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"Flowers in the Concrete”:

Anti-Violence Nonprofit Leadership and Primary Prevention in Minnesota

By

Kim Lohse

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science

In

Gender and Women’s Studies

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“Flowers in the Concrete”: Anti-Violence Nonprofit Leadership and Primary Prevention in Minnesota

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This thesis has been examined and approved by the following members of the student’s committee.

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Abstract

The grassroots origins of the American anti-violence movement have evolved to rely on institutions that perpetuate cycles of violence including law enforcement, criminal justice, and government funding programs. These systems do not meet the needs of most survivors and, in many cases, increase the physical violence and emotional abuse they experience. While the anti-violence movement has had success in shifting perceptions of gender-based violence, systemic responses have proven inadequate to prevent cases of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. This thesis study will analyze various forms of anti-violence response in the state of Minnesota using qualitative interviews with anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles. Using grounded theory and a feminist critique of neoliberalism, this thesis will examine challenges and successful strategies anti-violence advocates experience in their work. This research can be used by feminist scholars and activists to shift the focus of anti-violence organizing towards social justice and primary prevention initiatives.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Marilyn Jolene Lohse, who always encouraged me to pursue the things in which I found the most passion and value.

Firstly, I would like to thank the participants of this study and all anti-violence advocates who envision alternative paths for the movement. Despite the never-ending responsibilities of their roles in leadership, all participants met this research with many reflexive insights regarding anti-violence advocacy and social justice. It has always been the professional connections that keep me in this work and my correspondence with the participants leave me with a feeling of excitement for future personal and collective opportunities for violence response and prevention.

Second, I express gratitude for my thesis advisor, Dr. Ana Perez, and my thesis committee, Dr. Laura Harrison and Nikki Engel. The support from this group has allowed me to explore my place in the anti-violence movement and the academic field. This research was made possible through this committee's collaborative efforts. I look forward to continuing these relationships with leaders in the gender studies field and anti-violence movement in Minnesota.

Finally, a very special thanks goes to my father, Brian, who gives unwavering support in the toughest of times, and my sisters, Brianna and Khia, for the continual moments of joy and laughter. Additionally, a huge thanks to my roommate Holland and other friends for the space to decompress and share collective power as social justice activists.

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Introduction

Despite greater awareness and shifting public responses to intimate partner violence and sexual assault, gender-based violence remains a pervasive issue for millions of Americans (Office on Violence Against Women, 2020). Anti-violence activism in the United States was elevated by second-wave feminism, however, there is still an overwhelming demand for victim[1] services with little evidence of successful prevention initiatives (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009). Additionally, minority groups such as women of color and LGBTQIA+ people face disproportionate rates of interpersonal, community, and state-sanctioned violence and experience greater barriers while seeking comprehensive support services (Office on Violence Against Women, 2020). Feminist scholars and activists continue to promote awareness of and social justice activism against complex forms of violence.

Defining Gender-Based Violence

The term gender-based violence (GBV) is widely used to identify intimate partner or domestic abuse and sexual violence, including sex trafficking. GBV is a broad term that includes any violation of one's safety or wellbeing based on "their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or location in the hierarchy of male-dominated social systems" (O'Toole et al., 2020, p. xiii). The use of language has evolved throughout the anti-violence movement and many activists and scholars advocate for a more comprehensive definition that encompasses compounding forms of oppression, including racism and classism, in addition to sexism (Collins, 1998; Crenshaw, 1991). However, organizations such as the United Nations continue to use the term "violence

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[1] The terms victim and survivor are often used interchangeably to identify someone who has experienced or is currently experiencing gender-based violence. Not all who are labeled as a "victim" or "survivor" personally identify themselves as such.

against women" to encompass abuse targeted specifically at women worldwide and to highlight GBV as a human rights violation that "prevents women from fully participating in society" (UN Women, 2013). For this thesis, the term gender-based violence is used to indicate that abuse is often experienced by all genders and the systemic roots of this violence include many systems of oppression in addition to patriarchy. Gender-based violence is increasingly recognized to constitute a national and global crisis.

Defining Social Justice, Radicalism, and Collectivity

This thesis highlights feminist social justice initiatives for the anti-violence movement in Minnesota. Social justice will be analyzed in this thesis through a lens of "activist scholarship," which is defined by scholars Julie Shyane and Kristy Leissle (2014) as "a commitment to supporting the right of everyone to live a life absent of economic, political, social, and personal violence" (p. xix). The broader context of social justice can also be considered through the analysis of historic political activism in the United States, including from those in the civil rights and feminist movements. For instance, scholar Patricia Hill Collins (1998) discusses "resistance traditions" (p. 933) from Black women as they have had to disrupt systemic violence "hidden in plain sight… in the workplace, government, media, streets, and other social institutions" (p. 924). Collins highlights social justice as a means of challenging systemic injustice that is often overlooked and perpetuated by privileged groups in society. For this thesis, the term social justice is used to describe everyday acts of resistance to systemic oppression, specifically gender-based violence.

For this thesis, the term radical is used to describe activist initiatives that promote alternatives to the nonprofit industrial complex for anti-violence response and prevention. In an analysis of state-wide radical activism in the 20th century, the Minnesota Historical Society

(1994) defines radicalism as a set of ideologies that "offer a basic critique of the status quo" and "propose or initiate social reforms or a vision of a new society," (p. viii). In this context, radical anti-violence activists propose progressive initiatives to end gender-based violence at the systemic level. Although this thesis offers a critique of the nonprofit industrial complex, the importance of activist initiatives to advance state and federal resources for violence awareness, response, and prevention cannot be understated. The historic work from feminist activists in the anti-violence movement is the reason we have the capacity to support survivors today. This thesis argues that anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles continue to center radical values in their work.

This thesis promotes collective organizing for community-based anti-violence activism. Activist Nicole A. Burrowes (2018) reflects on "the collective" (p. 381) Sista II Sista, which prompted anti-violence activism based in Brooklyn in the early 2000s. Burrowes defines a collective as a nonhierarchical community or group that expands social transformation "grown out of local conditions" (p. 382). In a collective, all members are dedicated to empowerment for themselves and their communities (Burrowes, 2018). Burrowes' analysis highlights the power of collaborative activism and indicates the potential for community-level change to advance and influence systemic-level social justice. Anti-violence advocates and activists must prioritize community engagement at all levels of their work.

The Nonprofit Industrial Complex

Activist group INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence coined the term "nonprofit industrial complex" in the early 2000s to identify the "system of relationships" between federal and state governments and nonprofit organizations (Munshi & Willse, 2017, p. xiii). The term is used to analyze neoliberal processes carried out by nonprofit structures that prioritize social

service models for nonprofit organizations and inhibit the potential for these organizations to be catalysts for social change (Kivel, 2017). Nonprofit organizations, in addition to medical centers and law enforcement, comprise the primary response to gender-based violence in the United States. These organizations rely heavily on resources from state and federal structures to provide minimal services for victims while systemically promoting neoliberal ideologies of individual responsibility over community-based activism and social welfare (Brown, 2015; Fernandes, 2018; Harvey, 2005; Kivel, 2017). The anti-violence nonprofit sector in Minnesota and Wisconsin hit a funding crisis in 2023 and advocates face an expected decrease of legislative funding by 40% within the next year (Smith, 2023). Despite the increasing need for victim services, domestic violence shelters across Wisconsin and Minnesota are closing their doors (Smith, 2023) and survivors are often forced to decide between unsafe, sometimes deadly, living environments or homelessness. Advocates are prompted now more than ever to navigate between legislative and community fundraising efforts (Smith, 2023) while imagining alternative futures for the anti-violence movement.

The Current Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze various forms of anti-violence response from those in the nonprofit sector in the state of Minnesota. Additionally, this thesis will connect the experiences of advocates in nonprofit leadership roles to feminist scholarship regarding the anti-violence movement and the nonprofit industrial complex. Using in-depth interviews and qualitative thematic analysis, this study utilizes feminist critique of neoliberalism and grounded theory to analyze anti-violence practices from advocates in Minnesota nonprofit organizations. This thesis considers the questions: (1) do advocates in anti-violence nonprofit organizations prioritize social justice and prevention? (2) how do advocates in anti-violence nonprofit

organizations navigate neoliberal agendas of the nonprofit industrial complex? and (3) what are some steps nonprofit organizations could take to promote radical anti-violence social justice? This thesis argues that many advocates in the anti-violence movement, specifically those in leadership positions, prioritize primary prevention of gender-based violence in their communities as they navigate the nonprofit industrial complex. Additionally, intersectional and anti-oppressive community-based organizing must be prioritized at all levels of anti-violence advocacy and activism.

Organization of Chapters

In chapter two, I consider feminist scholarship regarding three bodies of knowledge: (1) anti-violence activism in the United States, (2) neoliberalism and the nonprofit industrial complex, and (3) anti-violence social justice frameworks. The first body of knowledge explores the work of activists who have historically promoted anti-violence initiatives in the United States, examining strategies from the anti-violence movement and from activists who were strategically silenced from the mainstream. The second body of knowledge discusses the neoliberal environment that continues to influence the movement and considers the financial power of "the neoliberal state." This section examines the nonprofit industrial complex and institutional funding structures. The third body of knowledge highlights anti-violence strategies that transcend state-led initiatives to promote community accountability and social justice, including restorative justice, transformative justice, and abolition feminism. Understanding these areas of scholarship is essential for activists as we seek to prevent gender-based violence.

Literature Review

The anti-violence movement has successfully promoted a public response due in large part to survivors who have shared their stories of sexual assault and intimate partner violence however, there is little evidence to suggest a reduction in cases of gender-based violence (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009). Additionally, feminists and scholars of color have historically critiqued government-funded and criminalized responses to gender-based violence. This literature review summarizes three bodies of knowledge: (1) anti-violence activism in the United States, (2) neoliberalism and the nonprofit industrial complex, and (3) alternative forms of anti-violence activism. These three bodies of knowledge provide important context for the study of anti-violence advocacy and nonprofit leadership in Minnesota. Grassroots activists provided significant shifts for anti-violence social justice and this research will address current initiatives in the anti-violence movement.

Feminist Anti-Violence Activism in the United States

The growth of the feminist anti-violence movement in the United States is attributed to second wave feminism in the early 1970s as survivors shared instances of abuse and supported one another in consciousness-raising groups (Bevacqua, 2000). Beth E. Richie (2012) describes consciousness raising as "spontaneous" grassroots efforts that often occurred "in daycare centers… and around kitchen tables" (p. 69) and provided support networks for survivors of gender-based violence. Additionally, Maria Bevacqua (2000) argues that consciousness-raising groups specifically centered gender-based violence on "the feminist agenda" (p. 54). Like Bevacqua, Richie describes the turning point of the movement as survivors and activists began to compare similar experiences with one another and increasingly recognized the social roots of the violence they were experiencing. These groups empowered survivors as they strategized for

political action against systems that ignored and undermined women's experiences of gender-based violence (Bevacqua, 2000; Richie, 2012).

