



The Martin Institute PRINTS is an undergraduate peer-reviewed academic journal that aims to support and promote the scholarship of Stonehill students in the fields of Anthropology, Criminology, Political Science, and Sociology.

**PRINTS 2024 Editorial Staff:**

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*\*Many thanks to our Faculty Advisor, Associate Professor of Criminology and Director of the Martin Institute: Katie Currul-Dykeman*

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## Meet the Editorial Staff!



**Sydney Farrell**  
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Sydney Farrell is a criminology and psychology double major with a minor in political science, a Moreau Honors Scholar, and a first-generation student. During her time at Stonehill, she has been involved in various clubs and organizations, including being the President of Criminology Club and Editor-in-Chief of PRINTS. Sydney was also a Resident Assistant for two years, one of which as a Head RA in the Colonial and Commonwealth Courts. She was also a member of the Women's Rugby team, the Honors Advisory Council (or HAC) and the Edwin Sutherland Criminology Honors Society. Sydney was also on the dean's list for the past 7 semesters. Over the course of her time at Stonehill, Sydney completed three internships in the realm of criminology and psychology, most recently at Family and Community Resources, Inc. Visitation Center in Brockton, MA. Sydney will be working full-time as a Family Intervention Specialist at Youth Villages in Boston after graduation.

**Malia McClerklin**  
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Malia McClerklin is a graduating senior from Boston, Massachusetts with a Criminology major and Sociology minor. She is a member of the Edwin H. Sutherland Criminology Honor Society and a recipient of the Brassil Fitzgerald Memorial Scholarship while being on the Dean's List for seven semesters. Additionally, she is involved with the Student Conduct Board, RUCKUS: Stonehill's Hip Hop and Step team, and the Criminology mentorship program. On campus, she works as an Accessibility Services Office Assistant at the Office of Accessibility Resources and a customer service representative at the Stonehill College dining establishments. Malia's internships during her time at Stonehill have included the Edward W. Brooke Courthouse, Children's Rights organization, the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services, Khanbabai Immigration Law, and the Digital Evidence Laboratory under the Attorney General's Office. After graduation, Malia will be working as a paralegal at Melick & Porter, LLP in Boston, Massachusetts and hopes to eventually go to law school.



**Adam Ammirata**  
Editor



Adam is a member of the Stonehill Class of 2026 pursuing a double major in Criminology and Psychology with a minor in Political Science. He is a Moreau Honors Scholar passionate about the interaction between mental health and criminal justice. Adam has specifically developed an interest in prisons and the treats provided to offenders while incarcerated. Through his time at Stonehill, Adam has been an active member of the Criminology Club and finished his internship with Family and Community Resources Inc., a domestic violence and mental health agency, in the Spring. Adam is also a Resident Assistant, a member of the Honors Advisory Council, Criminology Club, the Student Conduct Board, and Campus Ministry's Retreat team. Over the next few years, he wants to continue to explore the field of Criminology and determine a more specific path of interest within the Criminology and Psychology field.



## Sarah Bua

Sarah is a graduating senior with a Criminology and Psychology double major. She is the president of Stonehill's Art Club and vice president of the Criminology Club. She is an employee of The MacPháidin Library, where she has worked as a desk aide for the past four years. Sarah has participated in multiple internships during her time at Stonehill, including a victim witness advocacy position in the Bristol County District Attorney's Office and a court assistant at the Borough of Oakland Municipal Court. Sarah has a deep passion for improving the lives of individuals within and outside of the criminal justice system and hopes to accomplish this after graduation.

### **Shelters for Preventing Domestic Violence**

A crime, victimization, and injustice that occurs habitually in the United States is domestic violence. It is often defined as “violence that occurs between two people” (Mallicoat, 2023). This act of abuse can be emotional, physical, financial, or sexual, and can occur between family members or people in romantic relationships. Domestic violence can also include stalking behaviors and is composed of actions used to gain power and control over a victim (Mallicoat, 2023). As reported in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), approximately 1.2 million people experience domestic violence in the United States every year. Though this number is alarmingly high, the reality is a much greater figure due to countless instances. Researchers and theorists have argued that there are three types of individuals that perpetrate intimate partner violence (IPV) or domestic violence. The first type of abuser targets individuals inside of their family, the second type abuses family members due to mental illness, and the third type is generally violent to both family members and people outside the family (Mallicoat, 2023). All three types of abusers are harmful to people undeserving of punishment or mistreatment. Domestic violence is a widespread and recurrent issue that is present in millions of homes across the United States. Because of this, programs exist to help people escape their abusers or an environment that might be dangerous for them.

#### **Strengthen Our Sisters | Wanaque, New Jersey**

Strengthen Our Sisters (SOS) is a shelter and supportive service program for women fleeing domestic violence situations located in Wanaque, New Jersey. This format of shelter is co-operational, non-hierarchical, and allocates its' focus on improving the women participating in the program. The guests play a major role in the decision-making processes of the shelter, such as helping to plan meals, schedule activities, do upkeep jobs, and



further the “pass it on” theme of the shelter. The women are working to create a circle of support for past and current members of SOS that encourages self-sufficiency and independence. A second significant facet of this shelter is the employment opportunities available for the residents. Two nearby local businesses have storefronts that are managed by past resident that allow the women to “pass it on” by providing jobs for current residents of the shelter. Employment opportunities allow women to advance their career knowledge and financial and emotional independence. The program that oversees SOS, SWAN (Self-Sufficiency Women’s Action Network), has a collection of successful business projects that provide the majority of funding for the shelter. The network has a thrift store, print shop, newspaper, and cleaning service. All of the smaller projects within SWAN are run and organized by current residents of the shelter. The funds collected in these programs help to better the facilities of the shelter and the lives of the women within it. Overall, the services and opportunities within the Strengthen Our Sisters program help women escape domestic violence situations and encourages the betterment of women who have experienced hardships and difficulties in the past.

### **The Odyssey House | Alberta, Canada**

A second program that helps victims of domestic violence is The Odyssey House located in Alberta, Canada. This shelter focuses on equality, empowerment, and advancing the lives of those who leave the shelter. The house is a large residence with 42 beds, a full-time staff specialized in safety planning, large laundry facilities, extra clothing, support groups, a resource library, childcare, pet facilities, and handicap accessibility. An important aspect of this program is its emphasis on the idea that finding shelter is simply the start of a long road in escaping a domestic violence situation. After leaving the initial shelter, the Odyssey House offers a second-stage housing program they have named Serenity Place. The women placed in the Serenity housing have recently received job positions that allow them to lead normal lives and have 30% of their rent covered by the Alberta Works Core Funding for Shelter. Any person can apply for second-stage housing after living in the initial shelter, giving them access to support services, a collective kitchen, childcare assistance, counseling, and life-training skills. The Serenity Place and Odyssey House have rooms for meditation and yoga, as well as a full-service gym. This aspect of the program is important as it acknowledges that “a few weeks in a shelter isn’t enough to heal the scars of abuse or to lay a foundation for an independent life” (Odyssey House, 2022). Acknowledging this fact is essential to the betterment of the women who enter the shelter as it encourages a healthier and safer society for all. Overall, the Odyssey House’s services and programs inform women of how to escape their domestic violence situation and teach them how to live their life outside of a shelter.

### **Societal Issues Inherent in the Programs**

The societal issue inherent in both Strengthen Our Sisters and The Odyssey House is domestic violence. Despite the prevalence of domestic violence in the United States, there are very few resources available to help people leave their abusive situations or relationships. Domestic violence and intimate partner violence can leave

women and families homeless, financially unstable, and without access to necessary resources like food and water. This creates many issues and vulnerable environments for victims of abuse to fall into. Since there is very little education and widespread knowledge about people in abusive situations, other individuals are often unaware of how to help victims and what warning signs to look out for. A lack of education perpetuates a culture that allows domestic and intimate partner violence to occur, rather than stop it when warning signs are noticeable. The founder of Strengthen Our Sisters states domestic violence “...creeps under your door and is everywhere. We see it by the amount of violence we have in our society” (Ramos, 2011). Domestic violence can occur anywhere and hurt anyone, so it is important to promote a community that chooses to fight against the issue, rather than be complacent with the problem. Overall, the issue inherent within these programs to combat domestic violence showcases how dangerous it is and how the society we live in does not do enough to prevent it from occurring.

### **Gender Issues Inherent in the Programs**

The gender issue inherent in both Strengthen Our Sisters and The Odyssey House is the lack of support for women who experience domestic violence. Violence against women is a massive societal problem that occurs due to the patriarchal structure of our world. Typically, women who end up in shelters often lack the education, knowledge, and confidence to overcome their domestic abusers. They instead end up falling victim to the belittling comments and actions of their male partner. The survivors of domestic violence are in no way at fault for these issues. Women are stereotypically seen as less physically and mentally strong and can often feel as though they are helpless to their abuser’s power. Programs within SOS and The Odyssey House work to reverse the gendered stereotypes that women face on the daily. They educate women about abuse patterns and how to navigate a confusing and convoluted legal system. These programs also teach education courses that further the general knowledge of women, helping them to boost their confidence in their abilities to thrive in a typical workforce. Because our society enforces negative stereotypes associated with women, programs and education that combat these notions help to lessen the gendered issues inherent in domestic violence prevention programs.

### **Theories of Victimization in the Programs**

Strengthen Our Sisters uses aspects from theories of victimization that argue why the system should or should not work. Target Congruency theory was developed by Finkelhor and Asdigian in 1996, which criticized the typical theories that propose crimes are the results of a victim’s behavior with an offender (Mallicoat, 2023). This theory argues that most other theories cannot explain acquaintance or intra-family victimization, which is crucial to understanding domestic violence crimes. They proposed three different types of target congruence: target vulnerability, target gratification, and target antagonism. The target vulnerability category states that someone’s small stature or appearance of being physically weak might cause an offender to act violently toward them, which can explain why female victims tend to be the most common victims of domestic violence. The target gratification category argues that someone’s personal qualities might provoke an offender to victimize

them. For example, a victim might possess a skill that an offender wants to obtain, use, have access to, or manipulate. The target antagonism category can explain gender identity, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation-provoked domestic violence. For example, if a partner is lashing out at another partner due to their sexual orientation, it would fall into the explanation of target antagonism. When looking at the crime of domestic violence, target vulnerability and antagonism help to explain why instances occur within relationships and families. Strengthen Our Sisters uses aspects of this theory to stop victimization from occurring after someone enters their shelter (Mallicoat, 2023). The emphasis on someone's vulnerability pointed out by Target Congruence showcases how a perpetrator having access to a vulnerable victim can be harmful and dangerous. Removing that access through sheltering helps to eliminate further possibilities of victimization. Similarly, vulnerability can be more than just physical size or accessibility; a person can be mentally and educationally vulnerable as well. By providing psychological counseling and education to further someone's intelligence, Strengthen Our Sisters is helping to reduce these vulnerabilities, therefore removing a perpetrator's access to them. Overall, the victimization theory of Target Congruence helps to showcase how programs, like Strengthen Our Sisters, use different strategies and tactics to prevent victimization from occurring again.

