Reimagining Gender Violence: Understanding Community-Based Organizations’ Use of Restorative and Transformative Justices as Social Change Strategies

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REIMAGINING GENDER VIOLENCE: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS’ USE OF RESTORATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICES AS SOCIAL CHANGE STRATEGIES

By

Ahjané D. Billingsley

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

December 2019
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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AS SOCIAL CHANGE STRATEGIES

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Currently, the “violence against women” (VAW) frame that informs dominant responses to gender violence has had limited success. This frame often excludes victims who are men, gender diverse, and those of sexual minorities, and the omissions have resulted in collateral harms to victims and communities. Scholars and community psychologists have noted the need for multilevel, ecological, and multidimensional gender violence interventions and preventions. Some community-based organizations are responding to the limitations of the VAW frame by using restorative justice and/or transformative justice/community accountability social change strategies within social settings to understand and address gender violence. This study used interpretive phenomenology to establish the nature and function of these social change actions and to ascertain how these changes may be effective for shifting the VAW frame. This shift thus reduces gender violence and changes the social conditions that perpetuate gender violence. Findings of in-depth interviews with 11 representatives of seven U.S. community-based organizations revealed four themes and showed that community-based organizations focused on multileveled preventions that address the health of community’s relationships, support the community’s capacity and agency, and innovatively orient
resources to prevent gender violence. These findings reinforce the understanding of and need for more nuanced and integrated understanding of gender violence as well as more multileveled approaches that center the agency of those most impacted by gender violence.
Dedication

To the Husband of My Youth, Patrick James Macquoid, you believed in me even before I believed in myself. Through the adventures that we shared, your pure dedication and love was and is unmatched. No matter the journey, I will always carry a piece of you everywhere I go.

To the only king in my life, my beloved son, Solomon Issa, you have truly made me a better person. Know now, remember always: you are a passionate creator. Create amongst your excitement, amongst your fears, amongst the chaos, amongst all others’ ways. Create because you ARE.

To my mommy, Jacqueline Dale Patterson, who always makes me feel special and lets me soar to the highest peaks of the universe. I AM YOUR LEGACY. Gaze at your work and be proud.

To the jumping jellybean, girlie girl, crystal goddess, vibrant one, you have always been worthy. Continue to boldly transform and manifest all you desire, and to uniquely experience All-That-Is. As prophesized, it is with your own hands you crown yourself queen. Remember my sweet soul, you are meant to soar.

To my ancestors, your toil was not in vain, your perseverance runs through my veins. In your names I, too, have created space for generations to come.
Acknowledgements

You never fully understand all that you truly are until you take on a monumental task and experience the unwavering support of all the souls that surround you. It is with great honor and ease that I express gratitude to all who have lent a writing hand, pieces of advice, safe spaces for my thoughts and tears to land, encouragement and inspiration, folded pieces of money pressed into my palms, and above all else, resilient faith. My sun god, Ra, came into my life at a destine moment in this journey and reminded me that I am beautifully created and equipped to overcome all that is on my path. I love you and thank you for your vision, your courage, and for meeting me head-on.

As one of the trailblazers in this program, the terrain was often rocky and unknown. Still, the steadfast support of my chairs Laura Kohn-Wood and Donna Coker never wavered. Laura, thank you for your compassion and for always advocating for me. You are an amazing black woman, a beautiful mother, a dynamic scholar, and for all that you do for students, the university, and the field, I stand in awe. Donna, thank you so much. The amount of time, energy, patience, love, and care that you have endlessly poured into my life is only comparable to how we treat our own children. You have transformed my life and my scholarship. It has been an honor to reimagine with you and I look forward to making you proud.

I am living proof that it takes a village: my committee members Scot Evans and Guerda Nicolas; my past advisors John Murphy, Etiony Aldarondo, and Issac Prilleltensky; my writing coaches, Sam Dietz, Roxane Pickens, and Noelle Sterne; and my past mentors M. Brinton Lykes, Deborah Wiese, Nina Lerman, and Deborah Winters. You are the scholars that have encouraged me to passionately pursue social justice and
seek excellence. Thank you for your contributions to my life and to my visions of the world. It is your ideas, your praxis, and your stories that create the foundation of my own scholarship. I am proud that you are my lineage.

This journey would have been so lonely without the support of my colleagues, Patrice Fenton, Chrisann Newransky, and Adam Saltsman. As I say to one of you I say to you all: from the depths of my soul, I am forever grateful. You carried me, you dragged me, you did WHATEVER IT TAKES, and you got me to my finish line. I love you so much; you all are phenomenal scholars and even greater partners. Once more, thank you.

My communities both near and far contributed to the dream and the reality of completing this degree. The Boston Sunday Dinner Group, often hosted in a small one room space, is a student-created family of strong, talented, and young black scholars pursing higher degrees of education at predominantly white institutions. You all showed me how to stand tall and achieve amongst the trials and tribulations that were embedded along the path. P3 is a group of young women in Miami who had been homeless or aged out of foster care and lead by Alison Austin, Valerie Crawford, and Paulette White. My work and time with these young women and their wise leaders transformed my whole life and was essential in the completion of my degree. Thank you for helping me remember the abundance of the universe, to ask and it shall be given, and that I am a magnificent creator.

Finally, I began to fully understand who I am when the restorative and transformative justice healers and warriors believed in me and my vision. The participants of this project gifted me their voices, their stories, their dreams, and passions. I am humbled by the work that you all do. I see you all; I see your strength; I see your
beauty and your mess. That you trust me, that you support me, is symbolic of just how fearless and powerful you all are. Thank you for seeing me too. In service of social justice, peace, and well-being, I thank you all.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this interpretive qualitative research study was to identify how community-based organizations (CBOs) are addressing gender violence (GV) by using restorative justice (RJ) and/or transformative justice/community accountability (TJ/CA) as social change strategies within social settings. As illustrated in the literature review, prior research focused primarily on the dominant responses to interpersonal violence against women (VAW). These were largely professionalized, institutionalized, and state responses that targeted individual level factors. Why, how, and in what ways some U.S. antigender violence CBOs use community-based strategies such as RJ and/or TJ/CA to address GV has remained largely unanswered prior to this study.

Sexual violence, intimate partner violence (IPV), and violence against women (VAW) are sometimes described collectively as gender violence (GV). Historically and in current practice, GV is widely understood as synonymous with “men’s violence against women” (Carpenter, 2006, p. 86; see also Coker, 2001; U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women,1993; Richie, 2012). GV is often interchanged with VAW on websites and fact sheets of major organizations (Carpenter, 2006). Furthermore, although gender equality efforts (e.g., gender mainstreaming) have been made to shift the focus from women’s concerns only, and some organizations acknowledge that men, gender diverse individuals, and sexual minorities experience GV, many organizations still chose to focus on the “women and girls as they are the primary targets of gender-based violence world-wide” (Ward, 2002, as cited in Carpenter 2006, p. 87).
Gender diverse (i.e., all gender identities) and sexual minorities’ experiences of violence disrupt the definition of gender violence as identical to VAW. For over the last 20 years, gender equality strategies such as gender mainstreaming have been used to reframe gender violence as more than VAW. Many organizations, institutions, and states have shifted their policy-making, planning, and decision-making to include the concerns of gender diverse and sexual minorities (Calgar, 2013; Monday, 2018). Still, feminists argue that while gender mainstreaming efforts have broadened the definition of GV, the broadening has not led to a deeper framing of the issues (Caglar, 2013; Lombardo & Meier, 2008). GV as VAW continues to be the dominate frame that defines who is experiencing GV, who is perpetrating GV, and consequently, how GV is to be researched and addressed.

Notwithstanding the narrow definition of GV, this “violence against women” framing of the Feminist Antiviolence Movement (FAM) has been valuable in elevating a “women’s equal right to protection” and supporting women afflicted by interpersonal violence (Richie, 2012, p. 72). By increasing public awareness and addressing public perceptions of VAW, many formal services (i.e., shelters, rape crisis centers, 24-hour advocacy call lines) were created to assist women victims of “‘wife abuse’ or ‘domestic violence’” (Richie, 2012, p. 76). The VAW framing was important to challenging the “gender domination of a patriarchal society” and to achieving a level of institutional accountability through legal and legislative changes (Richie, 2012, p. 73).

Even with such successes, critics argue that the VAW framing only provided safety for some women. What’s more, the limited framing of GV as men’s VAW makes invisible many victims and sanctions structural violence by reinforcing harmful
heteronormative and patriarchal rules and norms (Carpenter, 2006; Crosby & Lykes, 2011; Goldscheid, 2014; Richie, 2012; Wasco & Bond, 2010). Critics describe the gender-specific, single-identity, and individual-level framing of VAW as problematic for provision of a just and safe system that supports the development and well-being of all individuals and communities experiencing gender violence.

**Gender-Specific Frame**

With an average of more than one in three women beaten or sexually abused in their lifetimes, VAW has been called a pandemic, a global phenomenon with catastrophic effects (Heise & Kotsadam, 2015; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence [NCADV], 2019). Surveys report that the physical and sexual violence (i.e., interpersonal violence) experienced by women is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men (Caldwell, Swan, & Woodbrown, 2012; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Goldschied, 2014). Given the pervasiveness of VAW, many feminist antiviolence advocates believe that the gender-specific VAW frame rightfully targets the population most afflicted. However, queer and gender scholars point out the limits of the gender-specific VAW frame, noting that multiple studies have indicated that sexual assault and IPV affects lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals at rates similar to or exceeding those that heterosexual women experience (Cruz & Firestone, 1998; Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, & Tolin, 1996; Merrill & Wolfe, 2000; McClennen, Summers, & Vaughn, 1995; Owen & Burke, 2004).

Many queer and gender diversity advocates and theorists argue that the gender-specific VAW frame is informed by heteropatriarchy and narrowly defines victims as heterosexual females and perpetrators as heterosexual males (Esquivel-Santoveña & Dixon, 2012; Guadalupe-Diaz & Yglesias, 2013; VanNatta, 2005). The heterosexist
assumption that only heterosexual men commit intimate partner violence against only heterosexual women is contradicted by empirical evidence (Murray & Mobley, 2009). For example, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2013) found that 43.8% of lesbians, 61.1% of bisexual women, 26% of gay men, and 37.3% of bisexual men reported experiencing IPV at least once in their lifetime.

In addition, it is generally accepted that the prevalence of IPV for both same-sex and heterosexual couples is between 25% and 35% (Goldscheid, 2014; McClennen, 2005). Furthermore, national research indicates rates of sexual assault for gender diverse and sexual minority women to be similar to those of heterosexual women (Coker, 2016; Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013). Finally, given the comparatively scant research on men, reports indicate that men and sexual minorities may be reluctant to report because of a homophobic and transphobic social environment, dominant social roles, gender stereotyping, and discrimination and harassment by reporting agents (Brown & Herman, 2015; Burke & Follinstad, 1999; Girshick, 2002; Goldscheid, 2014; Ristock, 2011). Still, some studies on college men’s experiences of sexual victimization and sexual assault indicate that over 12% had encountered at least one unwanted sexual contact since the age of 16, and that gay and bisexual men reported higher rates of sexual assault than did heterosexual men (Cantor et al., 2015; Coker, 2016; Turchik, 2012).

The normatively binary and male-dominated ideology assumed by the VAW framing excludes males, gender diverse, and sexual minorities from identifying as victims (Goldscheid, 2015; Goodmark, 2013; Harris, 2011; Richie, 2014). Excluding these populations “hides the reality of abuse . . . [and] excludes the complexities of the
experiences,” perpetuates gender-role stereotypes, and results in the erasure of the violence perpetuated (Goldscheid, 2014, p. 315). Ultimately, the erasure creates a barrier to accessing support services and legal redress for many individuals experiencing GV (Goldscheid, 2015, Goodmark, 2013).

**Single-Identity Frame**

Critical community psychologists and intersectional, multidimensional, and other antiessentialist scholars identify a number of ways in which using VAW as a “single axis of identity” for GV is problematic (Goldscheid, 2014, p. 315). Not only does the VAW frame prevent certain victims from being identified as victims, it also ignores intragroup differences and presumes that “femaleness” is always the critical identity marking vulnerability. This perspective fails to acknowledge the way in which multiple “forms of inequality . . . are routed through one another, and . . . cannot be untangled to reveal a single cause” (Grabham et al., 2009, as cited in in Stubbs, 2015, p. 1437).

In detailing the efforts of the FAM to influence powerful figures (primarily affluent, White, heterosexual men), activist scholar Richie (2012) described how the “everywoman rhetoric” within the VAW frame “came to mean the women with the most visibility, the most power, and the most public sympathy, [are] the citizens whose experience of violence is taken most seriously” (p. 92). Although the intent of the VAW frame was to organize and gain public support for legislative reform, the frame also appealed to the “universality” or “whiteness” of VAW (Richie, 2012, p. 93).