Many scholars differentiate between radical and liberal feminism in the anti-violence movement. Whereas radical activists prioritized direct services and political empowerment for survivors through grassroots rape crisis centers, liberal feminists focused on legal reform regarding the mistreatment of survivors by criminal justice and medical processes (Bevacqua, 2000; Levine & Meiners, 2020; Richie, 2012). Feminist scholar Beth E Richie (2012) argues that liberal feminists acted as counselors and administrators within an increasingly conservative political climate and radical activists promoted wide-scale structural change. Like Richie, feminist scholars Judith Levine & Erica R. Meiners (2020) also write that radical activist, specifically women of color, greatly opposed the promotion of carceral responses to gender-based violence due to state-sanctioned violence and mass-incarceration. The successes and challenges from both radical and liberal feminists in the anti-violence movement are essential to understand as we promote social justice today.

Rape crisis centers were some of the first organizations to address gender-based violence and offer direct support to survivors, and many scholars reflect on their transformative and grassroots beginnings. For example, scholar Maria Bevacqua (2000) argues that rape crisis centers consistently prioritize the needs of survivors and "have been the backbone of the anti-rape movement" (p. 73). However, these priorities have shifted, as many anti-violence organizations increasingly accepted state and federal funding to meet the overwhelming demand for victim services (Bevacqua, 2000; Burrowes, 2018; Levine & Meiners, 2020; Richie, 2012). Activist Anne Pride (1981) reflects on the radical potential public funding originally provided for the movement. Pride states that activists "believed that [they] had cleverly beaten the system. We

believed that we were being funded by the government to change society" (p. 114). However, Pride further describes the eventual pressure for feminists to "conform or die" (p. 116) as once radical anti-violence organizations that functioned in coalition with one another began to compete for funding that prioritized social service models over grassroots activism. This thesis uncovers the work of anti-violence nonprofit leadership as they reflect on past trends of the movement while prioritizing victim-centered services and prevention efforts moving forward.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

Perceptions and responses to gender-based violence were further transformed with the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), passed in 1994, which many scholars agree is the most influential law in addressing gender-based violence (Bevacqua, 2000; Goodmark, 2018; Richie, 2012; Sidorsky & Schiller, 2023). VAWA prioritized public response and prevention of gender-based violence through collaborations with state coalitions, localized anti-violence organizations, healthcare providers, educational institutions, and law enforcement (Meyer-Emerick, 2001). Ratified four times since 1994, the act increasingly provides funding to state-based programs with the goal of widening the scope of legislation and social services in response to shifting priorities for gender-based violence advocacy. However, many scholars such as Sidorsky and Schiller (2023) critique the impacts of VAWA as states are not necessarily held accountable for shifting policies to accommodate a public response to gender-based violence. Supporting this argument, Meyer-Emerick (2001) notes that states are not required to publicize policy changes prompted by VAWA, and victims are often not made aware of their rights until after an assault occurs. Meyer-Emerick further argues that VAWA is limited in its potential to address "male domination" (p. 75) as survivors are often further victimized by institutional processes. The work of these authors reflects legislative inconsistencies to promote anti-violence policies.

Scholars debate the criminalization of gender-based violence that has been largely influenced by VAWA. Criminologists Rachel Boba and David Lilley (2009) write that criminal justice policies prompted federal agencies and the public to take the issue of gender-based violence seriously. Additionally, they argue that criminalized responses can promote immediate safety for victims, deterrent effects for potential perpetrators and increased reporting for gender-based violence. While this is true in a limited capacity, feminist scholar Leigh Goodmark (2018) contests that the criminalization of gender-based violence prompted through VAWA has failed to decrease rates of gender-based violence, specifically among communities of color who are disproportionately hyper-policed and incarcerated through oppressive surveillance tactics. Similarly critiquing the limited scope of anti-violence legislation, Meyer-Emerick (2001) determines violence against women to include both interpersonal *and* state-sanctioned violence, stating that even if victims are granted immediate safety from perpetrators through arrest processes, they are often further blamed and trivialized by the legal system. These scholars critique institutional processes that often cause greater harm for survivors. This research will address modern insights from anti-violence leadership regarding the reliance on carceral systems to address gender-based violence.

Critique of the Movement from Women of Color

Feminist demands for a public response to gender-based violence often contradicted the needs of survivors of color who are systemically stripped of the right to privacy, or non-interference, from the carceral state[2] (Goodmark, 2018). Highlighting significant harm from institutions such as the carceral state, Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1991) influential framework of

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[2] Mimi E. Kim (2018) defines the carceral state as "activities of surveillance, arrest, and incarceration, often targeting marginalized populations" (p. 220).

intersectionality addresses compounding oppressions as Black women face unique "dimensions of disempowerment" (p. 1249) from both racism and sexism. Crenshaw argues that women of color are either ignored in anti-violence frameworks or conversely tokenized through portrayals of heinous acts of violence that are often assumed to be only applicable in minority communities. Beth E Richie (2012) echoes Crenshaw's argument and names the "every-woman analysis" (p. 90), which intentionally homogenizes gender-based violence as an issue for all women, no matter race or class, to gain support predominantly from white men in power. Richie argues that while this framework is often successful in "persuading those with decision-making authority to respond to the problem" (p. 91), women of color have been ignored in mainstream narratives. The erasure of women of color from dominant narratives of gender-based violence has significantly limited the efficacy of support services and prevention initiatives within the anti-violence movement.

Many influential scholars such as bell hooks (1995) and Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) critique singular ideologies of either race or gender oppression that have historically excluded women of color from the civil rights and feminist movements. Despite "conflicting political agendas" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1252) of the two movements, Black women have continued to prioritize radical activism against both sexism and racism (hooks, 1995). Feminist scholar Patricia Hill Collins (1998) argues that Black women have had to build "complex resistance traditions" (p. 933) against layered forms of violence. Echoing this argument, activist Feminista Jones (2019) writes that Black women have been consistent in their demands despite the "film of racist residue" (p. 14) from the predominantly white feminist movement. These authors promote multi-issue organizing that has consistently been foundational for women of color.

Neoliberal Funding Structures and the Non-Profit Industrial Complex

The feminist anti-violence movement was formally structured in an increasingly neoliberal environment (Richie, 2012). Scholars agree that the key tenets of neoliberalism include free and privatized markets that are largely deregulated from "the state," entrepreneurship, competition, and maximizing financial capital at all costs (Brown, 2015; Fernandes, 2018; Harvey, 2005). Feminist scholar Wendy Brown (2015) coined the phrase "the financialization of everything" (p. 28) to describe how capitalist ideals are highly prioritized in all social settings. Supporting this idea, social justice scholar David Harvey (2005) argues that all components of society are institutionalized and privatized, including education, healthcare, and even the environment. Another key feature of neoliberalism is fundamental individualism (Brown, 2015; Fernandes, 2018; Harvey, 2005). Sociologist Catherine G. Valentine (2015) discusses the neoliberal "American Dream" as a system in which individuals are "self-made" who have found financial success without the help of others (p. 2). Harvey contributes to this argument as he names a "neoliberal determination" (p. 76) of responsibility on individuals to manage their own well-being even though decreases in social welfare in the name of neoliberalism heavily contribute to the impoverishment of many communities. Minimal resources are dedicated to anti-violence work and survivors are often blamed for cycles of poverty and violence that are highly influenced by neoliberal policies.

Scholars often debate the use of singular language to discuss multiple systemic structures of privilege and oppression. For example, Leela Fernandes (2018) argues against the use of one "monolithic framework of state power" (p. 12) and necessitates the contextual analysis of long histories of inequity that predate neoliberal expansion. However, David Harvey (2005) and Wendy Brown (2015) purposefully analyze "the neoliberal state" as one dominant power

structure. Brown argues that neoliberalism itself homogenizes “the state” as it reforms institutional, political, and governmental systems. For my work, I will be using “the state” as synonymous with Harvey’s description:

> [T]he state has to guarantee…the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defense, police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets” (p. 2).

Harvey’s theoretical description informs public responses to gender-based violence through privatized funding for anti-violence organizations and institutional criminalization of those convicted of sexual assault or intimate partner violence.

Social Class and Cycles of Violence

Feminist scholars expose contradictory neoliberal theories of social welfare. For example, the “trickle-down” approach falsely predicts that poverty can be eliminated within free-market neoliberalism as it creates conditions for all to maintain their own well-being (Harvey, 2005; Fernandes, 2018). Activist Paul Kivel (2017) writes that the concentration of wealth creates conditions of “impoverishment, ill health, violence, and marginalization” (p. 132) which then necessitates neoliberal state intervention through social service. Kivel further argues that the wealthiest one percent of the United States population, as he names the “ruling class” (p. 133), controls the rest of the population through minimal welfare provision operated by “the buffer zone” (p. 134) that manages financial power under social service models. Examining the effects of these processes for survivors of gender-based violence, feminist scholars Judith Levine and Erica R. Meiners (2020) write that “budget cuts have decimated services for survivors and

government programs on which poor women and their families rely" (p. 24). They argue that survivors of gender-based violence are often caught in cycles of poverty and violence that are exacerbated by neoliberal policies. This research addresses challenges and strategies for anti-violence leadership as they navigate neoliberal social service provision for survivors.

State-sanctioned violence is continually employed to maintain neoliberal goals of market privatization and financial concentration. Wendy Brown (2015) writes that a "top-down rule" (p. 37) uses authoritative policies and practices to incentivize human worth through financial success and Kivel (2017) further argues that financial hierarchies are maintained through strategic use of militarization and policing. Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo (2017) expands on this argument by claiming a "fourth world war" in which neoliberal markets are imposed "in all corners of the world and all aspects of life" (p. 113) and violence is produced to diminish social justice movements. In this war, Rojas Durazo argues, the neoliberal state is complicit in violence against minority groups through policing, mass incarceration, militarism, and the "professionalization" of social justice initiatives. Rojas Durazo further states that social justice organizations "forfeit their right" (p. 114) to political action upon accepting funding from the neoliberal state. The anti-violence movement was established in an increasing neoliberal environment and this research highlights the work of those in nonprofit leadership positions to advance survivor advocacy and violence prevention while navigating neoliberal policies.

The Nonprofit Industrial Complex

The nonprofit industrial complex defines the neoliberal process of competitive and scarce state funding granted to nonprofit organizations as they assume the role of managing social service provision and welfare (Munshi & Willse, 2017). In the influential book *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded*, edited by activist group INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence,

Tiffany Lethabo King and Ewuare Osayande (2017) argue that institutionalized financial gain is prioritized within the nonprofit industrial complex, and activists are often held accountable by conservative funders rather than communities they are advocating for. Activists Rickke Mananzala and Dean Spade (2008) name the process of "depoliticizing charity framework" (p. 57) in which radical change is discouraged to maintain a social status quo. Anti-violence organizations have largely fallen into this trend as they are granted funding from neoliberal government structures and elitist foundations controlled by the wealthy (Smith, 2017). This research features insights from those in nonprofit anti-violence leadership in Minnesota as they navigate the nonprofit industrial complex and contradicting social justice goals of the anti-violence movement.