The Odyssey House has also implemented aspects of theories of victimization into its practices. One of the most popular criminal theories, Routine Activities Theory, focuses on three main aspects of convergence that can be applied to many types of victimization: a motivated offender, an available target, and the absence of a capable guardian. Cohen and Felson developed this theory in 1979, but the theory has been studied further to include women (Mallicoat, 2023). We know that women are more likely targets for crimes like sexual assault and domestic violence. Combining vulnerability and lifestyle choices with a rape-supportive culture can lead to more women becoming victims of violence against women. Programs and resources within The Odyssey House help to disestablish the three components of victimization outlined in Routine Activities Theory. Firstly, The Odyssey House provides legal support to victims of domestic violence and helps them navigate the difficult criminal justice system. By having resources available who know how to get justice for victims, more motivated offenders are being housed in facilities, like prisons or mental health programs, that eliminate their availability to available targets. Secondly, keeping women safe and away from their abusers, the streets, or dangerous situations is helping to remove an available target from a motivated offender. The Odyssey House is a large shelter with many bedrooms and sleeping arrangements, which is beneficial to the community and provides a safe place to live. Lastly, The Odyssey House has a full-time staff in charge of the safety and well-being of the residents on call at any given time. They have specific training that permits them to qualify as capable guardians for the residents within the program. This eliminates the absence of the capable guardian category of congruence for the essential components of victimization. Overall, The Odyssey House has implemented features of the Routine Activities Theory of victimization into their programs to prevent criminal activity from occurring to their residents.

## Evidence for the Success of the Programs

In a video made by 25 for 25, the founder of Strengthen Our Sisters, Sandra Ramos, tells the stories of different women who have successfully entered and left the program. After a woman knocked on her door asking for help, Ramos invited more and more individuals seeking shelter within her home. Soon, she had a full-fledged organization operating twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (Ramos, 2011). The program starts by asking each woman what they need, how they can help, and what information they might need to escape their situation. One woman, Ellen, came to the shelter physically hurt and scared for her life. She joined the program with her children and found the resources necessary to divorce her husband (Strengthen Our Sisters, 2011). She now has a full-time job, apartment, and custody of her children. She cites the support of the staff and the other women within the shelter for her life and claims that without their help, she would be dead. The shelter hires advocates who work closely with the women and encourage them to leave their abusive relationships or households. Having a close and trusting relationship between victim and advocate helps the women feel supported enough to escape their current situations. Ellen went through the social service, legal, and parenting training offered at SOS before leaving the program and returning to society. She believes that this education was a main contributor to her confidence in leaving her abusive husband. Overall, the services and programs available within Strengthen Our Sisters, as well as the supportive staff and fellow survivors, create an environment that supports women to leave their abusive relationships. They are also able to find work opportunities and advance their education in many different facets, which leads to hundreds of success stories from the women who enter the SOS program.

Yearly, the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS) releases a data report on the shelters within their organization. This council oversees many different programs within the Alberta area, and it compiles qualitative and quantitative information into a data release. From this information, we know that 7,620 women, men, and children were sheltered by an ACWS shelter in the year 2022. Out of those 7,000, 631 went onto second-stage programs like the Serenity Place system at the Odyssey House (Odyssey House, 2022). The data release also encapsulates how many individuals were turned away from shelters in Alberta: 11,546 (Odyssey House, 2022). This number is greater than the number of people who were accepted, which is an alarming and concerning figure. However, we know that shelters and programs are significantly understaffed and lack the physical space for the number of people who need help. With that being said, over 80% of the individuals who went to a shelter in Alberta created a safety plan with team members to guide them through their difficult circumstances. Though this aid is not housing, it is still a beneficial way that a service provided help to the community. The data release also shares stories of women who have entered and left the shelter. One woman claimed that "[the staff] help each other and every one of us get our self-esteem back and teach us how to start over...10 months later, I am still supported, and it has been a wonderful experience" (Odyssey House, 2022). This data report that is released yearly helps educate people on the reality of shelters within the Alberta area. By sharing success stories, it can encourage other women in need of help looking for a place to escape their dangerous situation.



## **Conclusion**

In summary, many important lessons can be learned from the domestic violence shelters and programs of Strengthen Our Sisters and The Odyssey House. Both programs do incredible work for women who have experienced domestic abuse or intimate partner violence and continue to work for a fairer and more just world. The use of education in both shelters helps women improve their lives outside and after the shelter, which is a crucial aspect of the rehabilitative element of life after experiencing abuse. Providing resources and keeping a friendly and caring staff helps women feel strong and motivated to leave their abusive situations and create a better life for themselves. Though domestic violence shelters and programs are exceedingly underfunded and undervalued, the work that people do within the shelters to help others is still very useful to the community. In a perfect world, no one would be turned away from the doors of a domestic violence shelter seeking a haven from danger. However, until that can be a reality, programs like SOS and The Odyssey House are doing work of great importance. Using the work of victimization theorists to see what aspects of life can increase or reduce crime is important so future offending is limited. Aspects of both Target Congruency and Rational Choice Theory can be seen in the preventative methods of domestic abuse programs. Though these shelters do not have a flawless success rate, learning and using knowledge from studies to improve their programs is a key lesson that can be cultivated from research. Overall, Strengthen Our Sisters and The Odyssey House exist to help people escape a dangerous environment, all while acknowledging the societal issues within our world that need to be fixed to stop domestic violence.

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## Sydney Farrell

Sydney Farrell is a criminology and psychology double major with a minor in political science, a Moreau Honors Scholar, and first-generation student. During her time at Stonehill, she has been involved in various clubs and organizations, including being the President of Criminology Club and Editor-in-Chief of PRINTS. Sydney was also a Resident Assistant for two years, one of which as a Head RA in the Colonial and Commonwealth Courts. She was also a member of the Women's Rugby team, the Honors Advisory Council (or HAC) and the Edwin Sutherland Criminology Honors Society. Sydney was also on the dean's list for the past 7 semesters. Over the course of her time at Stonehill, Sydney completed three internships in the realm of criminology and psychology, most recently at Family and Community Resources, Inc. Visitation Center in Brockton, MA. Sydney will be working full-time as a Family Intervention Specialist at Youth Villages in Boston after graduation.

### **Domestic Violence and its Impact on Children in the Home: Immediate and Lasting Effects**

Domestic violence (DV) is a very complex issue that is defined slightly differently in every state and affects all who surround the abuse. As there are many variations to what is considered domestic violence, it is important to set a baseline definition to understand the complexities of the issue, as well as what both victims experience and children in the home witness. The U.S. federal definition of domestic violence encompasses “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner” (U.S. DOJ: Office of Violence Against Women, 2023). This abuse can be actions or threats of actions that include physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, technological, or other patterns of coercive behavior that influence another person. These actions and behaviors are intended to intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound one's partner, and occurs in relationships regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, sex, gender identity, socioeconomic background, and education level (U.S. DOJ: Office of Violence Against Women, 2023).

Domestic violence does not only affect the victim: it affects their friends, family members, and potentially even their jobs and co-workers. When a victim has a child in the home, the effects exceed the worry and anxiety regarding the victim's safety and wellbeing that friends and family experience. Growing up in a home where youth are exposed to domestic violence can have detrimental effects on the child's development and relationship building. DV has both short-term effects on children, such as anxiety and reserved behavior with their peers, or long-term effects including the inability to form healthy non-toxic relationships, and potentially becoming a victim or abuser in the future. The following paper includes a meta-analysis of research done on the effects of DV in youth in the home, particularly how it affects their future relationships.

## Literature Review

### How Children Experience DV

Children experience exposure to domestic violence in many different ways. Some of these ways are more obvious, such as being physically present for DV incidents or over-hearing them from another area in the home (Maram, 2023). More complex or unacknowledged experiences can be generally being aware of the violence and/or its impacts on their primary caregiver, being used as a pawn in the DV, or being blamed as a trigger for it (Maram, 2023). These more complex examples incorporate the experiences that often go unacknowledged by society. Parents can utilize their children to create a fearful environment for their partner, telling them they will take the child(ren) and their partner will never see them again, or inflict harm upon the child(ren).

Children may try to intervene in DV, seeing themselves as responsible for protecting their abused parent (NCTSN, 2015). Kids may feel an obligation to remain with their parent, draw attention to themselves in order to distract from the DV, or get in the middle of a DV event, which can sometimes escalate the situation, resulting in being blamed or used as a trigger once again (NCTSN, 2015). Some children experience domestic violence in the complete opposite way, siding with the abusive parent. It is common for the abusive party to be extremely manipulative and even accomplish a level of brainwashing on their victims. Children may think their abused parent is responsible for how their abusive parent is acting, as if their actions are responsible for the anger and violence in the home. Regardless of how the DV is perceived, children face similar physical and psychological effects in childhood, and often understand the components of relationships in an unhealthy manner.

### Immediate Effects in Childhood

#### i. Behaviors of DV Children

Children experience DV in many ways, as each situation and relationship is unique. However, there are some common experiences and symptoms for children that witness and experience DV. Some of the main effects many research studies have found the increased experience of depression, anxiety, aggressive behaviors, and learning difficulties (Brown & Bzostek, 2003). Researchers Brown and Bzostek also found in their 2003 data brief that children who experience and witness DV are more likely to self-harm, wet the bed, be diagnosed with insomnia, and have antisocial behaviors. Exposure to DV can also play a role in aggression, violence, and delinquency (Moylan, et al., 2010). These effects can all occur in early childhood through adolescence.