Richie (2012) argued that this framing assumed “race and class neutrality of gender violence—to some extent ignoring the issue of sexuality—[and] led to the erasure from the dominant view of the victimization of lesbians, women of color in low-income
communities, and other marginalized groups” (p. 91). In doing so, the framing painted the essential battered woman [italics supplied] as heterosexual, middle-class, and White (Goodmark, 2012; see also Richie, 2012). By ignoring the multiple dimensions of a victim’s identity, the VAW frame excludes not only male and sexual minorities but also the “everywoman” it purported to protect (Goldschied, 2014; see also Crenshaw 1991; Richie 2012, p.24).

Within the single-identity of women, “everywoman” is not the same. Intragroup differences, whether of age, sexuality, immigration status, or class, all shape the violence each woman may experience. Although some VAW advocates are concerned that acknowledging intragroup differences may negate or reduce the visibility of gender, acknowledging differences and “the questioning of gender primacy is not the same as subscribing to a gender neutral account” (Stubbs, 2015, p. 1439; see also Crenshaw, 1991; Davis, 2008, p. 7). In fact, disregarding differences often creates tension and “identity wars” in which identities become hierarchical and could-be allies falsely become mutually exclusive efforts (Richie, 2012, p. 128; see also Crenshaw, 1991).

The primacy of gender or any other single identity, for that matter, obscures the “interlocking nature of oppression” (Stubbs, 2015, p. 1437). More importantly, how gender violence is addressed becomes limited in scope and reach. Many of the interventions using the VAW frame are inaccessible (e.g., few shelters for men and sexual minorities) and/or violent (e.g., discriminatory criminal justice responses) towards the diversity of people experiencing GV (Guadalupe-Diaz & Jasinski, 2017; Logan, Evans, Stevenson, & Jordan, 2005).
Individual-Level Frame

The efforts of Feminist Antiviolence Movement advocates and scholars successfully shifted the legal and legislative responses to VAW. With the new legal paradigm, new laws and higher penalties, VAW transformed from a personal or social problem to a crime (Richie, 2012). Those who adopted the “GV is VAW” frame often support the dominant “governing through crime” approach and even in noncriminal settings (e.g., colleges) imported what Coker (2016) identifies as “crime logic” (p. 155; see also Kim, 2015; Richie 2012).

Coker (2016) explained that crime logic, a dominant belief system, is narrowly focused on using the criminal justice system to remove and punish individual perpetrators or “bad actors” as the primary intervention strategy to addressing GV as VAW (p. 4). This limited focus disregards any collective accountability and minimizes the need to address the social determinants that underlie the use of violence (Coker, 2016). Focusing only on individual “bad actors” ignores many of the larger forms of violence that are gendered, particularly the state and structural violence that creates and maintains interpersonal violence and the multiple levels at which violence occurs (i.e., community, societal; Coker, 2004; Coker, 2016; Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Goldscheid, 2014; Richie, 2012).

In the United States, Black feminists and those in other marginalized communities have documented the multiple forms and contexts in which gendered violence occurs. For example, Richie (2012) developed a “violence matrix,” providing examples of how Black women experience different forms of gendered violence, such as physical, sexual, emotional; in different contexts or levels, such as interpersonal, community, state,
structural; and by different perpetrators, such as intimate partners, community members, state agencies, public policy (p. 133). These violations range from communities minimizing the violence in efforts to decrease the marginalization of the community to the sexual abuse of women under the control of state institutions (Richie, 2012).

The VAW frame continues to ignore the multiple forms, contexts, and perpetrators of gender violence and creates individual-level change strategies that have been shown to be less effective, inaccessible, exclusionary, and at times harmful to many individuals experiencing GV (Coker, 2002; Goodmark, 2015; Harris, 2011; Ptacek, 2010; Richie, 2014). Scholars and community psychologist have noted the fundamental importance of multilevel, ecological, and multidimensional prevention efforts to address all individuals experiencing gender violence (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009).

As previously stated, gender mainstreaming efforts have been made to shift from a VAW frame to a GV frame that incorporates the victimization experiences of men, gender diverse individuals, and sexual minorities. These GV scholars also offer a definition that includes (a) violence targeting people of subordinated genders, including indirect, structural violence; (b) violence directed against people whose identities threaten the binary status quo of the system of gender in society; (c) violence that creates or instills gender relations; and (d) violence that undermines identities and relations that challenge the system of gender (Harris, 2000, 2011; Richie, 2012; Wagner, 2001). These efforts have made some impact on the rhetoric used; however, the VAW frame continues to inform the dominant responses to gender violence.

Although many mainstream organizations continue to use the VAW frame to address gender violence, some community-based organizations are incorporating a
broader GV definition and answering the call made by radical feminists of color and their allies to recognize and redress state and systemic violence, as well as interpersonal violence, and to strengthen and develop community responses (INCITE! 2017; Richie, 2014). Here and for the purposes of this study, community is defined as relational, in which members share culture, interests, experiences, mutuality, and/or goals over a sustained period of time (Hawe, 1994). These community-based organizations and advocates argue that solutions for gender violence should center on and be led by those most affected (i.e., person harmed, person who caused harm, family and community members) by the violence (Kim, 2012; Richie, 2014). These stakeholders create the foundation of a community response that departs from the professionalized, institutionalized, and state responses of most mainstream organizations.

Coker and Macquoid (2015) provided examples of some promising community “programs and activists who are laboring to provide alternative responses and responses that moderate some of the harms of the dominant approach” to GV (p. 171). These community-based organizations acknowledge the “injustice, inequity, and/or unfairness” (Seidman & Tseng, 2010, p. 9) of the current dominant social system (i.e., social setting) for many individuals experiencing gender violence. The dominant social setting is “difficult, if not impossible, to change in the desired directions . . . [and some] believed that a new [or alternative] setting needs to be created or the old setting completely overhauled with a different normative culture and practices” (Seidman & Tseng, 2010, p. 14; see also Kim, 2011).

Community psychologists support the CBOs’ focus on social change strategies that target the multilevel factors supporting gender violence. Improving, changing, and/or
creating social settings “has been a goal for community psychologist since the field’s beginnings” (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000, p. 362). Many argue that “alternative settings can meet needs not currently being met by existing institutions, and can provide greater choice and diversity within a society” (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000, p. 362).

Driven by a systems framework for understanding social settings, Tseng and Seidman (2007) asserted that CBOs’ efforts to address gender violence can be strengthened by understanding how their new and alternative settings function. By understanding the interrelated and important aspects of their social setting (i.e., social processes, resources, and organization of resources), CBOs can develop better actions and targets for change and evaluate the strength and challenges of their settings. Most importantly, through the assessment of social processes, CBOs can determine if they are continuing to align with the needs of the communities involved and truly transforming the dominant frame for gender violence.

The purpose of the study was to address how CBOs use RJ and/or TJ/CA social change strategies within social settings to both shift the VAW frame and provide safety and well-being to all individuals experiencing gender violence. Furthermore, this study explored some of the questions that arise in response to the call for a more multidimensional, multileveled, and ecological understanding of GV, particularly as these questions relate to social change actions and strategies.

The specific focus of this dissertation was on CBOs using restorative justice (RJ), transformative justice (TJ), and/or community accountability (CA) responses to GV. The literature demonstrates a paucity of research that captures the experiences and
understandings of these emerging models. The study aim was met by formulation of the following research questions:

1. How do CBOs using RJ and/or TJ/CA to address GV understand the social processes (i.e., norms, relationships, participation in activities) that form their social setting?
2. How do CBOs using RJ and/or TJ/CA to address GV understand the resources and organization of resources (i.e., temporal, physical, economic, human) that form their social setting?
3. How do CBOs understand and employ RJ and/or TJ/CA as social change strategies to address GV?

**Contribution to the Field**

The gender-specific, single-identity, and individual-level specific frames of the VAW frame are associated with the current nationwide use of separation-focused and criminal-law-focused (Coker & Macquoid, 2015) responses to GV. These responses have had limited success; they often exclude victims who are men, gender diverse, and those of sexual minorities; and have resulted in collateral harms to victims and communities. Better frames and responses are needed. Due to these concerns, some CBOs respond to the problematic VAW frame and work to change the dominant social setting. By using RJ and TJ/CA strategies to intervene and prevent GV, CBOs attempt to institute a multidimensional, multileveled, and ecological framing of GV.

Although community psychologists have pursued understanding and changing of social settings since the inception of the field, the social change efforts of CBOs addressing GV using RJ and TJ/CA have not been well documented in the field. The
purpose of this in-depth interpretive study was to fill this void in the research literature. The primary goal of this project was to depict as completely as possible the CBO participants’ understanding of their efforts to address GV by changing the dominant social setting. This study assessed the nature of these CBOs’ social setting development and highlighted the interlocking systems that constitute GV oppression.

**Conclusion**

GV continues to touch and influence the lives of people throughout the world. Many strides have been made to support the safety of women who have experienced harm, but more efforts need to be made to decrease the multileveled violence they experience and to support the safety needs of all individuals afflicted by gender violence. Efforts must also incorporate and address the interconnections between gender and other systems of subordination. CBO members advocating for changes to the dominant social setting by employing RJ and/or TJ/CA models represent an innovative and empowering response. Yet the research literature sparsely documents a basis from which to understand what might become the best practices to address this social issue. Research is needed, first, to establish the nature and function of these social change actions, and second, to ascertain how these changes may be effective for shifting the VAW frame, reducing gender violence, and changing the social conditions that perpetuate GV.

**Structure of the Dissertation**

Chapter 2 reviews the literature pertaining to the use of RJ and/or TJ/CA models by antigender violence organizations looking to address the ineffective and at times harmful responses of the VAW frame. First, key theoretical and structural factors of each model are defined. Then, the application of RJ and/or TJ/CA by exemplar organizations
is discussed. Specific attention is given to their ideology, goals, and strategies. Finally, in-depth examination is provided of the conceptual frameworks (i.e., multidimensionality theory and the creation of social settings) and methodology (i.e., iterative framework and interpretive phenomenology) that guide this research.

Chapter 3 describes an overview of the iterative and interpretive phenomenological methods used in the study. The study was carried out in the United States with CBOs that use RJ and/or TJ/CA to address gender violence. Each CBO involved is described to introduce the contexts and interactions involved in data collection. The interpretive phenomenological method utilized the “hermeneutical spiral of interpretation,” and I engaged participants in the data collection and interpretation processes (Conroy, 2003, p. 42). Chapter 3 also addresses the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 reports on the insights that emerged from the CBO participants’ meaning-making of their efforts to affect gender violence by using RJ and/or TJ/CA social change strategies. In particular, the analysis focuses on how these revelations shift the VAW frame and incorporate a nuanced understanding of the complex systems of oppression interlocked with gender violence. This in-depth analysis highlighted, for example, CBO members’ analysis of gender violence and current intervention practices, as well as the important aspects of the CBOs’ social settings.

Chapter 5 discusses the results of the analysis and relates the findings to the theoretical frameworks of multidimensionality and changing social settings. This chapter explores the CBO participants’ meaning-making with regard to dominant and nondominant gender violence norms, culture, and ideology; and how these factors correlate to specific social practices used to curtail violence. Finally, specific
recommendations are made to encourage authentic community involvement in the
development of multidimensional and multilevel strategies to address gender violence.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

This literature review examines the practices and interventions that were established through the violence against women (VAW) frame, with successes and challenges of each solution. To address the challenges, this review also explores the implementation of restorative justice (RJ) and transformative justice (TJ)/community accountability (CA) social change strategies by antigender violence organizations within social settings. This chapter presents the justification for how an understanding the functions of social settings can inform community-based organizations’ (CBOs’) social change efforts. Theoretical frameworks and methodologies used to explore the phenomenon are also provided.

Community Psychology and Gender Violence

Driven by equality feminism, women increasingly entered the field of community psychology (CP). With this entry their interest grew in a variety of women’s issues, including VAW (Angelique & Culley, 2003; Salazar & Cook, 2002; Swift, Bond, & Serrano-Garcia, 2000). Both the feminist antiviolence movement (FAM) and community psychologists have historically and conventionally constructed a narrative of GV as limited to VAW (Bond, Hill, Mulvey, & Terenzio, 2000; Langhout, 2015; Salazar & Cook, 2002; Swift et al., 2000), specifically interpersonal violence primarily committed by private actors (i.e., sexual, physical, domestic, and intimate partner violence) against straight women (Wasco & Bond, 2010).

The research is limited by the VAW frame, in which gender violence is understood as rooted in simple notions of patriarchy. This narrow understanding reflects implicit heteronormativity (Angelique & Culley, 2003; Merry, 2009a; Stubbs, 2015;
Swift et al., 2000). As such, CP research on gender-motivated violence against gender diverse individuals, sexual minorities, and men is scant and segregated from research on VAW (Brown, 2011; Girshick, 2002; Goodmark, 2013; Guadalupe-Diaz & Ygkesuas, 2013; Mankowski & Maton, 2010; National Coalition of Antiviolence Programs [NCAVP], 2010, 2011, 2012; Owen & Burke; 2004; Ristock, 2011; Swift et al., 2000; West, 2002). Although the limitations of the VAW frame narrowly shaped CP research scope and understanding of gender violence, it did lay the foundation for a gendered analysis of violence.

