals—whose work should be devalued. In either case, the cultural conditions which condones violence against women, does not hold perpetrators accountable, or examines people's complicity in that culture are rarely the subject of scrutiny. The social actors only view advocates and their occupations with unrealistic positive stereotype or hostile regard—both strategies reaffirm a social relationship predicated on stigma for the victim advocate, as the following chapters demonstrate.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Given the existing research on victim advocates within the United States and the overwhelming focus on the negative psychological toll the profession takes on workers, I purposefully focused the majority of this study on the experience of advocates' relationships outside of work. The research design investigated the impact occupational identity had on advocates' social relationships with strangers. Emphasizing how advocates interact with those who did not work within the field of advocacy or in the field of gendered violence intervention/prevention. As such, I approached this project looking to gain an emic perspective (the insider's view) of the processes advocates go through in order to make sense of their occupational identities outside of work and their social support network development (Blumer 1969; Geertz 1973, 1983; Harre 1979; Mead 1943). Geertz emphasizes the importance of the process of becoming immersed in the world of the studied population and the seeking of "local knowledge" (1973, 1983). Thus, given the exploratory nature of the research, this study relied primarily on qualitative data and had a smaller quantitative component to statistically explore the relationships between various factors in relationship to occupational identity. However, it is not for the exploratory element alone that qualitative work takes primacy in this research. Advocates are a marginalized and hidden population as a direct result of the hostility to work on behalf of women (Ferree 2004; Pharr 1997). Research on advocates has rarely collected a national sample or used mixed methods to give this marginalized population voice. Thus, through the qualitative interviews, advocates' voices took primacy.

FEMINIST METHODOLOGY

As someone who engages in victim advocacy work, I have an understanding of many terms, jargon, acronyms, and even insider's jokes used in regards to shelter operations and client

interactions. This means I came to the project, survey construction, and interviews with a partial "insider's" perspective. My prior work history as a victim advocate provided me with firsthand knowledge about negotiating one's social networks outside of the occupation, so I was able to engage participants as peers more than research subjects. Friendly and familiar engagement assisted me in collecting more and different information than that would be provided to an "outsider." During interviews, advocates routinely expressed their excitement at "one of their own" conducting research on "us." Additionally, numerous individuals and organizations implicitly and explicitly expressed a deeper sense of trust as a result of my dual status as insider and researcher. The dual identification provided me unique opportunities to build rapport quickly and effectively, and also allowed me, as a researcher, to make sense of the information I receive in the reflexive context of lived experience. In an effort to further reduce traditional barriers of "researcher" and "subject" and support a more reflexive, feminist approach to the research process, I carefully used my insider status (Baca Zinn 1979; Hertz 1997). However, there are limitations to the dual perspective and potential ethical dilemmas in sharing my status as a practitioner. In order to remain committed to ethical research practices, I consistently and frequently emphasized my first identification and purpose as a researcher during interviews. I did not want to take advantage of my partial perspective and insider status nor violate the interviewee's trust.

During interviews, I engaged the qualitative data collection process with an emphasis on feminist, collaborative interviewing. As a feminist researcher, it is my ethical duty to ensure that I responded to interviewees not as subjects of study, but rather, as conversational partners (Rubin and Rubin 2011) who have the greatest insight into the lived experiences of advocates. While using a critical feminist perspective, it is necessary to note feminism is not, in and of itself, a

research method nor does it pose as such (Stalp 2008). Rather, feminism and feminist theory is a perspective applied to a traditional field of inquiry, such as cultural studies or sociology in the example of the current research. This is done in order to analyze the data using a different point of reference as the primary site of inquiry while still meeting all of the criteria of the traditional discipline's research paradigms (Reinharz 1992). Further, I adhered to the axiom that feminist research should not be "on" women, but rather, should be *for* women in an effort to change the conditions of their lives in some way (Riger 1992; Wuest 1995). This significantly informed my research questions as well as the design of the interview and survey. For example, the survey primarily used open text boxes and offered participants the opportunity to write in answers for most questions. This allowed participants' ideas to inform further research, as it is useful to examine how advocates understand and experience their occupational identities.

After data collection, I conducted my analysis using grounded methods—discussed further below—and feminist standpoint theory. Standpoint theory asserts there are multiple truths, and every social location alters the position from which a person can generate knowledge; this remains central to the goals of contemporary research (Hekman 1997). Specifically, the work of Nancy Hartsock on standpoint feminism provides a theoretical base that articulates how each social identity location provides unique insight into the multiple systems of hierarchy and power (1983; 1998). These early works provide a working definition of standpoint theory—we all contribute different perspectives to the knowledge base; this is something traditional social science and some humanities research paradigms have denied in the pursuit of absolute objectivity. Absolute objectivity often denies difference and seeks a single, overarching truth to explain all data. Thus, when examining the data at hand, I looked to see how various factors such as sex, sexual orientation, race, or regional location could have possibly impacted the experience.

Further, Hartsock asserted *women's* specific knowledge provides researchers a space to develop alternative methods that take numerous voices and truths into account. She argued women's voices have often been left out of the academy, both as researchers and as active participants in research processes. To that end, the focus of victim advocacy and gendered violence was central to the study conducted and the overwhelming majority of participants in the study self-identified as women. Thus, the experiences of women take primacy in the design and results of this study, as the field of victim advocacy arose out of women supporting other women in a patriarchal system that denied the violence as a natural by-product of being a part of the social world.

During the analysis and write-up phase, I also employed Sandra Harding's (1991) concept of "strong objectivity" within social scientific research. Harding held that traditional notions of "value-free" or "value-neutral" scientific research suffer from "weak" objectivity. However, Harding did not advocate for "weak subjectivity" either; weak subjectivity is that which suggests all things are relative and there can be no truth found among data. Strong objectivity, through feminist standpoint theory, is a reconsideration of how knowledge claims are made by those traditionally excluded—such as women—from research as well as questioning how the validity of "objectivity" in all projects serves to invest researchers with more reflexivity. In approaching the data collected from victim advocates, it was essential to incorporate the point of view of those typically excluded from research on violence against women: victim advocates. By focusing on advocates, this research provides insight into marginalized voices and offers important nuances to the discussion on cultural narratives about gendered violence and women's experiences in the social world.

Similarly, Donna Haraway argued for a model of socially situated knowledge that pays attention to marginalized groups, as their perspectives reveal different information about society and interactions within scientific research (1988). In each of these authors, the fundamental question of difference does not diffuse or debilitate the ability to make claim. Rather, accounting for difference and seeking out unique social locations provides the scaffolding to create the strongest possible case for many truths that all provide useful perspectives on the same issue. I employ these definitions of feminist, standpoint research in my own work, because it validates the many experiences represented by the oft-unheard voices of the participants; few people actively seek out their knowledge and lived experiences. While there are connections drawn between experiences among the research, there are many nuances to each participant's perspective.

Finally, in constructing a feminist methodological approach to this project, Dorothy Smith's body of work on creating a feminist sociology complements my understanding of feminist standpoint specifically in relationship to social science research. Smith's 1974 article, "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology," contended women and women's lives must be a fundamental part of sociology rather than optional figures that passively receive authoritative dictates from male sociologists. This is an especially influential idea when considering the discussions of gendered violence within the culture and the academy—those engaging in the daily work of responding to the crisis of patriarchal power exercised through domestic and sexual violence hold great potential. Advocates—especially the women engaged in the work—are best suited to informing various academic and cultural stakeholders.

Smith expounds upon the importance of women in sociology in her book, *The Conceptual Practices of Power*, in which she demonstrates how sociology separates knowledge

from experience. She held that this is a flawed approach, at best (1990). She argued sociology must conceptualize ideology as a method of reasoning that takes into account lived experience as worthy and complete knowledge claims. Stated differently: experience provides worthwhile knowledge that cannot be discounted simply because it cannot be easily quantified. Work such as this informs my own understanding of all intellectual projects, and thus, I sought to use multiple research methods to collect and analyze data. By collecting in-depth interviews and using a quantitative survey only as a secondary method of investigation, I affirmed the validity of lived experience as important and whole—in that lived experience *is* data—knowledge claims that take primacy in the study. I also strengthened experience with the data of quantifiable responses. Such an approach allowed for multiple truths and triangulated data, as neither collection method is "better" or more "valid" than the other; yet, one more concisely achieves the feminist work of creating space for marginalized voices. Smith's vision of sociology contends that researchers must approach interviewees as people who provide expert knowledge within a given set of lived experiences. Nuances in experience provide researchers with different sets of knowledge rather than undermining the homogeneity of data collection. As a result, the many perspectives offered through the interview and survey data provided a strengthened final product in the research on victim advocates; the weakness in one method is offset by the strength of the other and vice versa.

As a result of these methodological considerations, a feminist theoretical and methodological approach crafts the most solid possible argument on the topic of advocates' lives and experiences. This is because feminist work provides space for nuances within the analysis and accounts for individual experience within the larger setting of victim advocacy and the cultural landscape. Using a feminist, reflexive, and collaborative data collection style provided

research participants an opportunity to connect with me as a person and as a researcher, to build strong rapport, and to aid in the final outcome of the project through the interview and the survey. As a feminist, cultural studies researcher, my goal was to provide a work that is accessible and useful to participants, organizations, and to the larger body of scholarship. Further, it was to assist in the critical work of social change in American culture through this work, which was best accomplished through a feminist methodology.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND TRIANGULATION

In order complete data collection as well as provide the more holistic representation of advocates' experiences, I relied on a number of strategies that constitute a triangulation of data to design the study. Denzin defines triangulation as the "combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" (1978, 291) in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Mixed methods have long been part of the academy (Campbell and Fiske 1959; Smith 1975) and such an approach proves to be fruitful for many researchers who have combined traditional surveys with interviews (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Sieber 1973). Scholars demonstrate that few researchers prescribe to an either/or paradigm of qualitative and quantitative research; rather, they often fall within a continuum and rely on a combination of methods to gather data (Creswell 2003). Thus, in order to accomplish data collection with an emphasis on accuracy and applicability, as well as feminist methodology, the study conducted relied primarily on qualitative interviews supplemented by quantitative survey data—these were administered as concurrent procedures. Triangulation through mixed methods offered the greatest contribution to the body of scholarship, because the research was exploratory in nature due to the limited data currently available on victim advocates. Further, capturing a rich sample

and valuing the voices of the advocates lead to the strong reliance on qualitative methods at the primary source of data.

As a result of the theoretical and conceptual issues at work, I relied primarily upon qualitative interviews using semi-structured and unstructured, conversational strategies (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). Using these methods elicited rich data and allowed participants to fully elaborate on their answers and explore their experiences. In addition, I employed an online survey that measured similar themes to the interview data. All interviews and surveys were recruited through contacting local, state, national, and identity-based agencies and coalitions. I provided all agencies with a form letter using my recruitment script to ensure consistency for data collection. These multiple methods provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, and thus, provide a depth of information not typically present in research relying upon one method of data collection.

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES: INTERVIEW AND SURVEY

In order to recruit a more diverse range of participants, I contacted a total of 251 local, state, and national gendered violence intervention coalitions and organizations. To see a complete listing of all organizations contacted, reference APPENDIX A. For all organizations, I initially contacted through email and web contacts as a way to reach out and provided the full recruitment script. Email allowed organizations to determine fit or desire to participate on their own schedule, as many organizations have limited resources. On January 5, 2014, I contacted five national coalitions or programs via email and web form submissions, two of which responded to me. The National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence agreed to post the call on their announcements webpage. The National Network to End Domestic Violence initially agreed to assist me and then, subsequently ceased responding to my communications without

providing assistance, further contact, or explanation; I followed up with a total of four emails over the course of eight weeks with no response. During the period of January 23, 2014 through January 28, 2014, I contacted a total of 53 state and identity-based coalitions and organizations. I sought out several racial and religious identity based coalitions in order to reach a wider and more representative sample—none of these organizations responded to my contacts. After waiting for a period of approximately 60 days for response, I proceeded to contact state coalitions/organizations again by telephone to request research assistance. Finally, in an effort to connect with advocates in each state, I contacted shelters/programs directly in each state using the directories found on state coalition websites.

During the participant recruitment phase, a number of challenges and successes occurred surrounding the coalitions' decisions whether to assist me. The email responses received followed a distinct pattern: willingness to help through direct emailing of my call, providing a list of organizations that I needed to contact, refusal to participate without the National Network to End Domestic Violence's approval, and silence. Of the 53 original contacts made to state and identity-based coalitions during the first round of recruitment, nine coalitions responded or acknowledged the email. Four agreed to send information directly to their member lists and networks; three provided me a list of shelter/program names in their state to assist me in contacting each program individually, and two states refused participation without approval from the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Throughout the second round of recruitment, which occurred by telephone during the period of March 18, 2014 through May 1, 2014, I called the remaining 44 coalitions directly. I left voicemails for the appropriate contacts or in the general voicemail box of each coalition. From this set of contacts, 5 state coalitions agreed to assist me, the remaining 39 did not reply to

the voicemails or emails. After providing one week for response to the phone call, I began to email individual organizations in each state that provided a contact list directly with the call for participation; I contacted approximately 200 organizations with few responding to the emails directly. Most organizations did not respond, though a few throughout the nation agreed to participate or forward the information to the appropriate contact at the state or local level. As a result of the lack of responses via email or phone calls, I cannot account for how many organizations, states, or coalitions actually participated in the call for participants—this further means, I was unable to determine how many advocates my call reached. This limits the precision of which this study is able to definitively discuss response rates and effectiveness of the call. Despite these challenges, I was able to successfully recruit a sufficient population for both elements of the study.

Data collection began on January 4, 2014 and concluded on May 31, 2014. During that time, I had a total participation of 21 interviewees and 387 survey respondents—these surveys represent the total set that included partially finished answers. Importantly, the project employed a purposive sampling technique, as there were clear limitations to the characteristics of the sample of advocates with whom I wished to connect—specifically, length of time in direct advocacy and whether advocacy is the primary source of wage earnings for respondents in order to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of data. By choosing the framework of providing direct service work within the last two years as well as the aspect of paid employment, it allowed the study to concentrate on respondents who were fully engaged in the work of advocacy as their primary occupation, which poses different challenges than those who have only volunteered their time.

A final note on the recruitment pertains to the number of interviews and surveys

collected. The interviews reached saturation at approximately 17 interviews, and I completed 4 beyond saturation. Importantly, with qualitative projects, saturation is a significant variable and scholars have some debate over the operationalization of the term. Using a grounded approach, authors Corbin and Strauss suggested saturation is not an issue of numbers but rather that theoretical saturation occurs under three conditions. "(a) no new or relevant data seem to emerge regarding a category, (b) the category is well developed in terms of its properties and dimensions demonstrating variation, and (c) the relationships among categories are well established and validated" (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 212). For grounded methodologies, Creswell argues for a typical range of 20-30 interviews (1998, 64) while Morse cites a range of 30-50 interviews to reach theoretical saturation (1994, 225). In his study on saturation within 560 qualitative dissertations, Mason found that the mean sample size for all qualitative projects was 31 with a significant distribution of studies using multiples of ten; the most common samples sizes of 20 or 30 participants (2010, 13). While I reached saturation within the qualitative data portion of the study, I did not gain the total national participation in the quantitative survey as originally desired; advocates from 31 states in the United States participated in the survey. However, the sample for both the interview and the survey is robust and meaningful.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS, METHODS, AND PROCEDURES

Participants

The study sample consisted of 21 victim advocates working in the United States; participants were purposively recruited based on their identification as current victim advocates. Of the 21 participants, 20 identified as female and one identified as male. Ages for the group ranged from 23 to 69 years of age (M=42). Racially, one participant identified as Mestizo, one identified as Native American, and 19 identified as White. Interviewees identified their sexual

orientations as follows: 13 heterosexual, 1 lesbian, and 7 bisexual. Additionally, participants' length of time spent as a direct-service advocate spanned from one to more than 30 years (*M*=9), while working between four and 50 hours a week providing services to victims of gendered violence (*M*=26). Finally, 12 participants self-identified that they worked in rural communities, seven worked within suburban areas, and three were employed in urban settings.[1]

Interview Methods

The interviews used a semi-structured style with an emphasis on allowing the data to develop as naturally as possible—the use of semi-structured interviewing allowed me to maintain clear research objectives while also allowing new data/lines of inquiry to emerge during the interviews. Questions to begin the interview and build rapport were designed to be open ended and flexible. This offered advocates the opportunity to develop lines of discussion relevant to them. Typical first questions were as follows: "What brought you to this line of work?" or "Tell me about what a typical day looks like for you." During the early phases of the conversation, I followed up on any subject participants indicated was important to their personal experience. For example, when advocates in the first interviews consistently discussed their experiences with the politics of their organizational culture, I not only followed up by asking further questions, but I also incorporated questions about organizational culture into subsequent interviews. Another instance occurred when, in the original interview guide, the question regarding how people respond to the job title combined all possible parties—friends, family, and strangers. During interviews, advocates quickly made clear that there were distinctive differences between immediate family, extended family, friends who worked in social justice fields, those who did

[1] One participant worked in multiple locations in one county due to short staffing, and indicated working in both rural and suburban locations. She was counted for both location types.

not, and strangers. As a result, future interviews parsed out this question into several questions to be used based upon what the participant had already discussed in the interview.

All interviews were conducted over the telephone, though participants had the option to use video chat programs such as Skype or Google Hangout. No participant indicated a desire to complete the interview using video chat, which may have been related to concerns about confidentiality. Further, the interviews were recorded using two digital devices to ensure accuracy and to prevent loss of data in the case of device malfunction. Interviews lasted from a range of 37 to 73 minutes with a mean time of 48 minutes. Please see Appendix B for the initial interview guide with probe topics and questions.

At the end of each interview, I asked the participant to relay my contact information to anyone they thought would be a positive contributor to the study. This encouraged snowball sampling in addition to the purposive sampling used when contacting coalitions and programs. Asking only to pass along my information ensured no coercion of the participants or undue intrusion on future participants. Researchers have noted snowball sampling (or referral chain sampling) has some limitations, such as difficulty beginning the chain, controlling the chain to ensure eligibility, and issues with pacing (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981). Yet, snowball sampling provides a number of benefits, particularly for connecting with hidden or hard-to-reach populations that are outside of mainstream cultures and norms (Browne 2005). Advocates, as a result of their marginalized statuses, are populations that are often hidden—whether by choice, stigma, or occupational safe guards. Given the nature of this work, it was incredibly important to work through official as well as participants' channels to ensure trustworthiness on my behalf and safety for all those who were interested in participating. Thus, snowball sampling in addition

to the more traditional methods of recruitment outlined above offered the more possibilities for reaching the hidden population.

Data Analysis

After the completion of interviews, I listened to and transcribed all audio files verbatim. Then, I provided any necessary follow-up questions via email. During the analysis portion of the qualitative data, I used an inductive, grounded approach (Charmaz 2006; Corbin and Strauss 2008; Glaser and Strauss 1967) to code all data. That is to say I used the data contained in interviews to develop codes and determine concepts relevant to participants' understandings of their experiences rather than approaching the data with pre-determined categories of analysis. As an illustration, when participants discussed experiences wherein a new acquaintance said pitying or sympathetic sentiments regarding the occupation, I coded this directly out of the advocates' language used during the interview with codes such as "strangers: feeling sorry," "strangers: depressing work," or "strangers: sympathy." As an additional tool during the earliest stages of the process, I used constant comparative methods (Glaser and Strauss 1967) and periodic member checking—when appropriate—as tools to ensure accuracy of developed codes through the coding of initial interviews (Janesick 1994; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2011). Through using the words of advocates to develop codes, constant comparative methods, and the guidance from those engaged in the occupation through periodic member checking, I worked to privilege the voices of advocates within all stages of the study. Such strategies maintained my reflexive, feminist research ethic and ensure the work accurately reflected the cultural phenomenon and experience.

As is typical with grounded theory, the order of coding and analysis went as follows followed: open coding, followed by axial coding, and finally, drawing the data together into

thematic and theoretical codes (Charmaz 2006; Corbin and Strauss 2008). To return to the examples using sympathy, during the axial phase, these codes were condensed to “Strangers: sympathy” because when comparing the examples of the open codes, they were all best expressed under the concept of “sympathy.” During the theoretical phase, codes such as “Strangers: sympathy” were connected to other axial codes such as “Strangers: idealization” under the theoretical code “Friendly/positive responses.” This was a result of comparing how advocates identified all of these reactions as fundamentally non-hostile and even welcomed responses to the introduction of their job titles in new social situations.

SURVEY: PROCEDURES, PARTICIPANTS, MEASURES, AND DATA ANALYSIS

As a secondary method to measure victim advocates’ experiences, I developed an online survey that sought to provide a greater number of participants the opportunity to contribute to the study. To see a complete listing of the survey questions, please reference Appendix C. This approach contributed to the qualitative interviews by allowing the study to consider the prevalence of experiences within a larger population of advocates regarding the three original topic areas of the study. There were a number of advantages to the use of a quantitative survey: more participants, less time and resources were required from the participants in order to collect data, easy accessibility, and ease of use. These advantages all encouraged participation at advocates’ convenience; this was an especially important consideration as a result of their busy and life-changing crisis intervention work that often demands an extraordinary amount of flexibility in a daily schedule.

Most importantly, through the use of an online survey, a more broad range of perspectives and experiences were represented from across the United States, lending more reliability and generalizability to the overall results of the work (Creswell 2013). The survey was

especially important given the exploratory nature of this study, as there is little information that exists about these key areas of advocates' lives. The use of a quantitative scaling method in the survey, such as a Likert scale, poses some issues: there is less flexibility in responses, the responses are often predetermined, and the questions are closed ended, resulting in a more narrow understanding of the experiences measured (Creswell 2003, 15-17). However, using qualitative and quantitative methods in combination provided the study a number of opportunities for participation that created a more representative, holistic portrait of advocates' experiences with negotiation of occupational stigma and feelings of burnout in relationship to associated factors.

Procedures

The recruitment script ended with a hyperlink for recipients to click on in order to participate in the online survey. Participants followed the link to a survey using Qualtrics; the first page provided the informed consent letter complete with HSRB approval information. The first page contained a required response of consent or non-consent; the participant could only proceed if they indicated they consented to the procedures. After the consent page, participants filled in open-text demographics questions, which I later standardized for analysis after running frequencies for each text box to make meaningful categories provided by respondent. For example, under the demographics question "gender" the most frequent responses were female, male, or genderqueer; these three became the codes. All questions after the initial demographics used a closed ended set of questions in which participants could only choose one answer for each item on the page. There were open textboxes provided to allow participants to enter any user-determined, relevant categories; however, these answers were not used in the final product. After completing the nine pages of the survey, participants were taken to a final screen thanking them

for their time that also provided links for debriefing with crisis intervention counselors, a request to forward the survey to others, and finally, my contact information.

Participants began a total of 382 surveys, of which 221 were fully completed. Only completed surveys were considered in the sample and any missing data was treated as listwise deletions within SPSS. Additionally, while a participant took the survey, if they left any questions left blank the survey program prompted a response, though it did not require one to continue the survey. This allowed those taking the survey to choose the information they felt most comfortable providing. After 72 hours of no activity, the 161 partial surveys' data was submitted to the database. The surveys took approximately 25-30 minutes to complete.

Participants

There were a total of 382 responses with 31 states represented, which was sufficient to provide a meaningful sample for this research. Participants' demographic information is reported below in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Survey Sample's Demographic Characteristics

Demographics Variables	(*N*=382)	*M*	*SD*
Gender			
Female	348		
Genderqueer	4		
Male	3		
Not reported	27		
Race			
Black	9		
Native American	2		
Latina	6		
Asian American	2		
Multiracial	14		
White	312		
Other	2		
Not reported	35		
Ethnicity			
Hispanic	26		

White/Non-Hispanic	190		
African American	5		
Other	18		
Not reported	143		
Sexual Orientation			
Bisexual	28		
Lesbian/gay	19		
Queer	19		
Heterosexual	270		
Other	6		
Not reported	40		
Religious Affiliation			
Atheist or Agnostic	89		
Spiritual	40		
Jewish	7		
Buddhist	5		
Christian	182		
Other	10		
Not reported	49		
Type of Client Served			
Domestic violence only	69		
Domestic violence and sexual assault	205		
Sexual assault only	19		
Other	29		
Not reported	60		
Type of Organization			
Non-profit	295		
Criminal Justice System	22		
Not reported	65		
Location of Work			
Rural	123		
Suburban	61		
Urban	133		
Not reported	65		
Highest Degree Earned			
High School or GED	52		
Associate's	34		
Bachelor's	163		
Master's	95		
Doctorate	11		
Not reported	27		
Age			
Participants Reporting	352	38.2	13.1
Not reported	30		
Number of Weekly Hours			
Participants Reporting	298		

Not reported	84	29.4	14.4
Years in Direct Service			
Participants Reporting	304	8.0	7.5
Not reported	78		
Average Number of Clients Per Week			
Participants Reporting	249	57.0	86.9
Not reported	133		
Hours of Training Prior to Work			
Participants Reporting	246	40.9	23.4
Not reported	136		

Measures

For the purpose of this research project, I relied upon several measures to construct variables testing the relationships between positive and negative experiences of disclosure as well as burnout indicators and a measure of social support from family, friends, and romantic partners. Specifically, I examined the following variables: burnout, social support, negative responses to occupation, and positive responses to occupation in order to better understand the experiences and social processes for victim advocates as they disclose their work identities. Table 2 provides pertinent information on each of the variables constructed for this study such as the number of items, Chronbach's alpha, mean, and standard deviation. The construction of variables is discussed below, and to see all items in scales included, please reference Appendix D.

Table 2. Information on Variables

Variable Measured	Items	α	*M*	*SD*
Burnout	12	.84	2.1	.53
Social Support	11	.76	3.4	.67
Negative Responses	7	.76	2.46	.68
Positive Responses	6	.71	3.18	.56

Burnout. Twelve items were adapted from Maslach's traditional Burnout Inventory, which consists of 22 indicators (Maslach and Jackson 1981); the constructed measure similarly

retained questions regarding exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment and all language was made specific to advocacy work. Some samples of the statements, to which participants responded were as follows: "My job means a lot to me*," "I feel emotionally drained by my work as an advocate," or "I am able to easily connect with my clients*." In this measure, the five-point Likert scale consisted of *Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree no Disagree, Disagree,* and *Strongly Disagree*. In the burnout measure, items that demonstrated a sense of personal accomplishment and connection to clients were reverse-coded a second time so higher quantitative scores indicated greater feelings of burnout in the advocate. These statements are marked with asterisks above.

Social Support. Each of the measures relating to experiences of social support in relationship to their advocacy work operated on a five point Likert scale from *Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never*, which were then reverse coded so higher scores indicated greater levels of support. These scales were crafted to capture the overall experience of social support in relationship to advocacy work, as currently few studies have examined the ways in which advocates receive support outside of their places of employment. Wording of statements was modeled after Phinney's model of ethnic identity development in adolescents (1989), though no questions reflected direct wording; rather, Phinney's measures provided a base upon which to build advocacy specific questions. In all the measures used for the data, the scales were reverse coded to reflect an intuitive understanding of the data, as a higher number indicated a greater degree. As such, the social support measure consisted of questions regarding the advocate's friends, family, romantic partners, and networks outside of their coworkers. All marked items indicate these were reverse coded to create a variable measuring feelings of social support, with the greater score, the more support was felt, perceived, or received outside of the organization

and coworkers. The scale consisted of statements such as, “I talk to my family about my job,” “My romantic partner offers me a great deal of support regarding my work,” and “I don’t want to upset the people I love by talking about the things I experience at work*.” Any items indicating reduced access to social support were reverse coded to reflect that a higher score meant a greater sense of social support for the advocate.