Children who experience domestic violence commonly have trauma indicators, which are signs that someone has or is actively experiencing a traumatic event. Some examples of trauma indicators for children of DV at different developmental stages include; an infant having an over or under reaction to loud noises or voices, a preschool age child having difficulty playing with children their age, or an adolescent engaging in risky behaviors such as underage drinking (Maram, 2023). Children may also experience increased levels of fear, anger, tantrums, or clinginess (NCTSN, 2015). These trauma indicators show the complexity of a child's experiences on



their development, and are a sign for educators and social services to step in and help the child and family members involved in the cycle of domestic violence.

Studies that look at the psychological impact of children exposed to DV are vitally important to understanding the issue itself and developing strategies and services for supporting these children. As of 2006, UNICEF reports that approximately 133-275 million children witness DV every year, but scholars speculate that number has spiked drastically since the COVID-19 pandemic (Doroudchi et al., 2023). More recent studies, circa 2019 and on, have shown that children who grew up in a home with DV are experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than other children (Doroudchi et al., 2023). PTSD can manifest in children in various ways, including but not limited to “engaging in play where certain themes or aspects of the trauma are expressed, the appearance of frightening dreams without discernable content, and reenacting specific aspects of the traumatic event” (Tsavoussis, et al., 2014). All these manifestations of PTSD can include flashbacks of the event, causing children to feel as if they are reliving their experiences. These children are constantly on edge, and fearful of the violence and psychological warfare they witness at home. This is shown to have negative effects on children’s cognitive growth, academic and social performance, personal hygiene, and self-esteem (Doroudchi et al., 2023).

## **ii. Brain Development of DV Children**

While not all mental and behavioral functions have a connection to altered brain functioning, children who were maltreated in childhood or witnessed DV may have brain anatomy that is not consistent with the average child (Tsavoussis, et al., 2014). For children who witness DV, various parts of their brain are affected, including the midbrain, limbic system, cortex, corpus callosum, and cerebellum. The midbrain is the relay center for visual and auditory messages and is often underdeveloped in these children. This means these children may get distracted easily and have trouble focusing, increasing the likelihood for ADHD. The limbic system controls the centers for emotion, survival, fear, anger, and pleasure/sex – any excess in these areas (a result of a trauma) can alter the functioning. The cortex deals with decision making and the corpus callosum connects both brain hemispheres allowing them to communicate. Both these brain structures have been found to be smaller in children who have witnessed DV, decreasing their ability to understand and consider consequences. The cerebellum is involved with emotion, cognitive development, and balance. The size of the cerebellum is also found to be smaller than the average child’s and is similar to those who experience PTSD. More brain functions and neurotransmitters are affected in those who witnessed DV in childhood, most notably a chronic increase in cortisol level that leads to symptoms of PTSD, depression, and problems with both eating and sex (Tsavoussis, et al., 2014).

## **Expectations of DV Children**

A common psychological theory that ties along with a child’s development and understanding behaviors is social learning theory. This theory was developed by Albert Bandura, a psychologist who found support from his studies that children, and all people, learn their behaviors from watching those around them. In Bandura’s

1961 ‘Bobo Doll’ experiment, children were exposed to an adult woman beating a blow up doll (McLeod, 2024). When the adult left the room, the children were observed to be increasingly violent towards the doll, some even increasing their physical aggression to use weapons. Bandura’s experiment solidified that children learn easily from behaviors that are modeled for them, and latch on easily to violent behaviors. Social learning theory tells us that exposure to domestic violence in the home during development can be detrimental to a child’s perception of normal behavior. This theory is the basis for much of the research that refers to children being “destined” to be involved in abuse relationships in their future, as the behavior of their abusive parent(s) is what they are socialized to believe is acceptable behavior from a young age.

Much of the research prior to recent years declared that children in a home with domestic violence were destined to perpetually be in toxic and abusive relationships for the rest of their lives. An exploratory study was done for California State University, published in 2022, and investigated how determining of a factor childhood domestic violence is in future relationships (Rodriguez & Venzor, 2022). The study was comprised of interviews of eight women who had all experienced domestic violence in the environment they grew up in. The study found there was a significant correlation between childhood domestic violence and abusive future relationships (Rodriguez & Venzor, 2022). The researchers noted that much previous research they had utilized in formulating their study and cited in their literature review yielded the same findings. The study showed that experiencing DV in childhood desensitizes youth to violence and can lead to ignoring and normalizing warning signs in adult relationships. Further research shows that childhood maltreatment, which can often coincide with DV, has a significant correlation to perpetration of maltreatment (Thornberry, et al., 2013). This expectation of DV children can be detrimental to their perception of their own future, subconsciously putting themselves into a box that they cannot be in a healthy relationship.

### **Male Perpetration and Victimization**

The stigma that only men are perpetrators of violence is extremely harmful to those who are in abusive relationships. There is often a lack of recognition, acceptance, and support for men who are in relationships with abusive women, not only from society’s perspective, but also from the man himself. A qualitative study was done in the United Kingdom with 10 men who were involved in a family intervention program (Domoney & Trevillion, 2021). All 10 men experienced abuse or witnessed DV in their youth and were at risk for committing DV in their families as an adult and were in the program to stop the cycle of violence. The researchers identified four main themes from the data: making sense of violent behavior, conceptions of fatherhood, emotional transition, and breaking the cycle (Domoney & Trevillion, 2021). Many of the men reporting having to work through their own violent behavior, and the violence they witnessed/experienced as a child. They realized it was important to heal from that trauma to be able to work on themselves and “do better” for their own children, as well as take responsibility for any harm or abuse they have caused (Domoney & Trevillion, 2021). Researchers noted that many of the fathers talked about needing to be taught how to father after growing up in a chaotic home. They

spoke about wishing they had been in parenting classes earlier, since their perception of what it meant to be a father was not involved or supportive, nor was it recognized as being part of a team with your partner. The emotional transition into fatherhood is something that is often not discussed, and many of these men reported struggling with the changes in family dynamics. A concern was that their partners would think they are inadequate at parenting and not have any time to focus on their relationship. Having kids comes with a lot of emotions and changes, which is something these men felt they were not prepared for, as they were not raised in a “normal” home (Domoney & Trevillion, 2021).

To dive deeper into male victimization, a 2023 study surveyed 526 Korean male college students in Seoul (Kwon & You, 2023). This study looked at social learning theory from a slightly different angle, with the belief that children will only copy and adopt violent behaviors that they believe are effective. If a child sees that one parent is being violent towards the other and is getting what they want, then the child will begin to mirror that behavior. The study looked at both the gender and role specific models; the gender model referring to a child taking on traits and behaviors of the parent who they share a gender identity with, and the role model assuming that the child will learn to become a victim of violence in the future by witnessing it regardless of parental gender (Kwon & You, 2023). The study found that the college age male participants who witnessed mother to father DV were more likely to become victims, and those who witnessed father to mother DV are not any more likely than the average person to be a victim of DV (Kwon & You, 2023).

### **Female Relationships Later in Life**

Growing up in a home with domestic violence does not allow children to witness a strong and healthy relationship. Kids learn what is right and acceptable based on the examples set by those in the home, which is outlined in Bandura’s social learning theory. When this is applied to a child who experienced DV throughout their childhood, it is not surprising they may think it is acceptable, and even normal, for a relationship to consist of violence, anger, and fear; as that is what they witnessed from their parents. A qualitative study done with 23 young adult women in southeastern United States, exposed to father on mother domestic violence throughout childhood, showed that many young women experienced a relationship with DV themselves in adolescence (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). Many of the women who had experienced violent relationships themselves also minimized the harm done to them, even though they were no longer in those relationships. One woman even said, “he never broke any bones... the last time I saw him he did push me down the stairs, but they were like short stairs, like I was not injured” when talking about her high school ex-boyfriend (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). This finding is consistent with the decades old statistic that children who grew up in a home with DV are extremely likely to be involved in a DV relationship themselves.

What the Haselschwerdt study found that diverged from this perception is that not even one of these women experienced dating violence after the age of 20 (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). Many of these women reported that they fell into abusive relationships in high school, reporting they were trying to escape what was

happening at home and had been raised to normalize toxic relationships (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). Once the women went to college, their perceptions of relationships had changed as they were no longer immersed in the DV. One of the women stated “I realized the world is humongous... I didn’t have to be stuck with anyone I didn’t want to be stuck with” (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). The changing of one’s physical environment and escaping an abuser can be enough to change an entire mindset and outlook on life. Becoming educated at a higher level, and even simply learning about what others have experienced, becomes an outlet for new perspectives.

Many women also reported feeling pressure to break the intergenerational transmission process (ITP), which refers to ending the cycle of violence and expectation that they will fall into violent and toxic relationships their whole life. Researchers reported that many of the women “actively sought out romantic partners that were dissimilar to their fathers” and reported comparing their behaviors, as well as their parent’s marriage, to their own relationship (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). One woman discussed how she looks at relationships differently than her friends who had not experienced DV in their families or childhood; “I do look for those red flags a lot... but that’s just because I want to be cautious” (Haselschwerdt et al., 2021). As a child of DV, there are pressures to break the ITP for many reasons. The following are just some of these relentless pressures that children of DV report feeling on a regular basis: The fear of proving society right and joining the statistic of women who are victimized. The concern for your social emotional wellbeing and physical safety. The refusal to let your future children experience childhood the way you did, constantly hearing screams and physical altercations.

## **Interventions for Children of Domestic Violence**

### **i. Childhood Protective Factors**

There are many ways to look at experiences and supports in childhood, and one way is to label both risk and protective factors. Protective factors are experiences or supports that exist in a child’s life to decrease the possibility of trauma or violence, while risk factors increase that likelihood (CDC, 2023). It is difficult to minimize many of the risk factors in youth in DV homes, as DV itself is a major risk factor. Other risk factors that these children may experience are the justification of abuse or violence, parents with lower education, low socioeconomic status, high levels of stress, inconsistent discipline, and many more (CDC, 2023). While some risk factors may be unavoidable, having strong protective factors can make a huge difference in a child’s life. One of the most unanimously supported protective factors across all research is positive social relationships. This encompasses quite a bit of what a child is involved with each day. Positive social relationships refer to relationships where the child is actively engaged and feels seen. These can include family members, siblings, friends, teachers, coaches, peers, faith leaders, and so many more community-oriented role models (Livings, et al., 2022). The goal is for the child to be socialized into an environment focused on the child’s best interests, turning away from violence.