Overall, the accomplishments resulting from the addressing of GV as VAW increased the safety and well-being of some women. The accomplishments garnered greater attention in the field for understanding complex aspects of GV. Research indicates that positive shifts have taken place in public awareness, more direct services, and major legal and legislative reform (Goldscheid, 2014; Richie, 2012; Whittier, 2016).

**Public Awareness**

Remarkable and positive shifts in the public perceptions of sexual violence have taken place over the last 30 years. Research reports have increased public knowledge of sexual violence and improvements in how the U.S. society responds to and views sexual violence, as well as decreased victim blaming and/or rape supportive attitudes and beliefs (Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Gavey, 2005; O’Neil & Morgan, 2010). Furthermore, the creation of prevention education programs, including “U.S. Take Back the Night” events beginning in 1978, and national recognition of sexual assault awareness month starting in 2001 highlight the powerful impact of decades of FAM activism and awareness.

However, although public perceptions of sexual violence may have shifted positively over time, the problem continues—notably perpetrators’ moral shortcomings and victims’ lack of responsibility for their own safety (O’Neil & Morgan, 2010). Limited by the individual-level frame of VAW, the larger social and cultural systems that contribute to the pervasiveness of sexual violence is outside the scope of the general awareness (O’Neil & Morgan, 2010). As a result, most efforts to address gender violence are individual and crime-centered (e.g., stiffer penalties for potential offenders and ongoing detainment of repeat offenders; Coker & Macquoid, 2015; O’Neil & Morgan, 2010). Researchers indicate a need to develop frameworks for more systems-level thinking to begin education of the public (e.g., bystander education; [Coker et al., 2011]) and shifting public perceptions of the causes of and solutions for sexual violence (O’Neil & Morgan, 2010).

Direct Services

The feminist antiviolence movement (FAM) increased public awareness and developed emergency domestic violence shelters, safehouses, and hotlines focused largely on the needs of heterosexual women harmed by heterosexual men (Danis & Bhandari, 2010; Donnelly, Cook, Van Ausdale, & Foley, 2005; National Coalition of Antiviolence Programs [NCAVP], 2013). According to Garner and Fagan (1997), public attention to domestic violence increased during the 1980s; by the late 1990s approximately 1,200 shelters and 600 support programs existed for women victims of domestic violence. Currently, over 1,500 shelter services for intimate partner violence are
available (Danis & Bhandari, 2010, National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2012; Sullivan, 2012), as well as many not-for-profit organizations and support services (Haj-Yahia & Cohen, 2009).

Community psychologist Sullivan (2011) in a systematic review of the literature on shelter efficacy found that for women who are the victims of partner violence, shelters can be greatly supportive and essential resources to help them reestablish their lives. Furthermore, Sullivan (2011) highlighted Lyon, Lane, and Menard’s (2008) study of 215 shelters in eight states, in which most survivors at the shelters reported greater feelings of safety and hope once they were at the shelters. Moreover, the shelter atmosphere helped the victims develop strategies for their safety. Finally, shelters can provide a host of wraparound services that help support the safety and overall well-being of those seeking help (Goodmark, 2013; Sullivan, 2011).

The majority of shelter residents are women and their children (Sullivan & Gillum, 2001; Williams, 2016). This population results largely because of the prevalence of violence against women and perhaps due to the influence of the VAW gender-specific framing of IPV. Sullivan (2011) observed that emergency resources for housing and support are offered in U.S. shelters to both male and female victims of partner abuse. However, Douglas and Hines (2011), in surveying over 300 men seeking IPV services, reported that “those who sought help from DV agencies (49.9%), DV hotlines (63.9%), or online resources (42.9%) were told, ‘We only help women’” (p. 9).

Transgender victims of domestic violence have further challenges in accessing shelter. Goodmark (2013) quoted an explanation from Victoria Cruz, transgender woman
and domestic violence advocate with the New York City Gay and Lesbian Antiviolence Project:

If I am a victim of domestic violence and need to go someplace, I have no place to go, because male-to-female [transgender] survivors are funneled into the men’s shelter system. I don’t have to tell you what would happen there. My most vulnerable episodes there would be when I needed to take a shower or go to the bathroom. I would be revictimized then not only by the residents, but also by the service providers. (p. 70)

As explained in chapter 1, proponents of gender mainstreaming efforts meant to shift the VAW frame have attempted to urge services to incorporate the needs of all genders, but in practice many victims of gender violence who are not women are denied access to services and in some cases are harassed or wrongly accused of being perpetrators by service providers (Brown, 2011; McClennen, 2005). As a result, scholars and advocates call for actions that reach beyond written policies and work to genuinely shift the perceptions and practices of service providers.

**Laws and Policies**

Prior to 1960, gender and sexual minorities (i.e., transgender, lesbian, gay, and gender nonconforming identities) were often criminalized; women were assumed to be property; and none received equal protection under the law (Goodmark, 2012; Merry, 2009a, 2009b; Richie, 2012). In addition, few women spoke freely or publicly of the violence (e.g., intimate partner abuse, sexual assault, assaults by strangers) that they experienced in their private lives (Richie, 2012; Schneider, 2000). With the rise and influence of the Women’s Liberation Movement, by the mid-1960s women were publicly and nationally disclosing stories of male violence and began developing more collective responses (e.g., activism and networks of support) to address violence against women (Richie, 2012).
As women spoke of the male violence they experienced, they also criticized the unfair, nonresponsive, and blaming posture of social institutions and public servants they had sought out for help and protection (Richie, 2012; Satel, 1997). Feminist antiviolence advocates focused on the apparent inability of states to protect women from ongoing and repeated physical and mental abuse. The advocates strongly called for state and institutional responses that would more effectively meet the needs of victimized women. Some scholars argue that these experiences, coupled with the escalating attention of the nation on crime, fueled the individual-level and crime-centered approaches to addressing VAW (Kim, 2015, p. 222). VAW (i.e., interpersonal violence) was transformed from a “personal or even social problem” and became a major criminal justice and public health concern that demanded legal and legislative reforms (Richie, 2012, p.78; see also Grauwiler & Mills, 2004).

The legal and legislative reform work by FAM advocates was largely successful. Most states and local jurisdictions shifted their focus on how they addressed VAW. The advocates created specialized courts to handle VAW cases and laws and policies to address rape (e.g., statutory rape laws, rape shield laws), domestic violence (mandatory arrest policies, primary aggressor policies; Miccio, 2005), child protection (e.g., child protection services in IPV cases), and women’s self-protection (e.g., battered women’s defense; Grauwiler & Mills, 2004; Richie, 2012). In the mid-1990s, in the U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women of 1993 and the U.S. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994, the second-wave feminist movement secured legal recognition of rape, sexual assault, marital rape, and domestic violence as crimes.
These changes were all major victories accomplished through the VAW frame (Richie, 2012, 2014). Initially VAWA obscured multiple groups and modes of violence, including lesbians, gay men, transgender people, victims of psychological abuse, targets of police harassment and brutality, and heterosexual male victims of homophobic violence. Furthermore, the crime-centered approach of the VAWA made the state the default enforcer of gender violence law and obscured the state to GV (Goodmark, 2012; Harris, 2011; Richie, 2012). Important modifications to VAWA were made subsequently, including a 2019 reauthorization, to include LGBT nondiscrimination language (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2013; Richie, 2014; U.S. Violence Against Women Act, 1994).

Nevertheless, Goldshied (2014) argued that the overreliance of the FAM on interventions from the criminal justice system has produced an alienation of communities, especially in terms of marginalized segments, including race, immigration status, and gender. Coker and Macquoid (2015) emphasized that, overall, to understand IPV primarily as a problem rightfully addressed by the criminal justice system assumes the individuals are responsible. Rather, placement of responsibility should be on state policies that continue and extend inequities that have led to the creation, persistence, and increase of IPV. Given the limitations and concerns about the criminal justice system, it is important to expand the conceptualization of harm from violence and incorporate alternative methods for addressing harm. This incorporation is accomplished by a review of models of restorative justice and transformative justice and the potential for progressive creation of safety and promotion of equality for multiple populations.
Continued efforts are being made to incorporate the needs of diverse populations. For example, the NCAVP (2012) cheered national media coverage of LGBTQ survivors’ stories and political debates over access to services. Attitudes toward protecting gender and sexual minorities are improving, as evidenced by the continued modifications to the Violence Against Women Act in 2000, 2005, 2013, and 2019 (U.S. Violence Against Women Act, 2019). There is an effort to improve institutional cultural competency, including a rapid self-assessment for service providers’ level of gay affirmative practice (Crisp & McCave, 2007).

Similarly, some of the newer approaches for addressing GV have led to multileveled intervention and prevention strategies. To illustrate, Potter, Fountain, and Stapleton (2012) highlighted bystander education and mobilization initiatives. Finally, some antiviolence organizations are using alternative justice models (i.e., restorative justice, transformative justice/community accountability) to shift the VAW frame and create new and alternative social settings that support the safety and well-being of all individuals affected by GV. Next, I review RJ, TJ, and CA models and their implementation by antigender violence organizations in the United States.

Community-Based Strategies

Restorative justice. Restorative justice and restorative practices are widely used and researched both nationally and internationally (Armour, 2012; Daly & Nancarrow, 2010). RJ was initially focused on addressing youth offenders; evaluation research of RJ shows largely positive outcomes for victim satisfaction and reduction of recidivism rates (Ptacek, 2017). Most RJ programs are currently affiliated with the criminal justice
system, and professionals strive to provide increasingly less punitive more rehabilitative responses (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Pennell & Kim, 2010).

Ptacek (2017) noted that many jurisdictions ban the use of RJ to address IPV, and some scholars caution and/or contest its use for IPV. Others cite RJ facilitators’ capacity, accountability issues, community and family pressures to participate, and safety of the victim as concerns for use with IPV (Cook, K., Daly, K., & Stubbs, J., 2006; Daly & Curtis-Fawley 2005; Gavrielides & Loseby, 2014; Ptacek, 2010; Stubbs 2002, 2014). Despite these concerns, specialized programs for gender violence (i.e., sexual harms and IPV) using RJ have had positive results, and RJ is slowly emerging as a suitable practice for addressing gender violence (Coker, 2006, 2019; Hayden, 2016; Ptacek, 2017).

Researchers and scholars agree that there is no one RJ model, ideology, or definition (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Daly, 2016). RJ processes are frequently described as a response to harm that is “relationally focused” (Llewelyn & Howse, 1999, p. 1).

Wachtel (2016) further defined RJ as

a process involving the primary stakeholders in determining how best to repair the harm done by an offense. The three primary stakeholders in restorative justice are victims, offenders, and their communities of care, whose needs are, respectively, obtaining reparation, taking responsibility and achieving reconciliation. (p. 3)

Overall, scholars and practitioners acknowledge that RJ focuses on at least three goals. First, as opposed to a focus on retribution or punishment, RJ focuses on the wrongdoing—who is harmed, who caused the harm, and who is responsible for repairing the harm (Coker, 2019; Llewelyn & Howse, 1999). Second, RJ processes are meant to be nonpunitive or less punitive responses than ordinary criminal justice responses to harm (Coker, 2019). Lastly, RJ is concerned with repairing and restoring the dignity and respect of all the social entities (i.e., individual, group, community) that have been
impacted by the harm (Llewelyn & Howse, 1999). RJ proponents recognize that harm is not limited solely to the direct victim of the incident and that harm impacts all the stakeholders, offenders, and communities affected. Therefore, involvement of the primary stakeholders is fundamental in RJ processes.

Wachtel (2016) explained that there are partly, mostly, and fully restorative processes. These are determined by the number of stakeholders involved and the informal/formal range of restorative practices employed. For example, the three most common formal RJ processes used to address gender violence (e.g., intimate partner violence) are victim-offender mediation, which is primarily restorative; family-group conferencing, which is fully restorative; and peacemaking/sentencing circles, which is fully restorative (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Ptacek, 2017).

Restorative justice processes. Victim-offender mediation (VOM) or Victim-offender dialogue (VOD) is traditionally a face-to-face mediated interaction between only two stakeholders—the victim and the offender (Coker, 2019; Ptacek, 2017; Wachtel, 2016). Watchel defined VOM/VOD as aided by a facilitator and as mostly restorative as it usually does not involve the community of care. Nevertheless, like most other RJ processes, VOM/VOD focuses on the emotional exchange between the stakeholders who are present (Ptacek, 2017). Scholars and advocates of VOD/VOM stress the importance of safety, preparedness, and readiness of all parties in using this process effectively (Watchel, 2016).

Conferencing (also referred to as family group or community conferencing) takes the form of meetings involving all parties—the offenders, victims, and families and friends of both sides. In the meetings, the aim is to address the crime and its
consequences and optimally reach solutions on reparation for the wrongdoing (Wachtel, 2016). Family group conferencing may also include professionals (e.g., justice officials, school officials, service providers) involved with the case (Coker, 2019; Ptacek, 2017). Here, by incorporating all stakeholders, the justice process acknowledges the multileveled impact of the harm and allows individuals, through a structured and positive format, to reach their own resolutions (Wachtel, 2016).