Negative Responses to Occupation. In constructing the variable measuring occupational stigma that involved negative, hostile, or avoidant experiences, there have been few studies that have examined advocacy and the stigma associated with the position. As a result, I developed questions to explore the frequency in which others responded in hostile or avoidant ways. Each item used the five-point Likert scale using *Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Neve*r, which were reverse coded so higher scores indicated more negative responses. Some sample statements to which respondents provided answers are as follows: “People have negative reactions when I tell them what I do for the first time,” “I am not honest about my job or title to avoid an uncomfortable situation,” and “Talking about my job with new people is a stressful experience because I do not know how they will react.” In this variable, all items were coded to reflect intuitive scaling that indicated a higher score meant a greater feeling of negative associations when discussing advocacy with strangers.

Positive Responses to Occupation. In addition to exploring negative experiences, this study also aimed to capture the frequency of positive interactions with strangers. I constructed a variable measuring positive outcomes when introducing their occupations to strangers. As few studies to date have examined the process of positive stereotype attached to advocacy work, this scale is an exploratory measure. All answers were recoded so that higher scores indicated advocates had and felt more positive interactions about their occupational identities in

interactions with strangers. Sample items on the scale include: "Strangers are supportive when I tell them what I do" and "I feel excited to talk about what I do with people in new social situations." The Likert scale used *Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never* and was reverse coded to reflect a more intuitive reading of the data.

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING METHODS

Given the exploratory nature of this research—as few scholars have examined advocates' lives outside of the context of their employment—using a mixed methods approach was especially important. Through predominantly qualitative inquiry with supplemental quantitative data, scholarship and organizations are provided with a clear view of victim advocates' experiences of occupational stigma in every day interactions with strangers and new acquaintances. Through the representative samples in, both, the interviews and the survey, there is substantive evidence of the trends in advocates' lives. Triangulating the data allowed for the research to speak from a point of strong objectivity as the weakness of one method was attended by the strength of the other and vice versa. Further, through triangulation and multiple data collection methods, the following research more fully analyzed how advocates experience their occupations in the social world and how these experiences impact their internal senses of self, their social selves, and their working lives.

Finally, approaching the study using a feminist methodology with an emphasis on collaboration and applicability of the final product allowed for the development of a study that privileged the voices of a marginalized population. Rather than speaking for, the work speaks with advocates by naming their experiences as whole and complete knowledge claims. The commitment to producing research that changes the cultural and material conditions of life for women and other marginalized populations was aided by my own work history as a victim

advocate. Through my insider knowledge as well as my feminist, collaborative, and reflexive research approach, the following chapters highlight key issues facing advocates in the United States.

CHAPTER IV:
"IT TAKES *SUCH* A SPECIAL PERSON": ADVOCATES' EXPERIENCES OF POSITIVE STEREOTYPE

Victim advocates carry their occupational identities with them long after they have clocked out for the day. In the overwhelming majority of social interactions, one introduces their occupation as a point of connection, conversation, and understanding; further, occupation can be a source of information about personal identity in the social world (Christiansen 1999). When victim advocates introduce their occupations to strangers and new acquaintances, advocates in this study described a number of responses from their conversational partners. When discussing and identifying what the advocates deemed "positive interactions" or interactions in which they felt they had good experiences, an overwhelming majority of respondents suggest their conversational partners rely upon sentiments that employ *positive stereotype* through the tactics of idealization and sympathy. This chapter analyzes the content of advocates' recollections of "good" interactions with strangers and provides context as to why conversational partners may employ positive stereotype with such consistency. Further, this chapter discusses how advocates respond to instances of positive stereotyping.

POSITIVE STEREOTYPE AND OTHERING

Walter Lippmann provided a clear definition and purpose of stereotypes in our everyday lives—tools for quick and effective categorization of information based upon preconceived notions. Typically, stereotypes hold overtly negative connotations; yet, stereotypes need not be wholly overtly negative. *Positive stereotype* ascribes desirable or favorable attributes that ultimately function to limit the group when in contact with others. Positive stereotypes often operate in seemingly innocuous sentiments such as "Women are nurturing, caring, or helpful." For all appearances, the sentiment is a compliment; yet, it imposes gender roles and expectations

on all members of the group, regardless of individual traits or personality characteristics. This is especially pertinent in advocates' explanation of how others respond to their work in "positive" interactions. Most frequently, advocates in this study cited phrasing such as that marked in the title of this chapter, "It takes such a special person." While seemingly a compliment, the content actually functions to limit the individuality of the advocate, and moreover, it extricates the speaker from further reflection or action.

For social psychologists, there is parallel line of research on *benevolent prejudice* or *benevolent discrimination* particularly with gender-based stereotypes, which helps to better illuminate the concept of positive stereotype. Glick and Fiske demonstrated how benevolent prejudice against women places them in disadvantaged positions in nearly all aspects of social life, as masculine traits are more favorable to overall success over the life course (2001). Advocates work in organizations and positions marked as deeply gendered through the elements of emotional, caring labor without specific credentials, which places them in disadvantaged and socially disparaged occupational positions (Kolb 2104). As the gendered components of advocacy work reduces access to the symbolic rewards of occupational prestige, it similarly allows for the use of gendered positive stereotypes in an effort to make better sense of those who engage in the labor. Further, this reinstates order to a disrupted social pattern surrounding the expected social roles of women.

Positive stereotype, when applied to the self, holds potential benefits for the identified groups (Biernat, Vescio, Green 1996). Particularly when examining gender related stereotyping, college students more willingly apply gender-based positive stereotype to themselves, while actively distancing from negative stereotypes about their gender (Oswald and Lindstedt 2006). Advocates also employ these strategies in their conversations. Positive stereotype can also have

an effect called *stereotype boost* wherein the group experiences a favorable increase in performance, contrary to *stereotype threat* where the group performs more poorly as a result of stereotype. Research highlights that stereotype boost occurs more frequently when in-group and out-group members subtly activate stereotypes; overt activation does not increase the in-groups' performance (Shih et al. 2002). Thus, in some cases, positive stereotypes serve beneficial functions when an in-group member chooses to self-label; this is especially true of the research conducted in this study. Advocates can and do engage in actively identifying with positive stereotype in an effort to make sense of their stigmatized occupations. Not all accept the positively stereotyped ideas about their jobs and personalities, as other advocates indicated their extreme discomfort and frustration with the application. Yet, this demonstrates the ways in which personality can determine the effect of the positive stereotype and provides a range of tools to advocates when coping with the stress of Othering, stereotype, and stigma.

Similarly, previous scholarship has illustrated the disproportionately damaging consequences of positive stereotypes, especially in the context of gender as a target group. This is an especially important discussion in the context of victim advocacy: a profession focused primarily on disrupting patriarchal norms and power dynamics. When women take on leadership roles, as role incongruity heightens, the consequences become more severe for the women not acting in line with their socially prescribed roles (Eagly and Karau 2002); this punishes women who "step out of place" with regards to gender stereotypes. The connections between advocacy and gendered role incongruity are quite clear: advocates actively challenge gender inequality within social institutions and interpersonal interactions in a cultural system that encourages women to be submissive, passive counterparts to men's dominant, active roles (West and

Zimmerman 1987; Schippers 2007). Thus, when introducing the occupation to strangers, perceived role incongruity may influence the responses the conversational partners offer.

Some researchers have argued positive stereotypes are troubling to individualistic cultures, such as the United States, as members of the stereotyped group feel depersonalized in favor of the stereotyped image, regardless of the superficially positive message (Siy and Cheryan 2013). Additionally, communicators who hold negative views of a group provide less overt negative stereotype while simultaneously accentuating positive stereotypes; this strategy permits the conversational partners to present themselves in a positive light while still expressing stereotyped comments about another group (Bergsieker et al. 2012). These findings have a clear relationship to the data contained within this study: the conversational partners of advocates expressed negatively stereotyped sentiments about the work or clients while simultaneously accentuating how special advocates are within other parts of the conversation. Regardless of the frequency, positive stereotype functions to limit the group.

Consequences of Positive Stereotyping

Positive stereotypes occur for nearly all social identities, but the out-group member using positive stereotype can expect negative consequences. For example, studies demonstrate that a white men using positive stereotype towards African Americans are perceived as more prejudiced and less likeable than those who have not relied on positive stereotypes to discuss the racial group (Czopp 2008). Conversational partners who use positive stereotype while interacting with advocates can expect some advocates to express disgust, frustration, or annoyance. Positive stereotype functions within the social lives of advocates, women, and other stigmatized groups to limit the group's ability to achieve symbolic or material rewards within the wider society. Advocates, as a whole, are primarily women who participate in a stigmatized and

socially/emotionally tainted occupation, which makes them a group particularly vulnerable to positive stereotyping.

Othering and the Process of Positive Stereotyping

In the case of positive stereotyping of advocates, I argue Othering occurs, as the advocate is believed to be of higher moral standing, which places the conversational partner as the morally inferior party. This is contrary to the majority of literature on the subject wherein Othering results in a lower position for the Other. Regardless, advocates still become a distinct and undesirable sub-group as a result of their connection to stigmatized clients and work. This means the advocate becomes marked, an out-group member, despite the perceived higher moral character than the conversational partner. Importantly, Othering also functions to ensure the conversational partner has no claim or responsibility to victims/advocates, because they are morally inferior and thus, not capable of assisting those in need.

Consequently, this chapter analyzes the presence of positive stereotype in advocates' social interactions with strangers. Advocates described two results of the "friendly" responses from those with whom they interact: idealization or sympathy. In idealized and sympathetic reactions, the conversational partners connect to the cultural discourse based on stereotypes and occupational stigma surrounding the *idea* of victim advocacy rather than the reality of the occupation. For example, advocates indicated use of stereotypes about the nature of the work, the personality of the advocate, the clients with whom advocates interact, and the emotional outcomes of the labor they perform on a daily basis. The application of preconceived notions ensures the conversational partners' social interaction remains uninterrupted, as the initial introduction of the topic disrupts common responses about occupational identity and desirable gender roles. This creates the space for the Othering process to create psychological distance.

The majority of advocates, when recalling a specific example of their interactions with such responses, routinely identified the conversational partners in generic pronouns, which indicates this phenomenon is more likely to be gender blind as opposed to hostile/avoidant responses discussed in the next chapter. I contend that conversational partners use positive stereotype within both idealized and sympathetic reactions to engage in distancing and coping techniques when faced with the realities of domestic and sexual violence. Distancing allows the conversational partner to remove responsibility for assisting victims of gendered violence as well as the social/emotional taint associated with working with victims through the application of moral superiority/inferiority. Advocates, when faced with positive stereotype, generally reacted in one of two ways: actively denying the stereotyping by insisting, "anyone can do this job" or accepting the distorted image with pride through claiming, "few people can do this job." I argue these actions provide advocates successful ways to cope with the stress of introductory meetings, as they hold stigmatized positions in the conversation.

"GREAT FOR YOU": IDEALIZATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT

In describing the "friendly" or positive interactions with strangers, numerous advocates[2] identified phrasing that assumes inherently positive qualities about the advocate's emotional and psychological nature. Conversational partners, in their sentiments to the advocates, subtly and overtly ascribed some sort of unique advantage or emotional disposition that allows the advocate to be able to cope with the work; though, the majority of advocates in the study held that such abilities are a result of training or practice. As conversational partners identify the special disposition—thus, engaging in the social distancing technique of Othering—they further the stereotype by creating a scenario in which the advocate is doing good work for others and should

[2] All participants in this study have been assigned pseudonyms and identifying information contained in the interviews has been redacted or altered to protect anonymity.

be provided accolades for the moral superiority of the work. Yet, the advocate and their work still become inhuman, easily categorized, and marked as different. This demonstrates the presence of stigma, and 12 of the 21 interviewees discussed positive stereotype with elements of idealization and encouragement.

Sierra, a 23-year old who had worked as an advocate for less than a year at the time of interview, provided an exemplary description of idealization and encouragement when she relayed:

> I hadn't really noticed anyone or anything that has struck me as a pattern. Other than people being like, "Oh, that must be so hard. You must be…you're just doing great work." There's this weird assumption that I must be this great, altruistic saint for doing what I do.

At first, Sierra contended there is no pattern in her description of typical responses she receives. After a moment, she identified a trend wherein strangers ascribe positive characteristics to her, such as being "great" or "altruistic" for performing the labor of providing support to domestic and sexual violence survivors.

When Sierra recalled the language, "Oh, that must be so hard," the conversational partner assumes the work to be difficult in nature. This functions as a distancing technique to mark moral superiority, though the conversational partner has little concept of the actual work performed as an advocate. Such assumptions illustrate stereotyping with the work of encouragement subtly coded—acknowledging difficulty and doling out appropriate accolades of the altruistic saint. While many advocates in the interviews acknowledged and discussed the negative emotional impact advocacy work can have, overall, advocates provided an alternative view of the work: positive emotional outcomes and enjoyment of the labor. Yet, conversational partners regularly relied upon a preconceived idea that advocacy work is only ever a difficult, joyless occupation, and therefore, it takes a special combination of personality traits—

willingness to work for little pay, few symbolic or material rewards, altruism—to perform the labor. This means the advocate is more than human, different. As a result of the simultaneous processes of negative and positive stereotype, the advocate becomes an idealized vision—something the conversational partner cannot achieve, which indicates moral inferiority. This moral inferiority removes responsibility from the respondent to engage in any intervention work or acknowledge their role in upholding cultural notions.

Similar experiences are apparent for 69 year-old Jordan, who had worked in the field for more than 30 years as an advocate for sexual assault survivors. When discussing her encounters with friendly strangers, Jordan said, "Most of the time it's good. 'Well, great for you.' Or, 'We need more people like you.'" While Jordan noted she feels interactions are generally good, the sentiments expressed subtly suggest that the conversational partners are incapable of doing the work and that Jordan is somehow different. Phrasing, "We need more people like you," alludes to an alliance. "We" achieves a linguistic connection, and "more people like you" serves to distance the speaker from being implicated in helping victims, as they are not "like" Jordan in some way; Jordan is the Other.

Amy's narration of her interactions provides further insight into issues of positive stereotype in everyday interactions. She recounted, "Usually, it's 'Bless your heart. You're such a good person. Oh, that stuff you're doing is really wonderful. You're doing really good work.'" Amy's experiences echo sentiments that remove the conversational partner from becoming implicated in helping victims through the strict emphasis on the advocate. While seemingly a compliment, using the phrase, "You're *such* a good person," places an expectation of unusually superior characteristics onto the advocates, which marks the process of Othering through assignment of higher moral position. If one follows the logic of the sentence relying on

idealization, then, it suggests the speaker is *not* “such a good person,” and therefore, cannot be held responsible to assist victims of gendered violence as advocates do.

Ashley reiterated previous sentiments; yet, she indicated a sense of anger as a result of the application of idealization and encouragement. She shared, “I try to avoid having that conversation, because their response to it is just irritating. So, I try not to, especially with a stranger.” When I asked her to elaborate, she continued to explain, “That, ‘Oh God! It takes such a special person to do that. Good for you. Good for you.’ I don’t know, for some reason after hearing that same response from everybody….” At this point in the interview, she sighed deeply and trailed off; her frustration stems from the application of positive stereotype, which does not take her personal experiences or individual traits into account and marks her as the Other. The limited view of advocacy, buoyed by stereotypic notions, upsets some advocates—which indicates a sense of the social distancing and Othering process at play in the interactional exchange. Alyssa repeats this feeling when she described responses such as, “People who are not close to me are like, ‘Awwww. That’s really sweet. You help women. Good for you. God bless you.’ And all of that shit.” Alyssa calls out the positive stereotyping as “shit” because of how limiting she perceives it to be; she finds the conversational partners to be condescending to her and her clients. These sentiments dehumanize both the advocate and the clients with which they work—*dehumanization* is a common feature of social distancing techniques as it distorts reality and allows for a disconnect.

As seen above, positive stereotyping that relies upon idealization and encouragement sometimes leads to negative stereotyping of clients during interactions with strangers. This indicates a second process of Othering wherein clients are morally inferior and less than human.

Two advocates provided telling accounts of their experiences with this dual process in brief encounters with strangers after they revealed their occupations. Lauren further explained:

> Usually, the response is something like, "Oh, wow. That's great that you're helping women that can't help themselves." I hear that a lot. I want to say, "No. No." But, usually, it's that kind of a positive, "Oh, that's so great that you're doing that."

In a similar fashion, 64-year old Miranda talked about the responses of those closer to home:

> Across the board, I find that people are very respectful. They may roll their eyes and say, "I don't know how you do it. I couldn't do it," because they may have an opinion about *those* women not because they have that opinion about us. I find that people in this community, generally, recognize that it is necessary, but they have a negative opinion about the people that we are helping.

Both women highlight the issue of social and emotional taint when working with victims of gendered violence as they described the responses to their occupations from others. Through marking the advocates as doing something great or using linguistic constructions as "I don't know how you do it," the speakers Other the advocates by conferring a higher level of capability or emotional capacity for work with victims. However, through constructing the advocate as morally superior, the speakers sometimes employ negative imagery to describe the clients, such as being "helpless" or references to *those* women—marking moral inferiority which suggests Othering through the distancing techniques of victim-blaming, and dehumanization. As research has documented, survivors of domestic and sexual violence are routinely stigmatized in the social imaginary (Meyers 1996; Taylor 2009). The implication, then, is that advocates willingly work in a profession that socially encourages stigma by association (Goffman's "courtesy stigma"), which indicates a higher moral character—though the social/emotional taint is most clearly seen here.

Finally, the only cis-gender male advocate, 63 year-old Michael, shed light on the interesting application of positive stereotype as a direct result of being a man working in the field

of gendered violence victim advocacy. Michael, a former criminal justice advocate turned volunteer in retirement, described the idealized and encouraging responses as follows:

> Working in the criminal justice system, I got a lot of people saying that it was unusual. That, "You're a man doing this is unusual. You must be someone kind of special." I always smiled and said, "Not particularly." I think we should have more men in the field.

Michael's relationships with others highlight the unique way his masculine gender positively affects his work and relationships with others, which corresponds the findings of recent scholarship wherein men received significantly higher status as a result of working in "women's" issues (Kolb 2014). As a result of his status as a man, conversational partners deem him to be especially enlightened or morally different—Michael is Othered by this process. While he explains that he routinely deflects and places the impetus back upon the speaker, he has already been marked as "better" or somehow unique for his work against gendered violence. Thereby, the respondent is absolved through the act of distancing—other men are not implicated and Michael retains a special status.

Finally, 31 year-old Paige clearly illuminated a number of sentences used in interactions of idealization and encouragement. Paige provided the following verbiage from her experiences with friendly interactions: "'Oh, that's so nice of you. What a wonderful thing to do. That's just amazing. I could never do that. I'm glad somebody is doing that.'" As Paige reenacted the responses people have said to her when she introduces her work, the idealization and encouragement as well as the distancing strategies become apparent. The final sentence is most informative, "I'm glad somebody is doing that." The language conveys a simultaneous "pat on the back" by telling the advocate they are glad someone does the labor, which signifies importance. Yet, the implied sentiment is "I'm glad it's not me." By couching their responses in Othering, the conversational partners distance themselves from the ability to participate in work

with victims of gendered violence or address it in their own lives as it is something advocates do. As advocates discussed, later in this chapter, many people are capable of victim advocacy, if only they have the right training. Once the Othering and stigmatizing strategies are stripped away, it is revealed that nearly all people have the potential and responsibility to change the cultural norms and scripts surrounding gendered violence in the United States.

If advocates had expressed that people responded with energy, enthusiasm, genuine curiosity, inquiring how to participate, or how they can help advocates and victims, the interactions would have a different purpose and function. However, as advocates described their interactions, it becomes more apparent that the idealization and encouragement pattern suggests an ulterior, albeit mostly unconscious, motive to the interaction. While conversational partners are most likely genuine in their admiration, the phrasing of the language suggests a negative view of advocacy. Thus, they Other the advocate through the application of positive stereotype. Telling an advocate that they are a "special person" functions to limit both the targeted group as well as the conversational partner and removes any obligation or the social/emotional taint of working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence through the process of Othering. This achieves similar aims as sympathetic responses discussed below as well as avoidant/hostile responses examined in the next chapter.

"I JUST COULDN'T DO IT": SYMPATHY

While idealization and encouragement manifest distancing techniques such as Othering in very subtle ways, another category of "friendly" responses is that of sympathy. Like idealization and encouragement, sympathy applies positive stereotype to advocates by assigning a greater capability for managing traumatic material and thus, a greater moral character. Routinely, the sympathetic response has a secondary component of reinforcing occupational stigma in

conjunction with the use of positive stereotype. Advocates revealed that conversational partners place an inordinate amount of attention on the “awful things” they *assume* an advocate must deal with while working with traumatized clients and accordingly distance themselves from the occupation through sentiments such as, “I could never do that.” This actively marks their moral inferiority and thus, works to remove even the potential that they can help victims. While many advocates discussed difficult elements of their experiences with traumatized clients during interviews, most advocates readily enact self-care and professional boundary keeping measures to ensure they do not experience burnout or secondary traumatic stress. Conversational partners do not account for the processes of training or self-care in their application of positive stereotype through the sympathetic reply, which allows the Othering process to strip advocates and their professions of multi-dimensional or positive representation. Further, this ensures the disruptions to the cultural scripts and norms surrounding women’s roles, desirable occupations, and masculine power are ameliorated. Through failing to name the “awful things” as a direct result of primarily masculine violence, there needs to be no change to the social processes that allow those “awful things” to happen.

Conversational partner’s sympathy and focus on the negative impact of working with clients constructs an image of the advocate as extraordinarily capable of managing traumatic material; the positive stereotype exercised in these interactions bespeaks of exceptional resilience, of which speakers insist they are not capable. The use of positive stereotype through sympathy, then, distances the conversational partners from the need to attend to the issues of gendered violence and frequently, reinforces the taint attached to the work. Of 21 advocates, ten discussed interactions with elements of sympathy, which resulted in Othering. Of all the responses to their occupation, many advocates indicated they find sympathy most difficult to

navigate, because they perceived pity towards them and shaming of their clients. The difficulty is multiplied in the interactions that dually apply positive stereotype to advocates and reinforce the negative stereotypes of the occupation and victims, resulting in stigmatized interactions.

The use of negative stereotype to reinforce stigma of work with victims is typically accomplished through the speaker de-contextualizing the problems of gendered violence. Lippmann argues that one may detect stereotypes when, "That eternal principle censors out all the objections, isolates the issue from its background and its context, and set going in you some strong emotion…" (1926, 86). Through hyperbolically identifying the work solely through the lens of unimaginable negative emotional impact, the conversational partner removes the cultural context from the work and dehumanizes the clients—the clients and their experiences are "awful things" that an advocate must survive while at work. This serves to reinforce a cultural script that suggests the average person does not have the capabilities to help domestic and sexual violence victims; the script uses positive stereotype to highlight the moral and emotional superiority such a job would require while condemning the clients rather than their violent partners. Further, Lippmann stated there is a "false absolutism of a stereotype" (86), and this absolutism rings true of the interactions advocates recalled when discussing the sympathetic response to their occupations in interactions with new acquaintances and strangers.

Erica, a 49-year old advocate who had been in the field for nine years, highlighted the use of sympathy in her interactions with strangers when she relayed:

> People are like, "Oh my gosh. Don't you see all kinds of terrible things?" I wouldn't say it's negative, but it is them being sincere. They are just kind of horrified. "Oh my gosh, I couldn't do that type of work." Usually, they say, "I couldn't do what you do."

In Erica's experience, people use some aspects of idealization by stating, "I couldn't do what you do," which serves the same distancing purpose as described above. Yet, the message Erica

outlines is overwhelming sympathetic with assumptions of the difficult nature of the work. In analyzing her account of the experiences she has had, the conversational partners apply positive stereotype—that she is unique and has hyper-developed resistance to contact with traumatic material—while simultaneously over empathizing with her on the grounds of her choice of occupation. Because of the ascription of a higher set of powers (Othering), conversational partners construct an exchange in which the speaker cannot reasonably be expected to take on the work of assisting survivors. Yet, conversational partner also subtly reinforce stigma through the language of assuming "terrible things," that equate to overall negative employment conditions. The assumption of terrible things and the subsequent sympathy bespeak of Othering in that the realities of the job are distorted and simplified to readily understandable categories—there is no room for the possibility of joy or positive emotional reward from work with trauma.

Heather repeated this motif when she said, "There will be that, 'Gosh! I don't know how you do that.' But, they seem to treat it as that you're doing something good, helpful, and positive." Heather's description highlights the juxtaposition of positive stereotype with the reinforcement of Othering when she says, "But," as this alludes to the devaluation and simplification of the work. Additionally, Miranda—a worker in the field for more than 20 years—concurs with this when she reported, "Across the board, people are delighted that we are here. They acknowledge that this is necessary and almost always say, 'I couldn't do it.'" The sympathetic response usually entails the distancing technique of Othering, which insists the speaker is not capable of having the ability to assist victims or manage the work.

For many of the advocates who described the sympathetic response, conversational partners more openly approach the conversation with a fear of dealing with traumatic material

and/or the abusers—which applies a gross distortion of the nature and content of the job. An advocate of three years, Amanda, clearly addressed this when she explained:

> They're [strangers] usually very receptive. Then, they'll say, "Boy…." They're usually sympathetic, but they say it's not a job they would want. I think it's [the sympathy] only in their speech. When I say I work for my organization, which is a domestic violence, sexual assault agency, and they're like, "Oh boy, I don't think I could do that. I'm glad there's people like you that can, but I just couldn't do something like that." What they mean is dealing with the clients and the issues and the abuser.

Through Amanda's encounters, she recognizes the reasons many people respond with sympathy. Yet, the response essentializes the nature of the work and provides a falsely absolute negative view. This serves to buffer the conversational partner from critique and ultimately, undergirds both stigma and stereotype associated with working in advocacy, as it retains the Othering process of demarcation and differentiation.

Like idealization and encouragement occasionally leading to negative stereotyping of clients, sympathetic responses also have the significant potential to reinforce negative imagery about clients—a distancing technique of dehumanization and Othering with the victim occupying an inferior status. Victoria, a 13-year veteran of advocacy, calls attention to the damaging view of the occupation and the clients, which displays the false absolutism of stereotype, when she relayed:

> They look at you, "Oh, I'm so sorry. I couldn't do that work." That's typically the response I get. "Oh my gosh, I couldn't do that job. That's so sad. How do you do that? *Those women always go back*." [author's emphasis]

For Victoria, she expresses regularly managing sympathetic responses that echo occupational stigma. In her discussion of the interactions, Victoria does not allude to any overt elements of positive stereotyping involving idealization or encouragement; rather, the interactions consist primarily of sympathy for her and the stigmatization of her clients. This demonstrates the dual processes of Othering the advocate and their clients. By constructing clients as "those women"

and as hopeless causes who, "always go back," conversational partners un/consciously relieve themselves of responsibility by relying on stereotypes about victims of gendered violence, and more specifically in this case, domestic violence. Lauren hears similar answers when she reveals her occupation and responds to strangers who try to sympathize by insisting that she enjoys her job. Lauren reported that strangers follow up with statements such as, "'Oh, it's so nice that you're helping women.' You know, it's condescending when they're [victims] looked down on that way [helpless]." Lauren's frustration is a result of people rendering victims as helpless women who need someone to save them, thus Othering clients. This phrasing simultaneously uplifts the advocate while denigrating service recipients—all of which places the burden of the social problem of gendered violence off of the speaker and onto those already involved in the advocacy process.