As grassroots anti-violence organizations increasingly became professionalized through the nonprofit industrial complex, many activists and survivors were excluded from the mainstream movement. Feminist sociologist Elizabeth B. Erbaugh (2020) argues that despite some efforts from feminists to support anti-violence initiatives from queer women of color, the movement in the United States remains focused on strategies specific to elite, white middle-class contexts. Activists such as Susan Schechter (1981) continually warned against the nonprofit industrial complex and argued that the shift from a social justice movement to social service acted as "the destruction of our own history" (p. 102). Schechter also acknowledges major overwhelm and burnout of activists and advocates as they internalize "the pressure to perform miracles… out of the demand to become legitimate in the eyes of funding sources" (p. 99). Scarce and competitive funding for anti-violence services ultimately fails to meet the overwhelming demand for victim services, specifically for women of color who are disproportionately displaced by oppressive neoliberal policies (Crenshaw, 1991).

The nonprofit industrial complex has specific impacts for survivors seeking safety from gender-based violence. Feminist scholar Paige L. Sweet (2021) argues that survivors who seek advocacy services often are stripped of agency in the process as they must prove they are "legitimate" victims or survivors through bureaucratic processes of the carceral state. Reflecting neoliberal ideologies of "winners" and "losers" (Brown, 2015), Sweet further argues that survivors are categorized into differing levels of social and political power via hierarchical binaries of "victimhood" and "survivorhood" (p. 10). Throughout this process of categorization, specifically within the context of anti-violence shelter services, activist Emi Koyama (2006) contends that women of color are "somehow always pushed out of shelters first" (p. 210). Koyama, in addition to many anti-violence scholars who study the nonprofit industrial complex, questions the potential of eradicating gender-based violence while utilizing neoliberal funding structures that systemically depoliticize social movements and "minimize violence in the lives of women" (p. 215). This research addresses the work of anti-violence leadership in Minnesota to support survivors within the constraints of the nonprofit industrial complex.

Anti-Violence Social Justice Frameworks

Acknowledging the overall harm of the non-profit industrial complex and state-sanctioned carceral responses to gender-based violence, feminist activists have envisioned and enacted alternative forms of grassroots resistance to interpersonal and systemic violence, including restorative justice, transformative justice, and abolition feminism. Many of these approaches are built upon Indigenous practices (Daly & Stubbs, 2006; Smith, 2010) and center community collectivism as they promote active accountability and resistance to policies of the neoliberal state (Burrowes, 2018; Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2018; Kim, 2012; Smith, 2010). Leading scholars in the anti-violence field such as Angela Davis, Gina Dent, Erica Meiners, and

Beth Richie (2022) build upon the foundations of collective organizing to promote shared visions of transformative anti-violence activism. According to this group of authors, collectivism is enacted in many communities around the world and reflected in everyday practices that promote and define social justice. Anti-violence activists can build upon strategies such as these to promote the prevention of gender-based violence.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice provides a framework for direct community accountability through initiatives to actively engage those involved in instances of interpersonal harm. Activist Mimi E. Kim (2012) describes direct examples of restorative justice models which utilize facilitation to "identify and negotiate difference" (p. 28) among those involved in specific instances of violence. Activists Levine and Meiners (2020) discuss restorative justice as community-based responses to violence that promotes collective agreements on best strategies for reparation within that community. Goodmark (2018) determines two factors associated with restorative justice. First, a community must acknowledge individual harm of gender-based violence and engage processes of active accountability from the harmdoer[3] that are directly informed and controlled by the survivor. Second, community involvement must encompass preventative strategies such as education, reflection, and shared agreements among participants to enact an environment which actively promotes anti-violence principles. Feminist scholars widely agree that restorative justice centers those who directly experience gender-based violence and reflects the belief that survivors are the most capable of addressing instances of abuse and disrupting harmful social norms that perpetuate abuse (Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2018; Kim, 2012; Smith, 2010).

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[3] The restorative justice movement promotes alternative language from the criminal justice system. Terms often used are "those who are harmed," "those who cause harm" or "harmdoer."

Restorative justice promotes active accountability from those who cause harm so they may safely engage in their communities after instances of abuse (Smith, 2010). Levine and Meiners (2020) highlight a goal of restorative justice to "center the needs of the harmed person yet never loses sight of the harm-doer's humanity" (p. 13). Activists Kelly Hayes and Mariame Kaba (2021) argue that "it is hurt people who hurt other people" (p. 59) and Mimi E. Kim (2012) further writes that resistance from those who use violence is anticipated in these processes. Some scholars argue that restorative justice initiatives may cause potential revictimization of survivors throughout the process of offender accountability (Ptacek, 2010). However, restorative justice activists promote collective engagement rather than "taking sides" between perpetrator and victim, which often only exacerbates the violence between the two. Feminist scholar Leigh Goodmark (2018) argues that carceral processes only maintain cycles of violence as those convicted are forcibly taken from their communities and put into oppressive prison systems. These authors suggest that community accountability through restorative justice processes continue to center the needs of survivors while preventing further violence through criminal justice processes.

Despite progressive support for restorative justice, many scholars critique these initiatives, and some feminists warn against a deviation from the public systems responses that anti-violence activists have historically advocated for (Daly & Stubbs, 2006). For example, some scholars suggest the potential for restorative justice to cause coercion of engagement for survivors and manipulation of the process from harmdoers (Daly & Stubbs, 2006). Sociologist James Ptacek (2010) discusses the popular critique that restorative justice processes often prioritize harmdoer accountability over immediate safety for victims. Challenging this belief, Mimi E. Kim (2012) discusses the "fetishization of safety" to describe how anti-violence

responses often prioritize immediate separation tactics using shelters and the criminal justice system, even though these are against the wishes of many survivors. Alternately, Kim describes a model that promotes setting and maintaining goals of accountability specifically led by the survivor or someone within their support system. Kim ultimately argues for community-led intervention that resists institutionalization and works collectively with social justice activists to highlight both the successes and the challenges of restorative justice initiatives.

Transformative Justice

Many feminists adopt the framework of transformative justice to enact strategies of prevention and accountability outside of the carceral state. Transformative justice encompasses radical initiatives to "respond to harm without creating more harm" (Levine & Meiners, 2020, p. 13). Feminist scholar Mimi E. Kim (2018) outlines transformative justice as a framework that responds to interpersonal and community-based violence within contexts that specifically address systemic oppression. While restorative justice addresses interpersonal violence, transformative justice inherently challenges cycles of violence reinforced by larger systemic structures such as the carceral state (Kim, 2018). Activist Andrea Ritchie (2023) argues that transformative justice strategies "eliminate the conditions that produce harm" rather than "adapting to conditions as they move from bad to worse" (p. 91). Both Kim and Ritchie argue for radical activism that challenges oppressive anti-violence practices.

Transformative justice promotes social environments that enable long-term safety for survivors and their communities. Many scholars highlight the power of shared visions for violence intervention and to challenge the authority of the carceral state (Levine & Meiners, 2020; Kim; 2018; Ritchie, 2023). For example, feminist scholar Leigh Goodmark (2023) argues for redirection of funds from the criminal justice system to community-led initiatives for human

necessities such as housing, healthcare, and safety. Additionally, Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors (2019) demands reparations addressing colonialism, such as financial restitution and culturally relevant programming to enhance the political power of minority groups. Repair and restoration processes could initiate social conditions in which transformative justice may flourish and cycles of interpersonal and systemic violence could be prevented (Davis et al. 2022; Ritchie, 2018).

Abolition Feminism

Many radical feminists demand complete abolition of oppressive institutions that perpetuate violence. Influential scholar Audre Lorde (1984) famously writes that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (p. 112), arguing that systems of oppression will never influence social change. Anti-violence activists and scholars relate this argument to the use of the criminal justice system against gender-based violence, which largely prompted a public response but fails to prevent interpersonal and state-sanctioned violence (Bevacqua, 2000; Goodmark, 2018; Levine & Meiners, 2020; Richie, 2012). Alternatively, abolition feminism provides a framework for social justice that centers intersectional activism against white supremacy and patriarchy through initiatives to dismantle carceral institutions (Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2023). Activists and scholars Angela Y. Davis, Gina Dent, Erica R. Meiners, and Beth E Richie (2022) argue that abolitionist and feminist activism are most effective in cohesion with one another, and that interpersonal and systemic violence cannot be adequately addressed as separate entities. Abolition feminists often argue that systemic reliance on oppressive surveillance tactics will never eradicate gender-based violence (Collins, 1998; Crenshaw, 1991; Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2018; Herzing & Kaba, 2021).

Abolition feminists initiate transformative and restorative efforts against gender-based violence in ongoing initiatives to promote alternative forms of community safety and accountability (Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2023). Feminist scholar Leigh Goodmark (2023) writes that abolition feminism "reframes the work to end gender violence" (p. 186) and "challenges us to envision a different world entirely" (p. 185). Goodmark differentiates abolition and criminal justice reform, arguing that despite transformative intentions of criminal reform, these initiatives and policies ultimately increase resources and systemic power to the carceral state. Goodmark envisions abolition feminism as a process that ultimately prevents further harm caused by criminalized institutions. Similarly critiquing carceral responses, activists Mariam Kaba and Rachel Herzing (2021) argue that historical reliance on incarceration against gender-based violence has narrowed ideologies of justice and accountability to "prison or nothing" (p. 85). These authors challenge their readers to envision transformative consequences for harm that are comprehensive to the needs of each survivor and the social circumstances of each community. Abolition feminists reimagine activist initiatives to eradicate criminal justice processes that primarily compound harm for survivors of gender-based violence (Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2023; Herzing & Kaba, 2021).

Conclusion

This literature review provides a brief overview of influential work from academics and activists regarding anti-violence initiatives. Many scholars agree that interpersonal and state-sanctioned violence are inseparable, and one issue cannot be adequately addressed or prevented without simultaneously dismantling the other (Burrowes, 2018; Collins, 1998; Crenshaw, 1991; Davis et al., 2022; hooks, 1995; Levine & Meiners, 2020; Richie, 2012; Smith, 2010). Anti-violence activists and advocates harness histories of radical and liberal activism to promote

violence prevention and comprehensive support services for survivors. Influenced from the scholarship outlined in this literature review, the following research utilizes grounded theory and a feminist critique of neoliberalism to examine anti-violence strategies from the perspectives of nonprofit leadership in the state of Minnesota.

Methods

This research considers the experiences of those in anti-violence nonprofit work in Minnesota through a feminist social justice lens. The purpose of this study is to connect critical input of those in leadership positions in anti-violence nonprofit organizations to feminist scholarship that promotes transformative social justice for the anti-violence movement in the United States. Advocates and activists hold critical insight as they navigate daily challenges with limited funding and an overwhelming demand for services. This study aims to link these experiences with feminist methodologies of anti-neoliberal critique, which include analyses of the non-profit industrial complex and organizational reliance on state resources that severely limit the radical potential of anti-violence activism and social justice. This research promotes the importance of anti-violence initiatives that center multifaceted needs of survivors in the response and primary prevention of gender-based violence.