Circling (e.g., peacemaking, sentencing) is the less formal but still fully restorative process that is grounded in indigenous practices (Coker, 2001; Ptacek, 2017; Wachtel, 2016). Circling involves a community meeting of all primary stakeholders, a “circle keeper” or facilitator (although not always) and often a “talking piece” (small object passed and held by the speaking party; Wachtel, 2016, p. 8; see also Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Ptacek, 2017). RJ circling often focuses on conflict resolution through consensual processes. The aim is to give everyone an opportunity to speak safely and equally and listen to one another’s stories and perspectives, ultimately restoring both social relationships and stakeholder accountability (Llewelyn & Howse, 1999; Ptacek, 2017). Given the less formal nature of circling, it is also used as a preventive or community-building practice.

**Restorative justice practices.** RJ circles are used for a wide range of daily interactions, including but not limited to the resolution of conflict, supportive contributions and actions, healing, arriving at decisions, exchange of vital information, and development of relationships (Wachtel, 2016). Although RJ conferencing and VOM/VODs are responses to a harm, circling is a restorative practice that can be used both reactively and proactively (Wachtel, 2016). The format of circles mitigates common
communication challenges, such as talking over each other and back-and-forth arguing, and creates space for a more equitable distribution of voices and perspectives (Watchel, 2016). As an informal everyday practice, restorative justice circling has a cumulative positive impact on the affective culture and norms within the community (Watchel, 2016). Overall, RJ processes and practices acknowledge the multileveled effects of harm, encourage affective cultural and normative shifts, and help primary stakeholders address harms collectively.

**Evaluation of RJ in Cases of GV**

As stated previously, the resistance to RJ practices for addressing GV has impeded both the development and evaluation of such initiatives. In reviewing the U.S. literature, Koss (2014) pointed out that her peer-reviewed evaluation of RESTORE, a RJ conferencing program for adult sexual assault, was the first of its kind. After evaluating 22 RESTORE cases, Koss found that over 90% of victims and their supporters were satisfied with the conferences.

Feminist/restorative hybrid programs such as Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) also employ restorative justice conferences to address domestic violence and child abuse. FGDM is used when there is involvement with child welfare. FGDM uses restorative justice conferencing to gather formal and informal resources (i.e., temporal, human, physical, economic) that help families achieve safety and hold offenders accountable (Coker, 2019; Ptacek, 2017). Reports indicated that 32 families who participated in FGDM, indicators of maltreatment declined by half when compared to similar families in child protection cases who did not use FGDM (Pennell & Burford, 2000). These results highlight the potential for RJ conferencing usage to address gender
violence. Still, with safety concerns in mind, Pennell and Koss (2011) cautioned the use of RJ processes for some forms of GV (e.g., IPV).

Other modified RJ programs, such as Circles of Peace (COP), although not fully restorative, use RJ circling to help convicted domestic violence offenders focus on both the harms caused and their behavioral changes that are necessary to prevent future harm (Mills, Barocas, & Ariel, 2013). The COP RJ circle processes include all primary stakeholders (victim participation is voluntary), offenders’ support person(s), and circle facilitators. In a recent randomized controlled study, Mills, Barocas, Butters, and Ariel (2019) found that over a 2-year period arrests for crimes of participants of COP were over 50% less in total and severity compared to participants without COP RJ circle processes. Furthermore, this study helped address the safety concerns identified by Pennell and Koss (2011). The studies of Mills et al. (2013, 2019) showed that victims could be included in the circle process without experiencing additional harm.

No peer-reviewed evaluation research exists on VOD/VOM use in gender violence cases in the United States. However, international research indicates that VOM/VOD for IPV is well established in some countries, with thousands of cases every year in countries such as Austria and Finland (Coker, 2019). Coker (2019) cited the continued resistance from some feminist antiviolence activists and scholars as contributing to bans on using and subsequently researching RJ processes such as VOD/VOM. Despite the preliminary positive results from some programs, some feminist antiviolence activists and scholars continue to caution against using RJ to address GV.

Ptacek (2017) identified at least three main critiques of RJ: safety and the needs of the victims are not centralized; risk of low offender accountability; and there is failure to
incorporate an analysis of systems of oppression and GV. Beyond these primary critiques, some feminist of color and queer advocates have also criticized RJ’s common affiliation with the criminal justice system, which undermines the capacity of RJ to address state and structural GV (Smith, 2010). As more promising research such as that by Mills et al. (2019) becomes available, many of the concerns and limitations of RJ processes will be reduced. RJ processes and practices contribute to the ever-growing alternative responses to the punitive, individual-focused responses of the criminal justice system.

Although RJ processes and practices do not explicitly address the gender-specific, single-identity, state and structural violence concerns I identified above, RJ conferencing and circling processes can support antigender violence organizations’ efforts in creating social settings that address multidimensional and multileveled gender violence. RJ acknowledges the multileveled effects, encourages affective cultural and normative shifts, and helps primary stakeholders address harms collectively. By utilizing RJ conferencing and/or RJ circling, antigender violence organizations strive to create new and alternative social settings that redress the punishment and individual-level focus of the dominant crime-centered approach.

Furthermore, organizations such as Ahimsa Collective, Impact Justice, and S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective use RJ and are critical of the VAW frame and crime-centered approaches. These organizations acknowledge the need for multidimensional and multilevel responses and are employing RJ practices to create new and alternative social settings that address gender violence. Understanding and publicizing the functions of these organizations’ social settings will help fill the void in
the literature, address concerns about RJ use in gender violence cases, and, importantly, strengthen the organizations’ social change efforts.

**Transformative Justice and/or Community Accountability**

Although RJ and TJ/CA both focus on developing community-based approaches to addressing gender violence, critics have noted that traditional RJ does not include an explicit analysis of the VAW frame or its limitations. (Armatta, 2018; Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Ptacek, 2017). TJ/CA is rooted in a critique of the reliance of FAM on the state and institutions, often solely, to prevent and address gender violence (Coker, 2002; Ptacek, 2010). TJ and CA are often used interchangeably in reference to similar goals and community-based practices to increase collective action and community response for safety and self-governance (INCITE! & Abolitionist, 2012; Kim, 2006, 2010).

Smith (2010) cited TJ/CA as “grounded in a theory of the state . . . [and] not simply as flawed in its ability to redress violence, but as a primary perpetrator of violence against women” (p. 261, as cited in Coker & Macquoid, 2015, p. 175). Additionally, the core beliefs of TJ/CA hold that individual justice is intertwined with collective liberation and that for both to take place, the conditions supporting gender violence, including state and systemic responses, must be transformed (Armatta, 2018; Gready, Boeston, Crawford, & Wilding, 2010; Sered, 2011). This critique was formulated by radical feminists of color, queer communities, and gender nonconforming individuals, many of whom experienced firsthand the interpersonal, community, systemic, and state violence supported by the VAW frame (Armatta, 2018; INCITE!, 2017; Ptacek, 2010; Richie, 2014). Given this critique, the “TJ umbrella of processes” includes a framework for
understanding community agency among systemic and state violence, a movement to end gender violence, and a community-based practice to address interpersonal violence (Coker & Macquoid, 2015, p. 175).

One of the first organizations to develop a transformative justice framework was Generation FIVE. In their work to end child sexual assault, Generation FIVE (2007) defined TJ as “a liberatory approach that seeks safety and accountability without relying on alienation, punishment, or state or systemic violence, including incarceration and policing” (Gready et al., 2010, p. 5). The goals of TJ are for survivors to experience safety, healing, and agency; for abusers to be accountable and transformed; for communities to respond and be accountable; and for a change in the social conditions that create and perpetuate violence (Generation FIVE, 2007; Kim, 2006).

The beliefs associated with TJ/CA as a movement tend to emphasize justice through community-based practices that acknowledge community members as problem-solvers, organizers, and change agents (Bradford, 2013; Braude, Heaps, Rodriguez, & Whitney, 2007; Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Ritchie, 2012). Critical community psychologist Prilleltensky (2012) described such an insight as “a critique of social conditions leading to suffering and languishing, and a realization that people can change these conditions” (p. 16). Just as “critical action is transformative and not merely ameliorative” (Prilleltensky, 2012, p. 16), so transformative justice is not only an alternative response to the dominant state and institutional responses to GV but also a means for changing the underlying structures that cause and exacerbate violence (Generation FIVE, 2007; Gready et al., 2010).
TJ is a practice of liberation in personal, community, and political lives (Rojas Durazo, Bierria, & Kim, 2011), such that the correctives span all levels of society (Kelly, 2006). For example, the national organization INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence takes on addressing personal cases of state gender violence, like that of domestic violence survivor Marissa Alexander; develops tools for communities to address GV, such as the community accountability toolkit; and provides activist organizing resources such as the law enforcement toolkit (INCITE!, 2017).

Implementation of TJ means acting both politically and practically, addressing incidents, accomplishing prevention by addressing conditions, building collective power by addressing inequity, and building capacity to address larger conditions and challenge state violence (Coker, 2002; Generation FIVE, 2007). In addition, community-based models, tools, and programs are created to respond to individual and community cases of gender violence (Coker & Macquoid, 2015).

Whereas criminal justice responses to IPV have primarily focused on removing and punishing an abuser, TJ practices focus on building community capacity to support those who have been harmed and hold accountable those who have done harm. TJ/CA arises from critical race feminists, prison abolitionists, and queer communities that have centered the multidimensional identities and multileveled instances of violence that had been erased by the use of the dominant VAW frame to address GV. The practice of TJ/CA is both responsive and preventive. TJ/CA addresses the violence after it has occurred and also provides an action framework and movement aimed to change the social conditions so that survivors will be supported and future harm prevented in the
community by the community (Armatta, 2018; Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Generation FIVE, 2007; Nocella, & Anthony, 2011).

As catalogued in *The Revolution Starts at Home*, the seminal volume edited by Chen, Dulani, and Piepzna-Samarasinha (2011), many TJ/CA practices have been used as highly effective responses to injustice for minoritized individuals and populations. These practices demonstrate the depth of capturing the full complexity of the harm and complicated realities. Over 30 organizations nationally are employing TJ/CA practices to address gender violence, primarily focusing on communities vulnerable to state and systemic violence (Kim, 2014). National organizations such as INCITE! have helped to carry out the movement initiatives and provide tools and resources for local communities and organizations to address interpersonal and community violence as well as build community capacity and critical consciousness as first responders (INCITE!, 2017; Kim, 2006). Online collective knowledge bases such as *Community Accountability: Creating a Knowledge Base* (Community Accountability, 2012) and TRANSFORMINGHARM.org (2019) provide resource hubs that help facilitate a TJ/CA framework.

Although initial research on TJ/CA is limited, Kim (2006) candidly reviewed the accomplishments, challenges, and real potential of these community-based practices. Kim’s Creative Interventions (CI) is a “resource center to create and promote community-based responses to interpersonal violence” (Creative Interventions, n.d.; Kim, 2006). CI was a collaboration based on of four immigrant-based domestic violence and sexual assault programs to develop community organizing tools, recruit allies, design interpersonal violence intervention toolkits, and create several TJ/CA projects. Kim (2011) recounted the visions and evaluated the strengths and challenges of the
StoryTelling and Organizing Project ("STOP") and the Community-Based Intervention Project (CBIP).

STOP documented and shared community accountability stories as examples of alternative interventions carried out by community members for generations (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Kim, 2011). Inspired by “STOP,” the CBIP was formed initially for the development of a model and tools that did not rely upon the existence of organizations or institutions. The CBIP was envisioned for the intervention of and redressing of interpersonal violence by all community members, including victims’ family members, friends, coworkers, and other community stakeholders (Kim, 2011). The CBIP was specifically developed to legitimize community-based interventions, support their effectiveness and social change capacity, and critically analyze their “successes . . . failures, contradictions, and challenges” (Kim, 2011, p. 20).

In highlighting the successes of the CBIP, Kim (2011) identified the creation of an “alternative space for violence intervention” as fundamental (p. 26). In this environment, participants were able to bring allies and build supports for the process, develop realistic personalized goals to address the harm (in a noncondemning space), and reclaim authority in the accountability process. Furthermore, allies of the participants were welcome and were given the space to address the effects of the violence on their lives, identify their roles in addressing the violence, and feel less isolated as more supporters were brought in to address the harms (Kim, 2011). Kim also identified at least three challenges raised by critics of community-based practices (e.g., RJ, TJ/CA). These are offender accountability, community capacity, and the claim that supporters suggest that TJ/CA is a panacea for all justice-related issues (Kim, 2011).
One of the primary concerns asserted by critics of community-based interventions is offender accountability. Critics argue that in efforts to avoid punishment, prison, and/or other penalties, offenders will admit guilt, insincerely express remorse, and opt for less punitive community-based responses (Armatta, 2018). Kim (2006) did not address issues with false remorse; however, offender voluntary participation, strain and awkwardness in the accountability relationships, and lack of resources for engaging the offender were highlighted. Proponents of RJ and TJ/CA clarify that accountability is not based on retribution but on what is meaningful to the person harmed, whether symbolic (e.g., an apology or expressing how the harm affected harmed the person to the person who caused the harm) or actionable (e.g., addiction treatment for the person who caused the harm; Sered, 2017).