In a similar fashion, Whitney described the following interactions when people place sympathetic positive stereotype on her during introductory meetings:

> For the most part, people are like, "Oh that's wonderful. That's great you do that." It makes me a little uncomfortable. I'm like, "I like my job. It's something that I enjoy." Some people follow that up with, "Well, I don't know how you do that everyday. I would be so depressed."

Here, Whitney shows how, when faced with the challenge to deeply held stereotypes about advocacy and victims of gendered violence, some strangers fall back onto negative imagery to defend their positions and restore the normative cultural scripts.

Interestingly, even those who work in the field of domestic and sexual violence but do not provide direct services to clients employ positive and negative stereotype. During her discussion of speaking with others about her job, Heather named her administrative office and development staff as people with whom she sometimes emotionally processes her day. Heather noted about their reactions, "Sometimes, I'm telling them these stories and they're just like, 'Oh

my gosh! That's just horrible. How do you deal with it?' They have the same reaction that someone who doesn't work in this field might have." This echoes Sarah's experiences with those outside of the field who have told her, "I don't know how you can do that work. It just sounds really depressing." In both cases, we see the application stereotype/Othering and the resulting positions of stigma. While the office workers are employed in the field, being in direct service changes how others approach your occupation; even those who are aware of the occupation do not fully understand the jobs of those engaging in client care. Their reactions are like those of someone who has no part of the domestic and sexual violence advocacy field. In both cases, the speakers rely upon the distancing mechanisms of sympathy and Othering to disassociate themselves from being capable of the work.

Sympathy as a "friendly" response to victim advocates serves a number of purposes within the interactional exchange. Most importantly, sympathy relies upon a "false absolutism" that suggests the presence of a stereotype, in this case, a relatively positive one. By solely identifying the occupation with negative emotional outcomes and unimaginably terrible experiences, the respondent, "censors out all the objections, isolates the issue from its background and its context" (1926: 86). However, using sympathy marks the advocate as an exceptional person with rare capabilities, though a regrettable occupation. This highlights Othering as it ascribes moral positions and differentiates between in-group/out-group status within the interaction. Interestingly, in the examples advocates provided, conversational partners do not regret the cultural and social norms that create an environment where victim advocacy is needed; rather, the victims and work sadden speakers with little focus on the larger cultural issues at stake. Moreover, the distance reinforces the idea that violence against women is normal and thus, nothing needs to be done to change cultural assumptions and expectations. Therefore,

by focusing on the negative emotional impact, conversational partners successfully distance themselves and reinstate cultural norms and scripts that allow patriarchal, masculine access to power over others.

Further, the response of sympathy with a singular attention paid to negative emotional impact removes the context of training, years in the field, or self-care strategies advocates employ. While people are frequently surrounded by brutality and violence in media, when engaged in a conversation where advocacy is mentioned, strangers apply sympathy in order to distance themselves, elevate the status of the advocate, and sometimes, denigrate the clients who seek assistance. All of which leaves the advocate in the precarious position of the Other with little room to make social moves that re-contextualize and ground the issues at stake. Employing sympathy disengages the respondent from any sense of civic or personal ability to provide assistance to victims. In these conversations where new acquaintances employ sympathy as an unconscious conversational tactic, advocates have little room to hold others accountable for assisting in the struggle to end violence against women. However, there *is* room for rebuttal.

RESPONDING TO POSITIVE STEREOTYPE

When advocates introduce their occupation to a new acquaintance in social settings, there is a limited range of reactions the conversational partners provide. As advocates described above, the primary “friendly” responses they receive are grounded in idealization and encouragement or employed sympathy, both of which achieve distancing through Othering. Advocates routinely described having little room to challenge or discuss their views with the conversational partners; however, some advocates identified answers that provide space to “talk back” to positive stereotyping. Advocates, who develop responses over the course of their careers, noted they either place the onus back onto the speakers by insisting, “anyone can do this job” or

alternatively, they engage with the positive stereotype by confirming, “few can do this job.” Both strategies—the rejection or acceptance of the positive stereotype—reflect the desire to respond to the Othering and stereotyping. Yet, for advocates, negotiating the conversation after the application of positive stereotype is extremely difficult as compared to the responses to negative stereotype discussed in the next chapter, because these are the “friendly” responses.

Anyone Can

For several advocates, when a conversational partner engages in positive stereotyping, they choose to react by deconstructing the notion of the “special person.” This further disrupts the cultural scripts that the conversational partner attempts to reassert, by challenging the Othering process through humanizing and contextualizing advocacy work. These advocates resist the normative narratives and forcibly close the social distance the conversational partner has gained through positive stereotype. These advocates are vocal about re-orienting people to understand that with the right training, anyone could perform the labor. For Amanda, it is essential to demonstrate that others are capable of performing the labor. She walked through a typical interaction:

> I just say, “Oh, you’re silly. Anyone could do this job. You just have to care about the people that you’re helping.” I just try to smile and put it back on them. That it’s not anything that someone couldn’t do if they have a caring and kind heart.

Amanda makes clear through her reaction that she does not view herself as entirely unique, which disrupts the Othering process of demarcation. Moreover, she insists anyone is capable of working with victims of gendered violence if they have a basic sense of kindness and compassion, which grounds advocacy in humanity. This tactic breaks through the positive stereotype, as Amanda stresses she “puts it back on them.” Her words indicate that—on some level—she is aware of the linguistic distancing strategy and Othering, and she does not allow her

conversational partners to move away from the topic that easily. Here, Amanda doubly interrupts cultural norms associated with women through her refusal to accept stereotyping and her sustained resistance; this could risk negative stereotype and interaction, as discussed in the next chapter, though she did not mention whether that is an outcome of the strategy.

Morgan, an advocate of 15 years, discussed the different personalities that have more recently come into the field as a result of cultural shifts. When discussing the application of idealization or sympathy in her interactions with others, Morgan explained how she rejects the imagery of positive stereotype. “Coming in the field, now that it’s more institutionalized, for some people this is a J-O-B. Other people bring more of their own personal experiences or backgrounds surviving crime.” Morgan acknowledges some people may indeed have a specialized understanding as a result of their experiences or their past victimization, but she underscores that many people, as a result of structural shifts, can come into the field and work—not as an ardent activist, but as an employee who earns a paycheck through emotional labor. This reinterpretation artfully insists anyone can perform this labor, though the reasons may vary from passion to income, and her explanation places the speakers back into a position where they must contend with their own ability to help. Further, because Morgan underscores that anyone can do the work, the conversational partner must now reckon with the taint associated with assisting victims of domestic and sexual violence, as they are unable to distance themselves through claiming they are morally inferior.

Michael provides further information on his experience as a man working in the field. As he expressed above, throughout his career many people have idealized him as an especially unique man for his willingness to work with gendered violence victims. Michael regularly denies the application of positive stereotype when speaking with people about his work:

> I make it a point to say, "Thank you," if someone acknowledges me for doing something unusual. I will say, "Thank you. That's kind of you to say, but I don't think I'm anything real special." I don't believe that. I think there are a lot of men who are social workers and counselors, who are in helping professions, who could do this work.

Particularly as a result of his status as a cis-gender man, Michael receives a great deal of attention and positive stereotyping; research has shown men consistently receive greater symbolic rewards when engaged in "women's" work (Kolb 2014). However, he reframes that attention to implicate other men, which interrupts the dominant narrative of positive stereotype and the Othering process. This interruption allows Michael to demonstrate how other men could be equally capable of the work and already engage in emotionally based labor. This practical response brings a sense of grounding to the conversation, though it has the potential to make others uncomfortable. Yet, it achieves the aim of closing the distance between the conversational partner and challenges stereotypic conceptions.

The use of the "anyone can" argument provides advocates a modicum of control and places the responsibility back onto the conversational partners. Further, this strategy allows advocates to encourage others to examine their own positions and abilities to assist victims of gendered violence. To suggest many are able to do this work derails the distancing techniques, challenges normative scripts, and potentially reduces occupational stigma. The advocates direct the conversation to be more focused on issues of training and a sense of compassion rather than a unique disposition that places them at a great advantage for aiding traumatized individuals.

Few Can

While some advocates deny positive stereotype in interactions with strangers, other advocates approach the conversation by accepting the limiting definition and applying the stereotype to themselves. This self-application strategy provides the advocate a sense of validation and control in a conversation that continuously has the potential to become volatile.

This reflects the previous research on self-application of positive stereotype and stereotype boost. Advocates indicate this self-selection and naming process usually ends the conversation, which again offers unique advantages the "anyone can" conversational strategy does not. Yet, the "few can" approach similarly allows advocates to demystify the profession of victim advocacy while maintaining a positive sense of self and access to symbolic rewards during the interaction.

Rachel, a 31-year old advocate who had been in the field for two years at the time of interview, articulated the emotional rewards she receives as a result of accepting the positive stereotyping from others and accepting the distorted image. Rachel provided a clear discussion of the benefits from the interactions with strangers who ascribe an elevated status to her:

> It validates my job. It makes me realize that this isn't a job that just anyone can do, that they see it as important or impacting. It kind of gives me a rise that this is a line of work that is specific to a person that not just anyone can just jump into or would want to.

Rachel is not alone in feeling a sense of reward from these moments and reclaiming the Otherized position. Offering a comparable response, 20-year veteran, Miranda stated: "I tell them it's good they aren't doing it. That each of us is in the place we're supposed to be, and it's important to realize what it is and what your capacity is. Then, I let it drop." In their framing of the issue, these advocates provide others the opportunity to see that it is not an impossible job, but that one must be well suited to it. Further, in their self-application and conception of the positive stereotype, the advocates affirm that people have limited capacities, and it is good to be where you are "supposed to be" in your career path. This acceptance of the stereotype and reinforcement allows the advocates to feel a sense of worth for an occupation that is often culturally devalued through the labor focused on women and the disruption of normative scripts.

In contrast to the more diplomatic phrasing of some advocates, Sierra responds to instances of positive stereotype through a very direct approach. She simultaneously accepts the preconceived notion of being special while highlighting her own limitations in other areas when she explained that she retorts:

> If they're like, "I could never do that." I usually say, "Well, I could never sit at a cubicle and in front of a computer all day or not work with people. This is what I'm cut out to do. Other people do other things."

While she accepts that her disposition is unique and she revels in that, Sierra also demonstrates she is not capable of performing other occupations through this response. Her strategy breaks down the intellectual barrier of a person's capabilities while also acknowledging her own occupational preferences in a direct manner. This gives her a sense of control over the conversation as well as over the application of positive stereotype. Further, this employs an Othering technique designed to challenge the conversational partner. Sierra actively enjoys the higher moral status that the speaker ascribes to her; she uses it to her advantage in the conversation.

Erica's response to positive stereotyping also works to demystify the occupation for those who express sentiments of "I couldn't do it." Her reaction to the statement of inability is, "I usually ask for clarity. What part of the job you couldn't do? What part could you not handle? I always tell them it's a passion, and you don't take your work home with you." Likewise to Sierra, Erica accepts the stereotype to a small degree through her claiming of a passion, but she also provides a learning opportunity to break down stigma around the occupation. She provides practical information by stating that you "don't take your work home with you," which allows others to see that the job has little difference as compared to other occupations. Like the "anyone can" tactic, this strategy of "few can" reduces psychological distancing but does so while

affirming the Othering process. Erica uses the Othering to her advantage and is able to provide information about the nature of the work, which has the potential to change the speaker's misconceptions about advocacy.

Finally, Paige works to balance accepting the stereotype while also rejecting assumptions about her work and identity. She takes a particularly diplomatic approach that bridges both strategies advocates outline for dealing with instances of positive stereotype. Paige detailed that she tells others, "Not everybody is cut out for it, but it's not the hardest thing in the world." Paige went on, "I never try to convince them that they can, but I don't want them to think that it's such a specialized thing that nobody can do it, either." Her response strives to maintain equality between the two conversational strategies of "anyone can" and "few can." While she acknowledges advocacy is a difficult occupation, she also illustrates advocacy is an occupation of which others are most certainly capable. This more balanced approach minimizes stereotypes, affirms advocacy as a unique vocation, and diminishes the ability to engage in Othering.

When interacting with strangers, advocates who encounter positive stereotype frequently find it difficult to formulate a response and engage in demystification of the occupation. However, advocates in this study provided two conversational strategies that result in opportunities to engage the stereotype on their terms rather than have the stereotype uniformly applied to them by new acquaintances. The tactics of "anyone can" and "few can" both provide different benefits and drawbacks, but importantly, they identify a starting place for other advocates who may similarly struggle with positive stereotyping in their daily lives.

CONCLUSION

Through analyzing the experiences of victim advocates when speaking with new acquaintances about their employment, participants in the qualitative interviews identified two

sub-types of responses beneath the "friendly" category: idealization/encouragement and sympathy. Both of these responses to the statement, "I work as a victim advocate," rely upon the application of a positive stereotype about the advocate and can employ negative stereotypes about the work or clients. In each set of circumstances, the use of positive stereotype functions to ascribe a set of favorable but unique personality traits to the advocate, which results from the process of Othering. In doing so, conversational partners distance themselves from, both, the social responsibility to victims and the potential to change the cultural of patriarchal and masculine authority. In addition, conversational partners—through positive stereotyping and distancing the self—erase the possibility of social effects from the taint of working with victims of domestic and sexual violence. This ultimately reinforces stereotypes and enacts the social process of stigmatizing those who disrupt normative scripts of patriarchal access to social and cultural power over others through acts of gendered violence.

Interactions, in which the conversational partners use idealization, often exhibit elements of encouragement that seemingly applaud the work of the victim advocate. Upon closer examination, idealization and encouragement ultimately limit the advocates as a group through Othering and reinforce an image that has little grounding in reality. This means that advocates must contend with stereotype—they must decide whether to challenge or accept the stereotyping attached to the Othering process—before they can gain social support from the new acquaintance.

Similarly, sympathetic responses deploy a conception of advocacy work that is fundamentally damaging, either to the advocate or to the clients whom advocates serve. These responses function to distance speakers from the occupation, the clients, and the practical ways they, too, could contribute to aiding victims of gendered violence. The Othering process can

occur dually as conversational partners place advocates in a higher position than themselves and place victims and the work in a lower position. Both of these movements are grounded in an inaccurate understanding of advocacy with an emphasis on the negative impact of the work. By specifically focusing on a distorted understanding of the occupation, conversational partners remove the background and context from the issues at stake and simultaneously engage a series of strong emotions—all of which produce a nearly impenetrable position of being "incapable" of engaging in anti-violence work. These are all hallmarks of Lippmann's definition of stereotype and stereotypes serve to stabilize defenses against challenges to one's worldview. Thus, the positive stereotype and Othering processes—which are, arguably, most often un- or subconscious—effectively reinstate normative cultural scripts, soothe discomfort of the conversational partner, and ensure stigma stays in place for the advocate. All of this, in turn, serves to keep the conversational partner distanced from the realities of gendered violence. Othering often reveals more about the person speaking than it does about the stigmatized group.

However, advocates are not wholly subject to the application of stereotype with no recourse. While advocates identified difficulty in responding to the "friendly" reactions from new acquaintances as compared to responding to the hostile encounters, some advocates have developed replies that provide a modicum of control over the use of positive stereotype. One response advocates indicate to be useful is that of "anyone can do this job." "Anyone can" demystifies the work and places the onus back upon the conversational partners. Alternatively, advocates actively engage the positive stereotype and self-apply through the sentiment of "few can do this work." By accepting and self-applying the stereotype, advocates shut down the potential for an uncomfortable conversation while also experiencing emotional benefits for a job that has few extrinsic or tangible rewards. Both reactions to the use of positive stereotype are

useful in closing the distance the conversational partner attempts to create and are dependent upon the social situation and the individual personality of the advocate.

In short, the issue of positive stereotype is troubling because it highlights the lack of education around the topic of victim advocacy and the experiences of victims of gendered violence. The assumptions of higher emotional capacity in conjunction with the misconceptions about the effects of the labor further stigmatize the occupation for those engaging in the work. Further, this prevents the ability to engage in meaningful dialogue about the pervasiveness of gendered violence, the scarcity of resources for agencies working to help victims, and the culture that condones such violence against vulnerable populations. If one assumes that all advocates are special or that the work is unimaginably difficult, that means s/he is not required to think further on the uncomfortable topic, nor are they required to do anything about it. The Othering process serves to protect the conversational partner's worldview and sense of self in that social order. While initially identified as positive responses by those in this study, there is a subtle negative outlook encoded within these interactions that must be further analyzed. Specifically, questions of how advocates can build new social support networks when they must constantly cope with occupational stigma—in the guise of friendliness or a positive interaction that leaves them marked and yet, identified by broad misconceptions—must be considered. Yet, as advocates made clear in their interviews, not all responses to their occupations are "friendly." The next chapter highlights and addresses advocates' experiences with avoidance, hostility, and overtly negative stereotypes.

CHAPTER V: "A LOOK OF 'OH SHIT'": AVOIDANT AND HOSTILE RESPONSES TO ADVOCATES

In victim advocates' discussions of their experiences when introducing their occupations to a new acquaintance, advocates identified "friendly" responses and "negative" responses. Most advocates shied away from using the term "negative" when I posed the question, "Have you ever had any negative or uncomfortable experiences when introducing your job title?" In their discussions of difficult experiences, advocates provided two primary reactions in conversational partners: avoidance and hostility. This chapter explores the content of the qualitative descriptions of these experiences and considers the ways in which advocates respond to these moments of clear negative stereotyping and occupational stigma.

Through exploring the recalled interactions involving avoidant or hostile behaviors within the qualitative interviews, the issues of occupational stigma and negative stereotype about feminism, victims, and advocacy become quite clear. In recalling moments where conversational partners use avoidance, advocates generally used generic pronouns such as "they" or "people." In the overwhelming majority of hostile interactions, advocates remembered specific instances with men—the precise level of detail in their recollection of men's aggressive behaviors is markedly different than interactions involving positive stereotype or avoidance. As a result, I contend negative responses are a direct reaction to the disruption of the conversational partner's worldview—the subsequent response relies upon the Othering process though through different avenues than positive stereotyping. Primarily, Othering is accomplished through engagement with micropolitics—the interpersonal politics of power that often reflect larger structural inequalities. In the negative interactions, conversational partners engage in three clear distancing tactics at the micropolitical level, which reflects the trends at the macropolitical level: (1)

dehumanization, (2) easily categorizing all advocates, and (3) removing context from the reality of domestic and sexual violence; this is often accomplished through humor. More importantly, hostility and avoidance are both coping and distancing techniques to manage discomfort or challenging information (Lippmann 1922). Disparaging commentary and reliance upon damaging tropes of marginalized bodies functions as boundary marking and a reiteration of masculinity (Cameron 1997).

More specifically within the qualitative interviews, advocates described how avoidance allows conversational partners to quickly transition away from the possibility of discomfort or recognition of the full impact of gendered violence. Similarly, I argue the men who react with hostility dually rely upon negative stereotype and Othering to restore their sense of the world; victim advocacy disrupts the cultural narratives around masculinity as domination over others (especially women), the violability of women's bodies, and challenges normative structural, cultural, and social stratification through intervening and speaking out against these norms. These Othering behaviors more clearly demonstrate Goffman's notion of stigma as social positions that are context specific as compared to positive stereotype. The vehemence and the overt application of negative imagery are conversational tactics designed to diminish advocates' access to social and symbolic rewards. This reveals the micropolitics at play, as patriarchal hierarchy must be exercised rather than simply possessed in interactions; further, the exercising of micropolitics often comes in the form of coercive power relations such as bullying and spite, as previous studies have established within the academy (Morley 1999).

Advocates have very little mobility to change the direction of the conversation or expound upon their occupation to correct the misinformation in avoidant or hostile social encounters. During their interviews, advocates indicated that this often leads to uncomfortable

social encounters; however, advocates can and do have strategies for managing difficult conversational partners—primarily, advocates determine their emotional health, and then proceed by walking away or by creating teachable moments in which they attempt to educate their conversational partner. Yet, there is an impact from these negative encounters: advocates illustrated how they can become discouraged from creating new social relationships for fear of having to cope with negative stereotypes and occupational stigma.

GENDER, STIGMA, AND OTHERING AT WORK

Goffman's foundational work on stigma outlined the concept while paying special attention to the form and function of it when he wrote, "Note, too, that not all undesirable attributes are at issue, but only those which are incongruous with our stereotypes of what a given type of individual should be" (1963: 3). Here, the conception of stigma aligns closely with the argument of Lippmann regarding the role of stereotype for individuals employing them. Lippmann stated, "The systems of stereotypes may be the core of our personal tradition, the defenses of our position in society" (1922: 63). Yet, Lippmann goes on further to explain the importance of stereotypes in development of psychological defenses against any information that may disrupt the patterns of daily life:

> A pattern of stereotypes is not neutral. It is not merely a way of substituting order for the great blooming, buzzing confusion of reality. It is not merely a short cut. It is all of these things and something more. It is the guarantee of our self-respect; it is the projection upon the world of our own sense of our own value, our own position and our own rights. The stereotypes are, therefore, highly charged with the feelings that are attached to them. They are the fortress of our tradition, and behind its defenses we can continue to feel ourselves safe in the position we occupy (1922: 63-64).

Thus, using Goffman in conjunction with Lippmann and the process of Othering, it becomes clear when an individual violates the stereotypic conception or disrupts the defensive positions in which we place ourselves through the deployment of stereotype, stigma comes to the fore.

For advocates, to be a part of a movement that directly and actively interrupts cultural norms of masculine authority and routine violence against women places them in an incongruous position to the cultural ideals of "proper" gender relationships wherein men retain nearly exclusive access to power and domination (Connell 2005); thus, advocates violate the typical social rules of engagement. As this study demonstrates, the violation of norms must be challenged and the violator discredited for order and a sense of hegemonic position to be fully restored in the conversational partners. In Goffman's terms, the possessor of the stigma (advocate) is "not quite human" (5) and Lippmann confirms when he noted that the person "discredits the witness, finds a flaw somewhere" (66). Through application of negative stereotype and Othering of the advocate, social interactions can move forward; the conversational partner can disregard the unpleasant experience of interrupted cultural scripts. Yet, in these scenarios, the Othered advocate is left bereft of any substantive recourse, lest they run the risk of further disrupting cultural scripts and encountering a potential for more serious acts of violence.

The hostility advocates encounter through Othering can be better understood through the lens of micropolitics. There is already harm done through conversational partners' use of avoidance and hostility in interactions with advocates. In these situations, conversational partners exercise patriarchal power over advocates through micropolitics, which "discloses the subterranean conflict and minutiae of social relations. It describes how power is relayed through seemingly trivial incidents and transactions" (Morley 1999: 73). More specifically, micropolitics describes how and when people can use various interactional strategies, power, and competition/alliances to achieve their goals (Blasé 1991) and how larger social inequalities can be seen through individual interactions; this encompasses a range of generally unconscious and

marginalizing behaviors called “microaggressions” (Pierce 1970; Paludi 2010). The use of negative stereotyping and Othering is a clear assertion of micropolitics that deny access to power and authority to advocates within the conversation.

The three strategies discussed in this chapter of inappropriate humor, negative stereotypes about feminism, and rhetorical questions and comment as bait indicate the clear power relationships at play under the surface of seemingly trivial interactions between advocates and men. A new acquaintance must feel they have the power, privilege, and authority to engage in techniques that diminish or deny the advocate within a short interaction. This is not unusual as men typically silence women more often than women silence men (DeFransisco 1991) or interrupt more frequently (West and Zimmerman 1975). More recent research has reiterated these gender roles in most social interactions result in men dominating women through a variety of conversational tactics to establish normative social relationships (Ridgeway 2009). These micropolitical acts of individual men dominating a conversation or silencing individual women actually reiterate larger cultural hierarchies that privilege men’s voices over women’s voices.

Further, in this study, advocates recalled instances of men as not only establishing normative social relationships at the micropolitical level, but also, enacting the hegemonic cultural beliefs through their access to power within their conversations with a new person. That is to say, the norms they know about gender are an organizing and a determining factor of differentiation common to Othering are the default way of speaking and interacting (Ridgeway and Correll 2004). Women—who are perceived to be “out of place” through being too assertive—and men who are too passive are sanctioned heavily within social relationships (Eagly and Karau 2002; Rudman and Fairchild 2004). Thus, advocates—through their occupations—are quickly perceived as “out of place” through the very nature of the work that demands attention

and respect for women. Thus, the distancing responses conversational partners use that engage in the Othering process such as inappropriate humor, negative stereotyping, and baiting questions are all indicative of the micropolitics of gendered interactions.

As this chapter demonstrates, victim advocates' jobs place them in a precarious position, open to Othering, micropolitics, a number of negative stereotypes, and subsequent stigma within a patriarchal culture, but two stigmatized stereotypes are most predominant: feminism—as a pejorative and unacceptable trait—and the association with victims and women. The work of the victim advocate disrupts cultural, social, and interpersonal narratives that guarantee masculine access and privilege over others, because the profession often operates on a model of breaking the silence around culturally normative gendered relationships as well as empowering and believing women. For advocates, this challenge to patriarchal authority leads to avoidance or the use of negative stereotypes to shore up positions of defense for their conversational partners.

As mentioned previously, the Othering process reveals more about the person than "the other" in the social relationship—the negative encounters highlight this even more so than the positive ones. Men—as advocates nearly universally identified hostile interactions occurred only with men and not women—hold on to deeply negative images of those who work with domestic and sexual violence survivors. Arguably, this is a direct result of the threat to masculine privilege and the disruption to normative gendered relationships within the micropolitical landscape of new acquaintance introductions. Despite the precarious position and dehumanizing or humiliating experiences, advocates can and do engage with their hostile conversational partners. Yet, their engagement is dependent upon a number of factors such as their own emotional state, their feelings about the "worth" of the engagement, or the importance of educating others within the moment.

AN UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE: AVOIDANCE

When discussing the negative category of reactions to their occupations, advocates in this study identified one outcome of the conversation as clear avoidance of the topic and as a result, the advocate. In the advocates' view, this was a negative response because there were few if any affirming elements in the conversation. Further, there were no opportunities to build a new connection if a conversational partner avoided them and their work. Advocates relayed that these social interactions are usually quite brief, as the conversational partner quickly shifts topics or physically leaves the conversation all together. Avoidant behaviors suggest a disruption to the conversational partners' sense of life, self, or order—advocates interrupt the usual flow of causal conversation by directly addressing violence against women, though they cannot help but to do so. Avoidance is a clear distancing technique that communicates gendered micropolitics through refusal to pick up the conversation—a common issue in cross-gendered communication wherein men decide what is or is not appropriate, worthwhile, interesting, or desirable conversation (Fishman 1978; Holmes 2013; Tannen 1990). In the qualitative interviews, eight of 21 advocates named avoidance as a negative reaction to the introduction of their occupations when speaking with strangers or new acquaintances.