Researchers refer to Bandura’s self-efficacy theory for solidifying protective factors, which encompasses promoting self-confidence through one’s belief in their capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce



specific performance outcomes and ability to influence events and control their environment (Lopez-Garrido, 2023). To achieve this self-confidence according to Bandura's model, it is important that children of DV are encouraged to learn and participate in the community, allowing them to make their own choices, giving them positive and negative feedback, and having other confident and successful peers encourage them and model behaviors (Lopez-Garrido, 2023). This can be done at home, in the classroom, and/or in therapy – all of which should be consistent to see the best results.

## **ii. Breaking the Cycle**

It is easy for any cycle to continue if there is no force or supports put in place to stop it. The same applies to domestic violence. For children who are socialized to intimate partner violence through witnessing their parents' relationship, it can be difficult to break that cycle and knowing where to start. Home visit programs where social workers and intervention specialists come to the home to work with families on building a support system and working on behaviors have been proven to work well (Livings, et al., 2022). Other programs where children are removed from the home and placed with children who have similar experiences have been shown to yield extremely positive results. This group home intervention was designed specifically by researchers to break the cycle of family violence (Livings, et al., 2022). They placed at-risk youth in group homes run by married couples and a full-time assistant, with 6-8 other children, ages ranging from 10 to 18 years old. Members of the surrounding community, meaning anyone who would be regularly interacting with the kids, were trained to ensure consistent reinforcement of appropriate behaviors with the children. These included neighbors, teachers, coaches, and other community members. The researchers checked in with these children 16 years after the intervention, and found they reported less than half the rate of intimate partner violence that they were projected to be involved in at childhood. The success of this intervention is a great sign for innovative interventions that put the child's best interest at the center of the goal.

Other interventions could include life skills and relationship classes for children of DV, teaching them what "normal" relationships look like. This could encompass both romantic relationships and future parenting, as many men from the UK qualitative study noted they wished they had been better equipped for fatherhood (Domoney & Trevillion, 2021). Programs like this exist across the world for dads, but are often not advertised or have low attendance due to stigmas. Boosting these programs can help stop the cycle of DV, educating those who need it most, and may feel too uncomfortable or proud to ask for help. More national focus in middle and high schools about intimate partner/dating violence can be another tool to inform youth everywhere what healthy relationships look like, and how to look out for warning signs & seek help if needed.

## **Research Recommendations**

Unfortunately, much of the research available revolves around 'WEIRD' samples. This acronym stands for western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic – referring to the privileged population that society is already built to support (Azar, 2010). Using this sample of individuals, often white upper-class men and women

in America, ignores the experiences and perceptions of other groups that are already marginalized. It is extremely important to view societal issues such as children impacted by domestic violence, through a holistic lens, accounting for one's entire identity. There is a lack of acknowledgement of just how intersectional one's identity is in research. It is vital to account for how one's race, gender identity, social status, education level, religion, and other facets of one's identity account for the differences in relationship building and expectations.

While there is existing research cited regarding protective factors and interventions for youth affected by domestic violence, it is vital that research is continuously done in this area. The world changes so rapidly, and many of these programs and factors have no mention of technology and its role in these interventions. Children are often on social media and the internet, and due to their home environments, their screen time is likely unsupervised. Research shows that the media we consume plays a large role in our perception of the world and ourselves, which can be extremely harmful for at-risk youth who are already facing a myriad of challenges (Weir, 2023). Technology can be used for at-risk youth positively as well, with online therapy, journaling and affirmation apps, and access to communication with positive role models. More research should be done to study the change technology has had specifically on at-risk youth, and the development of online interventions that may be more widely accessible at a lower cost for youth.

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## Carolyn Deal

Carolyn is a graduating senior majoring in Criminology and minoring in Sociology. Over the course of her time at Stonehill, she has been an active member of the Criminology Club. She joined the Lambda Epsilon Sigma and Edwin Sutherland Criminology Honor Societies. In addition to her academic standing, Carolyn was a student worker at the MacPháidin Library for three years. During the summer before her senior year, she interned at the Braintree Police Department where she processed firearms applications. Carolyn has a strong interest in police dispatch services and white-collar crime. She is currently volunteering with the AARP Fraud Watch Network. After college, Carolyn plans on pursuing a career in private investigating.

### **Effectiveness of CIT Training on Mental Illness**

#### **Introduction:**

The roles of police officers and clinicians in mental health-related cases are intertwined with each other, as both professional groups work towards the de-escalation of incidents for everyone involved. They exist as indispensable divisions of the Braintree Police Department (BPD). Officers undergo Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training in order to understand how to treat those with mental illnesses. Clinicians take it a step further by assessing the person's level of risk and developing a course of action.

People that suffer from mental illnesses are often stigmatized for their disposition, however, they deserve to be treated the same as everyone else. Since their actions are not always caused by criminal intent, people with mental illnesses may require medical assistance to prevent more damage from occurring in the community. The end game is not putting someone behind bars, rather, it is getting the person the treatment that is most beneficial to them. Hospitals facilitate the recovery of individuals, but they are not always accessible. In the United States, "there are 130 million people" that occupy areas facing a lack of mental health providers (Willingham & Selsky 2022). Therefore, the number of available resources and police tactics implemented are crucial to the suspect(s) well-being. These factors contribute to the positive (hospitalization) or negative (increased mortality rate) options the person is forced to choose between.

To follow the principles described in CIT Training, officers must build rapport with the person. Rapport is built by using effective communication techniques and engaging in actions that are in the best interests of the person requiring help. The term's interpretation varies depending on how the officer wishes to put the suspect at ease. A recent study's data on police interactions with the mentally ill and usage of interventions highlights the benefits that rapport provides. Also, field observations and notes from the Braintree Police Department's Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training details the steps authorities take to create trust between the individual and

officer. Everyone that was asked about their involvement in mental illness cases agreed that de-escalation is a key component to law enforcement training.

The responsibilities of dispatchers, in mental health cases, are important to keep in mind when authorities are being called to respond. They organize information and have a certain set of questions asked to all victims. These include the confirmation of a crime taking place and whether there are any weapons present (BPD 2023). Also, emergency situations require the BPD to take immediate action. Their urgency increases when individuals are suffering from a substance use disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). When police officers encounter people that are mentally ill, they can bring the individuals to rehabilitation programs in hospitals. Even though some people do not want to seek aid, detox treatment is the primary solution.

Although victims of mental illness are assumed to be citizens within their given town, researchers have not viewed officers or emergency medical dispatchers as being in that position. This study touches upon the sense of conflict that law enforcement workers endure daily, but the topic still requires more data to develop viable solutions. The regret police hold on their shoulders, after an incident, has the potential to create negative long-term effects.

## **Literature Review:**

Past encounters between police officers and the mentally-ill have shaped the approach law enforcement take to addressing mental illness-related cases. However, their efforts also brought about areas for improvement due to high mortality rates. Through officers' use of force, individuals with mental health issues have become victims during these altercations and were not able to receive the help they needed. For instance, a man named Matt Jones suffered from a severe manic episode and stood on a West Virginia highway while holding a handgun. Police responded to the scene, shooting at Jones and eventually killing him. It was later found out that the man was unable to get his prescription refilled and thought the officers could assist him (Selsky & Willingham, 2022). This is a prime example of why proper law enforcement training in mental health response is necessary for police in the field. When tensions rise, officers having a calm and clear sense of direction is crucial to the de-escalation of the situation.

### **i. Implementation of CIT Training**

Today, research from the state of Ohio has demonstrated that Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training is beneficial to both parties involved. When officers can assess the level of risk that a person poses to themselves and others, a better course of action can be developed to prevent further loss of life. Currently, there are more than "2,700 communities nationwide that have incorporated some type of CIT program," (Ahern, 2021, 195). The CIT Model creates a partnership between clinicians, police officers, and family members to help those seeking rehabilitative assistance. The training that CIT officers endure includes "40 hours of specialized training in mental health law, psychiatric diagnosis, substance abuse issues, verbal de-escalation techniques, and available local resources for individuals experiencing crisis," (Ahern, et al. 195). This practice touches on a variety of subjects

for the purposes of understanding a person with the mental illness, being able to sympathize with them, and assisting with their needs. A middle ground can be reached, but authorities must be patient while in the process.

## **ii. Protection of Officers**

Officer safety is another part of CIT Training that police follow, and this is their form of damage control. Only those trained in the specialized de-escalation techniques can help those in crisis. This policy ensures police efficiency and protection from the harm associated with mental health calls. In Memphis, Tennessee, the implementation of CIT Training resulted in an “80% reduction of officer injuries that occur during mental health crisis calls,” (Ahern, et al. 196). Therefore, the high percentage indicates that there was a positive impact in the lives of police who engaged in additional training. Overall, Ohio and Tennessee’s findings were in favor of incorporating mental health instruction into police departments.

## **iii. Observations of Police Behavior**

One way that researchers collect data to analyze the effectiveness of Crisis Intervention Team Training is through interviews with officers on ride-alongs. Usually, criminologists depend on surveys from CIT officers as their main source of proof of whether CIT practices yielded promising results. In addition, it is crucial to observe police behavior while they are responding to calls. In-person observations give the public a chance to witness officers in action and look for signs of response enhancement due to such training. The study aimed to explore this idea, stating, “...training officers were interested in whether or not the training was having any impact on fellow officers’ behavior, on diversions, and on community relations...” (Felix-Ortiz et al., 2021, p. 17).

There were two other police departments included in the study that did not possess CIT Training – researchers used them as control groups to compare/contrast to the two target groups. Their findings revealed that those experienced in CIT Training spent more time with individuals in mental illness-related cases than those inexperienced (Felix-Ortiz et al., 2021, p. 17). Increased time coincides with increased training as officers that have undergone training know what questions to ask and how to treat the person suffering from a mental health issue. Police who never/rarely respond to this type of call would divert it to a clinician or answer with the wrong approach. According to standard policing protocols, CIT officers examined “...the environment, assessed the appearance of the individual, and questioned others at the scene,” (Felix-Ortiz et al., 2021, p. 22). The police’s perspective of the situation becomes the foundation of the case, and the report reflects that. With the proper resources and education necessary to treat the mentally ill, authorities can make well-informed decisions.

## **iv. Collection of Case Information**

The method police use to collect information is an important factor in developing the report. Specifically, open-ended questions provide more insight into the circumstances of the situation. Close-ended questions are less beneficial because they do not allow the person(s) involved to expand on their ideas of what occurred (Felix-Ortiz et al., 2021, p. 22). Gaining a better understanding of the case could lead to a decrease in jail diversions and an

increase in rehabilitation. In fact, researchers mentioned, “CIT officers resolved all calls on scene or transported the person in crisis to treatment; no one in this study was taken to jail,” (Felix-Ortiz et al., 2021, p. 23).