Methodology

The methodology for this study reflects feminist grounded theory and centers a feminist critique of neoliberalism. Hesse-Biber (2014) describes methodology as a "way of asking questions" (p. 4) and promotes feminist methodology that interrogates dominant frameworks of knowledge production. The data and analysis in this study are constructed from participant observation, reflection, and insight. Judith Wuest (1995) argues that feminist grounded theory inherently values participant experience as "subjective truth" that is continually influenced by social structures and interactions. This study values anti-violence advocates as "experts in their experience" (Wuest, 1995, p. 128) and centers participant insight regarding anti-violence social justice and prevention strategies. Additionally, this study centers feminist critique of neoliberalism and the nonprofit industrial complex. Scholars define neoliberalism as a set of

political and economic policies that prioritize financial success of privatized markets at all costs, with dominant narratives of individual responsibility over community welfare (Brown, 2015; Fernandez, 2019; Harvey, 2005). Centering a feminist critique of neoliberalism, this research prioritizes community-based social change over individual level responses to gender-based violence.

Methods

This study utilizes in-depth semi structured interviews to connect lived experiences of anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles to feminist scholarship surrounding the anti-violence movement. Qualitative in-depth interviewing is ideal for research involving lived experiences of participants, and feminist interviews remain issue-oriented to promote analyses based on social justice initiatives (Hesse-Biber, 2014). Six interviews were conducted with participants in various leadership roles of five different anti-violence nonprofit organizations in Minnesota. The organizational roles of the participants include executive directors and individual program directors, including prevention and community engagement. Both rural and metro-based organizations were included in this study. Interviews lasted between forty minutes and one hour and twenty minutes with the option for participants to end whenever they needed. Word of mouth and snowball sampling were used for recruitment using professional networks of the researcher and committee members.

An interview guide was used with specific questions constructed in advance by the researcher and follow-up questions were occasionally asked based on participant responses. The interview questions highlighted three different aspects of participant experiences: (1) their own roles as anti-violence advocates, (2) the organization's role in the communities it serves, and (3) funding structures of the organization. The data was thematically analyzed using manual coding

and memoing. Codes were assigned using Excel spreadsheets to document recurring themes from the data and were analyzed using memos noted throughout the interview and data collection processes. Memoing is a process in which the researcher notes key themes to conduct potential theories and reflects on connections or significance to the overall research (Hesse-Biber, 2014; Kelly, 2020). Using grounded theory, the process of coding and memoing were continually influenced by one another to "understand meaning in the data" (Kelly, 2020, p. 17).

Interviews were conducted via Zoom to reduce travel costs and utilize technological conveniences such as the use of auto-transcription. Anti-violence organizations in Minnesota are strategically placed to serve different geographical locations of the state. Additionally, interviews were conducted in the winter amidst consistent rates of COVID-19, therefore the use of Zoom promoted the safety of the researcher and participants by avoiding any unsafe travel conditions and potential health risks. Participants were asked to electronically sign informed consent in an online survey in which they indicated their preference for audio and video recording via Zoom with auto transcription or no recording with transcription via typed notes by the researcher. All transcriptions were edited for accuracy and made available to participants upon request, allowing opportunities for any retractions or changes if necessary.

The process of conducting online interviews includes potential research limitations, including technological barriers and a lack of in-person interaction. Zoom meetings have increasingly become normalized post-Covid 19 and participants are likely familiar with the technology. Additionally, some participants may enjoy the flexibility of using Zoom while others may experience a lessened sense of connectivity that is often inherent with in-person conversation. Informed consent practices were used to encourage active communication between

the researcher and participants. It is my belief that the convenience and flexibility of Zoom meetings offer benefits that outweigh potential limitations.

The recruitment of advocates in nonprofit leadership roles presents different benefits and limitations for this study. Feminist scholar and activist Chris A. Barcelos (2020) discusses the method of “studying up” which purposely shifts research focus from marginalized groups to those who “have the power to affect the lives of disadvantaged people” (p. 21). This study intentionally highlights the insights of those in nonprofit leadership positions due to their participation in the mainstream anti-violence response in Minnesota. This study utilizes the method of “studying up” to analyze the potential for social justice initiatives within the scope of the nonprofit industrial complex. Additionally, advocates in leadership roles may experience minimal barriers to engaging with the study if community engagement is part of their job responsibilities. A potential limitation for this study is the narrow geographical range and perspectives. To minimize this limitation, participants are recruited based on varying positions. Despite commonalities of anti-violence advocacy throughout Minnesota and the United States, this study represents data collected from only six interviews, and therefore cannot be generalized to represent state-wide or nation-wide advocacy practices.

Reflexivity

Feminists center reflexivity in their work as they consider how their own social position and bias influences their research (Kelly, 2020). This research is influenced by my own roles as an anti-violence advocate in a nonprofit organization and as a feminist researcher in multiple capacities. First, my positionality reflects both insider and outsider status (Buch & Staller, 2014, p. 130) as I share space in the same field of work as the participants, but organizational and hierarchical roles vary. Second, as a white researcher with a privileged academic background,

participants with different racial, gender, or ability statuses from my own may face barriers while communicating their experiences. Anti-violence activism in mainstream feminist circuits have historically excluded the needs of survivors within minority social, economic, and political groups. Providing prospective participants with adequate information at all stages of the study aims to minimize this risk.

In conclusion, this study utilizes methodologies of feminist grounded theory and feminist critique of neoliberalism to highlight anti-violence initiatives in Minnesota based on data collected from six semi structured interviews. My own positionality as an advocate and researcher is considered using feminist practices of reflexivity. The prevention of gender-based violence is only possible if complex levels of intersectional violence are addressed (Collins, 1998; Crenshaw, 1991), and this research utilizes feminist methodological practices to consider anti-violence advocacy and social justice.

Analysis

The data from interviews is thematically analyzed in this chapter, including three main themes and outliers, and is connected to scholarship regarding the feminist anti-violence movement. Three themes were identified: (1) organizational funding and capacity (2) community partnerships (3) primary prevention. To further organize the data, each theme is categorically analyzed by positive impacts, challenges, and strategies for moving forward. To protect confidentiality of research participants, demographics of interview participants are not disclosed, however, participants indicated between seven and twenty years of experience in anti-violence work, all with various backgrounds that led them to the movement. For this analysis, participants are identified using a randomized number system and organizations are assigned pseudonyms based on the researcher's favorite lakes in Minnesota. Below is a list for reference:

Participant 1 – Lake Andrew Coalition

Participant 2 – Green Lake Alliance

Participant 3 – Lake Marion Group

Participant 4 – Maple Lake Committee

Participant 5 – Games Lake Association

Participant 6 – Lake Superior Collective

Organizational Funding and Capacity

All participants identified funding structures that significantly rely on state funding. Participants noted between 80 and 97 percent of organizational funding from federal and state entities. The most common sources of funding named in the responses include the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Other common

funding sources discussed are community donations, corporate sponsorships, and private grants. Two positive impacts of funding structures were identified throughout the data: greater ability for staffing and direct service work[4]. However, four distinct challenges related to funding were identified: deficits, competition, regulations, and expectations of "deliverables." Two strategies were identified relating to funding and capacity: efforts to diversify funding and organizational restructuring to shift capacities.

Impacts of Funding and Capacity

The first positive impact of funding structures identified in the data is the ability to provide advocacy services at the organizational level. Participant 3 stated that "most of our funding goes just to paying people to work here" and that Lake Marion Group wouldn't be able to provide the services they do without it. All participants acknowledged the trend of advocate burnout throughout the movement and participant 3 specifically stated that "the level of burden put on frontline folks would be eased with fully funded and invested programs." Activists such as Madonna Thunder Hawk (2017) have argued that trends towards career-motivated activism often cause people to "work for a salary rather than because they are passionate about the issue" (p. 105). However, all participants reflected a continued passion for anti-violence work, and many noted continued hope for the movement. For example, participant 6 stated that what gives them hope is seeing leaders in the movement "really looking at themselves, looking at their institutional practices, looking at their policies and they're doing what they can to truly make positive change in a way that is... truly survivor centered." The anti-violence advocates and

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[4] Direct service work often refers to providing emergency shelter, legal advocacy, and ongoing emotional support.

activists interviewed are continuing to find inspiration for the movement despite systemic structures that provide only minimal funding for advocacy services (Kivel, 2017).

The second positive impact of funding is the provision of direct services for survivors. Many participants expressed gratitude for the services they can provide, which are directly enabled from public funding. Participant 5 noted that historically, advocates had to refer outside of the organization for emergency funding that could go directly to survivors. However, Games Lake Association has had increasing access to direct service funds and stated that "we really can remove those barriers in a much different way, and we can help clients access safety in a much different way." Public anti-violence funding has increasingly prioritized criminal justice responses (Goodmark, 2018) and participant 3 stated that "with OJP, [office of justice program funding], the focus is all about legal advocacy and shelter." The OJP (2024) reports that they "distribute approximately $58 million annually in state and federal funds to 178 agencies throughout Minnesota to provide direct advocacy services to victims of crime." These services are limited to include short-term support through emergency shelter and crisis intervention. Though all participants recognized the importance of this work, many expressed the need to "go upstream" (participant 3) and shift the movement's focus towards prevention efforts.

Challenges of Funding and Capacity

The first challenge identified from funding structures is increasing financial deficits. Despite the highest number of documented intimate-partner homicides in Minnesota last year (Cox, 2024), many participants reflected on significant funding cuts for anti-violence services in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (2022) reported millions of dollars in annual budget cuts through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and some direct service programs in Minnesota have had to close their doors due to rising costs and staffing shortages (Smith,

2023). Many participants acknowledged that they simply cannot meet the needs of "all survivors walking through our doors" (participants 1 & 3). Participant 3 specifically stated that "we just want to keep things moving, doing the best we can with what we have, and trying to stay hopeful that those resources will exist someday or there will be shifts that happen." Activist Paul Kivel (2017) argues that a "buffer zone" exists within the American class system and that those in certain occupations such as social workers are tasked to "take care of people at the bottom" of the economic pyramid by "providing minimal services for those in need" (p. 134). Despite hope for the movement shared by all participants, reliance on minimal funding continues to be a barrier for anti-violence social justice.

The second challenge of funding noted in this research is competition. Four participants compared their organization to others in the state and while they all expressed gratitude for the resources they do have, staff and funding shortfalls were reported as significant barriers. Participants often stated that they were "lucky" or "fortunate" to have certain resources many other organizations in the state do not, including greater accessibility to private grants and having specific teams or positions for development, grant writing, and prevention. However, these statements were often followed with reflections of minimal resources. For example, participant 5 stated that even though Games Lake Association is "one of the better funded programs in the state," they discussed an inability to "do all the work," specifically with the number of staff in the organization. This participant and three others highlighted the need for more staffing in rural areas as these advocates are "just spread thin." Additionally, five participants discussed the inability to compensate and sustain advocacy for culturally specific services, as they know this is a great need for the movement. Anti-violence organizations are consistently navigating budget cuts while attempting to ensure comprehensive support for survivors in their communities.