For Maria, a bilingual advocate of six years, she described her interactions with strangers as generally positive when she initially tells them she works with "people affected by violence." The vague description prevents stereotyping and stigmatization based on working with victims of gendered violence. If people try to discuss the topic further, Maria explained there is usually some misunderstanding, and she must clarify the type of clients with whom she works. However, Maria reported the following typical form in her conversations:

> I tell them, "No. Domestic and sexual violence [advocate]." Then, people react different. Some people say, "Oh, yeah." They don't want to continue talking about it, because they

> don't want to talk about sexual violence. People react different when you tell them what you do.

Maria's description echoes those of other advocates when they encounter avoidant strategies with new acquaintances, and she actively marked that others' responses perceptibly change when she introduces the topic of domestic or sexual violence into the conversation. Such a clear shift in comfort indicates a disruption of normative scripts and results in distancing from the work.

Similarly to Maria, Whitney noted how people's attitudes towards the advocate change when the advocate raises the topic of domestic or sexual violence through the title of their job. Whitney stated, "Other times, people will just go, 'Oh.' Then, they start talking about something else. I don't take it personally. I'm fine with that. It doesn't bother me. It's an uncomfortable topic for some reason." For both of these women, their descriptions of interactions clearly underscore the way advocacy disrupts normative conceptions of work—usually, work does not include victims or politicized social problems such as gendered violence. Moreover, their work challenges normative ideas about gender and the avoidant strategy demonstrates a willingness to engage in impolite behavior with a stranger; this can be understood through Lippmann, who explained avoidance is often a result when a person is faced with information that interrupts their worldview or sense of self (1926: 63-64).

For some advocates, they experience some positive stereotype as a strategy to achieve avoidance in addition to the avoidant behavior. These interactions differ significantly from those of the previous chapter, as the very brief use of positive affirmation serves to move the conversation away from the topic of work all together rather than allow for a more sustained treatment of the subject. To that end, 31-year old Paige said, "It really runs the gamut, but the most common [response] would be, 'That's nice.' Then, they change the subject." Amy repeated the pattern of response when she said of avoidance, "It's usually a really quick, 'Okay, let's talk

about something else now. Oh, it's so great, and I don't know how to deal with that, so I'm going to change the subject.'" Both advocates emphasize the immediacy of the topic change, which points to cultural issues surrounding advocacy and engagement with the process of distancing. A hurried shift in conversation, especially about occupational identity with a new acquaintance, would normally be considered rude in most conversational conventions in the United States—there are numerous advice columns, blogs, and articles on artfully changing topics without causing offense. To change topics indicates the presence of micropolitics—one must feel they have the power and authority to engage in impolite and distancing behavior. For those with marginalized identities such as women and low prestige occupation holders (advocates are usually in both categories) they have less social and cultural capital to direct conversation or to demand their topics of conversation be fully considered. Further, given the reactions, advocates may not wish to further discuss their occupations, because of the potential for the conversation to turn hostile or confirming negative stereotypes about victim advocacy.

Advocacy also elicits strong emotions in others based on their stereotypic conceptions or political positions. This is especially prominent for Sierra, who saw the importance of politics for conversational partners when she met her girlfriend's family for the first time. Sierra recalled, "My girlfriend's family is more conservative [politically]. They mostly just gave me a blank stare and were like, 'Oh. Okay.' And then, [they] wandered off." For Sierra, the avoidant response has a direct correlation with political views as well as the presence of micropolitics. The disruption to political position warrants the use of distancing behaviors in order to restore balance.

Advocates also addressed how others view gendered violence as a social ill or negative element within society they wish to avoid. Jasmine, an advocate of one year at the time of interview, provides clarity on this issue when she detailed the following encounters:

> Usually, I tell people the acronym of the place I work for. When they look confused, I say, "It's the center against rape and domestic violence." They sort of always step back a bit. It seems like a really touchy subject with a lot of people. They don't really understand my role and how I'm supporting these people. They just sort of picture a corrective situation. I feel like when I explain what I do, I'm met with acceptance, but initially, before I explain, it's confusion and a feeling of being uncomfortable. They don't want to talk about that negative aspect of society.

Here, Jasmine outlines a number of issues at stake with the presentation of her work with gendered violence. She identifies that for many people it is a "touchy subject," and they do not want to discuss any part of the work—indicative of micropolitics and stigma. Most interestingly, Jasmine names distancing behavior when she stated many people "step back a bit." Changing physical distance makes the psychological distancing techniques tangible—there are few more clear ways to demonstrate discomfort and discredit than through moving away from a speaker. For those who are initially avoidant and uncomfortable, Jasmine is able to assuage their discomfort through explanation; however, that requires the conversational partner to stay in the conversation long enough to listen. Many individuals, as advocates express, are not willing to hear the explanation in order to more fully understand advocacy as a profession; their ability to refuse to listen underscores the micropolitics at play, as they have more symbolic power within the conversation to direct its course. Thus, unwillingness to participate in the interaction long enough or more fully, bespeaks of negative stereotype and occupational stigma.

When reflecting on why people respond as they do with avoidance, Morgan offered a clear discussion of why people may wish to change the subject:

> I think that as people, we struggle with, whether we realize it or not, we struggle with trying to maintain a sense of control within a world that is largely outside of our control.

> When you look at issues of violence at the hands of another person that pushes the issue of control or lack of control right in someone's face. So, I can understand why people are like, "Oh, wow, this is something I don't want to talk about or don't know how to talk about." That means, who are you if you work with victims? Do you hate men? Or are you afraid of people? Are you a victim yourself and what does that mean? It's kind of opening up a large can of worms, or at least, it can feel that way to strangers.

Morgan clearly outlines one of the many ways advocacy disrupts the sense of self or the world many have in their daily lives. Her explanation echoes the concepts of stereotype and stigma presented in this work; further, this confirms the idea that choice of occupation can be reflective of core beliefs (Rudman 2002). Strangers have strong reactions because victim advocacy challenges dominant narratives by positioning the victims of gendered violence as important, trustworthy, and non-violable; all of which runs counter to traditional narratives within the United States. Advocacy is simultaneously a discrediting occupation (based on various stigma) and also a highly politicized occupation, both of which result in a discomfort with the topic as a result of a doubly stigmatized position. That discomfort leads to distancing behavior in conversational partners, which communicates and reiterates the presence of a stigmatized identity.

When discussing their occupations, advocates revealed they frequently deal with people who engage in avoidant behaviors. The new acquaintances' evasive linguistic strategies and willingness to ignore general social rules of communication highlights the extent to which occupational stigma taints victim advocates' interactions with others through micropolitics and distancing behaviors. The change of conversation demonstrates distancing techniques through refusal to engage the topic of gendered violence in any fashion, even by proxy of the job title, "Victim Advocate." While advocates identified avoidance as a "negative" interaction, they stress how they have little interest in pursuing lines of conversation with those who are avoidant; though, this allows conversational partners to engage in further stigmatization of the occupation

as well as leaving damaging stereotypes about gendered violence and the workers intact. However, for many advocates this seems to be the best way to cope with the extra stress in social interactions with new acquaintances.

A BUNCH OF HUMORLESS MAN-HATERS: HOSTILITY IN RESPONSES

When discussing negative experiences with strangers, advocates recalled a number of scenarios that display moments of overt hostility and aggression upon the mention of victim advocacy. Of 21 interviews, 17 advocates identified experiencing overtly hostile or aggressive responses. Advocates specifically named men or used male pronouns in 15 of the 17 examples provided during interviews. This works out to 88.2% of all hostile encounters consisted of men reacting to advocates with aggressiveness or hostility. Such a high proportion is indicative of a particularly gendered issue at stake, especially given that women comprise the overwhelming majority of advocates in the United States. Further, the content of the stories advocates described demonstrate the perceived connections to feminism or the taint associated with working with victims of gendered violence, both of which are negatively stereotyped.

There were several elements that united different hostile responses: inappropriate humor, applying negative stereotypes about feminism, or using rhetorical questions—sometimes in the form of declarative statements rather than questions—to bait advocates into a conversation in which their responses only confirm preconceived ideas and discredit them further. Hostile responses most obviously indicate micropolitics between women and men, Othering behaviors, and negative stereotypes that result in stigma for advocates. The various strategies used during hostile interactions ensured male privilege and authority remained intact and that advocates had little recourse within the scenario to reorient the conversational partner. Ultimately, this means that any disruption to normative scripts of gender and gender relations are ameliorated—the

Othering process dehumanizes, discredits, and stigmatizes those who work against gendered violence.

Inappropriate Humor

Conversational partners make hostility and aggression towards the profession and topic most apparent through the use of inappropriate humor in response to advocates' introduction of their job titles or a brief explanation of their organizations. Humor frequently functions as a distancing technique and social control (Fine and Soucey 2005). Engaging in humor at another person's expense and comfort also establishes a micropolitical hierarchy within the interaction, suggesting that an idea important to you is not to be taken seriously by the other party. Advocates felt the disempowering effects of this distancing technique. For example, Ashley illustrated her frustration when she stated:

> Some people say stupid stuff, or a guy will say a stupid domestic violence joke. It's so annoying. It basically tells me that you know nothing and I'm not going to try to explain it to you, because you are not going to care in the end, anyways.

Initially, Ashley provided a generic statement "some people" but seamlessly shifted into specifically noting that men will make domestic violence jokes. The freedom to diminish another person's work—especially a woman—highlights the re-establishment of a hierarchy after the disruption via the introduction of advocacy work. Ashley's encounter echoes the experiences of Erica-an advocate of nine years—who relayed:

> It [negative encounters] happens when they minimize. There was a situation with some man saying, "Deep fried and battered women." He was being funny about it. It's like, 'Okay. I have a sense of humor.' But, I just said, "Okay." Then, he says, "Well, it's their fault, because they are the ones that go back." So, I tried to explain the situation, because you need to walk a mile in their shoes.

For Erica, the hostile joke quickly turned into victim-blaming when she provided challenge to the male conversational partner; his use of victim-blaming to justify his behavior corresponds to

the stigma associated with working with victims. Erica clearly states her only response to his use of the term "deep fried and battered women" was a single word, "Okay." Through her non-engagement and refusal to laugh—which would have defused the tension felt on behalf of the conversational partner and confirmed the established micropolitical hierarchy of normative gender relations—he turned to victim blame, which reinforced his position and access to male privilege within the interaction. Thus, the conversational partner doubly relied on negative stereotype to reassert his masculine access to power and authority at the expense of women.

Paige offered a particularly disturbing example of negative stereotype and overt hostility by a male conversational partner:

> I was at the national sexual assault conference a couple of years ago, and I met someone while traveling. In talking, I said, "Oh, I work for a rape crisis center and battered women's center, and I'm headed to a sexual assault convention." He was like, "Oh, what do you do? Does everybody get raped? Does everybody just go around and assault each other for three days?" It was this cynical middle-aged man. I didn't know what to say to that, so I just pretended to laugh and said, "Yes. Something like that." I felt dumb, like I was put in my place or something. I don't know why. I had nothing to feel bad about. I was like, "Okay. Whatever. You're laughing at me. Obviously you're uncomfortable with the topic so you have to make a joke." It's the key to making me feel bad.

In this exchange, Paige identifies the response as a direct result of the *speaker's* discomfort with the topic, yet, he uses the distancing technique of inappropriate humor to Other all victim advocates and stereotype their work. Given the nature of the response—wherein the conversational partner made the comment about everyone engaging in sexual assault—he demonstrates his male privilege and positioning in the conversation because he is able to effectively Other Paige by applying negative stereotypes, which then, disregards her value as a thinking, functioning person. The micropolitics that afford men more power are made visible as the conversational partner feels he has the social and cultural capacity to demean the work of someone he has just met. His comments are about the nature of her work and her reason for

travel because Paige's occupation disrupts the normative cultural scripts about women, gendered labor, and the violability of women's bodies. Further, her work actively challenges men's access to power over women and their bodies. Thus, he offers inappropriate humor to Other and discredit Paige and gendered violence victim advocacy as well as restore cultural scripts of masculine privilege to the interaction. This also creates a situation in which gendered violence is humorous, and therefore, not to be taken seriously.

Advocates also recognized that the experiences of hostility and aggression through inappropriate humor often contain negative stereotypic elements about feminism or feminists. The use of feminism in the joke is designed to be a pejorative; the work, the workers, and the clients are all simultaneously demeaned through the use of humor, which allows the speaker to maintain his sense of self and the world and Other both victims and advocates. Sierra provides a glimpse into this type of interaction when she stated, "People will sometimes, especially men, they will make a joke out of it. 'I better behave myself around you.' Or they make some joke about feminism, but they are clearly super uncomfortable and don't know how to handle it." Similarly, Amanda relays the responses her husband gets since she has become an advocate in her late 50's. She sheds light on the use of negative stereotypes and Othering through humor when she elucidated:

> My husband has heard, because he works with all men, "Oh, I don't think I could live with somebody that works for the man-haters club." He just laughs. At first, he smiles and doesn't say anything. Honestly, one thing that has been said is, "What's it like now that she's with a bunch of man-hating bitches?" My husband laughs and says, "Nothing has changed. She's still the sweet lady that I married." They don't say anything.

From these encounters, conversational partners can and do use negative stereotypes about feminism within their jokes to discredit and devalue the work of victim advocates. Regardless of the content of the inappropriate humor, the men in these situations use humor as a vehicle by

which to stigmatize the advocates in the wake of a disruption to the normative gendered scripts. The advocates become the dehumanized, illegitimate Other. Moreover, advocates who experienced this behavior were all women, which indicates the humor used also functions to reiterate the patriarchal hierarchy at the micropolitical level; humor as a distancing strategy reestablishes male power and authority in the conversation, allowing conversational partners to distance themselves from the uncomfortable realities of domestic and sexual violence and restore normative scripts.

Negative Stereotypes of Feminism

As the previous section noted, hostile conversational partners negatively invoked feminism through humor. New acquaintances also engaged negative stereotypes about feminism in other ways, with a particular emphasis on assuming qualities about the advocate such as political positions or mental stability. While there are fewer clear and overt instances of negative stereotypes than the other examples of occupational stigma, the cases advocates provided are quite powerful. Such assumptions often play out on women, which works to put these "out of place" women back into alignment with acceptable gender roles or to exclude them from "normal" women. In either regard, negative stereotypes serve to reestablish patriarchal authority by Othering the advocate through micropolitical strategies.

Amy provides an illustration of this process when she relayed the following pattern of experiences when introducing her occupation to new acquaintances: "I think a lot of people have this understanding of that it [violence] doesn't happen anymore. Women's issues are overlooked. It's something they hear and go, 'Oh dear, I have a feminist on my hands,' and back away slowly." There is an assumption that feminism is bad or extreme, and the conversational partner should "back away slowly." Amy's words illustrate both the ignorance around the topic of

gendered violence and the Othering process that occurs as a result of the stigma of feminism, which disrupts patriarchal norms that suggest women should be passive and submissive.

Miranda provided a particularly troubling instance of the application of negative stereotype about feminism when she met the future in-laws of her son and spent the weekend with them. During their last breakfast together as a soon-to-be family, Miranda recalled the following interaction with the father of the fiancé:

> We were sitting outside having coffee and he said, "Given what you do for a living, you're probably for abortion, aren't you?" I just took a deep breath and said, "Well, I think it's really interesting that you would make that leap and think that this is a good time to have the conversation." He grinned at me. He *grinned* at me. That was his idea, that anyone working for women were automatically too liberal.

Perhaps one of the most interesting features of this example is the final response to Miranda's reaction, which deeply disturbed her, as she repeated the sentence, "He grinned at me" with intense, disgusted emphasis on the word "grinned" during the interview. Such a response to her challenge that it was not an appropriate decision or time to have the conversation demonstrates a clear reassertion of power over Miranda: he need not respond with anything other than a grin. As such, the gendered hierarchy comes into clear view, and his stereotypic conception Others Miranda fully in that moment. His interactional work informed her that she was not worthy of a mature response, and he communicated what is appropriate conversation by exercising rather than simply possessing patriarchal privilege. Further, he simultaneously invokes stereotypes about feminism and politics of those who work to end violence against women. Othering often indicates more about the speakers, and his discomfort and disrupted view of the world—as they had discussed work several days prior to the incident—becomes illustrated through his abrupt insertion of her presumed beliefs. In order to restore the function of his masculine position and

access to normative scripts, the father of the fiancé used negative stereotype to discredit Miranda and her work with victims of domestic violence.

Conversational partners also invoke feminism as a negative to lead to questions about an advocate's mental stability. Whitney talked about the myriad of negative responses she gets when she introduces her occupation in a social setting:

> People think I'm some kind of a crazy lady. For a lot people "feminism" is a bad word. On rare occasion, someone will say, "A lot of men get abused, too. What are you going to do about that?" Or, "You know, women are always making things up," or something to that effect.

Whitney highlights the discrediting assumptions attached to her job title, about being crazy, a feminist, or not caring about men—all of which function to Other Whitney and render her inhuman and untrustworthy. Additionally, conversational partners ascribed negative stereotypes to the women with whom Whitney works; female victims are not credible as the sentence reveals a stereotype about women as a whole group as they are "always making things up." Such a statement reveals the speaker's sense of self and world and they reflect patriarchal power and misogyny through distancing and Othering: women—as a categorical whole—always lie. A number of advocates brought up this concept throughout their interviews, that people frequently write women—especially victims of domestic and sexual violence—off as liars. Such negative stereotype serves to confirm and justify gendered inequality and maintain gendered scripts.

In Whitney's example, by bringing up men as victims, the conversational partner assumes the advocate does not provide services to male victims—this indicates a callousness towards men that is not practical nor grounded in any information they have received in the conversation. However, such a move allows the speaker to discredit advocacy as an unreliable or biased occupation. It additionally creates the grounds for a reassertion of the importance of men after the disruption of the traditional gendered narratives within a patriarchal society. Most

interestingly, in an effort to quickly dismiss the credibility of advocacy and reassert men as the point of orientation, the move of contending the importance of men actually accomplishes that task by insisting that men can be victims, which is counterintuitive to the very idea of normative and hegemonic masculinity (Connell 2005). Most people discredit the idea that men are or can be victims of women's physical or sexual violence as that defies the rule of gendered relationships (Scarce 2001; Tsui, Cheung, and Leung 2010). Thus, the speaker actually disrupts normative gendered scripts in an effort to reestablish normative gendered relationships.

Finally, Whitney's recollection of the aggressive response based in negative stereotypes about feminism also contains the rhetorical question, which baits the advocate into an indefensible position. The distancing and negative stereotyping strategy of the rhetorical question also reinforces the primacy of men, despite the fact that the majority of victims of domestic and sexual violence are women. Another feature of hostile responses that men employ is rhetorical questions with the express purpose of drawing advocates into an unwinnable debate, as they maintain power to control the conversation through the engagement of patriarchy at the micropolitical level.

Rhetorical Questions and Comment as Bait

The distancing and Othering tactic of using rhetorical questions and comments to engage in debates that seek no resolution is a frequent feature of hostility and aggression towards advocates. This strategy invalidates and discredits the work of the advocate and ensures they can be easily ignored. The baiting questions function to allow the conversational partner to continue upholding stereotypical ideas about victim advocacy and reify cultural norms that support male privilege and women's violable bodies. The rhetorical question debate also mimics earnest

engagement without the intent to listen to the response, which is an assertion of masculine authority and power at the micropolitical level.

Advocates recalled a number of examples of this type of engagement, but Paige best addressed this element when she reported:

> I've had some others [men] where they want to get into a debate with you. They want to start talking about, "Hey, isn't it true that women are just as violent as men? What do you guys do about all those husband beaters out there?" All of that ridiculous shit. "Do you serve men? Why not?" I think, "I could answer your question, but I know you won't be satisfied no matter what I say."

From how Paige describes the interactions, it is obvious the arguments are not founded upon a clear understanding of domestic violence statistics or how gendered violence confers cultural power and confirms access to masculinity for perpetrators. Further, Paige clearly addresses the difference between people who ask questions to know more about gendered violence and those who are seeking to be argumentative towards her occupation and organization. The "debate" serves to restore the normative power relationships within the disrupted dynamic and symbolically punishes the advocate for stepping outside of the typical rules of gendered behaviors. Paige noted that she could engage with the hostile behavior, but she is fully aware that it serves only the purpose of exercising patriarchal authority over the Other.

In some cases the debate is less of an invitation to fruitless conversation and more of an aggressive accusation and dismissal of the advocates' work. These come as declarative statements rather than rhetorical questions, yet they serve a similar purpose. Victoria reveals this behavior when she stated, "I've had a couple of the law enforcement officers get really crass and really inappropriate about, 'Y'all aren't doing real work over there.'" Through simply saying her job title, law enforcement officers negatively responded with hostility by being "crass" and "inappropriate." Further, the response of claiming victim advocacy to not be "real work"

operates on two levels to undercut the disruption of patriarchal power: refusal to acknowledge victimization of clients and invalidating the occupation. Additionally, by naming the work as "not real" the officers position themselves as engaging in "real" work. The broad use of negative stereotypes about the work and workers functions to effectively discredit, devalue, and dehumanize—more simply, the use of masculine privilege functions to Other the advocate. Once Othered, advocates have little recourse for coping with the stigmatized position; there is little social room to rebut and assert the legitimacy of her occupation or of her clients' experiences. She is a woman working in a low prestige occupation, and thus, she has little symbolic power. This minute experience is directly reflective of the macropolitics at play, which reveals how conversational partners accomplish Othering through the engagement of micropolitics.

Similarly uncomfortable situations based on aggressive responses exist for those who are simply associated with the advocate. This speaks to the incredibly disruptive power that gendered violence victim advocacy has in relationship to patriarchal authority. Rachel offered the following anecdote to illustrate the experience:

> My mom told someone what I did and she got an earful from a guy. She said he asked questions to an uncomfortable degree and wanted to know everything about my job. What I do. Who I work with. The stories. What kind of victimization. She said that it got really, really awkward. She said, "I have three children," and told him all of their names and what they did, but he kept focusing back on what I did.

Here, we see people associated with the advocate also have the potential to be affected by occupational stigma in the form of aggressive responses by men—Goffman named stigma by association "courtesy stigma" (1963). Victim advocates experience courtesy stigma by their relationship to victims of domestic and sexual violence. The power of taint is so great that it can affect someone entirely removed from the work of challenging normative gendered scripts. In this case, the aggression appears in the form of an uncomfortable interest in her daughter's work

despite trying to shift the conversation. This sort of conversational exchange with the man refocusing and ignoring the new topics or discomfort of the female speaker further demonstrates the attempt to re-establish masculine power at the micropolitical level of interaction.

Finally, advocates' occupations have the significant potential to limit their social networks and dating circles as a result of distancing, Othering, and negative stereotype. When meeting potential mates, advocates run a considerable risk of receiving an aggressive or hostile response after they introduce their job title. Morgan makes this especially apparent when she relayed:

> I haven't gotten a lot of hostile, "Oh, do you hate guys?" responses. It's usually a look of "Oh, shit" in men. They usually extricate themselves from the conversation as fast as possible. One of my closest friends back in Washington DC would say, "You are the best bar trick I know." She would time it. The first question would be, "What's your name?" The second question would be, "What do you do for work?" Then, the guy is out the door. So, it's been that men are aggressive.

When asked to clarify the situations she experienced with aggressive or hostile responses to her occupation while on the dating scene, Morgan elaborated about the importance of framing the response:

> A lot of it depended on how I answered the question. For about a year, I worked for RAINN [Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network]. So, I would often answer the question in a way that I can probably get rid of this guy faster if I say, "I work for the Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network." As soon as the word "rape" came out of my mouth, there would be this look of shock, panic, and total terror. Like, "Who is this chick?" Abuse, didn't make it that much worst, but it didn't help. I found that when the word "incest" came out of my mouth, they were gone. They were like, "Oh my god, I don't know what to do about this." Generally, if I answer the question, "I'm a victim advocate," and be gentle with the issue, the guy would be gone within three minutes.

From her accounts, the disruption of responding with an occupational title that challenges dominant scripts about women's work or work that intervenes in gendered violence upset her potential mates. Further, the look of "Oh, shit" and attempting to quickly exit suggests the potential mates make a number of assumptions about Morgan as the men described did not

inquire about her other interests or passions. Her work becomes the sole signifier of who she is as a person. Her occupational identity is saturated in stigma, and thus, the introduction of her work is enough to alienate men. The stigma attached to her occupation is a "bar trick" for her friends; yet, it has very real consequences for the impact on Morgan's romantic life. Knowing there is always a potential for aggressive or hostile responses forces Morgan—and other advocates—to carefully craft responses that usually conceal the nature of their work. This ultimately limits advocates in their development of new social networks, as discussed more in-depth in the following chapter.

In examining the content of the interchanges that include hostility or aggression, the stories present consistent elements: conversational partners who engage in hostility or aggression based on negative stereotype do so in order to smooth the interaction, restore masculine power and privilege, Other the advocates, and undermine the work. Conversational partners display hostility and aggression in a number of ways such as inappropriate humor, negative associations with feminism, and rhetorical questions. All of these reactions fundamentally rely on stereotype, and misinformation, which further confirms the strength of occupational stigma. Yet they all lead back to the same result: the advocates' disruption to cultural norms and dominant narratives about gendered violence are dismissed or ignored. Male conversational partners, in these instances, work to restore access to masculine power and privilege, and also reassert the violability of women's bodies. All of these elements ensure advocates have little room to advocate for themselves when introducing their occupation in new social settings. They run real and tangible risks of having to cope with hostility and aggression from those around them, especially men. However, advocates can and do respond to hostility under specific circumstances.

RESPONDING TO HOSTILITY

While managing social relationships with a new acquaintance who has responded in hostile ways, advocates in this study discussed two primary responses: attempting to craft a "teachable moment" with the stranger or walking away. Advocates must make decisions about the value of their efforts when determining whether to educate or walk away. Most of those interviewed discussed the simple fact that their resources are finite and such microaggressive, micropolitical Othering interactions strain their coping skills. It comes down to a cost-benefit analysis wherein the advocate must carefully weigh the potential of harm to themselves—from the source of their conversational partners' continued hostile responses or from unintentionally expending too much energy from their emotional reserves—to the good that may come from such a refusal to accept the micropolitics and Othering at play.

There is a definitive balance, especially for women, as they must manage the negative stereotypes that generate as a result of their interactions; they may be speaking to a member of the criminal justice system or a potential donor and thus, cannot afford to alienate those individuals. Advocates—as a result of negative stereotyping and occupational stigma—are held in a constant, precarious balance in which they must stand as a representative of all advocates. This is a feature common to those who hold the stigmatized position in a social interaction, as Goffman discussed:

> Further, during mixed contacts, the stigmatized individual is likely to feel that he is "on," having to be self-conscious and calculating about the impression he is making, to a degree and in area of conduct which he assumes others are not…minor failings or incidental impropriety may, he feels, be interpreted as a direct expression of his stigmatized differentness (14-15).