#### **v. Substance Use Disorders in Communities**

Substance use disorders are a growing concern among individuals and law enforcement. People suffer from substance use disorders when they engage in “...recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs” and this “...causes clinically significant impairment, including health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home,” (SAMHSA 2023). To help those dealing with mental illnesses, clinicians should respond to the scene before police. They can decide whether officers are needed or if their presence would be a hindrance.

The advancement of community response teams lead to the creation of the Support Team Assistance Response (STAR) Program. It includes “...two health care staff (i.e., a mental health clinician and a paramedic in a specially equipped van) who provide rapid, on-site support to individuals in crisis and direct them to further appropriate care...” (Dee & Pyne, 2021, p. 17). Dispatchers could direct 911 calls to the STAR staff members, and most did not require officers. There are arguments regarding the reduction of existing criminal offenses and the decrease in crime itself due to the program. Without it, individuals’ mental health would continue to decline, and the prevalence of crime rises. By taking action, the public recognizes that law enforcement has made mental illness a priority and treats it as such.

#### **vi. Impact of PTSD on Officers**

Not only does the mental health of citizens in the community matter, but also those who serve them. Law enforcement jobs have proven to be draining especially when enduring traumatic events. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is defined as “...a psychiatric disorder that may occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event, series of events or set of circumstances,” (American Psychiatric Association 2023). In earlier years, there has not been substantial data recorded about the mental states of emergency medical dispatchers. Therefore, the topic requires further investigation since the implementation of social support can positively impact emergency service personnel. EMD’s possess the responsibilities of “...taking emergency calls for the ambulance service, dispatching paramedics, and assisting callers until paramedics arrive,” (Shakespeare-Finch, et al., 2015, p. 550). They also make difficult and important judgements based on the information given by 911 callers, as people can be ambiguous with their level of information. Whether it is through direct or indirect contact, emergency dispatchers face psychological challenges in their profession.

Communication between both parties can become traumatic, especially for the dispatcher when they empathize with the other person or people involved. Thus, they begin to live vicariously through the individual they are talking to. They may present symptoms of PTSD after responding to the scene directly or something triggering their mind to relive a past event. A way to combat the negative outcome is Bandura’s social cognitive theory. His theory encourages self-efficacy to prevent the emotional turmoil these stressors can create, explaining, “...that individuals with higher self-efficacy experience less disruption when faced with stressors, due to their

belief that they have the resources to cope with adversity,” (Shakespeare-Finch, et al., 2015, p. 552). People that possess a stronger level of confidence in themselves tend to deal with each case regardless of its subject matter and are often able to separate work from their personal life. There are a variety of coping mechanisms dispatchers may use and this ideology contributes to the goal they wish to achieve.

Along with self-efficacy, the use of social support has a profound effect on the mental states of law enforcement workers. Friends and family members act as a buffer for the individual, so they can decrease the stress of any given situation. A research study concluded that there was a “...high mean for receiving social support...” and “...the majority of EMDs perceived receiving a high amount of social support...” (Shakespeare-Finch et al., 2015, p. 556). While confidentiality guidelines restrict authorities from discussing cases outside of the office, alternative peer views and solutions are helpful when the case grows in intensity. Therefore, they must find security in their peers. For example, police officers participate in group meetings after traumatic events to “...make meaning of the trauma, and to re-construct life stories...” (Shakespeare-Finch, et al., 2015, p. 553).

#### **vii. Improvement of Mental Health Resources**

As officials and law enforcement collaborate with one another to generate a future approach to mental health cases, they have begun to demonstrate improvements thus far. According to a report from the Massachusetts Department of Health, funding has been set aside for jail diversions and officer/clinician behavioral crisis techniques. This money is in the form of grants for programs to allow people the chance to seek rehabilitative aid instead of imprisonment (Healey et al., 2023, p. 4). When authorities show their support towards combatting mental illnesses, the message they stand for encompasses the entire community. It is not a small portion of the population, but rather, all that suffer from mental-health-related problems. Their funding has a positive impact on the lives of those with mental health concerns such as PTSD and substance use disorders. We cannot control what individuals become exposed to and that is compensated for by offering treatment to relieve the trauma. Any efforts in favor of crime prevention and under proper supervision can alter our environment for the better.

#### **Research Setting:**

Braintree, Massachusetts is a mid-size suburban town with an estimated population of 38,567 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2022). Housing options range from small clusters of buildings to condominium complexes. The town is 10 miles south of Boston and generates most of its business through the South Shore Plaza, along with office spaces/industrial parks (Town of Braintree 2023). Since this mall contributes to the commercial benefit of popular companies like Nike and Coach, people have attempted to steal its products for personal gain. Shoplifting is a crime that the Braintree Police Department keeps a look out for and respond to immediately when stores in the South Shore Plaza report incidents.

There are 6 units of the BPD: Communications Division, Patrol, Detective Division, Special Operations, Community Outreach Unit, and Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council. Communications acts as the support



services for the police department; through answering 911 calls (BPD 2023). Dispatchers find the addresses of people in need with the intention to notify police or refer the caller to a nearby hospital for emergency medical assistance (ambulances) (BPD 2023).

Patrol personnel are the officers that respond to many different calls like complaints and high-threat offenses. The Braintree Police Department responds to 25,000 calls annually (BPD 2023). In order to meet this, the town of Braintree is broken up into 7 sectors. A patrol officer is designated to each sector to maintain peace within the community. The 7<sup>th</sup> sector consists of three officers because it contains the South Shore Plaza (BPD 2023).

The Detective Division has two sections: General Detectives and the Narcotics Division. General Detectives deal with crimes against people and property committed in Braintree, MA. The Narcotics Division is involved in investigations that concern drug crimes and the drug task force. Also, they collaborate with state/local/federal agencies when necessary. This division includes a Detective Lieutenant, 3 Detective Sergeants, and 11 Detectives (BPD 2023).

Next, Special Operations includes K9 and a Motorcycle Unit. Currently, there is only 1 K9 handler who specializes in Patrol. The Motorcycle Unit has 6 motorcycles within the department and they are used during the summer months for Patrol along with special events like parades and funerals (BPD 2023).

Their Community Outreach Unit is widespread in its interactions with community members, attempting to decrease risks wherever present. Officers help the public by providing resources and education. Some examples are Post Overdose Outreach and the Rape Aggression Defense System (RADS). The RADS example takes it a step further to reduce rape in the community by teaching self-defense tactics to women while also providing education about risk avoidance (BPD 2023). Other educational outlets can be found in the Junior Police Academy and Middle School Drug Education. These programs show youths the danger that drugs can cause, but also emphasizes the values of physical fitness and discipline.

Lastly, the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council was created with the purpose of local communities banding together with the BPD to answer situations deemed too much for one agency. The council operates 7 separate divisions: K9 Unit, Computer Crime Unit, Crisis Negotiation Team, Mobile Operations Motorcycle Unit, Regional Response Team, Special Weapons and Tactics, and the Marine Unit (BPD 2023).

The Braintree Police Department does have a website. However, their agency's goals and how they ensure the protection of individuals can be found in a pdf regarding the BPD Code of Ethics. This department developed a mission statement to showcase the positive impact that an officer can have on the department and among community members. According to the Policy and Procedure Mission Statement, authorities:

“...work in partnership with the citizens of Braintree toward providing a safe environment and enhancing the quality of life consistent with the values of the community... BPD will accomplish this mission by providing dedicated police officers of high integrity, honesty, morals, and trustworthiness who are committed to establishing strong partnerships between the community, its residents, and this department.

In doing so, the BPD will be guided by its core values of Honesty, Integrity, Respect, and Compassion,” (BPD Policy and Procedure Mission Statement & Code of Ethics, 2019-2020).

It is important to implement these principles because citizens want to be able to create trust with their local police officers and know that they can feel secure in their neighborhood.

### **Methodology:**

Through a small qualitative research study, the researcher evaluated the effectiveness of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training on police officers and clinicians in mental health cases. Mental illness is a problem that negatively impacts individuals everywhere in the U.S. According to Mack and Woodsong, this type of study “...seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations,” (Mack & Woodsong, 2005, p. 1). If people can gain a better understanding of how CIT Training reduces the mortality rate of victims and promotes rehabilitation, then police departments will be encouraged to expand its use. In this case, the Braintree Police Department has implemented such practice for the well-being of their residents.

The researcher used participant observation and in-person interviews to collect data. Participant observation “...is a qualitative method with roots in traditional ethnographic research, whose objective is to help researchers learn the perspectives held by a study population,” (Mack & Woodsong, et al., p. 13). Clinicians and officers have protocols, like asking a select number of questions, to get the facts for a wellness check/report. Exposure to an emergency dispatcher’s environment during 911 calls shows the researcher how authorities handle the situation. They also participated in the process by inquiring about the overall process and technology used to pinpoint locations. While the researcher did not have the experience to be included on the calls directly, they developed enough knowledge of the topic to comprehend what was happening in front of them.

As for in-depth interviews, they provide more background about those working at the BPD. In-depth interviews are “...a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant’s perspective on the research topic,” (Mack & Woodsong, et al., p. 29). Mental illness can be considered taboo in society, so questions asked must be framed in a sensitive and proper manner. One’s mental health deteriorates when exposed to traumatic situations, which is often for law enforcement. Rehabilitation after being repeatedly involved in high-stress cases could be beneficial for all law enforcement. The source of this trauma can be revealed from the type of data the interviews produce such as “...individuals’ personal histories, perspectives, and experiences...” (Mack & Woodsong, et al., p. 2). In this study, all three are crucial to understanding how authorities follow CIT Training guidelines. If an officer or clinician fails to engage in the practice, then their perspective will interfere with the overall treatment of mental health.

### **Findings/Analysis:**

While observing the BPD environment, the researcher was able to conclude that police and clinicians take mental illness very seriously. In fact, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training was held at the department to educate law enforcement about the steps they must take to develop a sense of safety, engage in no judgement listening, create connections with victims, and provide reassurance when necessary. Officer A, whose father suffered from substance abuse, taught the class along with a mental health clinician. He provided insight into how he learned to deal with his father's issue, stating, "I kinda built that empathy and sympathy overtime. I did criticize until I learned not to do it" (Officer A). It takes time to develop the patience for those with substance use disorders. Once Officer A did, he helped him bring new meaning to CIT Training.