The third challenge of funding is regulations and guidelines. Participant 6 reflected on increasing funding restrictions, specifically within the past three years and they stated that "the requirements that come with the funding are arguably starting to get in the way of the programming that the funding is intended to provide." One example of funding guidelines that most participants mentioned is the strict use of dollars "explicitly dedicated to domestic violence" (participant 1). Participant 1 highlighted attempts from Lake Andrew Coalition to address the intersections of gender-based violence and meeting basic needs for survivors such as housing, food security, and healthcare. However, public funding provisions often inhibit intersectional service models. This participant also discussed extensive reporting processes to address exact amounts of money or time spent on separate things, which severely limits their ability to integrate different programs. Participants are limited as they attempt to expand programs beyond direct service work and implement intersectional anti-violence strategies for their organizations and the movement.

A final challenge from funding structures identified in the research is expectations of "deliverables" including proof of sustainability and ideologies of quantity over quality. Participant 5 discussed frustrations with reporting direct service dollars provided to survivors as advocates must "prove" in some way that the money will promote long-term wellbeing for that survivor. However, those in crisis often find it impossible to sustain minimal direct funds that are specifically for emergency needs. Similarly, participant 1 discussed frustrations with welfare systems that intentionally make financial sustainability an improbability for survivors due to lack of long-term, transitional support services. This participant and others discussed the ideology of "quantity over quality" relating to funding. Participant 2 stated that historically there has been incentive for Green Lake Alliance to "constantly churn out resource after resource... and that is

just reducing our capacity because we have so many different deliverables we have to hit." They discussed the importance of "slowing down a little and being more intentional." Participant 3 also reflected on how Lake Marion Group has prioritized strategies to build capacity for more comprehensive services and increased community involvement, even though this might mean providing direct services to less people. Overall, the data reflects strategies to shift, rather than increase, organizational capacity due to stagnant and even decreasing funds. However, participants continue to establish survivor-centered services as they balance ongoing needs of communities and the movement.

Strategies for Funding and Capacity

The first strategy identified in the data regarding funding and capacity is prioritizing organizational development teams. These teams consist of staff members that have specific roles of writing and maintaining financial grants and promoting community-based funding through donations. The data reflected shifting capacity when available for development teams or sharing the work amongst the staff to increase organizational efforts to diversify funding sources and decrease reliance on public funding. Four participants noted that grant writing and maintenance has historically been expected of executive directors, in addition to their already full workloads, which has been unrealistic and unsustainable. Additionally, all participants noted that development teams are not funded by state and federal sources, so many organizations have had to strategically shift advocacy roles and establish boundaries to generate capacity for development. Acknowledging daily conflicts of anti-violence work within the nonprofit industrial complex, participant 6 discussed a "balancing act" for leadership to prioritize the capacities of their own organizations while "trying to have really emergent and generative conversations in our movement collectively about... dismantling and rebuilding." Participants are

continually balancing funding needs for their own nonprofit organizations and anti-violence social justice initiatives.

The second strategy regarding funding and capacity reflected in the data is shifting staff roles and organizational structures altogether. Strategies towards staff and organizational restructuring were noted multiple times during interviews and the reasons for these shifts include responsiveness to the evolving needs of survivors and organizational trends within the movement. For example, Participant 1 highlighted the importance of "keeping an eye on the rest of the world" to ensure comprehensive programming. The anti-violence movement has only recently prioritized survivor-centered services and leadership positions for BIPOC communities (participant 4), and participants often expressed the need for accountability practices relating to harm against many survivors in their communities. Additionally, organizations are strategically shifting to meet potential funding expectations. Participant 3 specifically noted an organizational restructuring to prioritize community education. They stated that Lake Marion Group had anticipated increased funding demands and they strategically "had a plan for how that was going to look and how it could be possible to make it happen if we had to or when we wanted to. It's just, the 'we had to' came first." Participants often reflected on organizational strategies to improve responsiveness of the needs of the movement.

Community Partnerships

All participants were asked questions relating to community partnerships and many positive impacts were noted. Common partnerships discussed include those with other anti-violence agencies such as state coalitions and national anti-violence groups, other direct service providers such as housing programs and substance use support services, and radical groups such as abolitionist and other anti-carceral organizations. Three positive impacts of community

partnerships were noted in the responses: collaboration among anti-violence advocates and activists, services and referrals for survivors, and increased community awareness and support. Three challenges were noted: managing opposing community values, limited relationship-building in a competitive funding environment, and community misconceptions of gender-based violence and anti-violence organizing. Two strategies for moving forward with community partnerships were identified: prioritizing collectivity while balancing organizational duties and incorporating programs throughout the community to increase support for survivors.

Impacts of Community Partnerships

The first positive impact of community partnerships identified in the data is relationship-building among anti-violence advocates. Many participants noted that anti-violence leaders and organizers in Minnesota are generally supportive of transformations for the movement. Participant 3 specifically stated that "the people who are speaking for the movement in Minnesota... have a more holistic view of what justice and safety means for every survivor, and that gives me hope." Similarly, participant 4 discussed their love for "dreaming with the people" and "coming up with relationships to build and new plans to get the work done." This participant specifically discussed a collective focus on "incorporating joy and happiness to our work" and gave examples of promoting advocate togetherness to share the work that is "challenging and hard and beautiful." Activist Nicole A Burrowes (2018) argues that collective activism often "grows out of local conditions" then ripples outward (p. 382). Participants often discussed the impact of sharing knowledge and support within the movement and exemplified respect for many other organizations and coalitions promoting anti-oppression in Minnesota.

A second positive impact identified from community partnerships is increased referrals and support for survivors. As mentioned earlier, participants often acknowledged the fact that

they cannot meet every single demand for services due to lack of capacity. Participant 1 specifically noted that community partnerships with other direct service providers are essential so there can be referrals to other resources that may have greater ability meet those needs. Additionally, participant 3 identified efforts to rely more heavily on other community resources whereas Lake Marion Group has "historically been a catch-all for community partners when they didn't know what to do or say" to support community needs and they've "tried to meet those needs and now we're realizing the harmful impacts of that." This participant identified the importance of utilizing other community resources to manage increasing demand in a time of "stagnant funding" (participant 6). One distinct consequence of the nonprofit industrial complex is the discouragement of "mass-based organizing capable of actually transforming society" (Smith, 2017, p. 3). However, despite unrealistic expectations of meeting increasing demands on their own, participants are promoting collective anti-violence work in their communities.

The final positive impact of community partnerships identified in the data is increased awareness and support for anti-violence services. Participant 5 specifically noted that when awareness of gender-based violence is increased in communities, it is "made a priority" for individuals in that community and potential funders. Many participants noted the importance of providing educational outreach to those in partnering organizations such as universities, healthcare professionals, and other direct service providers so survivors can experience greater support from the larger community. Participant 6 expressed interest in expanding anti-violence values through community education. They stated, "instead of trying to be the advocate for every survivor we start training all other systems partners on how to do basic advocacy, safety planning, not victim blaming and believing survivors." This participant discussed the importance of community support that does not reinforce oppressive structures, specifically for BIPOC and

LGBTQIA+ survivors. All participants discussed the significance of consistency in messaging within their organization to ensure survivor-centered values are promoted in their community work. For instance, participant 2 stated that Green Lake Alliance consistently works to "eliminate the tenets of white supremacy" internally so that they're able to "build intentional relationships" that prioritize racial justice for their communities. This participant reflected on the importance of internal reflection before attempting to build community support. Participants often promote community partnerships that will provide comprehensive support within systems that cause further harm for many survivors.

Challenges of Community Partnerships

The first challenge identified with community partnerships is managing differing values within collective relationships. Five participants explicitly discussed challenges while working with law enforcement even though they are a community institution that anti-violence organizations continually partner with. For instance, participant 4 stated:

> I have a lot of respect for law enforcement and prosecution, and I also know we need to start dreaming up different ways because we know that [survivors] aren't using those systems and if they are, they're getting caught up and not getting supported correctly.

This participant highlighted the importance of continuing relationships with current partners while envisioning alternative resources for survivors. Echoing this argument, three participants specifically discussed efforts "not to rock the boat" (participants 4, 5 and 6) with community partners while acknowledging difficulties with clashing values. For example, participant 5 stated that they had to "cut ties" with a community partner due to practices that contradicted Games Lake Association's mission even though the partnering organization had "all kinds of money and

all kinds of community buy-in". This participant discussed difficulties with managing potentially resourceful relationships while “never doing things to harm victims.” Similarly, participant 4 discussed the importance of "telling the truth” to community partners when fundamental changes need to be made. This participant related conflicting values with potential for community-level social change. Participants often balance the necessity for community partnerships while prioritizing survivor-centered values.

The second challenge identified regarding community partnerships is limited relationship-building due to competitive funding structures. Four participants distinctly acknowledged frustrations with transactional relationships that often rely on the promise of donations or referral services from partnering organizations rather than collective dedication to social justice and prevention. Reflecting on this, participant 4 expressed a desire of “getting to know your community and getting to know the people you’re working with in a different way.” This participant promoted relationships that embrace “human connection” and prioritize fun and joy in anti-violence work. Elaborating this idea, participant 2 stated that Green Lake Alliance doesn’t “want to just have the violence stop, we want to be in joyful, enthusiastic, and thriving relationship with one another and in our communities too.” This participant and many others reflected a shift in anti-violence work to promote community among advocates and activists. Participants are increasingly prioritizing meaningful social relationships within competitive “corporate cultures” (Pérez, 2017, p. 93) within the nonprofit industrial complex.

The third challenge of community partnerships identified in the responses is ongoing misconceptions. The most common misconceptions noted by participants include anti-violence organizations solely providing shelter and not community outreach services, only serving women, and operating as an extension of the criminal justice system. All participants expressed

distinct differences between oppressive systems and the anti-violence work they practice daily. For example, participant 6 stated that "people expect us to be another branch of the criminal legal process... then we have systems partners... that get irritated with us when we don't play the way they think we should and that's a forever challenge." This participant reflected on continual strategies for Lake Superior Collective to specify their work with community partners as they serve survivors regardless of relationships to the criminal justice system. Amidst ongoing misconceptions and false expectations, participants continue to promote survivor-centered anti-violence advocacy.

Strategies for Community Partnerships

The first strategy identified in the data regarding community partnerships is balancing relationships with funders while prioritizing collectivity for the movement. All participants reflected the importance of prioritizing their own wellbeing in a system that has historically caused burnout and overwhelm. For example, participant 6 discussed their own expectations to "be a good employee" in their role while also "supporting whatever needs to happen in terms of shifting our movement and our work." This participant highlighted shifting priorities for their own organization while acknowledging potentially difficult work that needs to happen to promote shifts for the movement, such as providing less direct service to make capacity for social justice activism. Additionally, five participants explicitly discussed consequences of oppressive structures that prioritize business models over "movement-building cultures" (Pérez, 2017, p. 93). For example, participant 4 discussed their work to disrupt hierarchies within Maple Lake Committee. They stated that they "started with the idea of social change [as] taking care of the team" so they can all "do the ripple effect of that kind of change." This participant acknowledged unrealistic expectations for just one leader to promote social justice and promoted

collective movement building. Many participants seek to exemplify values of the movement as they prioritize teamwork and leadership in their own organizations.