This is true for advocates as they manage the various elements of hostile, Othering social interactions with conversational partners. Advocates discussed the complex decision making process of choosing to educate or walk away from instances of hostility.

Educating The Hostile Partner

Education of hostile partners, especially men, is a difficult encounter for two primary reasons. First, advocacy disrupts the normative scripts of desirable gendered relationships, which complicates the formation of new social relationships by making others uncomfortable; education continues to bring an uncomfortable topic to the fore of conversation. Second, the hostile partner has already attempted to restore those scripts through micropolitical acts of power and domination over the advocate through Othering, thus, to pursue a correction or reasserting the importance of the work/information runs risks of increasing the hostile response or poorly representing all of advocacy, which would only confirm the existing stigma. Yet, some advocates attempt to educate their hostile partners.

To come back to the example of Whitney and the assertion of male victims from above, Whitney outlines her responses to these acts of Othering through feminist stigma, when she stated:

> I explain to them that there have been studies that show people who make up sexual assaults are about the same with [false] reports for other crimes, that people actually under-report, that we serve men as well, because men can be victims. I give them some background and information and tell them we never turn away a man. So, that can be an uncomfortable conversation.

For Whitney, it is more important to her to advocate for her organization and correct the misinformation, even when there are negative stereotypes about feminism, victims, and rhetorical questions embedded within the hostile interaction. The value of correction is more

important than the consequences of violating the gendered scripts of interaction, which may lead to an escalation of hostility. She refuses to be Othered without the opportunity for rebuttal.

In managing hostile responses of conversational partners through education, Amanda addresses the importance of finesse when she approaches the conversation. Here, she discussed trying to find a positive relationship to the all male police force, many of whom routinely disparage her agency and their clients. "You go in there waving your big stick? No. You're never going to win anybody over that way. You have to go in and be yourself and try to persuade them to see another side." Amanda recognizes the importance of representation and the micropolitics at play with those who could potentially save a victim's life. Her awareness of the need for this group of hostile men requires her to respond differently and in a professional capacity. She continued, "You may never get them to see your side, but I want them to know that we're here, and they can always call me. I'm always accessible. Please ask." Similarly to Whitney, the potential positive outcomes for clients through accurate information outweigh the risks of disrupting normative gender relationships. Yet, Amanda still approaches the disruptive conversation through typical feminine, gendered conversational tactics of politeness rather than attempting to dominate those who are hostile or outright demand respect for herself, her organization, and her clients.

Jordan illuminated her strategy for coping with hostile or negative encounters when she reported, "When people say things like, 'Well, they probably deserved it or it's the alcohol.' I say, 'No. It's real and happens in any kind of family.' I don't preach, but if somebody says something, I'm not quiet." Jordan does not allow for discrediting of victims' experiences through her hostile encounters; though, she is careful to mention that she does not "preach" which would be too great a violation of norms of gendered interactions. Interestingly, Jamie repeats Jordan's

sentiment—both of these women had more than 60 years combined experience in direct services. Jamie expounded upon her reactions to hostile conversational partners, “I used to be a real crusader for DV stuff, but now the difference is that I’m so comfortable in that role. It doesn’t take a whole lot of energy to defend what I do.” When asking her to explain why she thinks that is the case, Jamie responded, “ It’s a function of the time in the field and living in a community that’s generally pretty liberal.” For these two women, they both identify the potential of the negative feminism stereotype avoid words such as “preach” or “crusade,” and thus, they distance themselves from the stigma by stating they are less forceful about their positions. Jamie asserts the more calm approach to clear and direct communication to new acquaintances who attempt to Other, distance, or negatively stereotype advocacy work is a direct result of her long stay within the field and her location in a supportive community. This is an important consideration when thinking through organizational trainings or policies on how to assist advocates in coping with occupational stigma.

Other advocates echo Jordan’s and Jamie’s approach in many ways, though younger advocates more frequently discuss the decision process that goes into choosing whether or not to say something to hostile conversational partners. More often, they make determinations about value. For example, Heather reiterated that she considers the following, “If someone reacts negatively, it gives me an opportunity to either not associate with that person or to try to have a teaching moment or be resistant on purpose.” Additionally, Sierra added, “Clearly if they are uncomfortable with it, it’s going to take more than the 3 seconds of an educational answer. It doesn’t feel like, at that point, it’s something I need to bother with.” Here, Sierra clearly makes a distinction about the value of her time and resources in the hostile encounter. Yet, she elaborates on the circumstances in which she sets clear boundaries about stereotyping and hostility when

she said, “But, when people make rape jokes or anything like that, I will speak up, even if it’s not about my job. I will be like, ‘Nope. You can’t do that around me. Don’t care.’” In these instances, advocates can and do react in assertive ways that defy typical norms of femininity that require subservience and politeness in order to achieve symbolic and social rewards (Schippers 2007).

When it comes to education, advocates carefully choose their strategies, as they are acutely aware of the stigma attached to their occupations as well as gendered micropolitical hierarchies in interactions with hostile men. This leads advocates to attempt to inform their conversational partners in, generally speaking, ways that do not entirely disrupt the attempt to reestablish the normative gendered scripts. However, when a conversational partner steps too far into the realm of negative stereotype through inappropriate humor or negative stereotypes, advocates will eschew normative gendered rules of interaction and actively assert their work/politics into the conversation, with little regard for the repercussions. At that moment, education and boundary maintenance holds primacy over the norms of social interaction and the advocates’ own emotional or social needs. This relates to the other primary reaction advocates describe when talking with a hostile partner: walking away.

Choosing to Let It Go: Walking Away

Walking away is a surprisingly difficult choice for advocates to make when engaging with negative stereotypes. Participants in this study explained that more often than not, they walk away from strangers in an effort to conserve energy for those more important in their lives. To that end, they understand the micropolitics at play, but choose not to engage in order to protect themselves or because they feel too disempowered to fight back.

Jamie makes this quite simple when she stated, “I choose, when I have the energy and feel compelled, to be more educating if people’s responses are stupid.” Here, she makes it clear that her educative strategies are dependent upon her emotional reserves. This reflects her previous statement about being able to quickly and more easily defend her work and clients. However, she will also choose to walk away from the hostile interactions if she does not have the energy or compulsion—this is about self-care, an important tool for any advocate.

Alternatively, Lauren provides a more complete commitment to walking away when she relayed, “I don’t really say anything. I just kind of smile and am like, ‘Okay.’ It’s annoying to me. I want to say, ‘Don’t be condescending. These are strong women.’” When asked why she does not say anything, Lauren responded, “I am inclined to just disregard them, because I don’t have the time or the energy.” In these interactions, Lauren has considered the costs and benefits of taking her time to talk to those who are hostile to her occupation. Through stating she doesn’t have the “time or energy,” she marks her resources as more important than challenging normative scripts and blocking attempts to reassert patriarchal authority into the conversation by the new acquaintance.

For Jasmine, only certain people are deemed worthy of further discussion and challenge to distancing, Othering, and negative stereotypes in interactions. Jasmine explained, “ I usually just let it go. The only time that I’ve taken extra steps to make people realize how important my work is with close family and friends.” Amy relayed a similar sentiment but added on that these efforts may include strangers after a certain period of time. “Usually, at first, that’s how it is [walking away from stereotyping]. If I get to know people better, they get more comfortable and are more willing to ask questions, at that point, I’ll say more.” Amy and Jasmine both define the boundaries of when and where they are willing to engage with negatively stereotyping or

stigmatizing conversational partners—both emphasize the importance of making clear choices about how they will expend their social and emotional energy. For these advocates, the micropolitics and insistence upon masculine access to patriarchal authority are less important than their needs—such self-care is self-preservation and can be a deeply political act, as famously stated by Audre Lorde (1988).

Paige provides interesting insight into the act of silence in the face of hostile conversational partners. She discusses the weight of gendered expectations that she carries which reduces her ability to respond to the insertion of normative gendered scripts when she stated:

> The instinct that I have, based on my personality, is that I'm a fighter. I want to get in their face. I want to win the argument. But, as I've become more grown-up and professional, I've had to deal with people in a more "civil" manner. That has hampered me, because I've learned it too well. I'm so polite. It's like when I'm in a situation where I'm so angry, but I can't think of a way to say something that is true and polite at the same time. So, I just kind of stew and stutter something like, "It's more complicated than that," or "That's not the way we see it."

Paige illustrates the ways in which women are taught to be polite and submissive, especially in the face of a masculine figure asserting authority over her. Though her personality would encourage her to say something, she has become so "professional" that she recognizes there are consequences to affirming negative stereotypes about advocacy, feminism, and women who intervene in the exercising of patriarchal authority. Admitting that you did "nothing" in the face of stigma is a difficult task. Many advocates avoided acknowledging the possibility that they would say nothing in difficult, stigmatizing interactions, because this is read as shameful or as failure. However, thinking through the possibility of violence from men, leads me to wonder as a researcher if perhaps this was a more common strategy to hostility than advocates would indicate.

Whether an advocate chooses to walk away from a hostile encounter is not an indicator of their dedication to the movement or their jobs, nor does it indicate their progressive-values if they choose to educate their conversational partners. All experiences must be considered in context, which advocates address repeatedly when thinking through responding to hostile introductions with a stranger. The assertion of the micropolitical, gendered hierarchy has very real consequences, especially if the advocate is a woman and the speaker a man. Generally speaking, violence against women is acceptable within the culture of the United States; this is particularly true if they are "out of place" with normative gendered behaviors. Thus, advocates indicated that educating or walking away are two of the most common responses to Othering through negative stereotypes. Both are valid options that ought to be respected, as advocates witness the consequences of men using their dominant cultural positions to achieve their ends through gendered violence. Advocates must choose which battles to take on and to what degree they have the capability of responding to negative encounters. There is no wrong choice when a stigmatized population responds to their marginalization. Some options can lead to increased education and cultural change to ensure that even micropolitical domination and conversational violence are not acceptable solutions to difficult topics. However, all responses are valid responses for stigmatized populations navigating difficult social terrain.

CONCLUSION

This chapter analyzed the negative experiences victim advocates have when introducing their occupations to new acquaintances. Advocates discuss two major types of negative interactions with strangers: avoidance and hostility. Both types of encounters engage in distancing techniques of Othering. Through Othering the advocate, conversational partners actively exercise patriarchal authority at the micropolitical level. Conversational partners—who

were identified as primarily men—direct the flow of the discussion, determining what is a worthy topic of consideration. This reflects traditional and normative gendered relationships within the United States.

By examining avoidance in conversational partners, this study reveals the strength of the taint associated with domestic and sexual violence victim advocacy—occupational stigma encourages others to engage in atypical social behavior. As a rule, when one engages in discussion with a stranger, occupational title is a frequent point of conversation. Advocacy so thoroughly disrupts normative conceptions of gendered behavior and masculine access to patriarchal authority that strangers are willing to engage in breaking of social norms and conventions of engagement—they are so uncomfortable with the challenge to their world-views, that these strangers are willing to abruptly change topic or walk away from the conversation. These violations establish a hierarchy of worth and clearly display the power of occupational stigma in advocates' lives.

Overt instances of hostility are routine parts of advocates' lives; while many advocates make clear that this type of interaction is not as frequent as positive stereotype or avoidance, the effects of these interactions are long-lasting. This study demonstrates that hostility most often appears as inappropriate humor, negative stereotypes about feminism, and rhetorical questions that are baiting. One of the most important findings is that of all instances of overt hostility (88.2%) consist of men engaging in the hostile behaviors towards female advocates. Advocacy's disruptive potential is made most apparent here as conversational partners engage in a number of distancing tactics and Othering that suggests they must quickly and effectively reinforce and strengthen their positions within the world. The force with which they employ negative stereotypes are most indicative of their worries and anxieties over masculinity and gendered

relationships. Jokes about rape or insistence upon the "truth" of negative tropes about feminism indicate a deep uncertainty; as Lippmann shows us, those who challenge our worldview must be discredited in order to maintain a sense of self and position within the social world. This position is that of one that claims access to authority and power over others—especially women.

The use of hostility works to exercise patriarchal authority at the micropolitical level, and advocates are acutely aware of these efforts. As a result, advocates have developed two ways of coping with hostility of strangers: educating them or walking away. Education and walking away are both useful tools for advocates in managing social relationships that have the potential to escalate to greater degrees of hostility. Thus, both have merit and must be considered in the context of the social relationship. It is not practical or accurate to summarily conclude one option is better, more moral, or more politically engaged than the other. The drastic and terrifying realities of male violence stay with advocates as they move about their days. Thus, more time must be spent considering how advocates can be better equipped to deal with these types of interactions in conjunction with more efforts to change the culture that condones violence against women.

With such a clear finding indicating such a strongly negative gendered component, the caveat must be made: not all men are hostile to victim advocates. While this is seemingly obvious, it needs to be stated clearly. I am not suggesting that all men are hostile to gendered violence victim advocacy and social change around those topics. However, there is a clear and distinct trend that indicates men feel they have more power and privilege to outright demean the work of victim advocates. The stigma attached has deeply gendered components that cannot be ignored in this or in future scholarship. Finally, occupational stigma—comprised of both positive and negative stereotypes—has an impact on the lives of advocates. As such, the final chapter

uses both qualitative and quantitative results to discuss the consequences of working in an occupation with low prestige and high potential for stigmatization.

CHAPTER VI: "I DON'T *HIDE* WHAT I DO, BUT…": STIGMA MANAGEMENT AND THE IMPACT OF TAINTED WORK IDENTITY

As demonstrated in previous chapters, victim advocates experience a range of stereotyping responses to their job titles, which indicates the presence of stigma in the social interaction. Thus far, this study demonstrates that new acquaintances frequently rely upon positive and negative stereotype to frame interactions, manage anxiety, and distance themselves from domestic and sexual violence victim advocacy work. This is because victim advocacy—as a field of employment and political position—disrupts normative gendered cultural discourses, violates social norms of gendered labor, and has the potential to contaminate both the interaction and the conversational partner's worldview with social and emotional taint as a result of association. Advocates have a range of responses for negotiating instances of occupational stigma within the interaction and this naturally leads to their development of management frameworks for future disclosures.

The long-term or secondary effects that stereotype and stigma have on advocates are not apparent in those initial interactions where those tools are invoked. Thus, this chapter explores the consequences occupational stigma has on those engaged in the profession of victim advocacy for survivors of domestic and sexual violence—decisions about disclosing occupational identity, building their social networks, and their experiences of burnout. Through qualitative interviews, when responding to the interview question, "Have there ever been times when you choose not to discuss what you do with new acquaintances?" advocates made clear that their experiences with occupational stigma deeply affect their disclosure of job titles to new acquaintances. Interview data demonstrates that advocates typically choose one of two paths when interacting with a new acquaintance. First, advocates declared a constant state of engagement with those around them,

feeling compelled to be an "open" advocate. Second and more frequently, advocates obscured their work identities for periods of time to new acquaintances in order to preserve emotional health—these are identified as "closed" advocates. Both of these strategies are acceptable—one is not more courageous or admirable than the other—as each advocate has different and finite tools to cope with their occupations, social support networks, and the daily stressors of life. More importantly, I argue that the purposes these seemingly antithetical strategies serve are the same: providing a sense of control over the introductory encounter with strangers and preserving emotional health for the advocate through stigma management.

Logically, there is a relationship between being able to build social support networks and being able to freely and honestly discuss one's occupation without fear of stigmatization—if one cannot talk about their livelihoods and their passions without repercussion, the person will experience some effects. The quantitative data reveal there is indeed an important relationship between the experience of occupational stigma and the rate of burnout—there is a correlation between these factors. Accounting for factors other studies have indicated to be significant in the experience of burnout in advocacy work such as age, number of hours worked per week or year of service, and social support perceived/received, my data reveal that the only statistically significant variable is experiences of occupational stigma. The results of this study are quite clear: advocates acutely feel the stress of identity management when meeting new people which has a significant impact on their careers in burnout; the quantitative data links burnout not to job stressors, but rather to the socially charged interactions of work identity introduction. This is an essential finding, as few studies have ever examined the external factors related to burnout in the field of victim advocacy. In short, a stigmatized work identity has an impact in numerous areas of life.

GOFFMAN, THE SELF, AND STIGMA MANAGEMENT

The framing of occupational title as private or sensitive information is best understood through Goffman's foundational work on stigma in conjunction with more recent literature on stigma management. In discussing the concept of stigma, Goffman wrote at length about the long-term effects of social disapproval upon the stigmatized group. Advocates' experiences with occupational stigma when speaking with strangers consistently result in similar decisions as those described in the foundational text. Goffman succinctly stated:

> The issue is not that of managing tension generated during social contacts, but rather that of managing information about his failing. To display or not to display; to tell or not to tell; to let on or not to let on; to lie or not to lie; and in each case, to whom how, when, and where (42).

Similarly, advocates consistently negotiate the process of either providing a job title or "passing"—Goffman's terms of presenting neutrally to certain audiences (73)—through careful management of information. No advocate in the qualitative interviews indicated that they overtly lied about their occupation; yet, when addressing their approaches to introducing new acquaintances to their jobs, advocates framed their well-crafted introductions as essential to managing their mental and emotional health in social situations.

As a result of the precarious position their work places them in new social interactions, advocates seek out signs that a conversational partner is "wise." A wise person is defined as, "Persons who are normal but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it" (Goffman 1963: 28). Wise individuals often provide external social support to the stigmatized individual, which can aid in disclosure and integration in mixed contacts (Winnick and Bodkin 2008). Seeking out social support often has emotional costs for stigmatized individuals, but those who receive support are better able to manage their uncertainty and experience positive changes (Brashers, Neidig, and

Goldsmith 2009). Research has also demonstrated disclosure is an essential element to receiving/perceiving social support and increasing the sense of well-being for those with stigmatized identities (Beals, Peplau, and Gable 2009). In their study, Beals, Peplau, and Gable found that suppression is a significant mediator in feelings of life satisfaction—those who suppressed their identities in interactions had lower feelings of life satisfaction. All of these are important findings for gendered violence victim advocates. This is especially important in light of advocates' discussion of their choices to not fully disclose their work in order to manage stigma as well as the ways advocates construct social support networks of a select group of wise individuals.

There is a cost to advocates' management of self within new social interactions and they routinely attempt to discern who is wise through their performance of passing and delayed disclosure. This series of performances and information seeking behavior echoes the words of Goffman's earlier germinal work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. In discussing the importance of information in framing social interactions, Goffman asserted:

> Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him. Informed in these ways, the others will know how best to act in order to call forth a desired response from him (1956: 1).

Thus, advocates engage in information seeking behavior prior to disclosure of their work identity to control the definitions and expectations of their conversational partners. This is not uncommon in stigma management, wherein stigmatized individuals work to pass or substitute identities (Park 2002; Roschelle and Kaufman 2004). Research has demonstrated that social conditions are more important than the stigmatized identity in disclosure (Cain 1991). Thus, advocates need social conditions that are conducive to disclosure or provide a safe cultural environment in which occupational stigma will not occur based upon work in the field of gendered violence.

In the overwhelming majority of interviews, advocates stated they engage in a number of litmus tests to determine whether or not they discuss their occupations and in what contexts they are willing to do so. Thus, it is clear advocates engage in the management of *stigma symbols*—"signs which are especially effective in drawing attention to a debasing identity discrepancy, breaking up what would otherwise be a coherent overall picture, with a consequent reduction in our valuation of the individual" (Goffman, 43-44). Those who work or volunteer in stigmatized employment see higher rates of burnout and frustration as a result of the stigma (Synder, Omoto, and Crain 1999) and spend a significant portion of time reframing, recalibrating, and refocusing conversational partners when talking about their work (O'Donnell, Weitz, and Freedman 2011). Similarly to the advocates in this study, other stigmatized workers, such as abortion care providers, choose to not disclose solely to protect themselves and manage occupational stigma (Harris 2008).

Advocates, in all new social interactions, must choose if, how, and when to disclose their occupational identities as a result of having to manage occupational stigma. What is different than other occupations is that the stigma symbol—job title—functions simultaneously to (artificially) increase valuation through positive stereotyping or reduce valuation through negative stereotyping; advocates rarely know how their new acquaintance will respond. This stress adds a dimension of exhaustion to the job for advocates who generally find joy in their work. Thus, whether if or how frequently advocates choose to disclose their jobs is mostly irrelevant. Advocates claim a modicum of control through engaging in stigma management within social situations that are often unpredictable. As a result, this chapter examines the ways in which advocates introduce their occupations and the subsequent impact on their sense of

selves, emotional and social health, as well as how it affects their ability to continue to engage in an occupational that changes the material conditions for victims of gendered violence.

QUALITATIVE DATA

It's My Job: Open Disclosure

In discussing the circumstances under which they reveal their occupations to new acquaintances, several advocates expressed they are "open" advocates—they freely discuss their work with anyone who may ask. Of the 21 participants in the qualitative portion of the study, only six advocates identified as such. While it is clear these advocates are the minority voice within the data, what is most interesting are their reasons for choosing to be open about their occupations. They have little regard for stigma management and are more concerned with an ethical imperative in their openness. Advocates cited *duty to others* and *pride in their identities* as the reasons they choose not to engage in stigma management measures in new social situations.

In coping with occupational stigma, open advocates see obscuring their work identities as doing a disservice to themselves, their clients, and the field if they do not disclose their occupational identities. To the "open" advocate, fully embracing their stigma in an effort to change cultural perceptions was more important than their own discomfort in new social situations. Victoria—the most vocal advocate for being open—particularly exemplifies this when she explained:

> I've always told people about the work that I do and the community I do it for. The topic of domestic violence has been in the closet. It's been this damn taboo thing for so many years. Why would I help perpetuate that by not telling people that I work with battered women and children? I think that's one of the primary, very baseline functions of being an advocate. If I can't stand up for myself and the work I do, then, why the hell am I trying to work with clients? I am doing a disservice to them.

Victoria clearly articulates how she sees being an advocate for the field as a part of the work she does on a daily basis; it is her duty to break down barriers and stigma for herself and her clients. She recognizes the stigma attached to the work, but believes it is necessary to "stand up" for advocacy; to closet or obscure the identity feels like a betrayal to herself and her clients. Likewise, Sarah stated:

> I would talk to anybody. It's not like I go around with a victim advocacy shirt on all the time. But, I'm certainly open to talking about it. Before I did this work, I didn't even know what an advocate was and had never heard of them. So, it's important for people to know they exist, what they are. We're a resource for people to know about.

In this discussion, Sarah highlights the importance of spreading information about advocacy through talking about her work; Sarah eschews the common conventions of stigma symbol management and the stigma associated with advocacy's disruption of patriarchal norms. In her view, increasing knowledge and awareness matters more than her potential unease.

The other advocates who cited duty as the primary reason for their open disclosure echoed the sentiments of Sarah and Victoria, but they more specifically identified the important ways that such openness about a stigmatized occupation and taboo topic can affect social change. To that end, Miranda said, "Every opportunity you have to talk about the work you do is an opportunity to educate. That's just one way to change. Change the system and change society." Erica reiterates openness as a part of advocacy work itself when she relayed, "I tell them what I do. It's never been a conscious decision to just talk about it. If it comes up, I will. That's my job. It's my job." The importance of reiterating that it is her job demonstrates a sense of commitment and an ability to manage the experiences of stigma and cope with potential stereotyping as a result of the stigma. Open advocates indicated that any stigma symbols are not to be hidden in favor of passing; rather the direct engagement offers countless opportunities to create change on interpersonal and systemic levels.

For the open advocates, the role of commitment to all aspects of the job permeated their conceptions of their social selves: they are advocates all of the time because that is what they agreed to do as an occupation and personal passion. The use of direct interactions places the advocate in an increased position of power within the conversation. While their conversational partner could engage in stigma and stereotype, the advocate controls the information how they see fit—thereby limiting Othering. Additionally, such direct and clear communication defies norms of gender *and* the norms associated with stigmatized communities who routinely attempt to pass or down play their stigmatized status—open advocates foreground their stigmatized status in social situations. This further disrupts normative gendered scripts. Such candid approaches can improve life satisfaction for stigmatized groups as noted above (Beals, Peplau, and Gable 2009). Further, open advocates who cited duty as a reason for straightforwardly addressing their stigmatized occupation want to respond to the cultural assumptions and silence around the topics of gendered violence in very immediate ways; it is an urgent need for them. This sense of urgency and obligation to their advocacy community ties in with the second way open advocates frame their identities and choice to openly disclose: *pride in the occupational identity*.

Only two advocates saw themselves as being open because of a sense of pride in their work. Yet, pride undergirds several advocates' decisions to talk about their work, even when it might be difficult. Amy sees her job as worthy of recognition because of its intrinsic value despite knowing the stigma associated with her work. She described her position as follows:

> I don't think there's been a time when I haven't told people what I do. I'm pretty proud of what I do. I'm not really afraid of backlash. So, even if I were to get it, I feel comfortable enough that I could defend it and defend what I do.

Importantly, Amy is aware of the possibility for a negative response when discussing her work. Yet, she highlights that she is unafraid because she is proud of what she does. This pride gives her the confidence to manage occupational stigma and instances of stereotyping. Following the Cass model for marginalized identity formation that emphasizes identity pride and synthesis, pride in stigmatized communities helps to identify in-group/out-group boundaries (1979). While the Cass model specifically contextualizes these processes for lesbian and gay individuals, the model is applicable to many marginalized positions including those who engage in stigmatized work. The previously stigmatized identity becomes a focal point for open advocates, and thus, an area of pride. Morgan concurs with this feeling she expressed a similar sentiment about the love she has for her work and identity:

> I have always felt okay with what I do for work, and if that is going to end the conversation, then it might as well just end the conversation. I don't really delay talking about what I do. It's a big part of my passion in life. I certainly don't want to give an answer that is incorrect. I'm pretty open about who I am and what I'm about. I figure I might as well get it out there early.

In her response, Morgan notes how she sees the importance of her work and that she does not care if others appreciate it. Her conversational partners may stereotype or stigmatize her, but she does not work to manage the stigma symbols through passing or concealment. Most importantly, her passion lies in advocacy work and she wants that to be a central part of her relationships with others from the very start—those who are not appreciative are not welcome in her life which further illustrates the identity pride stage of Cass' model.

While in the minority within this sample, open advocates see their occupational identities as central elements to their relationships with others and central to their sense of position in the world. For those who claim duty as a reason for open disclosure, the occupational self bleeds heavily into the social self; thus, for these advocates one cannot be separate from the other.

Further, it is not just a job; rather it is an important element in creating substantive change for their clients and society that mitigates occupational stigma through spreading knowledge. For the two advocates who frame their discussion of open disclosure in pride, their passion lies in the work. These advocates feel a deep sense of pride in their occupations and thus, it is similarly central in their social relationships with others. For these advocates, their work identity is closely linked with their social/political/cultural selves and they feel the need to be clear about their identities.

While the overwhelming majority of advocates in this study are extremely proud of their work, they more often choose well-crafted approaches to occupational disclosure. Limited, selective, or non-disclosure allows advocates to manage the stigmatizing responses of others, and thus preserve their limited resources for coping. This strategy ultimately enables them to manage feelings of burnout and social dissatisfaction by being able to control information about their lives and their stigmatized identities.