In comparison to the CIT Training used in Tennessee, Braintree has seen improvements from the implementation of mental health instruction. Officers possess the mindset that they need to keep themselves and victims safe. Safety precautions prevent both parties from additional suffering since some mental illness cases are more dangerous than others. Officer injuries are frequent occurrences while in the field. The same can be said for victims because they become unnecessary threats when police decide to use excessive force. After applying the Memphis Model, there was an "80% reduction of officer injuries that occur during mental health crisis calls," (Ahern, 2021, p. 196). Braintree has concluded that this battle with the unknown needs to be more transparent to ease stress levels. As CIT Training continues to spread to other police departments, law enforcement predict that the mortality rate will decrease. This will promote trust in local departments and form bonds with citizens.

However, an obstacle that hinders the implementation of this training is that people forget mental illness is widespread. Individuals do not treat each other with the same respect. Clinician A brought up an important point regarding the mental state of police, describing, "We take the most traumatized officers and put them in the field where they are traumatized even more and are so fast to slap them on the wrist to say 'why would you ever do that?'" Law enforcement try to keep a clear head when they are dealing with such cases, but trauma builds up over time and tragedy occurs. Authorities are depicted as people with stone-cold exteriors that do not get rattled easily. This is a stereotype, and the reality is that anyone can be negatively affected by repeated exposure to high-stress surroundings. Officer B attended the MHFA Training and mentioned that he and his peers would meet to debrief about cases to remove the burden that some officers felt after being in the field. There was a study that confirmed the usage of this activity, adding that it aims to, "...make meaning of the trauma, and to re-construct life stories..." (Shakespeare-Finch, et al., p. 553).

Through conducting two semi-structured in-person interviews, the data showed that people of different backgrounds use CIT Training in Braintree. For instance, Dispatcher A works as a police officer and emergency medical dispatcher. Before joining the BPD, Dispatcher A was a fire controlman for 4 years at the U.S. Naval station. He is the type of person that thrives in unpredictability and loves to stay busy. Because of his prolonged experience in law enforcement, he may be more susceptible to symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Since Dispatcher A's profession is rooted in discipline, this can cause unnecessary force regardless of the type of situation. Police must have patience and refrain from impulsivity when dealing with mental health-related cases.

The researcher could tell that Dispatcher A knows what is required of him. He explained his approach, for both the officer and emergency dispatcher roles, stating,

“Gather as much information as you can: their location, if they have access to weapons, and how they want to harm themselves. Diffuse the situation and know what makes them calm at the time to deescalate the situation. Doesn’t always work, but it is a good place to start,” (Dispatcher A).

It was like he had rehearsed the words in his head and was saying them for the hundredth time. Despite the almost robotic reply, the researcher gathered that de-escalation is the primary goal. Otherwise, police have a more difficult time admitting the person into a hospital involuntarily or seeking alternative rehabilitation methods.

Next, the researcher met with a mental health clinician to obtain a different perspective on the matter. She is a licensed mental health counselor and received her master’s in counseling in psychology. While Clinician A primarily works in mental health, it is crucial to see how medical personnel can impact the criminal justice system’s awareness of mental illness. Clinicians provide instruction to officers about safety measures and enter the field when it is most beneficial to the person in question. When asked to expand upon these duties, Clinician A was more than happy to discuss the types of instruction that she is involved in, explaining, “Mental Health and First Aid is 8 hours in 1 day. CIT Training is a 40-hour training within 5 days for law enforcement and dispatchers. Main goal is risk assessment,” (Clinician A). Police evaluate the level of risk that the individual poses to authorities and other people by using the information they have gained from these training sessions. Each step brings them closer to assisting the person and preventing further damage to their Braintree community.

### **Conclusion:**

A research topic that criminologists should conduct a further analysis of is the impact of mental health on those in law enforcement. Through the above study, the researcher was able to get a glimpse of an officer’s struggle, but there is more than meets the eye. We are all the same and authorities give up a piece of their humanity as they try to maintain low crime rates. Their experiences shape how they handle future altercations. Therefore, the aftermath of a case and choice of imprisonment will act as a weight on their shoulders for years to come.

Rehabilitation grants, from the government, show that those in power care about the well-being of their people. CIT Training is set to expand because funding for police instruction is increasing. Instead of sending individuals with substance use disorders or post-traumatic stress disorder to prison, hospitals can assist them. Therapy sessions and medication are examples of the actions taken to prevent the same people from committing more crimes. People do not always go against the law because they intend to hurt others. They are fighting their own demons and just want to get in a better headspace.

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## Andrew Poulin

Andrew is a member of the Stonehill Class of 2027 from Rochester, MA. He is a Moreau Honors Scholar majoring in criminology. Andrew is interested in the workings of the criminal justice system, specifically regarding the complexities of human behavior within it. He is highly dedicated to his studies and looks forward to continuing to explore various areas of the criminal justice system to chart a fulfilling and rewarding career path.

### **Preservation of Traditional Gender Norms at Walmart**

The field of sociology is concerned with studying the makeup of and behavioral interactions within society. Although sociology studies existing patterns, this does not mean that these patterns are resistant to change. There are calls for social change every day, however, amidst these calls for change, traditional social institutions and norms continue to exist. I found this to be especially true in the field observation I conducted, specifically in terms of gender. In my observation, I endeavored to determine the level of persistence of traditional gender norms in shopper interactions. To answer this question, I took to the food aisles of my local Walmart in Wareham, Massachusetts. My one-hour observation took place at 8:30 AM on the morning of Saturday, February 10, 2024. Through my observation, I reached the conclusion that traditional gender norms between men and women are, typically, strongly preserved between Walmart shoppers. More specifically, I found this to be true in three main ways: the attire of men, the items which men and women bought, and the interactions between man and woman shopping groups. These three factors contributed to the preservation of gender specific norms, specifically men acting as strong and successful breadwinners and women acting as homemakers. Based on the results of my observation, there is clear support that the shoppers demonstrated the sociological principle of people “doing gender”.

It is important to begin with a definition for what it means to “do gender”. According to Candace West and Don Zimmerman, as referenced in *A Sociology Experiment: Gender and Sexuality*, “[...] we do gender in our interactions with others, and we take into consideration what is believed to be appropriate for our gender,” (Barian, Brown, and Schoepflin 5). Doing gender means interacting in a way that upholds what is socially believed to be appropriate for one’s gender identity. This builds off the idea that gender is a socially constructed concept, defined by social interactions and norms. The social construction of gender led to strict definitions of masculinity and



femininity. Although the gender binary classification system can be stretched, traditional gender norms are still prevalent most of the time (in my local Walmart), as my following observations reveal.

One of the most significant ways I noticed shoppers “doing gender” at Walmart was through the clothes they were wearing, specifically the lone male shoppers. Although I observed that most shoppers were women, there were a handful of middle-aged adult men on their own. In my observation, I noticed a consistency between many of these men: that they wore t-shirts or hoodies. This serves to associate them with these companies, and even makes a possible implication that they work for these companies. In each of these instances, I noticed these companies were plumbing, insulation, or other contractor companies (Poulin Field Notes). The traditional and expected masculine social role is to be the breadwinner of the family, while leaving their wives at home to take care of matters like cooking, cleaning, and raising children. The wives’ role can also include shopping for food. In chapter 1 of her book *The Gender Trap*, Emily Kane briefly alludes to this “gendered division of labor”. She writes, “regarding boys, [...] toys relevant to science and engineering potentially reproduce gendered power in the workplace and politics; for girls, encouraging nurturance, domesticity, and interpersonal skills potentially reinforces gendered divisions of labor in the family” (46). The science and engineering toys that boys play with can contribute to an appraisal of the “working man” (breadwinner), while the encouragement of domesticity can encourage women to adopt domestic duties. The gendered nature of these toys reinforces traditional gender norms.

In addition to doing gender, the men in the observation are experiencing a status inconsistency – that is, they are performing an action (grocery shopping) which is not usually associated with the traditional masculine role. Status inconsistency involves the assuming of multiple statuses which do not meet social expectations (Bowman Lecture, 2/13/24). Here, the men have both the status of their gender and their status as a shopper. Their wearing of blue-collar clothing helps them to implicitly assert their status as working breadwinners to maintain a sense of consistency with traditional gender norms. Moreover, these clothes also attempt to negate the feminine role men may feel they are assuming by going grocery shopping. There is a status inconsistency in that the men are performing a traditionally feminine task while also projecting a masculine identity. The concept of the “looking-glass self”, coined by Charles Cooley, could be a potential explanation as to why these men were doing this. The looking-glass self theory concerns the way our perception of how others see us affects our sense of self (Bowman Lecture, 2/15/24). These men may have chosen to wear such clothes knowing that others would notice their presence at the grocery store and create more positive judgments of them from their attire.

The amount of groceries that men and women were buying also played a role in my conclusion as they reflected attempts to alleviate status inconsistencies (at least for the men). Lone men typically were carrying smaller hand baskets, while lone women usually pushed larger carriages (Poulin Field Notes). Due to the smaller size of the hand baskets, the men were able to present the intention of buying less groceries and thus assume a less “feminine” role. This can give the impression that the bulk of the shopping is left to their wives. In addition, the men holding the weight of the groceries, rather than pushing them in a carriage, possibly implies a sentiment

that men were “carrying the weight” of the task. On the other hand, since a wheeled shopping cart is larger and can therefore hold more groceries, it implies that women were intending to buy more groceries, in line with the traditional gender norm of women overseeing anything involving food, including groceries.

The specific items that men and women bought also differed. Men shoppers seemed to be buying one of two types of groceries: essentials or snacks (Poulin Field Notes). I use the term “essentials” here to include frequently bought and used items like bread, eggs, or milk. “Snacks” that men bought included chips, soda, or candy. While some women were certainly buying these categories of items, men seemed to generally be restricted only to these two groups. In contrast, women were buying more kinds of general grocery items. Some of the other items women were buying included produce, canned food, or spices (Poulin Field Notes). Women continued to buy a greater number of items than men, contributing to the gender norm of women doing the shopping.