The final strategy for navigating community partnerships identified in the data is prioritizing intersectional services for survivors. All participants discussed many overlapping demands for services, including housing, legal help, therapy, and many others. Four participants discussed barriers while trying to shift and combine programming to meet these overlapping needs, specifically with funding that requires complete separation of direct services, such as emergency shelter and legal advocacy. However, utilizing community partnerships that specifically cultivate intersectional values is essential for collective movement-building. Additionally, participant 3 discussed potential grants that specifically promote integration of multiple direct service models. While reflecting on integrated service models, this participant highlighted a strength of the anti-violence field to continually address intersectional needs. They stated that “people are having those conversations internally at shelters... and are trying to be out there and doing the work.” This participant reflected on the importance of organizations to exemplify “unique contributions to the field” in Minnesota that promote intersectional service models.

Primary Prevention

Despite limited resources, all participants promoted the importance of primary prevention initiatives. According to participant 2, primary prevention means “stopping violence before it has the chance to happen” and secondary prevention addresses strategies for avoiding further instances of violence once it occurs. Common strategies for violence prevention include promoting foundational shifts in norms and practices that minimize gender-based violence, promote bystander intervention techniques specifically for cisgender men in communities, and

efforts to deconstruct systems of privilege and oppression, such as patriarchy and white supremacy (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009). Two positive impacts were identified in the responses regarding prevention: centering anti-oppression and promoting community involvement. Three significant challenges were named for prevention: limited funding, capacity, and sustainability. Two strategies for violence prevention were reflected in the data: community-based educational opportunities and legislative activism.

Impacts of Prevention

The first positive impact of prevention signified in the data is increasing values of anti-oppression. Anti-violence prevention can look many ways and participant 2 argued for a bottom-up approach that addresses “root causes of violence being intersecting forms of oppression.” They stated that “if we’re able to support the most impacted, everyone else is going to be supported after that... I think prevention is the space that everyone can partake in some capacity.” This participant specifically reflects on the intersections of gender-based violence and approaches primary prevention through the lens of social justice. Similarly, participant 1 contested the idea of “simple solutions” to prevention. They stated that prevention must go beyond the surface level, and “take on the fact of state sanctioned violence and how our systems are perpetuating power and control.” This participant discussed primary prevention as an avenue for survivors to bypass oppressive systems altogether. This data suggests participants are envisioning transformative justice strategies to prevent interpersonal and systemic violence.

The second positive impact of prevention is increasing community engagement. All participants reflected on the necessity of community-focused initiatives. Participant 3, for example, stated that prevention needs to be “robust” and “holistic” to include entire communities and not just survivors. The anti-violence movement has historically centered survivors as

political activists against gender-based violence (Bevacqua, 2000) and participants often expanded this idea to include greater community involvement beyond their own organizations. For instance, participant 4 stated that "it isn't just up to domestic violence and sexual violence advocates to do all the social change, so the best capacity is actually prevention." Like other participants, they discussed prevention through the lens of social change and the importance of working alongside one another to make that happen. Expanding this idea, participant 6 stated that the movement is at a "crossroads" as we acknowledge the limits of direct service work. They asked, "how much longer do we keep doing the same thing, thinking we'll get different results?" The nonprofit industrial complex exists to maintain the status quo (Kivel, 2017) but this data suggests anti-violence advocates are promoting violence prevention that centers transformative justice practices.

Challenges of Prevention

The first challenge identified for prevention is lack of specific funding. Participants were often asked if they think prevention gets "lumped in" with education and all agreed. Participant 5 noted that historically, education has primarily been funded while prevention has not, and stated that "they've just kind of lumped those together for that purpose, because as long as we're doing education, we can throw prevention in." Similarly, participant 2 stated that "funding in general is very restrictive when it comes to prevention. A lot of our federal grants don't even allow you to say prevention." These responses suggest that education and prevention are bundled due to public funding guidelines. Although education is a significant component of prevention (participant 3), collective organizing must be utilized to promote social change. Additionally, limited public funds and increasing recognition of the importance of prevention work causes increasing competition for private funding dedicated to prevention (participant 2). The nonprofit industrial

complex exists to replicate neoliberal ideologies of competition and pacify social movements (Smith, 2017). This data suggests that limited public funding for prevention work, which participants relate to social justice work, is one strategy to maintain systemic cycles of violence.

The second challenge of prevention indicated in the data is sustainability. All participants agreed that prevention initiatives must be ongoing, and that occasional community presentations or awareness events "absolutely do not cut it" (participant 2). Three participants addressed potential impacts of having specific teams within organizations that are designated to this work as historically, education and prevention have been tasks given to existing employees as "yet another extra thing they have to do on their already full plates" (participant 3). This strategy would promote capacity for prevention; however, this is often impossible for organizations due to lack of funding. Additionally, sustainability of prevention work is notably difficult to evaluate. Four participants reflected on unrealistic expectations, even from themselves, of evaluating macro-level prevention and acknowledged that it's often the accumulation of smaller changes over time that create the most impact. This data suggests that anti-violence organizations experience significant barriers to sustain prevention initiatives in their work and nonprofit leadership continually promote the importance of primary prevention.

The third challenge of violence prevention is capacity. Addressing this barrier, participant 2 discussed Green Lake Alliance's efforts to build "infrastructures that center prevention" so these values can be promoted throughout communities. They stated that prevention has historically been "the first thing that gets thrown on the back burner" as organizations prioritize direct service. Though they and other participants highlighted the importance of direct services, there was a general understanding among all participants that something needs to shift in the movement and in individual organizations to build capacity for prevention work. For example,

participant 6 suggested that making these shifts may at some point require advocates to "intentionally serve less people... and that's something everybody involved in the work needs to grapple with." Participants often reflected on transitions for their own organizations and for the movement. The nonprofit industrial complex exists to maintain minimal direct service work (Kivel, 2017) and participants are implementing alternatives for the movement to challenge systemic oppression.

Strategies for Prevention

The first strategy for prevention identified in the data is promoting educational opportunities. Despite the discourse of anti-violence education and prevention being "lumped" together as noted above, some participants discussed relations between the two. For example, participant 3 discussed education as an extension of prevention work, which is often why the two are under the same organizational programming. This participant highlighted the importance of education and awareness to the prevention of gender-based violence. However, there is little evidence that correlates increased awareness to a reduction of violence (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009). All participants identified a collective need to provide consistent education beyond raising awareness. However, they also all identified the inability to do this due to three main barriers: time, funding, and staff. While imagining alternatives for violence prevention, participant 6 discussed transformative justice and the need for "community-based activism… to transform the roots of why violence is happening in relationships." This participant and others stated that anti-violence advocates and organizations should no longer be expected to hold sole accountability for the response to and the prevention of gender-based violence. Therefore, this data suggests that educational opportunities relating to anti-oppression and anti-violence must be a community priority.

The second strategy for prevention identified in the data is legislative activism. Despite objections from BIPOC communities (participant 4), the mainstream anti-violence movement largely allied itself with carceral systems to "legitimize the issue as a 'real' social problem and to get funding" (participant 3). After "almost 5 decades of this" (participant 6), anti-violence advocates must now provide alternative support for survivors beyond law enforcement and incarceration processes. Many participants acknowledged that the most impactful way to do this is to prevent the need for these systems in the first place. All participants discussed the possibilities of comprehensive education for children at young ages and three participants addressed efforts from their organizations to do this at the legislative level. Additionally, participants support legislative activism for increased housing access and decreased eviction rates for survivors. Historically, anti-violence legislation has primarily focused on funding for direct service work and while this continues to be an increasing need, activists in the movement are broadening their focus for the purpose of primary prevention. Current legislative activism in Minnesota includes access to human rights such as housing, food, and healthcare and advocating for alternative anti-violence efforts such as transformative and restorative justice efforts (VFMN, n.d.).

Uncommon Themes

Participants discussed many challenges and strategies with their work, including accountability practices, political expression, shelter infrastructures, and alternative models of anti-violence activism, including restorative and transformative justice. These outliers reflect continually changing trends of anti-violence response from the grassroots beginnings to the nonprofit industrial complex. Participants were highly reflexive of ongoing challenges for radical

anti-violence work and this research suggests that anti-violence advocates in Minnesota nonprofit leadership positions seek alternative strategies to promote intersectional advocacy services.

Accountability and Resources

Some participants discussed the deflection of accountability for gender-based violence in their communities. For example, participant 6 expressed frustration with funding trends in which community groups and county affiliates deny collaboration of resources for anti-violence advocacy and education. This participant stated that those in the community view anti-violence nonprofits to be funded from the county and those in the county view funding responsibility from state and federal sources. Therefore, in participant 6's experience, both of those entities are hesitant to dedicate the minimal resources they have to violence response in their communities and anti-violence nonprofits are expected to meet high demands for victim services on their own. Additionally, participant 6 shared:

> At some point when do we just face the facts and say we're not going to get more money and we're not going to be able to expand programs in the way that we know we could and we want to, but we can't? How does that reality change our approach? I think that needs to be a broader movement conversation but it's something that is a challenging point.

Frustrations with accountability practices and hope for shifts in the movement were highly reflected in the data. Participants all discussed continued passion for transformative anti-violence work and must continually balance conflicting organizational needs for resources and social justice for survivors and communities.

Political Expression

Far from the original political demands of the anti-violence movement, participants discussed discouragement from funders to promote radical politics. For example, participant 1 noted that those in anti-violence organizations will often support increased access to human rights for survivors, such as reproductive justice and safety from state sanctioned violence. This participant recalled instances in which Lake Andrew Coalition had to navigate objections from funders, specifically religious foundations, due to any indirect or direct organizational support for certain political ideologies. Participants reflected on the necessity to collaborate with groups in their communities, even those with differing values, while continuing to promote safety for all survivors, specifically those who have been historically harmed by the criminal justice system. Hesitations to publicly support social justice politics are not unfounded for those in anti-violence nonprofit organizations, especially after a publicized incident in which a Wisconsin-based shelter lost significant funding after issuing a statement in support of Black Lives Matter (Kremer, 2020). This organization is one of many across the country that directly address the intersectionality of gender-based violence and in response to this incident, many state coalitions jointly declared their support for racial justice in the movement (Buchbinder, 2020).

Shelter Infrastructures

Three participants highlighted the desire to rebuild shelters that better suit the needs of survivors in their communities. Participants specifically conceptualized building structures that resembled transitional housing rather than standardized shelter conditions in which survivors and their families share small spaces with others. Participant 6 reflected on historic goals for emergency shelters to provide communal spaces for survivors as they support one another through their experiences with gender-based violence. This participant stated “that’s not how it

works. There is a lot of diversity and a lot of varying ways of living in the world... and how do we adapt and make space for all those ways?" This participant highlighted a desire for emergency shelters to provide safety for all survivors including cisgender men and LGBTQIA+ communities. Activists such as Emi Koyama (2006) have argued that shelters have been conceived in the movement with false presumptions of "women's shared experiences," (p. 220) which has historically excluded most survivors, specifically women of color. Due to continually high demands for emergency shelter, participants advocate for safer and more inclusive shelter structures while imagining radical shifts for the movement.