Avoiding That *Conversation: Non-Disclosure and Obscuring Work Identity*

For advocates, coping with the stress associated with the introduction of their jobs in new social settings often trumps the pride they feel in their work identities. The management of stigma symbols becomes a focal point of their interactions with others. When discussing with whom and in what contexts they introduce their occupations with new acquaintances, 15 of 21 advocates revealed they choose a path of non/selective-disclosure unless the situation is unusual or they feel it is particularly important such as with relatives or potential friends. If advocates felt they would not be interacting with the stranger again, they chose two paths in managing and preventing the experience of occupational stigma: non-disclosure through avoidance or obscuring their work identities.

Non-disclosure through avoidance

Many advocates in this study choose to become "closed" advocates in situations that require disclosure of their work identities. This is a direct result of their previous encounters with occupational stigma and their fear/perceptions of possible stigma within future interactions. While it would be easy to identify non-disclosure as a cowardly act of passing, to do so would be an inaccurate assessment of the act. Closed advocates demonstrate that non-disclosure is an important act of self-care; advocates stress the importance of saving their limited resources for moments wherein disclosure serves a practical purpose or they have ascertained that their conversational partner is a "wise" person to whom it is safe to disclose their stigmatized identity as they will receive affirmation.

Choosing non-disclosure as a way to manage stigma and protect the self is best seen in Ashley's response, "I try to avoid having that conversation because their response is so irritating. So, I try not to [disclose], especially with a stranger." From the initial statement, it is clear Ashley is fully aware of stigmatizing responses, which are frustrating to her; she places special emphasis on interactions with strangers over those close to her. Those who are not "wise" or empathetic to the topic of gendered violence are not privy to Ashley's identity; this is reserved for only those who have demonstrated their worthiness. Lauren provides a similar and very succinct answer when she stated, "I don't have a lot of energy to deal with negative things." Lauren chooses to avoid those conversations because of a direct relationship to perceived and experienced negative interactions with strangers when introducing her job title. Rather than risking coping with stigma after disclosure, she identifies disclosure to strangers as a negative act. Further, by addressing her energy, she subtly indicates that her time and emotional resources are valuable which is incongruous with typical gender roles. Culturally, there are expectations of

women to act as selfless and be relationally focused, and women who advocate for their own best interest experience sanctions for role incongruity (Wade 2001).

The theme of avoiding the conversation because of the disruption to stereotypic conceptions of occupational and social identity runs through several advocates' discussions. For example, Michael knows that most strangers assume violence against women is work done primarily by women—as demonstrated in previous chapters of this study. Thus, gender role incongruity yields a special set of privileges among certain populations (e.g., men who are advocates) and extra stigma and sanctions among others (e.g., women who are advocates). These special sets of privileges are typical for men working in the gendered violence field (Kolb 2014). Knowledge of the stigma carries over into Michael's disclosure of his work identity to strangers. He relayed, "I don't talk about it a lot, because I think that people think it's unusual. If I'm sitting next to someone on a plane, it's not going to be the thing I say." Michael is aware of the occupational stigma and the disruption to normative cultural scripts about who engages in gendered violence prevention and intervention work; he chooses not to discuss his work freely as a coping strategy to manage the stigmatized identity in mixed social interactions. Additionally, when he does disclose, women routinely provide him extra privileges because they consider him a special man, while other men deride him for his work.

Likewise, Jamie said that for her, it is not about hiding her work identity, but rather not engaging with potentially stigmatizing parties. Jamie explained, "I don't bring up the issues I deal with when I go and visit my family. I don't feel like the interaction feeds me in any way. I'm often disappointed at people's lack of awareness or interest." For her, in her travels and seeing distant relatives (whom she identifies as strangers), she chooses not to discuss her work because of the failure to understand or have interest in her work. Lack of awareness is a site

where stigma may occur as a result of relying on stereotyped frameworks for interacting with her; thus, she notes that she requires interactions that "feed" her in positive ways.

Finally, despite her earlier comments about the importance of her work as a central point of interaction with others, Morgan illustrates the depth and gravity of how stereotypes about women operate when she discusses why she chooses to remain a closed advocate. Such an internal ambivalence—on one hand citing the importance of being an open advocate and yet, in reality limiting disclosure—indicates how deeply stigma can and does affect advocates. Thus, the decision to selectively disclose in order to manage stigma symbols is centered on self-care:

> I don't often divulge much to strangers, because it is a field that is not the expected answer. I am 37 now and have been doing this work for a long time. But, I look younger than I am. I am tall, thin, a relatively attractive girl who is usually out with friends, laughing, and having fun. So, I can understand why it catches people off guard when I say what I do for a living, talking about being a victim advocate.

Morgan's discussion of the reasons she chooses not to engage with strangers about her job title is directly linked to occupational stigma and stereotypes about women. For many, as discussed in the chapter on hostility, women engaging in anti-violence work disrupt normative gendered scripts; Morgan highlights that her appearance as a normatively attractive, heterosexual woman heightens role incongruity for her conversational partners, a result of heteronormative scripts. When role incongruity is elevated, people more frequently seek to undermine the person who challenges stereotypes, especially for women in positions of power (Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, and Nauts 2012). As a result, Morgan chooses not to give much information about her work self during interactions with strangers, which ultimately limits to her ability to create new social networks with people who work outside of the field of gendered violence or are not already wise. In short, avoidance serves to keep advocates protected from occupational stigma,

and yet, non-disclosure and avoidance also prevents social network expansion—a key element in navigating burnout in advocates (Babin, Palazzolo, and Rivera 2012).

The narrative of non-disclosure in direct response to potentially stigmatizing experiences carries through many advocates' responses, and they expound upon their reasoning for non-disclosure. Most prevalent in their decisions to remain closed about their jobs are themes of self-preservation in the form of time and energy conservation through avoidance stigma management. The concept of valuing one's time and caring for the self is an essential element to choosing non-disclosure for several of the closed advocates. Rachel offered this, "That opens to so many doors to so many possibilities. I don't offer it [job information], because it usually leads to a counseling session." She went on to explain a bit more about the importance of context and being aware of her own needs, "I don't hide what I do, but I'm careful about where I announce what I do. Otherwise someone wants to tell me *all* of their experiences regarding my occupation." Rachel does not want to engage in stigmatizing or draining conversations around her occupation, because she values her time and needs. Thus, non-disclosure is an act of important self-care in response to potential occupational stigma and stress of job disclosure.

Jordan—the 69-year old participant with more than 30 years experience in the field—provides a clear discussion about non-disclosure and the importance of self-care as a survival strategy. This is true even as a volunteer in her retirement as Jordan stated:

> I don't, at length, tell people unless they ask. I don't wear the button on my shirt that I do this. But, people ask what I've been doing since I've retired. I say, "Not much. New grandchild. I volunteer a couple days a month at this place." They'll ask what that is. I'll tell them, but I don't go into great detail about it.

Here, Jordan clearly notes that she tells people "not much" even though she continues the work of sexual assault advocacy through volunteer opportunities, and that she no longer discusses her

work in an in-depth capacity. When asked to explain why she chooses to avoid the conversation, despite having participated in the field of sexual assault advocacy for so long, Jordan replied:

> I don't know. I don't think I would burn myself out if I were talking about it. I just think hearing the opposite political views and knowing my response when I hear some of those things, I just think it wouldn't really be helpful. When someone lectures to me about behavior, my initial response is that I don't want to listen to them.

Jordan, in her response, identifies that she is capable of the discussion, but that she expects confrontation through "opposing political views." These view points lead to stigmatizing encounters, as the work of advocacy is disruptive to cultural norms and assumptions about gendered relationships. As a result, she chooses to pass without communicating any stigma symbols. Jordan recognizes that her responses to hostile or stigmatizing interactions are not effective in ameliorating the effects or changing the conversational partners' stereotypic conceptions; thus, her time is better spent elsewhere in her day.

Alyssa adds a final piece to the importance of non-disclosure, stigma management, and valuing her time when engaging with new acquaintances:

> Now, I don't tell strangers what I do because I don't want to get into that, "Domestic violence? Isn't that just like a bunch of women who are crazy?" My personality, despite how I act professionally, I'm mouthy. That's just my personality, and people know that at work. I hate to get into a, "Well, let me tell you…" because that's just not helpful. That's just going to make me look like I'm crazy. That's not helpful globally, so why would I even waste my time on this one person? I totally would, and I know that about myself, so I just keep my mouth shut.

In her discussion she marks a number of issues facing advocates when they disclose their work identities to strangers: coping with negative stereotypes about domestic violence survivors, occupational stigma, stereotypes about women advocates, as well as conserving time and energy. In her experiences with introducing her occupation, she has seen a wide range of responses, which leave her feeling as though all strangers will stigmatize her and the people with whom she works.

Further, Alyssa knows that if she chooses to engage in hostility or ignorance with correct information about advocacy and victims, the stranger may perceive her negatively. Such a view, then, reinforces the stereotypes about women and occupational stigma surrounding advocacy work making disclosure that much more difficult. Such challenges also run the risk of further harm to the advocate, as they continually disrupt gendered relations. Finally, Alyssa notes her time and energy are valuable resources when asks herself, “Why would I even waste my time on this one person?” Importantly, not all people would be a waste of time, but Alyssa copes with the overwhelming occupational stigma through choosing not to disclose her work identity to any strangers. Her use of broad categorization—stereotype—of strangers saves her emotional frustration and potential pain, anger, or rejection.

Interestingly, Alyssa’s response highlights an issue that many advocates discuss in their reflections: advocates engage in stereotyping of others in order to protect themselves and prevent disruption to their worldview. While their conversational partners use positive or negative stereotype to gain distance from the occupational stigma attached advocacy, advocates also stereotype others to distance themselves from experiencing occupational stigma placed on them. Importantly, for conversational partners stereotyping is a reiteration of hegemonic structures; for advocates, it is a response to that reiteration and thus, it is a self-protective measure. Stereotype, for both parties, becomes a way of managing encounters with occupational stigma. Yet, as advocates are the stigmatized and marginalized group, they suffer far more severe consequences from stereotyping in the social world than their counterparts. Their conversational partners succeed only in not discussing gendered violence, which enacts a form of micropolitical violence upon the advocate by dismissing, demeaning, or distorting their occupational selves.

Based upon this data, it quickly becomes clear advocates who choose not to disclose their work identities through the tactic of avoidance do so for a number of reasons. First and foremost, advocates are keenly aware of the occupational stigma associated with their jobs and that they run the risk of negative social interactions when introducing their job titles. Further, advocates understand there is often a role incongruity that makes social interactions more difficult than if they were to be in another occupation. Finally, advocates choose avoidance in order to preserve their daily levels of time, energy, and resources, as they deem the interaction less valuable than others. Avoidance is one particularly common and effective strategy for advocates; yet, other advocates employ a very similar non-disclosure strategy of obscuring their work identities in new social situations to achieve similar stigma management and protect their resources.

Non-disclosure through obscuring work identity

As advocates discussed their strategies for coping with new situations wherein they must potentially reveal their occupations, interview data demonstrate closed advocates use carefully crafted language that does not *lie* about their work; yet, it does conceal the fact they work with victims of gendered violence. Their obscuring identity relates to the concept of strategic ambiguity as a tool to avoid conflict (Heller 1988). This non-disclosure strategy—advocates emphasized—does not invite hostility or positive stereotype, but does get to the heart of their work with marginalized and vulnerable populations. The more neutral sounding job titles they offer provides strangers a sense of their work without the political engagement the terms for gendered violence provoke in others. Advocates choose this stigma management strategy to ensure they protect their emotional and social health as well as other limited resources like time. Further, this is a way to assess if a person is “wise” to gendered violence and victim advocacy.

Choosing non-disclosure through obscuring work identity is a common strategy as eight of 21 participants reported using carefully coded language to manage occupational stigma. One example, 59-year old Chelsea said, “I tend not to tell people. I just go with my gut. A lot of times, I say I’m in social work and just leave it at that.” When asked why she chooses to say social work, Chelsea simply stated, “Most people wouldn’t be able to handle what I do. So, I don’t bring it up.” Chelsea’s answer is typical to most of the closed advocates who choose to obscure their work identities; she reasons that most people are not able or willing to handle the conversation about her work so the logical conclusion is to choose a related field that is seemingly more neutral. Her response points to the disruptive power and potential of advocacy, and yet, it also points to the stigma attached to the work, as many people choose not to engage in real or substantive discussion about gendered violence. Alyssa also occasionally chooses this path when she remarked, “I tell people I’m a counselor at a non-profit.” The connection between non-disclosure and experiences of occupational stigma becomes quite clear when she commented, “When people say certain things or they pat me on the arm, ‘Oh, good for you.’ I get the feeling they really don’t understand what I do. So, it’s best not to get into a conversation about it.” Alyssa considers the cost/benefits of the interactions she will experience upon revealing her work identity—she identifies examples of positive stereotype as specifically frustrating. As a result of her evaluation of the situation, Alyssa chooses to obscure her work identity as a self-protective measure to avoid instances of stigma.

Similarly, Sierra articulated the following strategy, “Sometimes, I will say that I work for a women’s organization. I’ve said that, but I don’t ever really avoid it *completely*.” For many of the closed advocates, the last part of Sierra’s sentiment is key: they do not lie about their work. While they do not lie, they do artfully choose a related occupation that allows them to better pass

until they can determine whether their conversational partner is wise. Maria echoes this sentiment when she relayed, “Usually, I tell people I work at an agency that helps people affected by violence. People then get interested because they might think human trafficking or something like this.” Maria explains that when she provides vague job information it prevents stigmatizing interactions through management of stigma symbols. When she has to clarify—as discussed in the previous chapter—strangers’ responses frequently become more negative; such stigma leaves her unhappy and exhausted. For Maria, she does not wish to lie, but she is also aware of the potential consequences for honesty when speaking with new acquaintances.

In each interview, the closed advocate took great care to stress that they are not ashamed of their work. However, advocates noted the stress of job introduction to new acquaintances is incredible because of the unpredictability of the conversational partner. This limits their ability to freely discuss their occupations with others, as they are perpetually “on” and representing the whole of advocacy as Goffman discussed (1963: 14-15). For Jamie, she must consider all the possible outcomes of her disclosure, “Sometimes, I will say I am a social worker and be general about it. I’m not at work so I don’t want to work. I don’t want to be working all of the time.” Her response makes very clear the toll of being a victim advocate in social settings, and the idea of constantly being “on” as the representative of the stigmatized group. Jamie views her off-time as essential to self-care and when she must introduce her job title, she runs the risk of having to engage with others in stigmatizing ways, which she finds depleting. Similarly, Whitney sees the expenditure of time and resources with strangers as difficult, which results in her choice of non-disclosure through obscuring her title:

> If somebody says, “What do you do for work?” I say that I’m in non-profits. Sometimes, people will ask, “Oh, what do you do?” or “What place is it?” Then, I have to explain, which I’m happy to talk about my work, but there is no short answer for it. If I’m going

> to have to talk about it, then I'm going to have to explain exactly what it is. I'll say, "We serve victims of domestic and sexual assault, stalking." Things like that.

Whitney's explanation demonstrates how culturally situated the work of victim advocacy for victims of gendered violence becomes when engaging with new people. For Whitney—and other advocates—there is no short or simple answer to the question, "What do you do for work?" This is primarily because of a lack of understanding or knowledge of the field; this lack of understanding leads others to rely on the cultural stereotypes already in their toolkits (Swidler 1986) to understand the disruptive information presented to them. Advocates must often educate each person with whom they interact, and they cannot be certain if the response will be positive or negative. That stress results in obscuring occupational identity as a way to cope with their stigmatized occupational identity; such stress and misinformation has the possibility of hindering new social network development.

Finally, for Paige—who identifies as bisexual—she chooses to obscure her work identity especially in romantic situations, as she does not know whether the potential mate is wise to gendered violence victim advocacy:

> There have been times that I have said, "I work in community education," which is not necessarily true. It was with a cute guy. You know, if it was a hot woman, I would have maybe felt more comfortable, because women get it more. But, it makes guys uncomfortable a lot of times. I don't want to tell them, "I'm a rape prevention educator." I just say, "I'm a community educator." It sounds more sophisticated and less, less, less feminist. Whoever I end up being with needs to be pro-feminist anyways, but I just don't want to come off being militant.

This answer gets to the heart of a number of occupational stigma-related issues present for advocates when trying to build social and romantic networks as they introduce their occupations. Paige discerns that in talking about her work with potential women as romantic partners, she feels more comfortable with divulging her occupational identity; she perceives there will be less stigma because of her work with victims of gendered violence and engagement in emotional

labor. She extrapolates that women have more or better understanding of the issues surrounding sexual violence. With men, Paige has seen a trend of men becoming uncomfortable after discussing her job title, and she worries about potential male partners becoming hostile as described in the previous chapter. She is especially conscious of managing the stigma associated with feminism and rape prevention. Thus, she feels it is a better option to obscure her job title until she has determined if the potential mate is wise or if the acquaintance is a woman.

The closed advocates who obscure their job titles provide information that demonstrates the presence and strength of occupational stigma. For these advocates, it is essential that they do not *lie* about their work or fully divest themselves of association with helping occupations. However, these advocates carefully choose particular wording or similar job titles that are less stigmatized than gendered violence victim advocacy as a way to manage occupational stigma. Most advocates focus on social work, as a less stigmatized occupation, to transmit enough information that allows the superficial conversation to move forward; this allows them to pass. Advocates choose these paths in order to engage in self-care, as time and emotional resources are limited, especially when working in an emotionally demanding field. Further, there is little formal or structured social support for victim advocates outside of the walls of their offices, and they do not have training on how to cope with occupational stigma. As such, advocates participate in non-disclosure to manage their stigma symbols and pass in routine social encounters; yet, this prevents deep or meaningful connections as advocates cannot fully be "themselves" without running risks to their emotional health.

More broadly speaking, when considering the impact of work identity disclosure for advocates, it is obvious that nearly all of the 21 interviewed advocates hold a constant awareness of the possibility of occupational stigma in all of their interactions with those outside of the field.

For open and closed advocates, they recognize that each new contact brings challenges not seen if they were to have chosen less politicized occupations. As advocates, they challenge cultural norms of patriarchal authority and power; advocacy work disrupts normative gendered scripts. Through their associations with victims, feminism, and the disruption of male privilege, advocates feel the stress of occupational stigma in new social situations. Though some advocates identify as open advocates—that they freely disclose their occupations with all new acquaintances—they are in the minority. It is not because they are not aware of occupational stigma; rather, it is because they feel a sense of duty and pride that they feel compelled to discuss their work. For open advocates, the benefits outweigh the risks and they see direct communication as a way to achieve social change and preserve their emotional health. They do not need to worry about when or whether they will disclose to new acquaintances.

Conversely, more than two-thirds of the interviewed advocates identify as closed advocates—choosing to not disclose their work identities freely in new social situations. For these advocates, it is not that they lie about or refuse to ever discuss their work; rather, the closed advocates feel the stress of disclosure to be an unnecessary drain on their internal resources for coping. As a result, they avoid the conversation or simply obscure their work identities by stating a title in a closely related field. This allows them to continue their work and create social change through a different avenue. Both open and closed advocates seek a modicum of control over the unpredictable encounter through their stigma management techniques, and both are valid choices. One is not more honorable than the other. Coping resources are finite for all of us.

From the information presented in this study, occupational stigma clearly has a substantive impact on a victim advocates' ability to quickly or easily build new social networks, as they must manage stigma and stigma symbols. Advocates must choose to engage with the

constant potential for occupational stigma through disclosure or must choose to carefully divulge information until they can determine whether or not the new acquaintance will be receptive to their work. In either direction, the advocate makes difficult choices that can strain the social relationship and limit new connections to those who work outside of the victim advocacy field. The stigma attached to gendered violence and victim advocacy routinely places advocates in an untenable situation when introducing their work—to disclose or not disclose, each holds consequences the advocate cannot fully anticipate—which, as the quantitative data reveals, has a crucial impact upon factors of burnout and job stress. Yet, occupational stigma occurs while the advocate is not at work and few studies have examined external factors relating to job burnout in advocates.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

The Results of Occupational Stigma: Factors Related to Feelings of Burnout

Previous research on the issue of burnout and organizational factors is quite robust, as outlined more fully in the literature review. Areas of research focusing on factors outside of the work context and burnout in victim advocacy have had little consideration with the majority of it focusing on factors within advocacy organizations. In these studies, factors such as organizational support and an affirming workplace culture, access to resources and rewards, self-care routines, workload, and position within agencies all affected experiences of burnout (Babin, Palazzolo, and Rivera 2012; Choi 2009; Slattery and Goodman 2009; Wasco and Campbell 2002; Wasco, Campbell, and Clark 2002). More specifically, feelings of burnout corresponded with markers such as age, workload, length of time in field, and education (Baird and Jenkins 2003; Behounek 2011). Additionally, research demonstrates the positive effects—known as "buffering"—personal networks of social support have on individuals in caring professions

and/or trauma-related professions (Boscarino, Figley, and Adams 2004; Cohen and Wills 1985; Collins 2008; McRaith and Brown 1991; Michalopoulos and Aparicio 2012). Despite these findings, little research has examined the impact of advocates' social support networks outside of their institutions and co-workers.

Based upon these previous studies, I developed an exploratory survey to capture traditional markers as well as new focus areas such as positive encounters of occupational introduction, negative experiences with occupational introduction, and feelings of external social support. Thus, I aimed to examine how institutional and interpersonal factors affect levels of burnout in victim advocates. Specifically, I hypothesized that higher levels of individual and institutional factors such as age, number of weekly hours, length of time in field, and hours of training prior to employment should produce lower levels of burnout (H1). In addition, I hypothesized that the interpersonal factors of positive responses and external social support should reduce feelings of burnout (H2a) and that negative responses should increase levels of burnout (H2b).

To determine strength of the relationships between the exploratory variables and burnout, I first ran a multiple regression analysis with positive responses and negative responses as independent variables and burnout as the dependent; the total N for this sample was 207. The model was statistically significant, $F(2, 204) = 206$, $p<.001$. In reviewing the Pearson correlation matrix, negative experiences were positively correlated to burnout, suggesting more negative experiences introducing occupation had a relationship to feelings of burnout. Conversely, positive experiences were negatively correlated. This information initially supported both H2a and H2b; results for the multiple regression analysis are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Results of Multiple Regression to Predict Positive and Negative Responses as Factors of Burnout

	Burnout	Negative Responses	Positive Responses	B	β	*t*	Sig.	$Part^2$
Burnout								
Negative experiences	.30			.22	.28	4.43	.00**	.08
Positive Experiences	-.34	-.16		-.28	-.3	-4.62	.00**	.08
Mean	2.10	2.47	3.17					
SD	.53	.69	.56				R^2	.19
							R^2_{adj}	.19
							R	.44

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$

A second multiple regression analysis tested the relationship between external social support—a less commonly considered factor among the literature for victim advocates—and burnout, The *N* for this sample was 210, and the model was statistically significant $F(1, 208) = 209$, $p < .001$. The Pearson correlation matrix revealed a negative relationship to burnout, which suggests that higher levels of external social support may aid in the reduction of feelings of burnout. This initial finding supports H2a and the summary of the results are presented below in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Multiple Regression to Predict External Social Support as a Factor of Burnout

	Burnout	Social Support	B	β	*t*	Sig.	$Part^2$
Burnout							
Social Support	-.26		-.22	-.26	-3.82	.00**	.07
Mean	2.11	3.46					

SD	.53	.63	R^2	.07
			R^2_{adj}	.06
			R	.26

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$

From these results, I conducted a hierarchical regression with these variables as well as traditional factors related to burnout to test the hypotheses. The total *N* for this sample = 153, as all cases missing data were dropped from the sample. In examining the data and to better understand correlations between variables and predicative potential, Table 5 represents the Pearson correlation matrix for the factors. Based upon each factor in relationship to burnout within the matrix, it is clear that age, years in advocacy, positive experiences, and social support are all negatively correlated with burnout, which suggests increases in these categories were related to decreased feelings of burnout in the advocates who took this survey. Alternatively, the factors of number of weekly hours, hours of training prior to employment, and negative experiences were positively correlated with burnout, indicating these are factors that were positively related to feelings of burnout in advocates.

Table 5. Zero-Order Correlations among Predictor Variables (N=153)

	Burnout	Age	Weekly Hours	Years in Advocacy	Hours of Training	Negative Experiences	Positive Experiences	Social Support
Age	-.23							
Weekly Hours	.10	.02*						
Years in Advocacy	-.18	.55	.03*					
Hours of Training	.04*	.01**	-.00**	-.04*				
Negative experiences	.30	-.10	-.00**	-.04*	.02*			
Positive Experiences	-.39	.18	.00**	.03*	-.01**	-.11		
Social Support	-2.84	.19	.02*	.22	-.09	-.14	.46	

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$

As there were clear and meaningful relationships between the factors and burnout demonstrated in the correlation matrix, the hierarchical linear regression helped to determine which of the factors had the most effect on feelings of burnout. As discussed above, in research on victim advocates and burnout, personal demographics and organizational factors have been the variables considered; thus, I expected those to be significant (H1). Looking to external support and positive/negative experiences in introducing occupation is an exploratory element that extends the current literature, and I predicted those to be related to feelings of burnout as well (H2a and H2b).

Each set of predictor variables was entered in one step in an order determined by the researcher. As a result of previous literature, I entered traditional factors relating to burnout in Step One; Step Two, negative experiences and positive experiences; Step Three, external social support. The rationale for this order was based upon previous research suggesting the relationships of traditional factors and external social support having clear relationships to feelings of burnout. As noted above, research has indicated that higher caseloads, more hours, shorter time in the profession, lower levels of education, have a stronger positive correlation to feelings of burnout. I predicted these variables would be statistically significant and could potentially explain more of the variance, which is why the factors were placed in Step One and Step Three. The overall model, including traditional factors and the three exploratory variables, was statistically significant, $F(7, 145) = 152$, $p<.001$; the model summary is below in Table 6.

Table 6. Model Summary of Factors Related to Burnout in Advocates

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	R^2 change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.26	.07	.05	.51	.07	2.77	4	148	.03

2	.51	.26	.23	.46	.19	19.11	2	146	.00
3	.51	.27	.23	.46	.003	.63	1	145	.43

As illustrated in Table 2, there were three steps to the hierarchal regression. Step one included typical factors in burnout measures, including age, number of years in advocacy, hours of training, weekly number of hours per week, and hours of training required prior to start of employment. A hierarchical linear regression was employed to determine which factors had the most predictive potential for burnout in victim advocates. Of these factors, age was the only statistically significant variable in Step One , t = -1.99, p = .048. This means that older advocates or years being an advocate are more likely to experience stronger feelings of burnout. This step produced an R^2 change = .07. which accounts for approximately 7% of the variance. This did not support the H1, as there was less predictive potential for burnout from traditionally associated factors.

In the second step, the variables of positive and negative responses to introduction of occupation were considered in addition to traditional factors of burnout. This resulted in both positive and negative experiences being the only statistically significant factors with p-values of <.001. Negative experiences in Step Two resulted in t = 3.54 and Positive experiences t =-4.73. Age held a p-value of .370, which indicated it was no longer a statistically significant factor predictive of burnout as compared to positive/negative experiences in introducing occupation. The positive and negative experiences significantly increased the change in R^2 = .19, which indicates 19% of the variance is explained by these encounters. This data supported the predictions of H2a in relationship to positive experiences and supported H2b.