The third area I saw the persistence of traditional gender norms in was the interactions between shopper groups consisting of one man and one woman. It is likely many of them were partners, although this cannot be known for sure. Their marital status is not quite as relevant as are the implications of their gendered interactions. Indeed, many of the men and women in these groups seemed to be “doing gender”. One of the ways this occurred was through who was pushing the shopping carriage. I should note that these groups almost always were pushing carriages rather than carrying hand baskets (Poulin Field Notes). In the groups, it was most often the woman who was pushing the carriage, which allowed for the upholding of the traditional feminine role of overseeing groceries (Poulin Field Notes). Additionally, without pushing the carriage, the men were free to act as onlookers or supervisors, possibly retaining the traditional gender norm of masculine dominance. In this way, the men were able to give the shopping authority to women without looking as if they themselves were assuming this traditionally feminine role.

It is essential to remember that this observation was conducted in a single hour, on a single morning, and in a single location. Therefore, the results I have summarized in this paper may not be representative of broader societal trends across larger demographic and geographical regions. Also, I only observed certain shoppers for limited periods of time. To protect their privacy, I was not able to follow shoppers around the store, so I was only able to observe them for a small part of their shopping. Although my observation took place for over an hour, I could not observe any shopper or group of shoppers for more than a few minutes at best resulting in a possible time limitation. There are certainly also exceptions to my observations. The points I have discussed in this paper reflect the general trends I was seeing, not absolute consistency. However, the observations I gathered are still illuminating as to gender dynamics at Walmart.

In conclusion, my Walmart observation provides compelling evidence for the persistent influence of traditional gender norms on shopper behavior. Through the lens of sociological concepts of “doing gender”, status inconsistency, and the looking-glass self, my observation reveals that men and women often conform to societal expectations regarding gender roles, whether consciously or unconsciously. From the attire worn by male shoppers to the items men and women bought, the persistence of these traditional norms can still be seen, even if

not to the extent of prevalence they carried in prior decades. My observation of how traditional gender norms are upheld in consumer culture emphasizes the importance of ongoing sociological inquiry into the dynamics of gender in modern society.

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## Jessika Crockett-Murphy



Jessika Crockett-Murphy is a Senior at Stonehill College from Marshfield, MA majoring in Political Science and Religious Studies, with a minor in Ethical Leadership. She serves as the Student Government Association as Executive Vice President, and a Newman Civic Fellow for Stonehill College, with a recent appointment to the Student Design Fellowship to reimagine youth leadership training. Jessika is involved in Campus Ministry, serving in the L.I.G.H.T community engagement program as an intern, in the H.O.P.E. service immersion program as a participant and leader, and as a Moreau Student Minister. She belonging to the Moreau Honors Society, Pi Sigma Alpha honors society, Lambda Epsilon Sigma Society, Theta Alpha Kappa society, and is a First-Generation Scholar. Currently, Jessika is finishing her thesis, focusing on the potential addition of women Deacons in the Catholic Church, as well as overseeing the new LGBTQ+ faith dialogue group, *The Rainbow Connection*, which she founded. Jessika plans to go to Graduate school next year at Villanova University, for a Masters in Ministry and Theology and a Certificate in Higher Education Leadership, while also serving as a Graduate Resident Minister at the school. Following this, she hopes to enter into a career in collegiate ministry and student leadership development.

### **The Increased Need to Build Town and Gown Relationships**

A college cannot and should not be an island in and of itself, completely cut off from its outside environments. The relationship between a college or university and its surrounding town or city can be a beneficial one where both parties can offer support and gain benefits in a symbiotic relationship with one another. This relationship, frequently referred to as a “Town and Gown Relationship”, is a relatively new concept due to the increase in a demand for higher education.<sup>1</sup> As student populations began to grow upward, the reach of the colleges began to expand outward and spill into the outer communities. Off-campus housing, internships, jobs, and rambunctious bar crawl opportunities meant that the colleges and towns needed to learn how to play nice and coexist with each other. This was a difficult transition for both parties, however as time went, the benefit of a good relationship was discovered and both were happy to have one another’s resources, thus leading the way for the current town and gown relationship model we see today.

The original transitional period for the creation of town and gown relationships started roughly around the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century, as many colleges saw an increase in students without the ability to house them. This began to create neighborhoods full of college students, referred to as college row, which greatly impacted the housing market. Less houses were now available to non-student residents and often the houses rented were packed with many roommates to split the cost of utilities and rent. Many prior residents found their new neighbors to be rambunctious and rude, leading to awkward late-night encounters and occasional noise complaints to the police.<sup>2</sup> Some found the students to even be destructive, with cases of vandalism and graffiti occurring. Once colleges began to see these disruptions, they took action.

Universities like UVM began looking into these issues and addressing them both to the student body and the public. The colleges began to monitor student off-campus activities and allowed for disciplinary actions to be taken if students were disrespectful to the community. Then, they began to see how they could further expand the relationship past just coexistence, and decided to “entirely shift our focus from our traditional approach of pondering what we could do to the community or even for the community, to a mindset of candidly discussing what we could do with the community”.<sup>3</sup> The communication began to flow and the relationships began to build, and the Good Neighbor Program launched to further improve town and gown relations, thus launching the volunteering boom which helped to create many collegiate community engagement programs.<sup>4</sup> Many schools later followed suit and found that their students enjoyed the opportunity to serve in their community and sought it out frequently. The creation of these programs made it more accessible for students to find service locations and increased their involvement in the outer community.

Similar to Stonehill College’s L.I.G.H.T. program, which I interned for this past summer, many colleges and universities now pride themselves on offering some form of community engagement opportunities where students can volunteer with nearby organizations. Students now are either required or highly encouraged to partake in some service while attending university.<sup>5</sup> For Stonehill, students have options to service in the various nearby organizations like the Farm or My Brothers Keeper, or they may choose to do a service immersion trip and serve nationally or even internationally in places like Florida or Peru.<sup>6</sup> This model allows for students to choose service that interests them so it feels less like work and more engaging and enjoyable. Students can focus on social justice issues they may already be passionate about, meaning they are more willing to dedicate time and effort to the service.

By engaging students in community service and volunteering, they are exposed to civil issues that affect people every day and learn how to be an engaged citizen upon graduation. Someone who is ignorant to the struggles people experience in terms of-poverty, homelessness, racism, bigotry, and more face is less likely to show compassion to these people and offer them help when they can. It is crucial to expose young adult to these manners in an educational way to show them how they can help those in need. In some cases, mine included, exposure to volunteering and community engagement may open the door for students to find new career paths. They may be able to get connected to an organization where they could score an internship or a job down the line, leading them to dedicate their lives to fighting the issues. The world of volunteering and nonprofit work is always in need of more hands to make the work lighter, so by introducing that world early enough, colleges can set up the future of this career for success.

Not only does it help the students to be engaged in social justice work, but the organizations benefit from it too as they always need more volunteers to help fight against the injustices. Farms need harvesters, furniture providers need movers, soup kitchens need servers, and overall people struggling need others to lean on. Some organizations rely heavily on the work of college students, and plan for the on and off seasons of school to be



able to meet the needs of the community. Special events or roles may not be filled without the work of these students because they come from colleges that can offer so many hands but only during the school year.

There is a risk that comes to the offering of volunteer support with colleges that reside in urban areas. If the university happens to be a PWI (Predominantly White Institution), there is the worry of the university fostering a white savior complex among students, causing them to serve in ways that may harm more than they help.<sup>7</sup> If the university already struggles with diversity, then the diverse world outside its walls may be a shock to some students and lead to unhelpful aid and a misunderstanding on what service means. This could cause the students to view their service as a “gift” to the community that can be taken away, giving the university all the power and making the community feel indebted to the college.<sup>8</sup> This is why having a free flowing line of communication and an understanding that the community is helping the university as much as the university is helping the community is crucial. The relationship must be mutually beneficial, where both are giving and receiving a relatively equal amount.

Aside from offering volunteer opportunities, the outer community can gain a lot of additional aid as student populations grow. A strong symbiotic support system frequently seen in college towns is the relationship between the students and the business surrounding their college, especially mom and pop businesses. In towns like Bridgewater, you frequently see banners and promotional ads welcoming college students back at BSU at the beginning of the year, boasting slogans like “We welcome back the BSU bears”, or Easton’s “Welcome back Skyhawks”. Businesses and restaurants show their school spirit and hold special deals for students, allow them to use their campus card, decorate their lobbies with school spirit and memorabilia, and offer many students jobs during the school year.<sup>9</sup> These businesses, especially non-corporate ones, gain a great deal of revenue from the student population and sometimes rely on them entirely to stay afloat. Some places even offer special school specific hours or create partnerships to give students a discount if they go to the school. This shows how much of an effect the students have on the economy of their community.

In addition to their stimulating effects on local businesses, students also affect the housing market of their town or city greatly. On one hand, college students are known to not be too picky when it comes to housing off campus as they shoot for affordability and ease of care over looks and sustainability. This could easily lead to the creation of slums and broken-down homes as residents move in and out almost yearly.<sup>10</sup> As mentioned previously, many colleges needed students to take advantage of off campus living due to a spike in admissions, so it was difficult to account for that in the beginning. Now however, there is a bit of a better handle on the issue, with many landlords creating college-specific residencies nearby that meet those particular needs, and universities expanding outward and upward to create more on-campus housing. This both helps the issue as students are not taking away homes from those who would stay in them long-term and offers job opportunities during the construction of the buildings. This again helps to stimulate the economy and job market, bettering the town and gown relationship. Both parties can have their needed space while not overlapping, but they can still coexist.



Apart from economic and social justice aid, the broad topic of civic engagement can also be aided by student populations in a town. When entering undergraduate school, many students are newly 18 and thus able to register to vote and exercise their civil duty. This can be a very exciting milestone for many, but also falls to the wayside if students are uneducated on the importance of voting and political action. However, like many of the previous issues raised, there have been several solutions proposed for this issue. First, there has been an increase in colleges holding voter registration drives and teaching students how to use absentee ballots. Second, many students are also encouraged to attend local town hall meeting in which their college resides. While they may not be able to vote on everything depending on their residency, they can voice their opinions and help to bring about action.<sup>11</sup> This leads the college students to being productive members of society in their community, as opposed to disruptive vagrants. Many local election campaigns and voting poll recording companies are often made up of single time hires of college students, who are able to stay involved in politics while making some money. This means the local representative can meet the students, discuss issues they worry about, and can rely on having more hands to help promote their candidacy.