Restorative Justice

Four participants discussed restorative justice as a pathway to potential social change for the movement. As a means of secondary prevention, there are many programs across the United States that practice "domestic abuse transformation programming" (participant 3), which was introduced on a broad scale in Duluth, Minnesota, beginning in 1980 (DAIP, 2017). These programs aim to promote accountability, often through educational groups or "rehabilitation programs for offenders" (DAIP, 2017). Participant 3 specifically stated that "restorative justice has an opportunity to bridge the world of advocacy and domestic abuse transformation programming." They suggest this programming offers one way to practice restorative justice within the current structure of the movement. Additionally, they discussed language changes as beginning steps towards restorative justice. The terms we use to discuss gender-based violence, such as "victim" and "survivor" are highly correlated to the criminal justice system and promote false expectations of those who experience gender-based violence, including burden to prove "legitimate victimhood" (Sweet, 2021, p. 13) and rigid linear models of physical and mental "healing." Participant 3 argued that "survivors are harmed by their labels as victims, and they

have a lot of rights, autonomy, and voice stripped away from them in that process." This participant promotes restorative initiatives for accountability practices alternative to criminal justice systems. Participants are exploring new avenues for their organizations that disrupt harmful expectations for survivors.

Transformative Justice

The data collected for this study suggests efforts from participants to redirect anti-violence organizing in Minnesota in reflection of transformative activist models. Many participants discussed some level of acceptance with "how things have always been done" from those in the anti-violence field. However, participants regularly expressed gratitude for the radical voices advocating for intersectional and anti-oppressive activism in Minnesota. While reflecting on potential transformative shifts for the movement, participant 6 highlighted everyday activism in anti-violence organizing. They stated:

> That's something I see every single day in our movement and in our communities. While there are a lot of things that are pushing down in a very oppressive and structured way, there are a lot of flowers growing through the cracks of the concrete anyhow, and that's what gives me hope.

This participant specifically acknowledges varying levels of transformation for anti-violence activism and while they anticipate large-scale change for the movement, they continue to recognize the importance of community-level initiatives. Despite shrinking resources and overwhelming demands, this research suggests that participants actively promote and strategize for structural transformation.

Discussion

This thesis argues that advocates in nonprofit anti-violence leadership positions in Minnesota continually acknowledge past harm within the anti-violence movement and seek transformative initiatives for future response and prevention. Participants often balance their roles within nonprofit structures while pursuing more radical alternatives in their work. Additionally, participants promote wellbeing for the advocates in their own organizations and for the communities they serve to build safe and sustainable environments. In the words of participant 6, there are “flowers growing in the concrete,” and despite oppressive structures of the nonprofit industrial complex, anti-violence advocates in Minnesota are prioritizing transformative shifts for violence prevention.

This research highlights the work of anti-violence leadership in nonprofit organizations as they strategize for greater community engagement with response, accountability, and prevention of gender-based violence. Corporate and bureaucratic organizational models of the nonprofit industrial complex (Smith, 2017) have primarily isolated responses to gender-based violence to anti-violence nonprofit organizations and the criminal justice system. In recognition and attempts to address ineffective models of accountability and prevention, participants strategize greater community engagement that has been systemically discouraged by the institutionalization of the nonprofit industrial complex. Participants promote collaborative efforts against gender-based violence and community-level initiatives that have transformative potential to prevent violence.

Minnesota has historically been at the forefront of the anti-violence movement. For example, the Duluth-based organization, Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP) was one of the first grassroots groups to initiate institutional collaboration for anti-violence services

through a “Coordinated Community Response” in 1981 (Bartlett, 2016). What became known as “The Duluth Model” continues to center various needs of survivors through ongoing anti-violence organizing. Additionally, DAIP advocates worked collaboratively with survivors to create the tool used by many advocates nation-wide to discuss specific examples of intimate partner violence with survivors and communities, the Power and Control Wheel (Bartlett, 2016). Anti-violence activism has continued to flourish in Minnesota and participants of this research exemplify ongoing passion for survivor advocacy and violence prevention.

The work of participants and other activists in Minnesota has had substantial impacts for the anti-violence field. For instance, statewide coalitions such as Violence Free Minnesota (VFMN) and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) continue to promote transformative visions for Minnesota and alternatives to the criminal justice system. Although dedicated as a coalition to end relationships abuse, VFMN addresses systemic oppression alongside membership programs across Minnesota to provide comprehensive services, specifically for survivors of color, and promote community-level wellbeing (VFMN, n.d.). Additionally, since 2013, MNCASA has dedicated the Sexual Violence Justice Institute to promote collaboration among anti-violence institutions in rural Minnesota communities to expand violence response and prevention strategies (MNCASA, 2024). These metro-based teams use financial resources available to them to promote community-based anti-violence initiatives across Minnesota and continually act as leaders for anti-violence organizing in Minnesota. The influence of their work is reflected by advocates across the state.

Minnesota activists have also promoted abolition work, specifically heightened after the murder of George Floyd in 2020. For instance, grassroots activist groups such as Reclaim the Block and Black Vision Collective organize in Minneapolis to redirect available funding and

resources from law enforcement to sustainable community initiatives, including accessibility efforts to food security and housing (Shim, 2020). Additionally, the group MPD 150 released *10 Action Ideas for Building a Police-Free Future,* including community organizing to provide crisis support and alternative visions for transformative justice and abolition (MPD 150, 2019). The data from this research suggests that anti-violence advocates in Minnesota nonprofit organizations strategize to collaborate with radical initiatives such as these despite discouragement and minimal resources within the nonprofit industrial complex.

Participants of this study demonstrate continued passion for radical anti-violence work and imagine future avenues for social justice in Minnesota. The nonprofit industrial complex requires those in leadership roles to maintain daily management of social service organizational models. However, participants continue to center anti-oppression in the work that they do. Activists Soniya Munshi and Craig Willse (2017) write that "we do not want to mistake the non-profit worker for the institution itself" and this research highlights the participant initiatives towards alternative anti-violence strategies. Participants acknowledge the necessity of transformative shifts for the anti-violence movement due to historic and current responses that have failed to prevent interpersonal and systemic violence. Additionally, recent funding deficits and increasingly conservative political climates have prompted radical shifts for the mainstream anti-violence movement in Minnesota. The data from this research suggests ongoing efforts from those in nonprofit leadership roles to promote transformative initiatives against gender-based violence in their communities.

Conclusion

This research highlights social justice initiatives of those in nonprofit leadership roles in relation to the anti-violence movement and the nonprofit industrial complex. In this thesis I argue that anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles in Minnesota promote social justice through strategies to diversify funding resources, collaborate with community partners, and center anti-oppression in their direct service and prevention initiatives. Additionally, participants continue to prioritize transformative values for the anti-violence movement as they balance their responsibilities within the nonprofit industrial complex. This research can be used by activists in Minnesota to engage with anti-violence strategies and academics studying the nonprofit industrial complex. This thesis promotes transformative community initiatives to prevent gender-based violence.

The goal of this research is to connect challenges and strategies from six anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles to feminist scholarship regarding the anti-violence movement, the nonprofit industrial complex, and transformative justice frameworks. Additionally, this research aims to further advance primary prevention of gender-based violence in Minnesota and the United States. Participants shared both short-term and long-term challenges related to the nonprofit industrial complex, such as funding restrictions, minimal resources to meet some mandates of public and private funders, and challenges with shifting the focus of their work to encompass sustainable prevention initiatives. Participants also discussed challenges and benefits of both grassroots and systems-focused activism within the past decades of the anti-violence movement. This data reflects efforts from participants to build collective support and resources for survivor-centered and prevention-focused advocacy.

Anti-violence advocacy discussed in this study reflects ongoing feminist efforts to prevent gender-based violence. Grassroots activism from the “second wave” centered gender-based violence on the public feminist agenda (Bevacqua, 2000) and modern feminist efforts have focused on intersectionality in addressing gender-based violence. Additionally, feminist anti-violence activism has shifted from its original focus on men’s violence against women to encompass more intersectional forms of oppression. Many feminist scholars suggest a separation between once grassroots anti-violence advocacy to the current social service models within the nonprofit industrial complex (Burrowes, 2018; Davis et al., 2022; Goodmark, 2018; Levine & Meiners, 2020; Richie, 2012). The data from this research suggests that participants center values from the feminist anti-violence movement while using resources found within the nonprofit industrial complex. The data from this study demonstrates efforts from anti-violence nonprofit leadership in Minnesota to repair harm from the mainstream feminist movement and shift the focus of advocacy and activism towards more transformative goals.

This research can be utilized by advocates and activists in the anti-violence field to engage with current organizing in Minnesota. Strategies mentioned in this data can be modified for different organizations and communities based on individual challenges and goals. Additionally, this research could prompt further transformative, restorative, and abolition activism to address gender-based violence and state-sanctioned violence in Minnesota and the United States. Anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership positions demonstrate the potential to promote radical activism in their communities to address and prevent gender-based violence. Despite potential resistance from public and community funders, participants promote transformative strategies in their own organizations and for collective anti-violence activism in the state of Minnesota.

This research can also be used by academics studying the nonprofit industrial complex and the anti-violence movement. Those in academic scholarship and anti-violence advocates in the field could collectively build transformative initiatives for serving survivors and preventing interpersonal and stated sanctioned violence. The nonprofit industrial complex and the academic industrial complex[5] both operate to maintain institutional divisions and "are two key sites in which neoliberal social and economic reforms are both constituted and contested" (Munshi & Willse, 2017, p. xiv). As power brokers in communities, anti-violence nonprofits and academic institutions hold power that could be directed to collective activism.

This thesis reflects multi-level initiatives from those in anti-violence nonprofit leadership roles in Minnesota. Research regarding effective strategies for the prevention of gender-based violence often promotes multiple approaches within community environments. For instance, Erin A. Casey and Taryn P. Lindhorst (2009) outline six components of multi-level prevention strategies of sexual violence, including attention to specific community and structural contexts and community engagement at all levels to promote comprehensiveness and sustainability. Although a substantial challenge for primary prevention work is lack of funding, participants strategically distribute resources to demonstrate multi-level response and prevention initiatives. Participants reflected on the strategies for funding and capacity building such as the promotion of specific development teams and other shifts within their organizational structure to redistribute capacity for more sustainable advocacy. Additionally, participants nurture partnerships to promote greater community support and engagement for violence response and prevention. The

[5] Munshi and Willse (2017) define the academic industrial complex as the institutionalization of education and the "roles of universities in maintaining status quos and furthering harms caused by capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and white supremacy" (p. xiii).

data reflects strategies for prevention that center anti-oppression to build not only awareness but educational opportunities for community members to engage with prevention initiatives.