In the third and final step of the hierarchical regression, external social support was included in examining potential causes of burnout. Positive and negative responses held p-values

of <.001 while external social support returned *p* = .43, which indicates external social support was not a strongly related factor in predicting burnout in this sample. In this step, the R^2 change = .003, which demonstrates less than 1% of the variance is explained by external social support, which did not support the prediction of H2a. Finally, the power analyses for the three steps were as follows: Step One Sig. F Change = .03; Step Two Sig. F Change = .00; Step Three Sig. F Change = .43. As such, it is clear from the power analyses that Step Two—positive and negative experiences introducing occupation—provided the most improvement to the prediction within the model. The results of Step Three in the regression is summarized and represented in Table 7.

Table 7. Coefficients from Model 3 of Hierarchical Regression

Model 3	B	β	t	Sig.	Part^2
(Constant)	2.75		8.85	.000	
Age	-.003	-.08	-.90	.37	.004
Weekly Hours	.004	.10	1.42	.16	.01
Years in Advocacy	-.008	-.11	-1.26	.21	.008
Hours of Training	.001	.02	.31	.76	.0004
Negative Experiences	.18	.25	3.45	.001	.06
Positive Experiences	-.27	-.32	-3.87	.00	.08
Social Support	-.05	-.07	-.78	.43	.003

Data collected from this survey indicate that the most predictive factors in ameliorating or increasing feelings of burnout in advocates are positive or negative experiences in introducing occupation to new acquaintances rather than more traditional factors such as age, length of time in field, weekly hours, and hours of training prior to employment. Moreover, studies to date have not accounted for external factors such as occupational stigma; thus, this finding is noteworthy as

it suggests that one must consider external factors associated with the stress of advocacy work rather than the work/organization/personal histories in isolation.

Further, these findings support the qualitative data within this research, which suggests the stress of occupational stigma from outside of employment has an impact on advocates. Occupational stigma can translate into their lives at work as negative experiences of occupation introduction have a statistically significant, positive correlation to feelings of burnout and positive experiences have a negative correlation. Simply stated, this data suggests that social interactions with strangers outside of the work context matter—burnout is not only affected by factors related to what happens while at work. Thus, future studies should look to more external factors in predicting burnout in stigmatized occupations. This is also an especially important finding for advocacy organizations as they work to understand how to better assist advocates in being healthy both inside and outside of work.

CONCLUSION

There are very real and taxing consequences for advocates in everyday social interactions. Every time an advocate meets a new person in a social setting, they must make the decision whether to disclose their work identity. This seemingly innocuous social process holds great potential for stigma, and advocates feel the stress of that potential in their daily lives. As a result, interview participants revealed two ways of coping with this stress: open disclosure or non-disclosure. While very different in content, both tactics help to manage stress in new social encounters; advocates preserve their time, emotional resources, and coping skills through their choices of disclosure.

Open advocates discussed the importance of ensuring they do not obscure or deny their work identity in everyday conversation. While they are keenly aware of the occupational stigma associated with their advocacy work, open disclosure saves advocates the stress of making

decisions about to whom, when, and how they will talk about their employment. Six advocates addressed being open with all strangers and they cited duty and pride in their work as reasons to clearly communicate their titles. Duty is the predominant theme, and the advocates in this study hope to achieve social and interpersonal change—through demystifying, de-stigmatizing, and honestly addressing the social problems of gendered violence—as a result of their open disclosures. The two advocates who addressed pride cited that they are extremely proud of the work they do, and they want their occupations to convey what matters most to them to everyone they meet.

While all advocates in this study went to great lengths to stress their pride in their work, the overwhelming majority of participants in this study routinely choose a route of non-disclosure until a later time. Advocates evade stereotypes and experiencing occupational stigma through avoiding the conversation and obscuring their work identities by naming a related, less culturally disruptive field of employment such as social work. Most advocates indicated that they do not permanently choose this method of managing the stress of social interactions; often, their non-disclosure is based on difficult past experiences or being careful to reserve their few resources for their work and those immediately in their lives. Further, their non-disclosure is a tool to ensure the advocate has time to determine whether their conversational partner is wise to the issues of gendered violence. Such preservation and careful disclosure is another way to be able to contribute to social change, as advocates work to stay in the field without experiencing the effects of burnout because they never have time "off" even when they have left their jobs for the day.

When considering the impacts the experiences of occupational stigma, the quantitative data statistically demonstrates the words of the interview participants. In analyzing the

relationships between burnout and positive experiences, negative experiences, external social support, and traditional factors that are predictive of burnout, the survey reveals that experiences with occupational stigma are the most important predictive factors leading to burnout. Based on the interviews, this finding is not surprising; yet, few studies have ever considered how experiences of occupational stigma outside of the employment context could have effects on the longevity and emotional health of advocates. Thus, this finding is especially useful for considering how organizations can better support their advocates and reduce turnover and burnout. Further, it develops a clear line of future research for other stigmatized occupations that engage in care-work and emotional labor.

Advocacy work is fundamentally disruptive to norms about gender and masculine access to power; thus, it is unsurprising that advocates experience occupational stigma. Most importantly, occupational stigma—seen through the application of both positive and negative stereotype—in situations where advocates must introduce their occupational titles, has lasting and detrimental effects on advocates. Importantly, how an individual advocate chooses to manage these effects are not to be criticized—open or closed advocates are making the best choices with the resources they have available to them. There is much to be learned from both open disclosure and non-disclosure—or any combination of tactics in new social settings—in helping advocates find ways to navigate a culture that does not support their work or their clients. Further, it is imperative that we use such information to provide emotionally/socially healthy strategies to advocates as the engage in such important and necessary work.

CHAPTER VII: CULTURAL CHANGE, ADVOCACY, AND GENDERED VIOLENCE

Advocates for victims of domestic and sexual violence are essential pillars in local communities as they provide a unique set of services that other agencies—such as law enforcement, hospitals, or courts—often fail to provide to victims of gendered violence. Equipping victims with the tools to gain power and control over their lives in the aftermath of domestic and sexual violence—a philosophy rooted in feminism—is necessary in a culture that condones and excuses acts of gendered violence. Despite the thousands of paid and volunteer advocates across the United States, there has been little research on these intermediaries between the victims and all of the components of the criminal justice system. The limited body of scholarship focuses primarily upon issues relating to the negative impact of employment in the field such as secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, and burnout. Few studies have considered advocates' lives outside of the work context or have explored what it means to be an advocate in the socio-relational context. Context can and does matter in all of our lives—especially in relationship to something as important as occupational choice. Occupation is a cornerstone for nearly all encounters in the social world (Unruh 2004)—people frequently adhere to the adage, "we are what we do."

As a result, this study more thoroughly explored the lives and experiences of victim advocates with a special emphasis on how they make sense of their occupations, introduce their work to strangers, and the ways in which those interactions play a significant role in managing the stress and joy of the work. By analyzing interviews of 21 advocates and the survey data collected from advocates across the United States, we can reasonably draw a number of conclusions from the presented evidence. For one, advocating for victims of domestic and sexual violence can be a challenging but deeply rewarding occupation and this is translated through

advocates' discussions of their work. The advocates in this study very clearly articulated that they enjoy their jobs and are quite proud of the work they do. Additionally, this work demonstrates that when introducing themselves to new acquaintances, advocates are often faced with a difficult decision: to disclose or not disclose their occupational identity. With each new social interaction, advocates must question to what degree they should disclose their work and prepare for the possibility of occupational stigma as a result of the cultural scripts that surround women, women's work, and gendered violence. Advocates know that conversational partners can and do deploy familiar cultural scripts in the form of stereotypes, which affects the advocates' interactions with others.

From the content of the responses, advocating for victims of sexual and domestic violence carries with it two of the types of taint associated with dirty work: social and emotional. Social taint—and thus, occupational stigma—attached to the job is most readily seen in that advocates work in servile positions and remain in consistent contact with stigmatized populations (stigma by association). Their limited credentials and varying educational requirements place advocates in servile positions, which is in stark contrast to the symbolic and social rewards received by counselors, therapists, or lawyers, though their work frequently employs elements of those fields. Further, the newer conception of emotional taint applies to the work of the advocate as they must listen to and manage feelings that threaten to disrupt the social and cultural scripts of everyday interaction. Discussing domestic and sexual violence points to a cultural system in which those with more power and socio-cultural capital target their violence against specific populations: primarily though not exclusively, women. Domestic and sexual violence are crimes of power, not uncontrollable urges as much of United States patriarchal lore suggests (Scully and Marolla 1984). Thus, advocates serve as a point of reference to a conversation that many in

Western culture would prefer to ignore—this disrupts the solidarity and sense of unity within communities, as many do not acknowledge the depth and breadth of gendered violence. In other words, many people distance themselves from the topic.

As a result of the social and emotional taint associated with the position of advocacy, new acquaintances and/or strangers engage in stereotyping advocates when they introduce their occupations in an effort to distance themselves and Other the advocates (and all they represent). The various strategies of positive or negative stereotypes distance speakers from the discomfort of considering the issues at stake in real, matter-of-fact conversations about the nature, impact, and extent of domestic and sexual violence in the United States. In this study, advocates from across the U.S. report consistent narratives of conversational partners' discomfort, which suggests a cultural issue, not a problem of a few unenlightened individuals who do not know how to respond.

Further, such repetitive patterns indicate that advocacy disrupts normative patriarchal power and cultural scripts; as such, there is dire need for serious reflection and cultural intervention around the topic of gendered violence. This reveals the contours of stock responses that an overwhelming number of people offer when they are challenged with the reality of domestic and sexual violence in their daily conversations. Most new acquaintances, as advocates note, are unprepared for the occupational title; it is human to want to "save face" through protective and defensive tactics (Goffman 1959). However, the social and relational process of saving face for the stranger relies upon cultural scripts that engage in stereotyping and stigmatizing the advocates, their clients, or their professions in the process. Given the patriarchal culture entrenched in victim blaming of domestic and sexual violence victims and a culture

hostile towards feminism, it is not surprising that these are the cultural scripts for those engaged in conversations with advocates.

Advocates in this study identify friendly/positive and negative responses. Friendly reactions consist of idealization and sympathy. Idealization uses positive stereotyping about the advocate to allow speakers to make assumptions about the advocates' feelings, nature, and abilities. While these are seemingly affirming encounters, the sentiments expressed actually have little regard for the individual advocate and work to limit the discussion about advocacy. Interviewees most clearly express the concept of idealization through reductive phrasing such as, "It takes *such* a special person." While many of the advocates give a variety of examples to that effect, the core sentiment is always the same: there is something vastly different about the advocate that makes them capable of managing the daily stressors of gendered violence and victim advocacy. The often unspoken part of the message is that the conversational partner is *not* special, and therefore, does not have to engage with such traumatic material—this is an extremely effective distancing and Othering technique for conversational partners.

If idealization does not appear in the friendly encounter with a stranger, there is likely to be a sympathetic response—the second major type of friendly/positive interaction. Advocates identify a sympathetic response as any time a stranger engages in pity, condolences, or otherwise feels sorry for the advocate regarding their occupation. Advocates frequently identify this sentiment through recalling their conversational partners stating things like, "I'm so sorry. I could never do that." Other times, advocates recount the language of others implying depression as the only result of the work advocates do. The conversational tactic of sympathy serves similar functions to that of idealization: conversational partners insist advocates have unique abilities to be able to assist victims of domestic and sexual violence victims, and the conversational partner

does not have such capability. Sympathy generates a feeling of Otherness—the conversational partner is, simply, not like the advocate. Thus, the advocate is ostracized from potential connection with a new social contact.

As conversational tools, idealization and sympathy encourage others to view the advocate through a positive, though ultimately, stigmatizing lens. Advocates become marked as "different" and this functions to isolate and Other advocates. Further, this marking of difference also negates the social and interpersonal responsibility of the conversational partner. This happens on two levels. First, the conversational partner does not have to consider the possibility of how they, too, could assist victims, as they are not "special" like the advocate with whom they are speaking. The second level is these tactics frequently preclude more in-depth and important conversations about the pervasiveness and ignorance surrounding a culture that condones—primarily through silence, inaction, and victim blaming for those who come forward—acts of gendered violence. This preclusion occurs through the advocate having little room or opportunity to rebut such clear stereotypes; how does one argue against something that seems like a symbolic reward when there are so few rewards attached to the job? Most advocates in this study discuss that the struggles with friendly interactions and stereotyping are not worth the effort or it provides them with only momentary symbolic reward. Even if the conversational partner were to identify they did not want to be an advocate, sympathy and idealization as distancing tactics successfully prevent substantive conversation about the social problem of gendered violence.

As a result, the advocate has little conversational recourse but to either accept the positive stereotyping, which further confirms the conversational partner's beliefs or the advocate can deny the stereotyping, which may lead to conversational and relational disruption. Ultimately, both paths leave advocates with little room to grow, challenge perceptions, or encourage others

to know more about the profession and clients. These conversational scripts that rely on positive stereotyping—whether intentionally deployed or not—ensures there is little cultural or local change on the topic of gendered violence as the work is left to be done by those already engaging in it.

On the other side of the conversation, advocates in this study discuss their experiences with negative interactions when introducing their occupations to strangers. There exist two major trends within the negative reaction: avoidance or hostility. Advocates mark that those who are avoidant to the conversation often demonstrate external, non-verbal signals that communicate strong discomfort with the topic. Avoidance is sometimes combined with brief interactions of positive stereotyping; yet, the primary goal of avoidant behavior is to immediately redirect the conversation or leave the conversation all together. The avoidant response serves a similar function as the friendly responses: to preserve the conversational partner's sense of self and their worldview. Further, avoidance indicates a refusal to engage in a larger discussion about the politics of the culture and the conversational partner's own implication in social processes that condone and excuse gendered violence.

On the other end of the negative encounters spectrum, advocates identify that conversational partners also engage in overtly hostile or aggressive responses. Importantly, when advocates recalled specific or general instances of hostility, 88.2% of all recollections consisted of interactions with men. This is a particularly important finding within the context of the study, as it highlights a significant point of interest that begs the question of why hostility is such a uniform response from men. Superficially, one can consider the content of the hostile encounters described by the advocates; hostility appears through inappropriate humor, negative assumptions about feminism, and finally, rhetorical questions and comments designed to bait conversations

that cannot be productive. Through examining each type of response more in-depth, there is a clear undercurrent of power and control being in flux within the context of the conversation. Examining the power flux at the micropolitical level demonstrates how advocacy disrupts the cultural and interpersonal narratives about women's roles and work designated as "acceptable" for women. This is especially accomplished by the interruption of a cultural system that provides material and symbolic rewards to men, primarily through their ability to maintain hegemonic positions; negative stereotypes function to shore up defenses against potentially disruptive information. Thus, to employ conversational moves that Other and distance themselves from advocacy, hostile conversational partners attempt to regain control over others and thus, their interrupted worldview that places primacy on masculine entitlement. Advocates' stories demonstrate how this masculine entitlement is expressed through domination over those with less cultural power—in this case, women, their bodies, and their sense of position in the world.

In short, acts of gendered violence are acts of power. Thus, to respond with hostility to those interrupting that power dynamic—advocates and all the change or challenge they represent—is to be hostile to the redistribution of symbolic and material power and a reiteration of the normative gendered hierarchies at the micropolitical level. Frequently, it seems from the data collected, men engage in these three primary tactics with an unconscious intent to ease their discomfort with the topic; yet, from the stories relayed by advocates, there are many cases where this is a intentional move to diminish and degrade the advocate and their work in very gendered ways. Whether hostility or avoidance, both tactics silence, isolate, and stigmatize the advocates, their work, and their clients; these tactics also ensure that conversational partners do not need to rethink their positions in a deeply patriarchal culture.

Advocates, in responding to hostility, have a limited range of choices due to the micropolitical landscape of gendered hierarchy. The two most common strategies for managing negative stereotypes and the hostile conversational partner are by educating or walking away. Education runs the greatest risk for advocates because their partner is already hostile to the disruption of the gendered power dynamic. To continue to insist on conversation, when the privileged group has deemed the conversation finished, runs the potential of escalation and confirms the negative stereotypes the conversational partner already has about victim advocates. This leads to advocates choosing to enact gendered stereotypes that are more congruous with traits typically associated with women. However, if a conversational partner steps too far out of line—such as making rape or domestic violence jokes—advocates will eschew all micropolitics and directly confront the speaker.

More often, advocates choose to walk away from the hostile party without further discussion or challenge. Walking away is a significantly more difficult choice for advocates, as they often feel as though they *should* say something. However, advocates consider the cost/benefit of engagement. Additionally, because of the micropolitical moves to reestablish power over the advocate, frequently interviewees discussed how they felt disempowered or stupid, which left them without the resources to combat the negative stereotypes or occupational stigma in the encounter. Thus, advocates choose to walk away in favor of saving their precious coping skills to manage relationships with those more important in their lives.

Most importantly, how advocates choose to manage their friendly or hostile conversational partners is not to be judged by outsiders. These situations must always be considered in context. Some days might yield more emotional resources than others for

negotiating experiences of occupational stigma. A more important reflection is on how the experience of occupational stigma affects advocates.

As a result, this research considers the consequences of being marked as a stigmatized group and experiencing the effects of stereotyping in regular social interactions with others. Interviewees indicate there are two primary options for advocates when addressing their occupational identities in social settings: to be "open" or to be "closed" about their work. Both are reasonable but vastly different options when managing occupational stigma. Yet, they serve similar functions within the conversation. Both tactics allow advocates to maintain a sense of control over their interactions in conversational contexts that often preclude the possibility of "normal" responses to discussions of work identity. Advocates engage in stigma management surrounding what is usually considered "social" information—occupational identity—to achieve control over the information. It is as a direct result of the interpersonal and cultural scripts that entrench advocacy for victims of gendered violence in stigma and stereotype. As a result of that entrenchment, advocates' occupational selves become sensitive, stigmatizing information that must be managed. Control over disclosure of their stigmatized identity provides advocates the opportunity to determine whether their conversational partner is "wise" to gendered violence and victim advocacy and preserves their emotional and social health.

Those who were open advocates identified that they choose to be consistently forthright about their occupations with strangers because it is their duty, and they hold sense of deep pride in their work. Both of these encourage moments of direct social and cultural change, as they do not respond as strongly to the pressures of stigma and stereotyping through becoming strategic or silent about their disclosure. This approach does run the risk of experiencing more negative encounters or positive stereotyping; yet, it also allows for more direct access to symbolic power

and opportunities to engage with those who may be ill-informed on the topics of victim advocacy and gendered violence. Further, open identification removes the emotional and social stress the advocate experiences over deciding when, where, and how they will disclose. The most stressful social processes of stigma—discernment over wise identity, passing, and disclosure—have been stripped away. The open advocate does not have to engage with questions of when and how to disclose and to whom; they have already made that decision and ground the rationale in a strong sense of duty or pride in their work. They disclose because the strategy manages their emotional resources and potentially ameliorates stigma by spreading knowledge.

In this study, the overwhelming majority of advocates choose to be closed about their occupational information as they selectively disclose. The closed advocate controls their "private" information of occupational identity differently through their careful considerations of when, how, and to whom they will disclose their occupations. While these advocates have a similar sense of pride in their work, they choose to exercise control over the interaction through intentionally delaying the release of information because they are keenly aware of the stigma attached to their jobs. Further, they understand that role incongruity exposes them to a whole host of responses that may attempt to undermine them, their clients, and their work. This leads to the two primary non-disclosure strategies of avoiding job title introductions or obscuring their work title to a more "neutral" job title such as "social work."

Both tactics, the non-disclosure through avoidance of the conversation or obscuring their work identity, provide advocates time to assess the situation and determine whether their conversational partner is wise. That is to say, they are trying to determine whether their disclosure will result in occupational stigmatization. Advocates who engage in non-disclosure reiterate that this approach to managing information is an effort to preserve their emotional and

social health, as no person has infinite resources to cope with all the stressors of daily life *and* unnecessary stigma with new acquaintances in social interactions. Interviewees make it clear that their time and energy is crucial, and also, that they do not lie about their work. Their non-disclosure offers them the ability to make social and cultural change in different venues than initial introductions with strangers.

Whether open or closed, advocates indicate that they are acutely aware of the possibility of stigma and stereotyping; further, they are aware of the stereotypes that exist about their work, their clients, and their passions. As a result, advocates can and do manage their information with new acquaintances and strangers. These seemingly innocuous interactions have serious consequences for advocates, as demonstrated by the survey data. Through multiple regression analyses, the data show a link between the experiences of occupational stigma in new social situations and feelings of burnout. As points of comparison, I used traditional factors predictive of burnout such as age, length of time in field, weekly hours, and hours of training prior to employment. In addition, I developed a variable based on external social support from friends, family, and romantic partners. Through using a hierarchical regression analysis, I was able to determine that the only statistically significant factors predictive of burnout were the experiences with occupational stigma. This is a unique finding, as few studies have ever considered external factors in predicting feelings of burnout in victim advocates. For those working with victims of gendered violence, the dozens of minute social interactions with positive and negative stereotypes has an impact on their ability to remain doing the work in the field and doing it well. This means that occupational stigma is not just frustrating or a mild irritation to advocates; occupational stigma is detrimental to the profession and the hundreds of thousands of clients whom advocates serve each year. The requests for services are increasing every year; thus, it is

more important now than ever that we find ways to assist advocates in being healthy and happy in their work and create cultural change.

REVISITING AIMS AND PURPOSE

In developing this work and through the introduction, I outlined several goals for this research. First, my goal was to use Cultural Studies as a primary site of investigation in order to develop a more comprehensive, interdisciplinary study that would combine the strengths of several disciplines in order to best understand the workings of the cultural moment. Further, I set out to contribute to both humanities and social science literature through the interdisciplinary, mixed methods approach; this was with a focus towards expanding the literature about domestic and sexual violence victim advocates as there are few studies that use mixed methods, gain a nationally representative sample, or examine topics outside of traditional questions regarding negative emotional outcomes for advocates.

These goals have been achieved in my work. First, through the use of an interdisciplinary approach of Cultural Studies, I relied upon major concepts from fields such as Women's and Gender Studies, Sociology, Communication, and Political Science. Through analyzing the literature and theory of each field, I found the applicable concepts that spoke to many researchers rather than being limited by traditional disciplinary boundaries. This provides a fluency of language and understanding to many. Further, the mixed methods approach also assisted with this aim, as well as that of contributing to several fields. Through using qualitative approaches supported by quantitative data, I was able to gather a varied sample that speaks to many regions across the United States; both samples were robust. Thus, this work offers relevant topics to many and is not limited. The mixed methods approach also allowed me to understand the areas of life most relevant to advocates. Using the qualitative data as the primary guide, I was able to

better understand how deeply they are affected by talking to strangers about their jobs. Had I come to the work from a strictly deductive approach, this vital information may have been missed. Thus, the quantitative work supported the findings of the qualitative interviews and demonstrated that above all other traditional markers related to burnout, that experiences with occupational stigma have a profound effect on advocates. Finally, my study begins new areas of exploration of advocates' lives. Through my time as a victim advocate, I was able to move past the usual questions about the work, and seek out the nuances of what it means to be a victim advocate. In addition, my insider status allowed me to be able to connect with participants in meaningful and substantive ways that revealed a wealth of information. Advocates expressed how comfortable and happy it made them to see one of their own trying to improve the lives of those engaged in the work.

Such statements bring me to the second objective that I mapped out earlier in the write-up: creating research that intervened in the cultural moment to improve the lives of advocates, their organizations, and all the people they serve. In achieving that aim, I have been successful in so far as finding new areas of potential trainings to decrease feelings of isolation or burnout. Working in a stigmatized occupation is often difficult, especially with politicized, gendered components attached to the work such as that of abortion care (Hern 1980; Todd 2003) While abortion care is not the same as domestic and sexual violence victim advocacy, there are a number of parallels which involve violating the normative scripts of femininity and "appropriate" work for women. As a result, my research demonstrates the importance of training those engaged in gendered violence intervention and prevention on how to introduce their occupations and manage the responses, as there is a correlation from these interactions that occur outside of work on the feelings of burnout while at work.

To begin the work of training advocates and their organizations, this research offers an initial place to begin understanding the interactions between advocates and strangers based upon the data collected in this project. The information contained within this study suggests that advocates are not given training on how to cope with instances of occupational stigma—the information advocates offer is a place to start the process of intervening in the cultural moment. Based on this data, there are clear trends of positive and negative stereotype that fundamentally rely on Othering as a tool to disconnect from the realities of gendered violence. It is important to acknowledge these are potential reactions from new acquaintances; there are more possible reactions such as states of neutrality or general support without elements of Othering. However, from the advocates in this study there are several options available to manage the Othering interactions that increase occupational stigma: accepting/denying stereotypes; educating conversational partners through accurate information; engaging in debate; providing generic work titles; or walking away from the situation.

These strategies have all been successful—to some degree or another—for the 21 interviewed advocates of this study. Overwhelmingly, the advocates stressed that one must constantly appraise the context of the situation, their emotional state and needs, and the possibility for change. Thus, in moving forward with the development of training, it is of the utmost importance to stress to advocates and their organizations that each of these strategies can be an effective tool for coping with occupational stigma. Privileging one strategy over others denies the importance on the finite resources each advocate has. I would encourage any trainers to work with advocates to develop individual strategies advocates can practice and rely upon during difficult interactions. Further work and trainings should continue to explore the ways in which advocates manage potentially difficult social situations in which they must introduce their

occupations to strangers—this must done through the lived experience taking primacy in the research and development process.

A final consideration to stress in using the research at hand to create training tools is that not all interactions will rely upon Othering, stereotype, or stigma. While these are the most common responses among this sample, there are numerous approaches; further, a conversation has the possibility of shifting mid-conversation. A conversational partner may be neutral, engage in positive or negative stereotyping, or may become avoidant at any point. The key element to stress during any training is the importance of practicing coping techniques that work for each advocate; this allows each advocate to rely upon their predetermined plan of action in order to preserve and protect their resources in new social situations. These strategies could also be applied to people closer to the advocate, such as friends or family. To achieve the aim of intervention and improvement of participants' lives, this research uses the words of advocates to offer some practical skills and tools for immediate use by advocates and their organizations.

FUTURE RESEARCH AND INTERVENTION CONSIDERATIONS

In short, occupational stigma is present within victim advocates' daily lives and more specifically, in the socio-relational processes of making new acquaintances. Based upon the research conducted in this study of victim advocates' experiences of occupational stigma with new acquaintances, there are serious implications for the need to consider the messages present within United States' culture around women's inherent value and dignity—this is in all regards of social life. The patriarchal roots of gendered violence are undeniable and have been quite fully explored in scholarship. Yet, there has been less exploration about the ways in which patriarchal power informs responses to those who challenge a system of masculine privilege and power, in this case, victim advocates who work with victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Quite simply, there must be more research on the lives of advocates, as they hold a wealth of information that provides insight in a number of other academic fields: women's and gender studies, masculinity studies, labor management, and those who engage in care-work and emotion management in their occupations. Additionally, advocates stand on the front line of responding to the failures of the cultural and legal systems in changing a world where violence against women is normalized and excused. In order to continue the work of changing the system, advocates need real and tangible support in their lives. This includes in every day interactions with strangers, their organization, and their loved ones. To determine the ways in which advocates most need support, from whom, and to what extent should be studied further. The support offered to advocates, their clients, and their agencies must be more informed on the subjects of domestic and sexual violence; thus, the public discourse about gendered violence must change.