According to a 2016 national poll by the Alliance for Safety and Justice, survivors desire a range of services that help them address the harm, such as rehabilitation, education, jobs, mental health and drug programs, and options other than prison for the perpetrators (Armatta, 2018). Kim (2006, 2011) expressed the need for ally support and resources to address those who harm and for survivors who desire additional alternatives. In response, organizations such as Common Justice work to develop extensive accountability principles, models, and processes to address these concerns (Kelly, 2011).

The romanticizing of communities has been a concern of both RJ critics and TJ/CA advocates. Critics claim that community members are often not skilled enough in the processes to effect change, may pressure survivors to forgive, and may not have a sound analysis of power to inform and procure safety (Armatta, 2018; Kim, 2011). Kim’s (2011) analysis of the CBIP also identified the contradictions and challenges in the work
of communities whose members were both knowledgeable and stressed, strained and responsive, and feeling isolated from help. Additionally, these communities were the most likely to effectively hold members accountable and maintain beliefs that both support and challenge harmful behaviors.

As documented by STOP, communities have been the first responders to violence for generations. The collection of community stories in STOP provides a glimpse into the continuum of community-based tactics used daily to respond to violence. Although these responses were informal and varied in their effectiveness, the determination and resourcefulness of the community is palatable. In efforts to develop more sustainable solutions, CBOs like Creative Interventions created CBIP, which helped strengthen communities’ everyday responses by providing communities with community accountability strategies and models, toolkits, critical education, and most importantly an “alternative space” to develop support, set realistic goals, and build capacity (Kim, 2011, p. 26). All of these resources and tools support more effective and strategic everyday community responses.

Lastly, critics express concern with RJ and TJ/CA identified as an alternative or catch-all response for all harms. RJ and TJ/CA advocates readily acknowledge the limitations of community-based practices to address every harm. Kaba, a founder of the CBO Just Practice, explained that RJ and TJ/CA are not appropriate for everyone or every situation (Armatta, 2018; Just Practice, n.d.). Some people who cause more harm may require separation from others or need other forms of intervention (Armatta, 2018).

Unfortunately, the current and widely used criminal justice responses are punitive, harmful, and ineffective. These responses perpetuate systemic and state violence that
underpins gender violence (Coker, 2004; Messing, Ward-Lasher, Thaller, & Bagwell-Gray, 2015; Richie, 2012). Although Smith (2010) explained that the point is not to “argue that all prisons should be dismantled tomorrow, our task is to crowd out prisons with other forms of justice-making that will eventually demonstrate both the ineffectiveness and the brutality of prisons” (p. 267). Other justice-making forms like TJ/CA provide a strong framework that is grounded in the principles of confronting power and confronting unacceptable conditions (Generation FIVE, 2007; INCITE!, 2014) for all. TJ/CA fosters humane and equitable accountability, safety, rehabilitation and healing. The TJ/CA framework can be used to support the development of responses to incidents that may require interventions beyond the scope of the community.

The transformative model promotes the development of critical consciousness, critical action through collectives, and critical experience (Chen et al., 2011). Still, TJ/CA does not come without its challenges, limitations, and areas of improvement. Stakeholder safety, particularly for those who have been directly harmed, and offender accountability are essential to any effective justice-seeking approach. CBOs addressing GV must also be keenly aware of their communities’ capacity to respond and foster liberatory goals to guide the processes and practices (Kim, 2011). Like RJ, by using TJ/CA, with continued practice, feedback, and research, organizations will develop stronger, more effective, and less punitive responses to GV.

CBOs like Creative Interventions used TJ/CA to create alternative spaces or settings that support communities with realistic, innovative, and personally tailored responses to harm (Kim, 2006). The creation of alternative spaces is fundamental to shifting the norms and culture that support gender violence. Furthermore, the creation of
alternative spaces is indicative of shifts in the dominant social setting, supporting further social change efforts. Community psychologists theorize that social settings are an essential site for social change strategies and advocate for “the proactive creation of new social settings” that support “the struggle for principled social change and social justice” (Burton & Kagan, n.d., p. 3) and “foster the development and well-being of those within the setting” (Tseng & Seidman, 2007, p. 2). Some antigender violence CBOs are using RJ and TJ/CA to create new and alternative social settings. An understanding the functions of these CBOs will contribute to the development of more justice-making solutions. The next section will discuss the theoretical frameworks used in this study to conceptualize CBOs’ creation of these new and alternative social settings.

**Theoretical Framework: Creation of Social Settings**

Community psychologists (CP) and antigender violence advocates believe that changes to the social setting are imperative in addressing gender violence (Bond & Allen, 2016; Seidman & Tseng, 2010). These individuals have the shared goals of creating a more just and safe system that supports the development and well-being of all the individuals and communities within the setting. In particular, antigender violence advocates call for the development of more community-level responses. Advocates argue that various interventions at the individual/interpersonal level, although important and needed, do not address community, state, and/or structural violence as well as the underlying systemic oppression that supports such violence. Neglect of these multileveled harms will not bring about the social change necessary to meet the aforementioned goals (Coker, 2002; Goodmark, 2015; Ptacek, 2010; Richie, 2014).
Thus, community psychology becomes a crucial resource in the theorizing and informing of social change actions that target levels beyond the individual/interpersonal. CP theorists focus on change at the community or social setting level and that centers an ecological perspective. With this perspective is an understanding of social situations and settings as fundamental to the development of action for social change (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000; Kagan, Burton, Duckett, Lawthorn, & Siddiquee, 2011; Seidman & Capella, 2017; Seidman & Tseng, 2010; Trickett, 2009).

The community psychology literature defines the creation of social settings as “any instance in which two or more people come together in new relationships over a sustained period of time in order to achieve certain goals” (Sarason, 1972, p. 1). In these settings, individuals develop relationships based on their common interests and drive to accomplish goals (Sarason, 1974; Trickett, 2009). Although this definition is highly inclusive (including both dyads and large societies), Cherniss and Deegan (2000) identified that in practice, community psychologists apply a narrow definition to include groups that are generally stable, those in small communities, and those with specific purposes and settings (see also Rappaport, 1977; Seidman and Tseng, 2010). The current research adopts Cherniss and Deegan’s (2000) definition of social settings and focuses on social change efforts through the changing and/or creation of new and alternative social settings.

Many CP and GV advocates use a preventative social change approach and suggest that creating new and alternative social settings may be more effective than “fixing existing broken institutions” that are mired in “organizational craziness,” “recuperative processes,” and “ideological hegemony” (Burton, 1994, p.5; Burton &
Kagan, 1996; Sarason, Levine, Goldenberg, Cherlin, & Bennett, 1966, p. 362). CP asserts that by CBOs creating new and alternative settings so as to withstand too-common processes that can lead to self-destruction, CBOs can meet lacking societal needs with a variety of salutary options as well as empower all those involved (Odahl-Ruan, McConnell, Shattell, & Kozlowski, 2015; see also Sarason, 1974). The CBOs can then actualize “a new social form that people can choose outside the established options” (Odahl-Ruan et al., 2015, p. 4; see also Reinharz, 1984).

This research is guided by the explanation of Kagan et al. (2011) of new and alternative social settings. Kagan et al. (2011) described new social settings as individuals coming together in new ways, whether inside or outside of the dominant social order. Although these individuals may be from the existing social setting, they are often working in new or different ways or relating differently from the generally accepted norm. These new social settings are created to address the various dimensions (i.e., organizational structure, goals, ideology, or technology) of the dominant social setting.

In contrast, the creation of alternative social settings involves those that are distinctly “prefigurative” (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000, p. 206) and call into question the prevailing social order. These alternative social settings promote perceptions, actions, and experiences that are drastically different from the predominant modes (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000). For example, some gender violence activists are guided by a prison abolition approach and have created alternative social settings that reject the use of the criminal justice system in the dominant social setting to address gender violence (Deer, 2015; Lyndon, 2016; Richie, 2015). These gender violence activists have determined that addressing their concerns demands radically different organizational structures, goals,
and ideologies, and therefore the activists press for the creation of a “prefigurative” or “alternative social setting” (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000, p. 207).

Creating new and alternative social settings are two different processes that exist on a dynamic change-creation continuum (Cherniss & Deegan, 2000). Burton and Kagan (n.d.) explained that as CBOs challenge the dominant social order with new or radically different concerns, values, and ideologies, multiple sources (i.e., both external and internal) of resistance will result. The CBO members will react with the “ideological and psychological baggage” that CBOs inevitably bring from the dominant social setting (p. 5; see also Cherniss & Deegan, 2000). These types of resistance form the “prefigurative/recuperative” tensions that steer the process of changing dominant social settings into creating new and alternative social settings (Burton & Kagan, n.d., p. 207). Such tensions influence how CBOs’ social settings function, and more importantly, how CBO members understand the functions of their new and alternative social settings as well as their effects on social change.

Another way to understand social settings is through Seidman and Tseng’s (2010) theory of how social settings function and mandate actions needed for changing social settings. According to Seidman and Tseng (2010), both the creation of new social settings and alternative social settings are guided by certain assumptions that are grounded in philosophies, principles, values, and facts. Furthermore, Seidman and Tseng paired these approaches with a set of coordinating strategies and tactics used to implement the social change. Finally, and most importantly, Seidman and Tseng identified the major elements or “action levers” of social settings that can be targeted to implement the change-creation continuum (Seidman & Tseng, 2010, p. 2).
**Assumptions of Social Interventions**

Tseng and Seidman (2007) identified five fundamental frameworks or approaches that guide both social interventions and the change-creation continuum of social settings. These are the Reduction of Inequity, Utopian, Professional Development, Data-Driven, and Regulatory frameworks. Each framework is composed of a set of assumptions based on ideology, values, and/or empirical data. Each approach targets one or more action lever or setting component, with the ultimate goal of improving social settings and fostering the development and well-being of those within the setting.

Although there may be a base framework, Tseng and Seidman (2007) acknowledged that, like the change-creation continuum, different strategies are often combined. The primary focus of the present study is on understanding the process of changing and creating new social settings. Therefore, to guide the research question in this study, I used only the Reduction of Inequity and Utopian frameworks identified by Tseng and Seidman (2007; see also Seidman & Tseng, 2010), as these directly encompass the creation of new and alternative settings phenomena.

**Reduction of Inequity and Utopian Frameworks**

Seidman and Tseng (2010) asserted that social change agents often believe that power differentials and resource imbalances exist between the more privileged and more needy (e.g., the haves and have nots) that create injustice, inequity, and unfairness in the social setting. The primary goal of social change agents is to alter the role relationships and reduce the inequity. Seidman and Tseng identified grassroots organizing, consciousness-raising, advocacy, and litigation as common strategies employed to reduce inequity.
The Reduction of Inequity approach is driven by a desire to change the dominant social setting, from which arises the possibility for creating new and alternative settings. Seidman and Tseng (2010) positioned the Utopian framework within this change-creation continuum. Those with utopian ideals believe that completely different “normative culture and practices” are necessary to bring about the desired outcomes (Seidman & Tseng, 2010, p. 14), for example, the reduction of inequity, because the dominant social setting is deemed too difficult or impossible to improve. Although Seidman and Tseng (2010) did not distinguish between new and alternative social settings, as Burton and Kagan (n.d.) did, the Utopian framework is consistent with Burton and Kagan’s creation end of the change-creation continuum.

Both the Reduction of Inequity and the Utopian frameworks focus on change at the social setting level. But they target distinct action levers. Tseng and Seidman (2007) identified three key action levers: social processes, resources, and organization of resources. Social processes involve transactions between and among groups and include the groups’ norms, practices, and methods of behavior and response (Tseng & Seidman, 2007). This lever is critical and central to the improvement of social settings and ultimate creation of significant social change. Social processes form the daily interactions that directly influence both individuals and social setting levels. The culture and norms of a setting are comprised of a multitude of social processes in which messages are created, reinforced, repeated, and further developed as the setting progresses. These cultural norms, repeated beliefs, or formed ideologies are the primary mechanisms that drive the functioning of the setting.
Social processes are also expressed through relationships and participation in activities. Whereas norms are related to expectations, broad social and environmental factors, and the influences of other settings, relationships are shaped by individuals’ roles and power in the setting and consist of reciprocal interactions, feedback loops, and social networks (Tseng & Seidman, 2007). Participation in daily activities and routines shapes expectations and relationships within the setting. Overall, developmental, educational, and organizational scholars stress the importance of social processes, such as supportive relationships, appropriate structures, and positive social norms for the improvement of social settings (Tseng & Seidman, 2007). In the current study, explorations of how the social processes function in the antigender violence social settings of CBOs provide insight on the shifts and changes that are being made to address the limitations of both the VAW frame and the existing dominant approaches.