Furthermore, the data suggests a turning point for anti-violence advocacy and activism within nonprofit organizations. Participants continually expressed excitement for more sustainable initiatives moving forward in their organizations and for anti-violence response throughout Minnesota. Anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles must manage finite resources while fulfilling state and federal funding guidelines and restrictions. Participants reflected processes of funding redistribution in their organizations to prioritize sustainable service models and long-term wellbeing for advocates and survivors. These redistribution processes may suggest stricter boundaries for emergency services such as shelter and legal advocacy. However, some participants discussed these changes to be necessary as they prioritize survivor-centered services and primary prevention of gender-based violence in their communities. Balancing the use of resources they currently have and implementing strategies to promote more sustainable initiatives, anti-violence advocates in nonprofit leadership roles provide essential contributions to violence prevention efforts in Minnesota.

This research suggests that addressing and preventing interpersonal and state-sanctioned violence should be a priority for all community-based groups. Future anti-violence initiatives must include collective efforts from various community members and center intersectional violence response and prevention through anti-oppressive strategies. Participants manage daily challenges of maintaining sustainable organizational models to provide crisis services for survivors while simultaneously promoting transformative shifts from the nonprofit industrial complex. Additionally, participants continually strategize for primary prevention initiatives, often with goals of “working themselves out of a job” (participant 4). The modern response to

gender-based violence primarily consists of the criminal justice system and anti-violence nonprofit organizations (Goodmark, 2018). However, in the words of participant 6, many anti-violence advocates and activists in Minnesota reflect “flowers growing through the cracks of the concrete” by emanating transformative practices that promote safety and equity for survivors and their communities.

Appendix A

Interview Guide

Hi, my name is Kim Lohse, and I am a graduate student at Minnesota State University, Mankato studying Gender and Women's Studies. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I am working on a thesis project about the anti-violence movement in the United States and am very interested to hear your perspective on this essential work. I currently work part-time in a shelter setting and am looking to get some input from folks in leadership positions within non-profit organizations.

I want to go over some important points before we start the interview. Please feel free to pause or end the interview at any time. You may also choose to skip any question for any reason. This will be a semi-structured interview, so I have written questions prepared for you. However, I would like to hear your perspective on things that are important to you in this work, so please feel free to elaborate on anything even if it isn't within scope of these questions.

This interview is confidential. I will not include names of participants or organizations in my thesis. This interview will be recorded through Zoom for my review only and you may choose to retract any statement or information at any time. I will also be transcribing the recording, and I am happy to send you this document for review or editing once it is available. Even if there is something you wish to retract after we leave our meeting, I am available for communication through email. This interview is to get your perspective and it's important that you feel comfortable throughout our conversation.

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Zoom audio and video recording will start if agreed upon by the participant.

Anti-Violence Work

1. How long have you been in anti-violence work?
    a. What influenced your decision to start this type of work?
2. Can you tell me about your current position?
    a. What are your main responsibilities?
3. What do you most enjoy about your work?
    a. Is there a moment on the job you can share that you found rewarding?
4. What are some challenges you have faced?
    a. What has been most beneficial for you as you navigate these challenges?

Community Education and Outreach

1. What are some best practices that work for you in your organization in terms of capacity building?
2. Are there any misconceptions about the organization's purpose or functions from the communities it serves?
3. What are some projects your organization is carrying out in terms of community education or outreach?

   a. What strategies have you found to be the most effective for community education or outreach?
   b. Is there anything you wish was available or more accessible for the organization as you navigate community education or outreach?
4. In your experience, have there been any community partnerships that have been helpful for you as you navigate this work? What worked best about this partnership?
   a. Follow-up question: are there any community partnerships that have not worked as you would have expected?

Funding

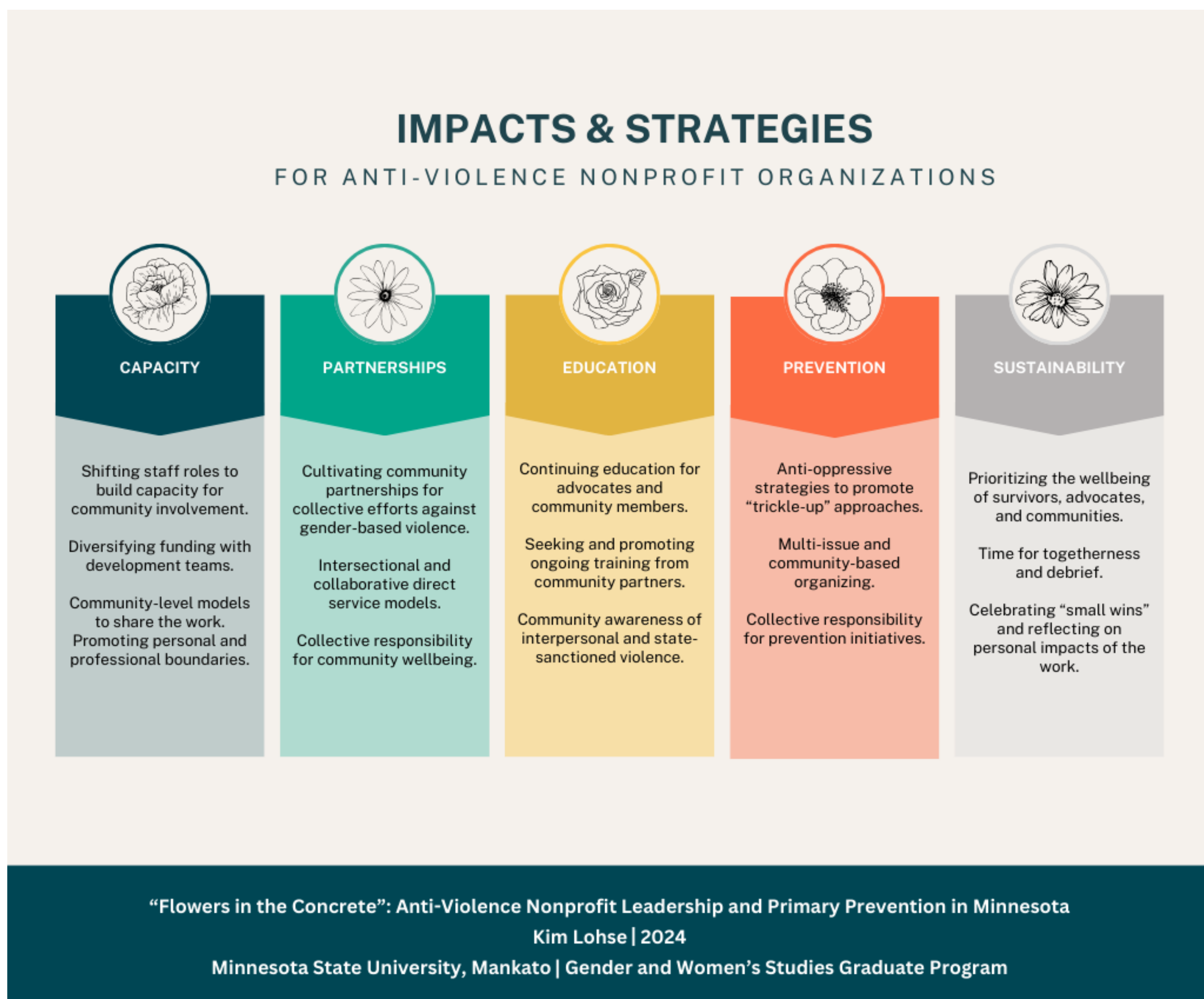
1. What are the organization's sources of funding?
   a. What are the strengths of this funding?
   b. What are some challenges that come along with this funding?
2. Does the organization receive any funding from the communities it serves?
   a. What are some strengths and challenges with this?
3. Are there ways you think the organization could utilize funding differently to have greater community involvement or impact?
4. If your organization was granted unlimited funding without any guidelines, what are some things you would immediately change or do differently?
5. If you were tasked to start a *new* organization without any funding limitations or guidelines, what would be some things you would include in its mission statement?

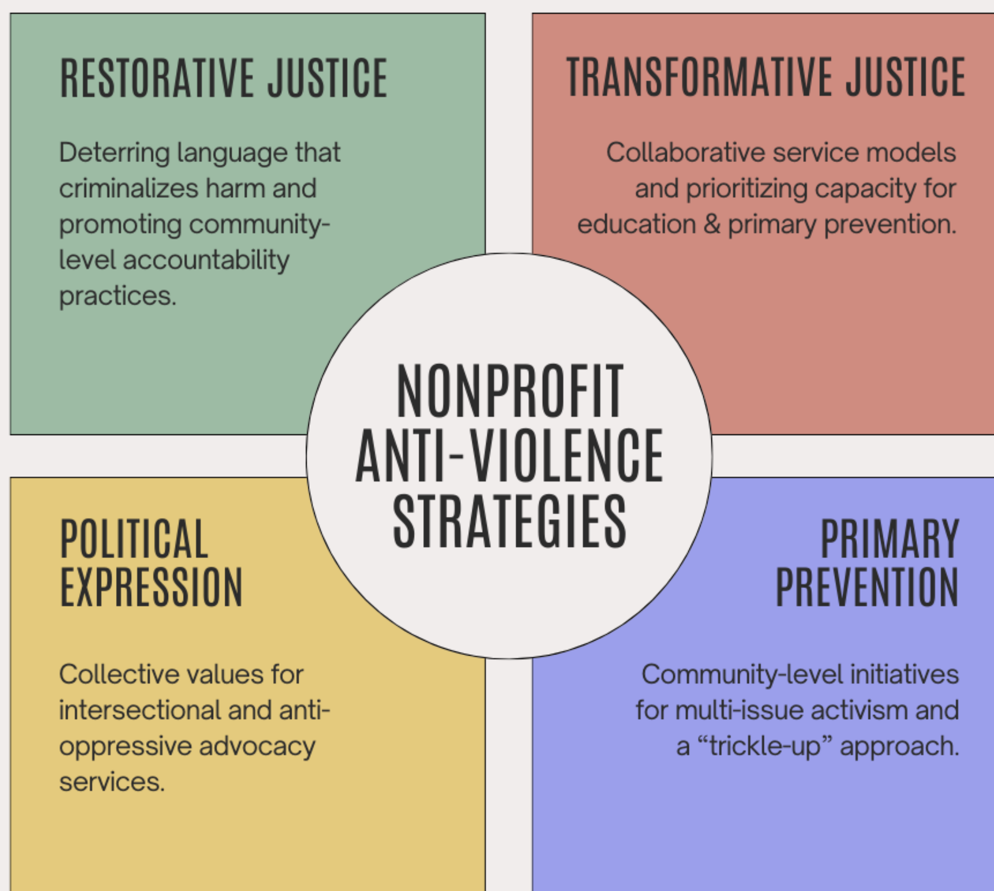
Before we end, is there anything else you would like to add or share?

Do you have any questions for me?

Appendix B

Research Graphics




RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
Deterring language that criminalizes harm and promoting community-level accountability practices.
TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE
Collaborative service models and prioritizing capacity for education & primary prevention.
NONPROFIT ANTI-VIOLENCE STRATEGIES
POLITICAL EXPRESSION
Collective values for intersectional and anti-oppressive advocacy services.
PRIMARY PREVENTION
Community-level initiatives for multi-issue activism and a "trickle-up" approach.
"Flowers in the Concrete": Anti-Violence Nonprofit Leadership and Primary Prevention in Minnesota
Kim Lohse 2024
Minnesota State University, Mankato Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Program

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