Additionally, as someone who was trained and worked as advocate for two years and attended several national and regional conventions, the training and scripts provided to advocates must also change. Currently, there are many internal resources that emphasize the necessity of strict confidentiality, but there are few resources on how to manage social relationships as an advocate. I recall multiple trainings and sessions on why or how we keep confidentiality, but no one spoke about the practical ways to talk about our occupational selves and experiences with anyone outside of the office. Based on the interviews in the study, this seems to be a common thread and one that has detrimental effects on the emotional and social processes of the victim advocates. National, state, and local agencies must begin to prepare advocates more fully through practical discussions of how the occupation can and will impact the ability to develop new social relationships—as reducing occupational stigma in new social interactions is a key element in

preventing burnout among advocates. In order to change the system and continue doing the work of changing lives, advocates need to be socially and emotionally healthy. This cannot happen through the difficult process of trial and error of determining who is wise in each new social situation. Through informed trainings that provide a toolkit for possible considerations in interacting with others about advocacy work, advocate can become more socially and emotionally healthy.

I suggest developing a clear and mandatory training on how to talk to others, what to expect, and how to respond when engaging others in conversation about working with victims of gendered violence. This sort of training would provide a modicum of preparation for the ways in which advocates could handle their experiences and would offer some basic tools and scripts for being able to handle the routine conversations about occupational identity. Such a reduction in the complex mental and social processes that advocates experience upon introducing their occupations could prove a useful tool. As many advocates indicated in this research, they often feel exhausted and frustrated when having to consistently engage with unknown conversational partners and doing so with few tools or preparation. Further, providing a training that includes the whole range of responses—including non-disclosure—as viable options would reduce feelings of shame for those advocates who choose not to talk about their occupations as a way to preserve their finite resources. Such training could provide more confidence and preparation while also possibly reducing the effects of occupational stigma on feelings of burnout.

Further, providing advocates tools to address loved ones, such as offering general practical strategies for discussing their daily work experiences in meaningful ways has great potential to reduce turnover. Providing resources about getting external social support through tactics that maintain confidentiality of clients and organizations may increase feelings of

satisfaction in their work-life balance. Continued research is necessary on this specific topic, as those who have been in the field may be able to provide keen insight into managing both new and familiar social relationships with the requirements of their work.

Finally, for future consideration, there must be a shift in cultural discourse. As advocates revealed in this study, they experienced hostile encounters primarily with men. Such a finding is highly suggestive of the role that patriarchal power and a socialized masculine discourse of demeaning women have in the discussions of gendered violence. Cultural change is much more complicated and slower than providing training for those already engaged in the work. There must be a real investment in gendered violence as not a “women’s issue” but rather a human rights issue. One start is re-naming the social movement to “gendered violence” rather than “violence against women.” While some may argue that this has the potential of removing the feminist politics from the conversation that began as a direct result of feminist action, I argue there is more room for contemporary feminist dialogue in the name “gendered violence.” This move shifts the discourse away from allowing people to think of domestic and sexual violence as strictly the problem of women and also works to incorporate victims who are men or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender (LGBT). These considerations are especially important as the cultural visibility of both male and LGBT individuals allows for more social and legal protection for these populations.

Further, the name “gendered violence” can re-conceive the acts of violence as those that are enacted by a socialization process of gendered behavior—within the United States, women are generally socialized against using violence to resolve problems, where men are generally socialized to do so—thus, the current socialization of men and masculinity reiterates violence as a viable option. This is a problem of socialized, gendered violence. In short, the terminology

"gendered violence" provides some flexibility on who can be a victim and more accountability for the social processes involved in the creation of a social problem. To rename the movement—while risky for removing the context of women as the primary victims at the hands of men who are perpetrators—also has strong potential for reconsidering the cultural discourse around domestic and sexual violence against all bodies, while naming the source of the problem.

To that end, there is another aspect that must be considered further in the field: men. Few social movements can be successful without the investment of those in privileged positions. In this study, only one man agreed to be interviewed. However, throughout his interview, Michael revealed the overwhelming ways in which he received special accolades for being a man doing "women's work." This is the same work that thousands of women do without receiving such overwhelming symbolic rewards in the form of praise and glass escalators. While Kenneth Kolb addresses this concept in his work (2014), there must be further consideration and study done on men who participate in gendered violence work—positive stereotyping of a select few men distances all other men from the problem so often caused by male perpetrators. Instead of dispensing disproportionate privileges to men working in a field created by women, there should simply be an expectation that men participate. Providing those men who do participate special status only further reinforces patriarchal hierarchy that ascribes more status to men than women.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the social problem of gendered violence is not changing or going away any time soon, especially from a cultural or a legal perspective. Reasonably, then, we can assume that advocates will be necessary fixtures within all of our communities as they continue to provide services and support for those who experience domestic and sexual violence. Advocates play a pivotal role in communities and the lives of victims as all work to manage the effects of a

patriarchal, violence-prone culture. In order for advocates to continue their crucial work, there must be more research to discover the ways in which they cope with their work, how they most effectively work with clients, and how advocates manage the myriad of relationships that occur outside of the work context.

In addition to research, lay-people who do not work in the field can take steps to educate themselves and others on these topics to avoid stereotyping. All people in all communities can support advocacy organizations through volunteering, donating much needed resources, and lobbying local, state, and federal politicians for substantive changes in the legal processes surrounding acts of gendered violence. Further, organizations must respond to the new research that suggests there are important links between occupational stigma and feeling satisfied in the work. I have provided a few ideas on how to begin to shift the culture of preparation for occupational stigma and confidentiality within advocacy work. These ideas all start with refocusing on providing advocates real tools and an awareness of the stigma they can expect to experience. I have also offered some suggestions as to how we can work to change the larger cultural context through language and education around the issues of domestic and sexual violence.

Gendered violence is not "just" a women's issue; rather, the culture of socialized, gendered violence impacts all relationships. Most importantly, because gendered violence is a product of socialization and cultural norms, it *can* and *will* change over time. Through continued research such as this and the efforts of agencies and their workers who respond to gendered violence every single day, there is hope for real and meaningful change. Everyone can play a role in creating that change alongside the oft-unseen advocates who assist victims as they change lives and help others recover from gendered violence.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED BY STATE

Alabama
- Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Alaska
- Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Arizona
- Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Community Alliance Against Family Abuse
- Against Abuse
- My Sister's Place
- Verde Valley Sanctuary
- Northland Family Help Services
- Someone Worth Accepting Now
- Alice's Place
- Chrysalis
- Colorado River Regional Crisis Shelter
- DOVES
- Forgach House
- Genesis House

Arkansas
- Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence

California
- California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

Colorado
- Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Alternatives to Family Violence
- Family Tree
- Gateway Battered Women's Services
- SPAN
- SafeHouse Denver
- Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley

Connecticut
- Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Delaware
- Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence

DC
- District of Columbia Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Florida
- Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Georgia
- Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Project Safe
- Partnership Against Domestic Violence
- Hope Harbour Domestic Violence Shelter
- Project Renewal
- Circle of Hope
- No One Alone
- Shepherd's Rest Ministries
- SHARE House
- Women's Resource Center
- Gateway Domestic Violence Center
- Promise Place
- Circle of Love
- Heart Haven
- Harmony House
- Serenity House of Colquitt County
- Safe Haven
- Ruth's Cottage
- Peace Place

Hawaii
- Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Idaho
- Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

Illinois
- Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Indiana
- Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Iowa
- Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Kansas

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

Kentucky
- Kentucky Domestic Violence Association

Louisiana
- Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Maine
- Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence

Maryland
- Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
- YWCA DV Services
- House of Ruth
- Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland
- Family Crisis Center of Baltimore County
- Crisis Intervention Center
- FCS of Central Maryland
- Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence
- Center for Abused Persons
- Dove Center
- Sexual Assualt/Spouse Abuse Resource Center
- Abused Persons Program
- Walden/Sierra, Inc.
- Life Crisis Center
- CASA
- Asian Pacific Island DV Resource Project
- Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy
- Hope Works of Howard County, Inc.
- Heartly House
- Cecil County DV/Rape Crisis Center
- CHANA

Massachusetts
- Jane Doe, Inc.

Michigan
- Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

Minnesota
- Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

Mississippi
- Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Safe Haven, Inc
- S.A.F.E. Inc,
- Care Lodge
- Center for Violence Prevention
- Gulf Coast Women's Center for Nonviolence
- Domestic Abuse Family Shelter

Missouri
- Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Montana
- Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Nebraska
- Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition

Nevada
- Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence
- Advocates to End Domestic Violence
- Safe Embrace
- CADV
- WDVS
- Domestic Violence Intervention, Inc
- CAHS
- CAAW
- Safe House

New Hampshire
- New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Support Center at Burch House
- Starting Point Services for DV/SV Survivors
- WISE of the Upper Valley
- New Beginnings without Violence and Abuse
- Turning Points Network
- Crisis Center of Central New Hampshire
- Bridges of New Hampshire

New Jersey
- New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women

New Mexico
- New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Alternatives to Violence
- Carlsbad Battered Family Shelter
- Community Against Violence
- Crisis Center of Northern New Mexico
- Domestic Abuse Intervention Center
- El Refugio, Inc.
- ENIPC Peacekeepers Domestic Violence Program
- Enlace Comunitario
- Grammy's House
- Haven House
- Home for Women and Children
- IMPACT Personal Safety
- Nambe Pueblo DV Program
- Sanctuary Zone, Inc.
- Healing House
- Tri-County Family Justice Center of Northeast New Mexcio

New York
- New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

North Carolina
- North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence

North Dakota
- North Dakota Council on Abused Women’s Services

Ohio
- Ohio Domestic Violence Network

Oklahoma
- Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- ADA Family Crisis Center
- Altus
- Ardmore Family Shleter of Southern Oklahoma
- Bartlesville Family Crisis Center and Counseling
- Chickasaw Office of Family Violence Prevention
- Chickasha Women's Service and Family Resource Center
- Citizen Potowatomi Nation Family Violence
- Safenet Services
- ACTION Associates
- Women's Haven
- SOS for Families
- New Directions
- Women in Safe Home
- Women's Resource Center
- Okmulgee County Family Resource Center
- Domestic Violence Program of North Central Oklahoma
- Women's Crisis Services of LeFlore County
- Seminole Nation
- Project Safe
- Wings of Hope Family Crisis Services
- Help In Crisis
- Domestic Violence Intervention Services/ Call Rape
- NW Domestic Crisis Service

Oregon
- Bradley Angle
- Canyone Crisis Resource Center
- CARDV
- Clackamas Women's Services
- Community Works
- CTUIR
- DVRC
- Domestic Violence Services
- HAVEN
- Heart of Grant County
- Helping Hands
- Henderson House
- IVSHA
- Klamath Crisis Center
- Lake County Crisis Center
- MayDay
- Mid-Valley
- My Sister's Place

Oasis Shelter Home
PWCL
Raphael House
ROSS
SABLE
SAFE Harbors
Saving Grace
A Shelter from the Storm
CARE
Suislaw
SAWERA
Tillamook
Women's Space

Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Rhode Island
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence

South Carolina
South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
Beyond Abuse
CASA Family Systems
Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons
Family Resource Center
Foothills Alliance
The Safe Home
Julie Valentine Center
Meg's House
My Sister's House
Safe Harbor
Safe Passage
Sistercare
Sexual Trauma Center of the Midlands

South Dakota
South Dakota Coalition Ending Domestic and Sexual Violence

Tennessee
Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

Texas
Texas Council on Family Violence

Utah
Utah Domestic Violence Council

Vermont
Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Virginia
Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

Washington
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

West Virginia
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Wisconsin
Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Advocates of OZ
AVAIL
Bolton Refuse
CAP Services
CASDA
Christine Ann
Daystar
Deafunity
DAIS
Family Advocates
Family Support Center
Green Haven
Help of Door County
Hope House
Manitowoc Domestic Violence Center
MKE LGBT
PAVE
PADA
Rainbow House
Safe Harbor of Sheboygan
Safe Haven
Shirley's House
Sojourner Family Peace
Solutions Center
Bridge to Hope
Family Center
Women's Center
Women's Community

Time Out
Family and Children Center
Wyoming
Wyoming Coalition Against
Domestic Violence and Sexual
Assault
National Organizations
Battered Women's Justice Project
INCITE! Women of Color Against
Violence
National Center on Domestic and
Sexual Violence
National Coalition Against Domestic
Violence
National Latino Alliance for the
Elimination of Domestic
Violence (ALIANZA)
National Network to End Domestic
Violence
National Resource Center on
Domestic Violence

APPENDIX B: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE AND PROBE TOPICS Demographic Information (Collected Via Emailed Form)

Sex (e.g. Female, Male, Transgender)

Race (e.g. Black, White)

Ethnicity (e.g., Hispanic, Chinese)

Religious Affiliation (e.g. Muslim, Christian, Atheist)

Sexual Orientation (e.g. Lesbian, Bisexual, Heterosexual)

Relationship Status

State of Residence in United States (e.g. Alaska)

Age

Highest Degree Earned (e.g. High School Diploma, Bachelor Degree)

Average number of weekly hours worked providing direct advocacy and services

Years worked in direct service advocacy

Type of Organization (Non-profit, Criminal Justice System, For Profit)

Urban or Rural Location of work

Primary Client Type Served by Your Organization

- Exclusively Domestic Violence
- Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Exclusively Sexual Assault
- Other

Estimated average number of clients served per week by your organization:

Total number of advocates positions employed by your organization:

Number of agencies providing direct services to domestic violence survivors in your county:

Hours of Training Required by Employer Prior to Start of Advocacy Work:

Current Wage (Yearly or Hourly):

Questions and Probe Topics

I. **I would like to get a little better sense of your job and how who you are shapes your experiences.**
   a. Can you tell me more about what you do in your daily work?
   b. What brought you to this line of work?
   c. What aspects of your personality or upbringing come through in your work?

d. How, if at all, do you see your personal experiences influence your work?
e. What does it mean to be a (use racial, gender, and sexual orientation markers) (job title)?
    i. Can you think of any instances that you worked with a client who was significantly different than you in some way?
    ii. How did you handle this difference?
        1. Did it change any aspect of how you do your work or how you felt about going to work?
    iii. Did your organization offer any support or trainings on these issues?

II. **I would like to talk to you about your experiences with talking about your job to anyone outside of the DV field.**

a. How do people—friends, family, acquaintances, or strangers—respond when you tell them what you do?
b. Can you think of any times that you have chosen not to tell someone about what you do?
    i. What helped you come to that decision? Was there anything that influenced you?
c. Can you think of any times when you've had any negative or uncomfortable experiences with telling people about your job?
    i. Describe.
        1. Who was it? What happened? How did they respond? How did you respond?
d. Can you think of any examples where people have been really supportive or enthusiastic when you tell them about your job?
    i. Describe.
        1. Who was it? What happened? How did they respond? How did you respond?
e. In general, what tools or strategies do you use to recover from those intense interactions that require you to talk about your job?

III. **Finally, I would like to talk about how you build a social support system outside of your co-workers.**

a. What is your support system like outside of work?
   i. Who do you talk to when you have had a rough day?
   ii. How do you get support from others? What do your family/friends/etc do that makes you feel supported?
   iii. What do you do for self-care?
b. How do you talk to your (friend, family, partner) about your job?
   i. What do you tell them about your day?
      1. How do they respond when you talk about your work?
c. Can you think of any instances where the restrictions of confidentiality ever impeded you from talking about your job to your loved ones?
   i. If so, can you provide an example?
      1. How did that feel? What did you do?
      2. What tools did you use to be able to express what you needed to in order to get support?

IV. **Just a few more things, but we have covered the important things I wanted to cover in this interview.**

a. What is the best part of your job? What gives you the most satisfaction?
b. Are there any questions that I should have asked about and didn't?
c. Is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX C: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

Sex (e.g. Female, Male, Transgender):
Text Box: ______________________________

Race (e.g. Black, White):
Text Box: ______________________________

Ethnicity (e.g., Hispanic, Chinese)
Text Box: ______________________________

Religious Affiliation (e.g. Muslim, Christian, Atheist)
Text Box: ______________________________

Sexual Orientation (e.g. Lesbian, Bisexual, Heterosexual):
Text Box: ______________________________

Relationship Status:

- € Single
- € Dating
- € Long-term, committed relationship
- € Married
- € Open relationship
- € Divorced
- € Widowed

State of Residence in United States (e.g. Alaska)
Text Box: _______________________

Age (in whole numbers: 18-100): _________

Highest Degree Earned (e.g. High School Diploma, Bachelor Degree)
Text Box: _______________________

Victim advocates are trained individuals who work with victims of crimes and their families in order to assist them with legal, personal, or social service matters and provide support, information, and resources to victims.

Are you currently a victim advocate or have been employed as an advocate within the last 2 years?
Yes/No

Average number of weekly hours worked providing direct advocacy and services
Text Box Whole Numbers 1-100

Years worked in direct service advocacy
Provide whole numbers 0-45

Type of Organization
Non-profit
Criminal Justice System
For Profit

Urban or Rural Location of work
Urban
Rural

Primary Client Type Served by Your Organization

Exclusively Domestic Violence
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
Exclusively Sexual Assault
Other (provide text box)

Estimated average number of clients served per week by your organization
Text Box: Whole Numbers 1-2000

Total number of advocates positions employed by your organization
Provide whole numbers 0-100

Number of agencies providing direct services to domestic violence survivors in your county
Provide whole numbers 0-25

Hours of Training Required by Employer Prior to Start of Advocacy Work
Provide whole numbers 0-500

Current Wage (Yearly or Hourly)
Provide text box with numbers 0-100,000

Social identities (i.e., memberships to social groups based on certain qualities or affiliations such as gender or race) are important to our sense of selves. Thinking about the entire span of your career, please answer the following questions about social identities.

How frequently did you work with clients who were different than how you identify?
Gender
Political Orientation
Race
Religious Beliefs
Sexual Orientation
Social Class

Recall a recent experience in which you had a different social identity than someone with whom you were working. Please describe the nature of the difference, the situation, and the length of contact with the client.
Text box

In that experience, please describe how you responded to the client who had a different social identity?
Text box

In the experience described above, when you worked with the client, how often did you feel while working with the client?
Angry
Annoyed
Content

Disappointed
Excited
Frustrated
Happy
Hopeful
Sad
Other (Text Box)

Keeping the experience you described in mind, how frequently did you respond by doing the following:

Avoid the client
Change topics
Engage in spirited discussion with client
Probe for more information from client
Research information on your own
Say nothing
Talk to a co-worker
Talk to friends
Other (Text box)

If you had any other responses to the recent experience, please describe them here.

Text Box

Has your organization offered *formal* trainings or support on cultural sensitivity regarding (Check all that apply)

Gender
Political Orientation
Race
Religious Beliefs
Sexual Orientation
Social Class
Other (text box)

Which of the following formal trainings offered by your organization have you attended? (Check all that apply)

Gender
Political Orientation
Race
Religious Beliefs
Sexual Orientation
Social Class
Other (text box)

Has your organization offered *informal* trainings or support on cultural sensitivity regarding (Check all that apply)

Gender

Political Orientation
Race
Religious Beliefs
Sexual Orientation
Social Class
Other (text box)

Which of the following informal trainings offered by your organization have you attended? (Check all that apply)

Gender
Political Orientation
Race
Religious Beliefs
Sexual Orientation
Social Class
Other (text box)

Discrimination or discriminatory attitudes refers to when a marginalized or under-represented group experiences negative reactions, actions, or beliefs as a result of stigma. This means that as a result of a person's social identity, another person treats them or that group differently, based solely on that identity. (Example: when a heterosexual person makes negative comments, jokes, or threats about lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people.)

Does your organization have formal policies for when you feel a client has discriminatory attitudes towards one of your social identities? (For example, a formal reporting procedure you can use if you feel a client has behaved in discriminatory ways towards you.)

Yes/No

Does your organization have informal policies for when you feel a client has discriminatory attitudes towards one of your social identities? (For example, a supervisor has told you that you can talk to them if you feel a client has behaved in discriminatory ways towards you, but there is no formal policy within the organization.)

Yes/No

Have you ever reported any discriminatory behavior you have experienced or seen happen with other coworkers (whether they behaved in discriminatory ways or they experienced discrimination)?

Yes/No/Not Applicable

Advocacy work and working with victims can elicit strong emotions from others, especially people whom you have just met. Thinking about your experiences in talking to people who do not work in advocacy and with whom you do not share a close, personal relationship, please answer the following questions.

When introducing yourself in new social situations (parties, on airplanes, etc), how often do you:

Explain what you do in full detail

Give your job title
Provide more information about your job if asked
Provide a generic phrase such as “I work in a women’s organization”
Tell them you work in a different field entirely
Other (Text box)

What, if any, factors influence your decision to reveal your occupation to someone you have just met?
Text Box

In general, when you tell someone you have just met about your occupation, how often do they react by:
Asking questions
Making a joke
Becoming aggressive or hostile
Praising you
Avoiding the subject
Changing topics quickly
Responding with sympathy
Other (text box)

Recall a recent experience in which you told a stranger about your job. Briefly describe the moment, with whom you interacted, how the person responded to you, and how you felt during the experience.
Text Box

In the experience described above, please rate the intensity of the feelings you experienced during the interaction.
Angry
Annoyed
Content
Disappointed
Excited
Frustrated
Happy
Hopeful
Sad
Other (Text Box)

After you have had an experience with a stranger who reacts strongly (either positively or negatively) to your job, what do you do in order to emotionally process the experience and return to a neutral emotional state? (This is often called “self-care”)
Text Box

Please rate the following statements thinking about all of your experiences since working in advocacy.

People associate my job with feminism.
People have negative reactions when I tell them what I do for the first time.
Women respond in hostile or uncomfortable ways when they hear my job title.
Strangers are supportive when I tell them what I do.
Men respond in hostile or uncomfortable ways when they hear my job title.
I feel excited to talk about what I do with people in new social situations.
Women act really kind and very sympathetic when I tell them what I do.
I am not honest about my job or title to avoid an uncomfortable situation.
Men act really kind and very sympathetic when I tell them what I do.
New acquaintances avoid talking with me about my job.
Talking about my job with new people is a stressful experience because I do not know how they will react.
People know what it is and understand what I do when I say my job title.

Confidentiality is formal and informal rules that restrict the information you can discuss about your job location, clients with whom you work, and other job related information. Confidentiality is an important component to advocacy work, but confidentiality also means you often cannot openly discuss your work with those in your life. Thinking about your experiences while working in victim advocacy, please answer the following questions based on your communications with people with whom you share a close relationship.

When you experience a difficult time at work with whom do you most frequently speak about the difficult time?

Romantic partner
Family members
Friends
Professional Counselors
Coworkers
Other (text box)

What information do you provide to those closest to you when speaking about your job? Are there any topics that you do or do not discuss?

Text Box

Please rate the following statements

I have spent time trying to find out how to effectively communicate with my loved ones about my job.
I talk to my family about my job.
My close friends offer me a lot of support regarding my work.
I feel like I can’t talk to my loved ones about my job because of confidentiality requirements.
I am active in organizations or social groups outside of work.
I have a clear sense of when I am at work and when I am spending time with loved ones.
I find it hard to share details about my day with those closest to me.
I talk to my romantic partner about my job.
I don’t want to upset the people I love by talking about the things I experience at work.
I enjoy my job and get a sense of satisfaction from doing this work.

My family provides me a great deal of support about my work
I talk to my friends about my job.
My romantic partner offers me a great deal of support regarding my work.
I feel like I have no one outside of work that I can talk to about a difficult day.
In order to develop social networks, I associate with others outside of work.
I have a lot of pride in my work as an advocate.

Advocacy can be a stressful occupation, given the difficult nature of the work. Thinking about your experiences over the course of your career, please answer the following questions.

When you have had a difficult or upsetting day at work, what do you do to process through the events? (Hobbies, activities, etc.)
Text Box

Please rate the following statements: (scale: never, a few times per year, a few times per month, a few times per week, daily)

My job means a lot to me
I feel emotionally drained by my work as an advocate
I feel refreshed after working closely with clients
I feel like advocacy work is breaking me down
I am happy to be an advocate
I feel frustrated by direct service work
I’m afraid this job is making me uncaring
I am able to easily connect with my clients
I am at the end of my patience at the end of a workday
I feel exhausted when I think about having to face another day at work
I handle advocacy and crisis work very calmly
Through advocacy, I feel like I am making a positive difference

APPENDIX D: ITEMS USED IN CONSTRUCTION OF FOUR VARIABLES

(1) Burnout

My job means a lot to me*
I feel emotionally drained by my work as an advocate
I feel refreshed after working closely with clients*
I feel like advocacy work is breaking me down
I am happy to be an advocate*
I feel frustrated by direct service work
I'm afraid this job is making me uncaring
I am able to easily connect with my clients*
I am at the end of my patience at the end of a workday
I feel exhausted when I think about having to face another day at work
I handle advocacy and crisis work very calmly*
Through advocacy, I feel like I am making a positive difference*

(2) External Social Support

I talk to my family about my job
My close friends offer me a lot of support regarding my work
I find it hard to share details about my day with those closest to me*
I talk to my romantic partner about my job
I don't want to upset the people I love by talking about the things I experience at work*
My family provides me a great deal of support about my work
I talk to my friends about my job
My romantic partner offers me a great deal of support regarding my work
I feel like I have no one outside of work that I can talk to about a difficult day*
In order to develop social networks, I associate with others outside of work.

(3) Negative Responses to Occupation

People associate my job with feminism
People have negative reactions when I tell them what I do for the first time
Women respond in hostile or uncomfortable ways when they hear my job title
Men respond in hostile or uncomfortable ways when they hear my job title
I am not honest about my job or title to avoid an uncomfortable situation
New acquaintances avoid talking with me about my job
Talking about my job with new people is a stressful experience because I do not know how they will react

(4) Positive Responses to Occupation

Strangers are supportive when I tell them what I do
I feel excited to talk about what I do with people in new social situations
Women act really kind and very sympathetic when I tell them what I do
Men act really kind and very sympathetic when I tell them what I do
People know what my job title means
When I say my job title, people understand what I do at work

DATE:	December 17, 2013
TO:	Johnanna Ganz
FROM:	Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board
PROJECT TITLE:	[526758-2] Working for Change: A Mixed Methods Study of Victim Advocates' Experiences with Social Identities, Occupational Stigma, and Social Support Networks
SUBMISSION TYPE:	Revision
ACTION:	APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE:	December 13, 2013
EXPIRATION DATE:	November 5, 2014
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited Review
REVIEW CATEGORY:	Full Board review category

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is available as a published Board Document in the Review Details page. You must use the approved version of the consent document when obtaining consent from participants. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please add the text equivalent of the HSRB IRBNet approval/expiration date stamp to the "footer" area of the electronic consent document.

Please note that you are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures, those modifications must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the modification request form for this procedure.

You have been approved to enroll *535* participants. If you wish to enroll additional participants you must seek approval from the HSRB.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must also be reported promptly to this office.

This approval expires on November 5, 2014. You will receive a continuing review notice before your project expires. If you wish to continue your work after the expiration date, your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date.

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Good luck with your work. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 419-372-7716 or hsrb@bgsu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence regarding this project.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board's records.

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