The other two action levers of social settings identified by Tseng and Seidman (2007) are resources and organization of resources. Tseng and Seidman identified the types of resources (i.e., human, physical, economic, temporal) that are commonly available in settings and how they are organized (i.e., socially, physically, temporally, economically). Whereas social processes (e.g., changing relationships and norms) are primarily targeted by community psychologists, regulating resources (e.g., per-survivor spending) and their arrangement (e.g., financial incentive structures) are often the focus of policymakers’ actions (Tseng & Seidman, 2007).

Tseng and Seidman (2007) further argued that social intervention approaches (i.e., Reduction of Inequity, Utopian ideals) drive the target action lever. Tseng and Seidman cautioned that changes in resources and their organization as a whole may not materially
change outcomes. What is necessary for real change is modification of the “daily social processes” (p. 219). However, the organization of resources and their organization in turn, Tseng and Seidman (2007) maintained, can become action levers that activate social processes settings. Finally, Tseng and Seidman recognized the dynamic practice of changing social settings.

The prefigurative/recuperative tensions theorized by Burton and Kagan (n.d.; see also Cherniss & Deegan, 2000) produce an amalgam of strategies and targeted action levers used by antigender violence CBOs to create new and alternative social settings. An understanding of how all three action levers function within these settings can help and strengthen the CBOs’ social change efforts. Moreover, this understanding can inform the CBOs of possible problems and areas to target for change.

**Multidimensionality**

In alignment with the efforts to shift from the VAW frame, I developed a conceptual frame for this study that incorporates both privilege and subordination, does not essentialize gender, acknowledges multiple identities, and underscores their interactions at the individual, community, and societal levels. Multidimensionality provides such a framework. Multidimensional analysis is rooted in an understanding of the nature of interlocking hierarchies and the contexts in which those hierarchies constitute human relations (Matsuda, 1991).

In the present study, a multidimensionality framework was used to capture participants’ views of the interacting dimensions of the social problems they sought to address. Mutua (2013) defined multidimensionality as a theoretical approach in which oppression is understood as a matrix of socially constructed hierarchies, “[a] synergistic
interplay between categories such as gender and race” (p. 341). Multidimensionality takes into account the intricacies inherent in oppressive systems as well as the power distributions engendered by categories of social identity (Hutchinson, 1999, p. 9, as cited in Hutchinson, 2001, p. 309).

For example, within the scholarly field, identity and social power influence the research and theories that “invariably reflect the experiences of class- and race-privileged individuals” (Hutchinson, 1999, p. 10, as cited in Hutchinson, 2001, pp. 309-310). Multidimensionality highlights this dynamic and complex operation of systems.

Furthermore, “multidimensionality posits that the various forms of identity and oppression are ‘inextricably and forever intertwined’” (Hutchinson, 1997, p. 641, as cited in Hutchinson 2001, p. 309). Multidimensionality theory is built from queer, masculinities, and intersectionality theory, which in turn emerged from critical race feminisms (Crenshaw, 1991; Harris, 2011; Hutchinson, 2001).

In addition to explaining the influence of privilege, subordination is an important positionality in the web of systems. The interaction of systems of oppression is key to understanding the complexity of subordination. Froc (2010) described this phenomenon by using the metaphor of an “invisible matrix” (p. 23), which must be understood as a network of mutually reinforcing systems. In sum, Mutua (2013) described multidimensionality as having five tenets:

1. Individuals have many dimensions.
2. Groups are also multidimensional, not monolithic.
3. The material relevance of systems that structure and rank groups in a hierarchy based on traits or expressions which have been made materially relevant historically through the allocation and denial of resources.
4. These hierarchical systems form a matrix of privilege and oppression that interact, intersect, and are mutually reinforcing [and synergistic] . . . . At the same time, these categories are unstable and shift in different contexts.
5. Context matters both in the construction of categories and is methodologically important because
it directs attention to the specific hierarchy that is foregrounded in a given situation as well as the particular aspects of the system that may be in play. (p. 355)

In other words, these tenets explain the “invisible matrix” of overlapping, complex, and interactive systems that constitute every individual’s reality (Froc, 2010). One’s own privilege and subordination, as well as those of others, influence everyone else’s experiences of and reinforces the systems of oppression. Addressing issues such as gender violence requires a keen awareness of multiple systems of oppression (e.g., patriarchy, White supremacy, homophobia) at play in a given context to expose the operations (i.e., interactions of privilege, subordination, and essentialism) of those systems (Froc, 2010).

Multidimensionality is both antischubordinationist and antiessentialist (Harris, 2011). In this regard, multidimensionality can be understood as an extension or evolution of the concept of intersectionality. Harris (2011) pointed out that her approach to GV has been variously labeled intersectionality, cosynthesis, and multidimensionality. Yet, whereas intersectionality examines two subordinated identities interacting, and cosynthesis explores how different forms of oppression have emerged from common sources and even from each other, multidimensionality examines multiple forms of privilege and subordination that interact differently in different contexts. This is the most nuanced analysis of subordination available today (Hutchinson, 2001). At the heart of Harris’ (2011) approach is recognition of intertwining practices, values, and beliefs that change the focus from group identities and result in an expanded definition of, in the present case, GV. Harris’ multidimensional approach undergirds this research project.
Intersectionality theory constructed privilege and subordination as static phenomena. In contrast, multidimensionality defines multiple privileges, multiple subordinations, and different contexts as interacting and changing. In other words, persons are understood as multidimensional wholes, rather than as simply loci for intersections of separate spheres or categories (Mutua, 2013). Multidimensionality elevates not simply those who experience two subordinated structures (e.g., Black women) but the salience of partially privileged groups (e.g., heterosexual Black women; Mutua, 2013). Hence, multidimensionality exposes how everyone is subject to a hierarchical continuum and system of both privilege and subordination (Mutua, 2013).

This study was shaped by critical race feminisms (CRF), an important underpinning of multidimensionality theory (MDT; Harris, 2011). CRF situates the capacity of individuals to create their own narratives in opposition to the dominant narrative (Wing, 1997). Researchers can discover these counternarratives by investigating and interpreting individuals’ experiences. Critics of this aspect of CRF have pointed out that although CRF theorists focus on the dominant and counternarratives, a variety of narratives are possible. All participants’ narratives are fundamental to the meaning-making and coconstruction of the communities’ reality. For this reason, the present research is concerned with all participants’ experiences regardless of the narratives (i.e., dominant, counter, other) they may contribute to.

**Methodology: Iterative Framework**

As a critical community psychologist, my research is driven by the core principles of critical community practice: social justice, empowerment, and transformation of social systems (Butcher, Banks, Henderson, & Robertson, 2007, as cited in Evans, Kivell,
Decades of researchers in various social fields have developed methodologies that acknowledge and address the structural inequities and exploitation that often accompany mainstream research processes (Evans et al., 2014; Ghanbarpour et al., 2018; Kagan & Burton, 2001). I have strived to support what critical community psychologists call “giving psychology away” or as the DataCenter labels it, “Research Justice” (Assil, Kim, & Waheed, 2015, p.6; Change & Power, 2012; Jolivette, 2015; Kagan & Burton, 2001, p.10).

These participatory research approaches support community initiatives, voice, and equal access to resources. Such an approach is expressly relevant to diverse gender, sexual, racial populations championing TJ/CA who have a history of being exploited (Generation FIVE, 2007; Kim, 2006). The literature indicates that TJ/CA initiatives often value community members as central planners and implementers of change, with many studies emphasizing the centrality of collectives (Chen et al., 2011; Generation FIVE; Kim, 2006). CCP-informed research pairs well with a multidimensional, theoretical paradigm, as participation enables marginalized populations to have agency over and through the research process (Froc, 2010; Houh & Kalsen, 2014). In this regard, the research in this study was responsive to members’ priorities.

The research questions were formulated with Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) iterative framework. The iterative process allows for participants’ meaning-making and interests to inform the research. This research method maintains consistency with participants’ priorities, helps them engage in the process of continuous meaning-making, and highlights the importance of reflexivity. Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) reflexive approach has three iterative questions: What are the data telling me? What is it I want to
know? and What is the dialectical relationship between what the data are telling me and what I want to know? This reflexive approach is also supported by the interpretive qualitative methodologies employed in this study. Details regarding the initial research questions and the refined research questions will be described in chapter 3.

**Interpretive Phenomenology**

Interpretive phenomenological (IP) approaches to research describe not only the “human experience of being” but also reflexively acknowledges the necessary and undividable presence of interpretation (Gill, 2014, p. 120). Approaches such as interpretive phenomenological analysis call for both phenomenological and hermeneutic aspects (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In phenomenology, the researcher strives to approach as closely as possible the participants’ experiences, but the researcher also realizes that interpretation of the experience is inevitable for both parties. However, without “the phenomenology, there would be nothing to interpret; without the hermeneutics, the phenomenon would not be seen” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 37).

Many of the phenomenological approaches, including IP, share at least five important guidelines:

2. A definitive focus on the meaning of individuals’ experience: “a commitment to explore practical activities and acts of living through narratives to reveal meaning” (Crist & Tanner, 2003, p. 202; see also Gill, 2014).
3. A relaying of such experience from the point of view of the experiencer, i.e.,
the participants: to hear and understand participants’ voices while maintaining
the integrity of the text (Benner, 1994).

4. Homogenous sampling: purposive sampling through interpretive, pragmatic,
and/or subject matter boundaries, in which for participants the research
problem has shared relevance and personal significance (Pietkiewicz & Smith,
2012).

5. Thematic analysis: a focus on subjective experiences and/or the phenomenon
of interest through articulation of meaningful patterns, stances, or concerns
(Benner, 1994; Norlyk & Harder, 2010).

Furthermore and specifically, IP approaches provide different interpretive vantage points
to the reader that help supply clarity, access, and understanding of the “text in its own
terms” (Benner, 1994, p. 101).

Given the identified guidelines, interpretive phenomenological approaches
complement the conceptual frameworks used in this study. IP allows for authentic
participation, includes an awareness of the interpretive context, and encourages collective
praxis. Moreover, like multidimensionality, the theoretical and epistemological
underpinnings of IP approaches challenge essentialist and dualist epistemologies,
recognize the importance of context, and acknowledge the socially constructed and
complex nature of phenomena such as gender violence and community-based approaches
(Gill, 2014; Shinebourne, 2011; Tuffour, 2017).

A frequent criticism of the findings of qualitative studies is that they are not
generalizable (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The focus of this study is on providing in-depth,
rich, and evocative accounts of participants’ experiences as they share their descriptions of the study phenomenon rather than the establishment of generalizability or causal relationships (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). My concern is with meaning-making and quality of experience; therefore, I worked to achieve trustworthiness and used IP methods to apply a rigorous evaluation that best develops the views of the participants (Balazs & Morello-Frosch, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Norlyk & Harder 2010; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability must be adequately achieved through multiple techniques. Such techniques employed in this study included participant review of transcripts, discussions with other researchers, member validation of themes, and the maintaining of the principles of hermeneutical phenomenological inquiry (Conroy, 2003; Norlyk & Harder 2010). Indeed, Balazs and Morello-Frosch (2013) observed that the rigor and relevance of research are achieved through democratizing knowledge production because study participants cocreate the data. That is, knowledge developed in this study is valuable, thorough, and effective for RJ, TJ, and CA CBOs.

The interpretive approach and iterative process used in this study closely aligned with the priorities of RJ, TJ, and CA practitioners. These practitioners are highly invested in the authentic understanding and interpretation of their approaches (M. Kim and M. Mingus, personal communication, March 5, 2015). Thus, the present research was undertaken, as Maguire (1987) noted about her own research, not only for the benefit of the field but also for the benefit of the relevant communities.
Chapter 3: Method

Building from the interpretive phenomenological (IP) framework outlined in chapter 2, I followed a qualitative and iterative research design. To begin, I used Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) iterative framework to formulate and refine the research questions. Then, guided by IP research designs (Benner, 1994; Conroy, 2003; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2008), I incorporated elements of a "hermeneutical spiral of interpretation," what Conroy (2003) also called "concurrent interpretation" (p. 43). Here, a participant’s own interpretations of the data were included with those of other participants’ interpretations, as well as my own, to formulate a master interpretive dataset (MID) from which the themes and findings of this study were identified. This chapter describes the research design, recruitment, selection of participants, and data collection and analysis processes.

Research Design

Iterative framework process. Using an iterative process for crafting the research questions, I was able to guard against the overuse of my own “background interpretation” or “prejudgements” (Conroy, 2003, p. 43) of the topic and the participants. This “explicitly reflexive approach” (Conroy, 2003, p. 78) provided transparency, thereby bolstering the rigor of the research and enforcing the importance of keeping participants’ perspectives and priorities at the forefront. Three initial research questions were formulated based on theoretical points of interest, epistemological stance, review of the literature, and the CBOs’ initial interests (M. Kim and M. Mingus, personal communication, March 5, 2015; see also Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). After applying
Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) iterative framework, I retained two of my initial research questions, but reformulated the third to reflect what I learned from the dialectical relationship between data and my interest in the phenomenon.