An example of student engagement with the politics of their surrounding community is the current undertaking of Stonehill students requesting a crosswalk to be built connecting the campus to the Farm. This has required the students to connect with their political science department, the Farm Director, the College President, and soon the town administration. This process has caused the students to be much more civically involved and they have learned a lot about the governmental processes that exist between the town and the campus. While the farm is technically part of the campus, the two are divided by a state road, meaning they will eventually need to contact the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. This project is being undertaken because it would benefit everyone mutually. The farm gets more volunteers, the college feels more connected to its partner location, and the town is less likely to have any pedestrian accidents due to the dangerous crossing. This is a prime example of the town and gown relationship being put into action: students and townspeople working together to accomplish a project of public safety and transportation as it is a common ground for both.<sup>12</sup>

Finding the common ground issues for both the school and the community can be tricky occasionally, and if communication is not present from the beginning, both parties can suffer greatly. Syracuse University had a large rift placed between it and Syracuse, New York during the mid-80s when building and managing the untaxed 500,000 seat Carrier Dome stadium. Due to its popularity it caused large traffic jams that upset the city. When building, the university promised to pay for any management fees if the stadium remained untaxed. They were unable to make up the cost due to the high traffic fees, which led to a messy lawsuit.<sup>13</sup> This is a prime example of a town and gown relationship going wrong due to a lack of communication and too much focus on personal gain and not how they can help the other party as well. If the school had considered the likely issues with traffic and found a way to better the flow of cars, this issue would have been avoided for both parties.

It is clear that communication is key when developing and maintaining town and gown relationships. Both the university and the community, as well as any direct partner organizations must be open and honest with the needs they

have and the resources they can offer. Part of my internship included compiling a list of contact people from our partner organization, finding new possible partners and reaching out to them, and sending out email surveys to see what the partners were in need of. Most of the time, people requested more student volunteers and options to come to campus, so we worked to have a volunteer fair at the beginning of the semester. This communication and offering of resources helps us continue to maintain a good relationship with all of our partners, giving us the ability to offer more and more volunteering opportunities for students.

The idea of a town and gown relationship is not new to the realm of colleges helping their town. In the medieval era, churches often acted as the university in this case, and cared for the people in the surrounding town or village.<sup>14</sup> The church would provide a meeting place for the entire town, a place to post bulletins looking for service, and support community member by taking up a collection in their name. It is no surprise, given this history, that universities and colleges with religious education often place their volunteering programs in their campus ministry office. Places like Boston College and Stonehill College both have their community engagement program nestled within their campus ministry, as the two are seen as going hand and hand due to the large emphasis on helping those less fortunate found in many faith traditions. This is not to say that schools without a religious based education care less about community engagement, as their program is likely found under student activities or outreach. However, it is seen that schools with a liberal arts focus do tend to put more emphasis on it, as they hope to create more well-rounded graduates. Overall, this connection is mainly to show how a large institution that would otherwise be isolated, like a church or school, is able and should be willing to help its broader community with service projects that benefit both parties.

It is clear that there has been a massive rise in the creation and maintenance of town and gown relationships across the country in recent years, and that is something that will hopefully lead to many positive changes in the future. There has been a recent uptick in focusing on social justice issues, specifically issues like racial injustice and gender inequality, that will only be aided by the increase in young adult volunteer participation. Colleges are finding that instead of focusing solely on themselves, by shifting the focus to include helping their community, both the town and the school reap the benefits of a stable and mutually beneficial town and gown relationship. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many universities saw themselves as being too prestigious to waste time and resources on the outer community, thus isolating themselves and creating a hateful feeling towards and from the outer community that still felt the effects of their presence with higher cost of living and disrespectful students.<sup>15</sup> The shift caused this wall to collapse and led to increased diversity, better connections, and more civically engaged generations coming forth into the world. The key to continuing this beneficial wave of community service: communication. Honesty in what one party can offer and what they need is crucial in ensuring both parties benefit, and neither are harmed by the relationship. Town and gown relationships are going to be formed, but it is up to the university and town to make sure that it is a positive relationship, not a negative one.

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## Interview with Candi Wills de Jesus

Assistant Professor of Criminology

By: Adam Ammirata

In the Fall of 2023, Stonehill College's Department of Criminology welcomed Assistant Professor Candence "Candi" Wills de Jesus. Candi comes to Stonehill from Northeastern University where she is currently a doctoral candidate in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Mentored by Dr. Amy Farrell, her main research interests lie in the realm of institutional responses to human trafficking and marginalized populations.

Candi began her academic career at the University of Pittsburgh where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Communication with minors in Theatre, Spanish, and Political Science. She remained at the University of Pittsburgh where she later received a Master of International Development. It was here that her interests in human trafficking developed as she explored sex work policies and why people had begun to care about sexual freedom of private people.

During the interview, Candi noted in her undergraduate experience that she was interested in many areas and took the opportunity to explore those through elective courses and an internship with the Institute of Politics. She took to exploring many different interests until discovering her interest in institutions and human trafficking.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Candi now calls Massachusetts home. She has two dogs, Mimosa Liv and Margaritta Jean, and is excited to expand her family this summer. Candi is expecting a baby girl Aurora Jane in July!

### **What research have you been involved with?**

While working towards her Masters, Candi researched the relationship between counterterrorism and women. She wanted to gain a better understanding of women involved in terrorism and the counterterror efforts targeting

women in terrorist organizations. Candi noted that often a woman's role in terrorism is overlooked and advancing the research on that topic would be essential in preventing and combatting it. Many people do not know the roles women take on, whether it be providing support or participating in bombings themselves.

Candi also analyzed social networks between terrorism research and the organizations and governments citing the research, as well as understanding the factors that lead to state failure in her Master's program in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

Once Candi moved to Northeastern her research shifted to align with her interests in human trafficking. She explored domestic trafficking through mixed methods projects. She also researched hate crime victimization and co-authored the Massachusetts School Hate Crimes Resource Guide, a policy manual for schools and communities to respond to bias motivated events.

### **What classes do you teach?**

Candi is currently teaching two courses within the Criminology Department: Critical Introduction to Criminal Justice and Human Trafficking as a Topic in Criminology. She also teaches Criminology Theories in the Fall. The courses allow Candi to share her criminological interests while also sharing her expertise with a variety of students.

While her interests focus on human trafficking, Candi also believes it is important to address misconceptions within the overall field. She hopes to use her position as an educator to open students' minds and assist them in expanding on their learning. Candi especially enjoys teaching the intro courses as they tend to be interdisciplinary in nature. Students across a multitude of majors take these courses and Candi believes these conversations are an important opportunity to not only discuss hot topics but educate on novel concepts.

### **What is life like outside of class?**

Candi likes being physically active in her personal time. She finds enjoyment playing competitive sports, specifically kickball, dodgeball, and flag football. She is a member of a women-inclusive competitive league in Boston.

These activities help Candi socialize with others outside of academia and maintain an active role within the LGBTQIA+ communities. They are also excellent opportunities for networking and involving herself in her communities. Candi enjoys the variety of sports as a source of competitive entertainment and ultimately low stakes fun.





## The Martin Institute Presents: The Rhode Island Fusion Center

By: Malia McClerklin

On Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Director John C. Soscia of the Rhode Island Fusion Center visited Stonehill College in the Martin Auditorium to teach about the role of Fusion Centers in the United States. With over 30 years in law enforcement and 18 years of experience within the Rhode Island Fusion Center, Soscia was able to explain the work that the Rhode Island Fusion Center, as well as Fusion Centers all over the country, does to spread intelligence information and prevent terrorist attacks.

### How Did They Start?

The concept of fusion centers was birthed following the 9/11 tragedy. Director Soscia explained that research post-attack found that 9/11 “may have been able to be prevented if intelligence and information sharing was better.” Thus, fusion centers, or intelligence information sharing centers, were funded by Homeland Security across the nation to facilitate the exchange of information between public safety agencies at every level. While the initial objective was specifically counter terrorism, their mission expanded to include crimes at every level because of how many crimes fund or can lead to terrorism.

Most fusion centers are state-owned and operated and they all tend to follow the same guidelines. Director Soscia states that their overall goal is to “collect information and intelligence to process it, to analyze it, to hopefully pull out something valuable when we call actionable intelligence that we can then disseminate.” Through following all the same guidelines, there is less potential for confusion when it comes to information sharing and processes that were done to analyze intelligence. Soscia states that with this method, anyone from one fusion center could be plucked and put into one in a different state and still know exactly what to do.



## **Rhode Island Fusion Center**

Director Soscia was there for the formation of the Rhode Island Fusion Center and recalls how the center started as two desks around the State Police Intelligence Unit. Overtime, the Rhode Island Fusion Center was able to expand, establish itself, and collaborate with the other United States fusion centers. Since there were already fusion centers formed around the country before the RIFC formed, the center had to take the essential aspects of other centers to make it official and match the standards of the pre-existing ones. The Rhode Island Fusion Center is the smallest fusion center in the country. It only has 6 full-time employees, compared to the five fusion centers in Texas where one has nearly 300 analysts alone. Despite this, the RIFC has access to everything that other centers are doing due to the importance of making sure there is no miscommunication with any other center. A key aspect of combatting counterterrorism is open communication between centers across the country, everyone having access to everything helps prevent any miscommunication that could lead to infiltration and other threats to American soil.

## **The Process**

*What do we need to collect intelligence on? What are the gaps? What are we missing?* These are the main questions that begin the process of intelligence analysis. After receiving information on these questions, the goal is to process the information and analyze it to produce actionable intelligence, or valuable information, that can then be disseminated. The process can be quite complicated considering the avalanche of information these intelligence centers are provided with. Out of all the information given, it is the job of these centers to “pick the valuable pieces out of that pile out of that mountain of information, to connect them with other disparate pieces of information and intelligence, and then turn that into an intelligence product that we can then share with our partners to hopefully again, you know, give them something actionable that they can actually use.”

## **How it Effects Students**

The objectives of the Rhode Island Fusion Center are appealing to students who are looking to work in active anti-terrorism efforts and are interested in investigation and intelligence analysis. It also serves as a way for people who had little familiarity with intelligence analysis and counter terrorism as a career path to become more exposed to the concept. The Criminology Department at Stonehill College continuously provides a variety of different speakers that cover a wide range of speakers in the Criminal Justice field. This allows for both students who have an interest in this field to be able to hear from an established official with experience in the area, as well as students who are still trying to figure out what they want to do after graduation. This event received great feedback and the Martin Institute is happy to have welcomed Deputy Director John C. Soscia of the Rhode Island Fusion Center.