The three initial research questions were these:

1. How do CBOs using RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address GV understand the social processes (i.e., norms, relationships, participation in activities) that form their social setting?
2. How do CBOs understand and employ RJ, TJ, and/or CA as social change strategies to address GV?
3. According to these CBOs, how can alternative approaches inform their social change strategies that address GV?

**Use of reflexive questions.** I used Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) three reflexive questions (see chapter 2) to analyze the first two interviews of the study and found that the data and my inquiries were aligned for Research Questions 1 and 2. Given the differences between the data and my initial community-informed Research Question 3, I decided to significantly shift the focus of Research Question 3 (RQ 3). The initial RQ 3 was formulated to build rapport and ensure that the question had relevance and significance to the CBOs’ stated priorities and interests (N. Nursat, personal communication, February 24, 2017). The original interview questions for RQ 3 were formulated to solicit corresponding information, but participants’ initial responses reflected disinterest in how their work might be informed by other known alternative approaches and how their work might inform other known alternative approaches.
For example, several of the interview questions asked the following (see Appendix A): What other alternative approaches to violence have you heard of, considered, or used? How do they work? Are there aspects of, e.g., peacemaking, RJ circles, indigenous practices that may be beneficial to your approach? And are there aspects of your approach that may be beneficial to the alternatives you mentioned?

In response, members of one CBO responded with uncertainty and often returned to their own methods. For example, Pat stated,

It is tricky to try to think about what is a different response. It’s not just going through the legal system and focusing on punitive punishment but looking at what might have a restorative approach to that. I’ve had conversations with a couple of other people about thinking through if that’s something we could offer. We haven’t found the right test case to try something like that.

Even in such a response, as respondents expressed attempts to use other approaches in their work, they focused primarily on their own current methods. Therefore, it became clear to me that the initial RQ 3 and the derivative interview questions were not a priority for the CBO participants’ interests, narratives, or understanding during the interview process. When I realized that participants had very little interest in RQ 3 and in utilizing Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) iterative approach, I studied the data from the first two interviews and recognized that the understanding of community involvement was of greater import to the CBO members than how different approaches might inform one another, as asked in the initial RQ 3.

Thus, I developed a new data-informed research question: How do CBOs using RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address GV understand the resources and organization of resources (i.e., temporal, physical, economic, human) that form their social setting?
This final iteration of RQ 3 better reflected the dialectal relationship between data and my interest (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). Using the theoretical frame and the CBO members’ understanding as they saw it, I refined the question. The new question helped highlight the ways in which CBOs grapple with community needs, community capacity, and the CBOs members’ needs to effectively use RJ and TJ/CA approaches. Given the changes indicated, as noted in chapter 1, I also reordered the questions so that the theoretically informed questions followed one another.

**Setting**

The research took place remotely by video chat and telephone with five CBO members (described in detail below), as well as in-person at the regular meeting places of two CBO members. As stated in chapter 1, although not all of the organizations had physical infrastructures, all had clearly defined organizational structures. The CBOs were located in the U.S. Northwest (four) and Southeast regions (three). According to the Center for Court Innovation’s initial statewide search, at least 54 national organizations were identified as organizations that address multiple forms of gender violence using alternative approaches, including restorative and transformative justices (D. Coker, personal communication, January 22, 2018). The exact number of “community-based” organizations in the United States is not known or whether the organizations that participated in this study were included in the Center for Court Innovation listings.

**Recruitment**

Recruitment took place in several steps. The CBO members approached were decentralized and disaggregated nationwide and, given their work, they had cause to be cautious about inviting individuals from beyond their immediate communities (Incite!,
By the employment of multiple sampling techniques, I desired to overcome the challenge of obtaining participants who represented only a small part of the national response to gender violence. Thus, (a) potential CBO participants were initially recruited through convenience sampling, (b) the remaining CBO participants were recruited through snowball sampling, and finally (c) purposive sampling was conducted to identify collectives and representatives who met the inclusion criteria (i.e., “for whom the research problem has relevance and personal significance” [Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012, p. 364]).

**Criteria for participation.** CBOs must have met the following two criteria to participate in the study. The organization must have (a) self-identified as a CBO that (b) has been using RJ, TJ, and/or CA for a minimum of 3 years to address gender violence. Once CBOs met these criteria, representatives of the CBO must have met the following four criteria to participate in the study. (a) Each representative had to be or had been a leader, staff member, or community member of the CBO. (b) Representatives had to have a comprehensive understanding of gender violence determined by a minimum of 3 years of work experience in organizations that address gender violence. (c) Representatives must have been involved with the CBO they represented for a minimum of 9 months. (d) They must be adults who were willing and able to consent to being interviewed.

Representatives were excluded from participating in the study if they were not leaders, staff members, or community members of the CBOs. Also excluded were individuals who had fewer than 3 years of experience working in organizations that address gender violence and less than 9 months experience with the CBO represented. Finally, adults who were unable to consent, individuals who were not yet adults (infants,
children, teenagers), pregnant women, and prisoners were excluded from participating in the study.

**Selection of CBOs.** In alignment with interpretive phenomenology, the recruitment of the CBO and members began initially with the convenience sampling of two expert scholars, both familiar to myself and one also a professional in the field. The scholars were informed that I was soliciting CBOs that employ RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address gender violence. These scholars were then asked to identify exemplar CBOs in the United States. Each scholar had taken part in some of the CBOs identified or similar ones as participants, advocates, researchers, and scholars. Thus, I asked them to provide and create locally relevant knowledge through dialogue and feedback with me and the individuals in the community projects/collectives.

From the recommendations of these scholars, I used snowballing or networking techniques (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003; Merriam, 2009) to identify other CBOs. I provided the scholars with an email letter detailing the study and an attached informational flyer. The scholars and I then forwarded this email and flyer to inform prospective CBOs of the study purpose and directed them to contact me if they were interested (see Appendix B). The aim was to recruit 18 individuals for interviews from six different CBOs that (a) self-identified as community-based organizations and (b) self-identified as employing restorative justice, transformative justice, and/or community accountability to address gender-based violence.

Following the suggestions of previous IP researchers (Benner, 1994; Conroy, 2003; Gill, 2014; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012), I used snowball and purposive sampling to reach the goal of six collectives and three interviews at each CBO, totaling 18 interviews.
The purposive sampling strategy for this study is consistent with qualitative and interpretive research methods (Gill, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Specifically, purposive sampling was used to gain access to a broad base of members’ different positions and perspectives within the CBOs, with the concurrent aim of homogeneity (Gill, 2014; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). The strategies described here were used so that I could understand and capture the work and perspectives of the CBOs using RJ, TJ/CA.

Twelve organizations responded to the email/flyer and were contacted via phone and email. In alignment with purposive sampling, the responders were screened for the inclusion criteria stated above. Of the 12 organizations, three did not meet the inclusion criteria. One organization did not self-identify as community-based, and the other two had been using RJ, TJ, and/or CA for less than 3 years. In total, nine organizations met the selection criteria and were invited to select representatives of their CBOs to participate in the study.

**Selection of CBO representatives.** Each CBO that met the inclusion criteria was contacted via phone and email and invited to participate by recommending for participation: (a) a leader, (b) a staff member, and/or (c) a community member. Representatives from nine CBOs initially expressed a strong interest, but representatives from two CBOs were unresponsive when I attempted to set times for interviews. Although more CBOs participated in the study than expected, I was able to collect only one to two interviews per CBO, for a total of 11 representative interviews.

This outcome resulted because leaders of many CBOs identified time constraints as a barrier to granting more interviews. In addition, some CBOs had few accessible staff who met the study inclusion criteria (i.e., individuals did not have enough years using the
approach or addressing the issue). Finally, in an effort to complete the recruitment phase, I settled on seven CBOs, with a total of 11 representative participants.

It is important to note again that, although not all of the CBOs had physical infrastructures, they all had clearly defined organizational structures. Two CBOs for which interviews took place no longer functioned as CBOs. These CBOs intentionally dissolved. These two CBOs are well known exemplars and have served as models for practicing CBOs. Interviews from these CBOs still represented the CBO members’ understanding and explained the next iteration of the CBOs (that is, current practices of individuals).

**Participants**

I recruited seven community-based organizations that used RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address gender violence in the United States. In total, I interviewed 11 individuals, with one to two individuals interviewed per CBO. Each CBO self-identified as community-based and had been using RJ, TJ, and/or CA for a minimum of 3 years. In an effort to develop a relatively homogenous sample (Smith & Osborn, 2008), as per the inclusion criteria for participation, I ensured that all individual participants self-identified as having a clear understanding of gender violence and had a minimum of 3 years of work experience in organizations and collectives that actively address gender violence (see Table 1).
Table 1

**Participant Organization Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Community-Based Organization (CBO)</th>
<th>RJ TJ/ CA</th>
<th>Population Served and Main Social Issue Addressed</th>
<th>Functionality of CBO</th>
<th>Interviewees and Relationship to CBO</th>
<th>Year Founded (f) Year Ended (a) Interviewee Years of Using RJ/TJ/CA (i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progressive Youth Community Restoration (PYCR)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Youth Girls/Gender-nonconforming Systems Involved Black/Brown</td>
<td>Still functioning</td>
<td>Keri - cofounder Lois - cofounder</td>
<td>f. 2015 a.2015 i. 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Restoration Project (CRP)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Organizations LGBTQ/Queer Gender-Based Violence Mental Health Family Law</td>
<td>Still functioning</td>
<td>Nadine - staff Kris - staff</td>
<td>f.2001 a.2017 i. 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Community Change (CCC)</td>
<td>TJ/ CA</td>
<td>Youth People of Color Black community people w/disabilities</td>
<td>No longer exists</td>
<td>Renee – community organizer Jessie – coExDir.</td>
<td>f. 1999 e. 2010 a.1999 i.10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise Up</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Organizations Racial and Social Justice Equity and Inclusion</td>
<td>Still functioning</td>
<td>Pat – staff</td>
<td>f. 1985 a. 1985 i. 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomorrow’s Promise (TP)</td>
<td>TJ</td>
<td>Communities of Color LGBTQ/Queer Gender Justice Racial Justice Class Justice</td>
<td>No longer exists</td>
<td>Ingrid – founder</td>
<td>f.2004 e. 2010 i. 6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative Solutions Initiative (TSI)</td>
<td>TJ</td>
<td>Youth/Young Adults Gender-Based Violence Consent Education</td>
<td>Still functioning</td>
<td>Terry – founder Jaime – founder</td>
<td>f.2013 i.7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Community-Based Organization (CBO)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Population Served and Main Social Issue Addressed</td>
<td>Functionality of CBO</td>
<td>Interviewees and Relationship to CBO</td>
<td>Year Founded (f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity/Equity Inclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Chance Restoration (SCR)</td>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Systems Involved Anti-oppression Racial Justice Criminal Justice Reform Anti-Sexual Violence</td>
<td>Still functioning</td>
<td>Charlene – staff</td>
<td>f.2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 1 illustrates, I was able to gather narratives from CBOs with varying amounts of time in using RJ, TJ, and/or CA. This variation allowed for the identification of “paradigm shifts” (Conroy, 2003, p. 54) within and between CBOs in relation to the overall phenomenon. There were no restrictions on populations served by the CBOs.

**Data Collection**

The data analysis and findings of this study were guided by Conroy’s (2003) suggested use of multiple data collection strategies to capture the entire interpretation process and address the research questions outlined in chapter 1. These strategies included semistructured qualitative interviews, the gathering of “documentary evidence” (Conroy, 2003, p. 43), and the eliciting of participant interpretations. I also elicited the interpretations of a second reader. Selection of a second reader was based on the reader’s skilled abilities to audit narratives and interpretations. The second reader has a professional background in academic scholarship and, to maintain neutrality, had no
“personal stake in the emergence of specific or general outcomes” or any affiliation with the university or study (Conroy, 2003, p. 56).

These strategies yielded, finally, the construction of a master interpretive dataset (Conroy, 2003). This dataset was based on the “hermeneutical spiral of interpretation,” engaging participants in the processes of data collection and interpretation (Conroy, 2003, p. 42). The conceptualization is a spiral, as shown in Figure 1.

**Semistructured interviews.** For the interviews, I designed questions based on an interpretive phenomenology methodology, which calls for interviews that provide participants with an opportunity to share how they make meaning of a particular topic (Benner, 1994; Seidman, 1998; Smith & Osborn, 2007). For this study, the topics were gender violence and transformative justice. Designing semistructured interview protocols for interpretive phenomenology, what Seidman (1998) calls "phenomenologically-based interviewing" (p. 15), I relied primarily on open-ended questions. As Seidman (1998) noted, the aim of these questions "is to build upon and explore . . . participants” responses to questions . . . . The goal is to have the participant reconstruct his or her experience within the topic of study" (p. 15).

Thus, in the interview protocol, I included questions that sought to elicit participants’ ways of framing community, community-based work, and gender violence (see Appendix A). I asked participants to think about how they conceptualized their own work, and what success, barriers, and progress mean to them. Additionally, the overall interview format was both “dialogical” and “reflective” (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000, p. 1487).
In this format, rather than attempting a level of researcher objectivity, I engaged with participants, probed for further information, and sought in-depth responses. We worked together to achieve understanding through exchanges of ideas and discussion. This process is what Wimpenny and Gass (2000) referred to as the "co-construction of knowledge" (p. 1487). The method includes "the use of reflection, clarification, requests for examples and description and the conveyance of interest through listening techniques" (Jasper, 1994, p. 311).
The interviews were conducted in three main formats: one by video chat, six by telephone, and four in person (see Table 1 for other characteristics). Prior to each interview, participant consent forms were emailed or delivered by hand, with time for questions (see Appendix C). Each of the formats of video, telephone, and in-person interviews produced a different dynamic between the participants and me; therefore, the different modes can be considered a limitation to the present study. However, this limitation may be offset because reliance on different formats allowed for interviews to take place in a wider variety of regions within the United States rather than would have been the case if the study relied exclusively on in-person interviews. Further, participants were given their choice of preferred format for the interviews.

In my desire to establish rapport and a forum for candid and deep discussion, I realized that to dictate or prescribe the same interview format for each participant would likely not achieve these objectives. Thus, I was glad to honor their individual desires for the formats of their choice. In support, Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) found that leaving the choice of interview mode up to participants increases familiarity and participation in the research context. Finally, the focus on phenomenological narrative allowed for a level of consistency among these formats (discussed in more detail below under Rigor and Relevance).

**Documentary evidence.** Documentary evidence consisted of all the materials that participants were willing to share, including brochures, zines, websites, and toolkits. Such information constituted secondary data that allowed me to better understand the work of the CBOs and their different approaches to RJ and TJ. As Conroy (2003) noted, such
evidence is useful because it provides another layer of narrative, albeit in written, often institutional form, for interpretation, together with the text and audio from interviews.

**Interpretations.** Finally, multiple forms of interpretation, while clearly part of this study, also constitute data. Interpretations pertain to the iterative nature of interpretive phenomenology in which, as described elsewhere, I interpreted the data, participants provided their interpretations of my reading of the interview, and a second reader provided an additional layer of interpretation. At the end of these rounds of interpretation, the researcher considers every component and analyzes it as part of a master interpretive dataset (see Figure 1).

These rounds of interpretation are forms of data and tools of analysis because the iterative approach allows the researcher to better place the process of meaning-making within the participants’ social context. Mischler (1979) suggested that this iterative approach is crucial in a methodology in which meaning is seen as deriving from the interaction (or coconstruction) of participants and researchers (e.g., Wimpenny & Gass, 2000). Therefore, the coconstructed interaction itself becomes an important source of data. In interpretive phenomenology, one way to capture this interaction is by analysis of the iterative rounds of interpretation that take place. These methods of data collection enabled me to construct a MID for data analysis.

**Data Analysis**

This study employed a “hermeneutical spiral of interpretation” (Conroy, 2003, p. 42) method essential to IP approaches (Crist & Tanner, 2003; Smith & Osborn, 2007) in four stages. Within this iterative spiral, the participants, second reader, and I reflected on and interpreted all shared understandings. The data collected were grounded in the
“foregrounding” (‘taken-for-granted’ background) . . . ‘fore-meanings’ (a general grasp of the whole situation we have in advance) . . . and ‘fore-having’ (something we grasp in advance)” of all parties involved (Conroy, 2003, p. 40). The methodological process involved building on this “background of our existence” as all parties involved (i.e., researcher, participants, second reader) shared, reflected, and interpreted the narratives and interview sessions at hand (Conroy, 2003).

The interpretation process included all previously mentioned data sources. I repeatedly listened to each audiorecording of the interviews. After transcription, I closely reread the written texts three times to establish familiarity and develop a global understanding of the narrative (Benner, 1994; Conroy, 2003; Smith & Osborn, 2007).

Unlike most descriptive phenomenological or grounded theory approaches, IP approaches provide flexible guidelines but offer no definitive rules or requirements in text analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2007). To stay true to the IP aims of “giving evidence of the participants making sense of phenomena under investigation, and at the same time document[ing] the researcher’s sense making” (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012, p. 366), I attempted to move freely between the emic (from the perspective of the researcher) and etic (from the perspective of the participant) perspectives (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

To formulate these perspectives, I reviewed the transcripts and my research journal of reflections and took into consideration Conroy’s (2003) “‘Hermeneutic Development of Commentary’ questions” (p. 49). For example, after each interview, I reviewed my research journal by referring to questions such as “What am I missing (explicitly or implicitly said)? What is so ‘normal’ to me that I can’t see it?” (Conroy, 2003, p. 50) to engage an emic perspective. I also used questions such as “What is the
line of thought—within a segment and across segments of participants’ words within one session? or What is valued by the participant?” (Conroy, 2003, p. 50) to support an etic perspective. Finally, questions such as “Am I listening/responding within the participant’s world or from a world outside her own, i.e., from mine?” and “How synchronized am I with what the participant is saying?” (Conroy, 2003, p. 50) helped me maintain reflexivity and rigor in determining which perspectives and understandings I was applying.

For the first stage of the data analysis process, I developed exploratory comments or notes regarding my initial observations, reflections about the interview experiences, and any other interesting or significant comments and thoughts that came to mind (Benner, 1994; Conroy, 2003; Smith & Osborn, 2007). The notes varied greatly and focused primarily on content and context. Comments were summaries (written in a precis form), associations or connections, similarities or differences, contradictions in what the person was saying, and preliminary interpretations (Conroy, 2003; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2007).

After formulating the precis and exploratory notes, and informed by Conroy’s (2003) approach, for the second stage, I shared the original transcripts and initial interpretations via Dropbox with the participants for member checking (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine, & Sambrook, 2010). This stage of the analysis supported the rigor of the research and fulfilled the fundamental nature of interpretation, that is, shared understanding (Conroy, 2003; Creswell, 1998; Doyle, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Once the participants engaged with the data by verbal or typed feedback, I added additional notes, if necessary. At this stage, I then provided the second reader with randomly selected
portions of the transcripts and the following corresponding parts: precis notes, researcher’s initial exploratory notes, participant’s interpretive notes, and researcher’s comments following the participant’s notes (Conroy, 2003).

Inclusion of a second reader in the analysis process contributed in at least two important ways. First, the performing of audits improves the quality of the interpretation and compliance with the intended procedures and principles (Conroy, 2003). Second, the second reader helped ensure the “role of others in contributing to participants’ worlds,” (p. 54), thereby confirming or questioning the “multiple layers of meanings” interpreted from both the researcher and the participant (Conroy, 2003, p. 54). With the second reader’s notes, the researcher moves forward in a final but iterative fashion. In response to notes of the second reader, I added additional notes as necessary, gathered clarifying information from the CBOs, and combined the information with all previous interpretive notes to formulate the master interpretative data. The MID also included, when necessary, documentary evidence, which was consulted as supplementary to all other data sources (Conroy, 2003).

I collected 436 notes from the initial participant interviews, 47 notes from the participants’ interpretation process, and 15 notes from the second reader’s interpretation process. Table 2 shows the summaries of CBOs, participants and their titles, the number of participant and second reader notes, and the interview types. The hermeneutic spiraling and interactive interpretation process of the first and second stages of data analysis are depicted in Figure 1 and in Appendix D an example of the MID for one participant in table and text format.
After developing a MID set for each interview, during the third stage, I exported the set to a spreadsheet. I then perused the first CBO participant’s MID set to identify emergent themes, paradigm shifts, and exemplars (Conroy, 2003), formulating a concise...
phrase or expression that was still grounded in what the participant actually said (Benner, 1994; Conroy, 2003; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2007). This procedure made the naming process embedded in the precis style extremely important. As Conroy (2003) stated, a precis “refreshes access to what is happening in the narrative session . . . what was disclosed as primary and meaningful within the narrative becomes more apparent . . . [and] opens up one’s background understanding to scrutiny” (p. 52).

It is also important to note that, in accordance with the iterative process, emergent themes identified in any dataset were used to inform the analysis of all datasets (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Although I may have used emergent themes developed in one CBO participant’s narrative for other participants’ narratives, I maintained a critical lens in acknowledging unique issues, thereby respecting the convergence and divergence of participant’s contribution and the data (Smith & Osborn, 2007). This process was carried out within each set of interviews, so that from all MIDs combined, 38 emergent themes were identified.

Once I organized all the emergent themes in the spreadsheet, the fourth and final stage entailed looking for connections, further patterns, and “superordinate concepts” (Smith & Osborn, 2007, p. 70). At this stage of analysis, comparisons were made to find the commonalities and differences across the emergent themes of all datasets (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2006; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). This clustering of emergent themes produced subthemes and ultimately major themes. For example, emergent theme (a) Movement for gender inclusivity—A cultural revolution around gender (Keri); (b) Pieces of abolitionist movement that inform “job“ (Nadine); and (c) Collective community self-
determination as a part of the antiviolence and antiracist movement (Charlene) were gathered to create subtheme “Influential Social Movements.”

The subtheme “Influential Social Movements” was then clustered with subthemes “Local Dynamics” and “Personal Experiences” to form the master theme “Time, Space, and Place: Sociohistorical Context and Their Story.” The precis notes and emergent themes remained as close to the data as possible. However, my own interpretations of the patterns that emerged from the data formed the bridge between the emergent themes and the subthemes and major themes (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2007).

My interpretations were driven by the study focus on “being-in-the-world” that “emerges in reciprocal interdependence with other Beings” (Conroy, 2003, p. 39). Interpretive phenomenological principles demand analytic reflexivity; therefore, I rechecked the primary source material and created a directory of participants’ phrases, narratives, and interpretive comments that supported each corresponding theme (Smith & Osborn, 2007). Overall, this process produced 12 descriptive subthemes and subsequently four major themes.

Figure 2 and Table 3 are visual exemplars of the entire four-stage data analysis process (i.e., IP pathway and coding map). Following the IP analytical process previously outlined, I recognized the analytic movement, which allowed an inductive and iterative approach toward building shared meaning-making. In this fashion, meaning-making (i.e., interpretation) was considered a product of both the researcher and participants who were both contextually situated (Conroy, 2003, Smith & Osborn, 2007; Wimpenny & Gass, 2000).
Figure 2. IP pathway to code map.
Table 3

Coding Map of Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Time, Space, and Place: Sociohistorical Context and Their Story</td>
<td>Personal Experiences</td>
<td>1. Personally harmed but didn’t want to punish the person who caused harm (Charlene)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Dynamics</td>
<td>2. Working with culturally specific programs and their critiques (Nadine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influential Social Movements</td>
<td>3. Friends’ GV experiences and inability to depend on system (Ingrid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Discourse about race mirrors that of the country overall (Renee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Administrations rely on cyclical population turnover to delay action on historically promised changes (Jaime or Terry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Movement for gender inclusivity—A cultural revolution around gender (Keri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Pieces of abolitionist movement that inform “job“ (Nadine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. Collective community self-determination as a part of the antiviolence and antiracist movement (Charlene)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Getting to the Root of It”</td>
<td>Root Causes of Violence</td>
<td>9. Violence rooted in the gender binary (Jaime or Terry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perpetrators of Violence</td>
<td>10. Educating people on intersectionality of sexual assault, funding, and marginalized communities (Keri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11. Ability diverse people seen as not just nonsexual, but also as subhuman (Renee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12. Power and control (Nadine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13. Patriarchal ideas (Jaime or Terry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14. Toxic masculinity dynamics (Pat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15. Cultures of silence and cultures of violence (Pat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Restorative Justice and Transformative Justice in Action</strong></td>
<td>Processes and Practices</td>
<td>20. Community building—you can’t restore something that doesn’t exist (Pat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transformative Justice/Community Accountability</td>
<td>21. Community that’s about movements (Keri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Merging Processes and Practices</td>
<td>22. Planting the seed of RJ in the culture through the youth (Keri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23. TJ as an umbrella politic that all practices and tools fit into (Ingrid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24. RJ as an approach to respond to interpersonal problems and address the harms (Charlene)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25. TJ transforms communities into agents of change (Jaime or Terry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26. Developing interventions to violence that take into account state violence (Nadine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27. Actively addressing structural dynamics to prevent additional harm (Pat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28. RJ responds to harmful and illegal issues while TJ is a community response to harmful but not illegal issues (Jaime or Terry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29. “Watered down TJ” AKA “the kind of restorative justice that doesn't use the system” (Ingrid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA</strong></td>
<td>Building Resources</td>
<td>30. Building community wherever you work, with whomever you work with (Keri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities and Culture</td>
<td>Building Community Capacity</td>
<td>Building Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31. Community capacity to provide support for reintegration and take collective responsibility (Pat)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32. Relationship-building organizing (Jaime or Terry)</td>
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<td>33. Open exchange/cross pollination through trainings with other CBOs (Nadine)</td>
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<td>34. Creating accessible RJ models for families and communities (Ingrid)</td>
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<td>35. Creating concrete/sustainable tools, frameworks, and artifacts (Ingrid)</td>
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<td>36. Transformative education is a catalyst -- making tools, doing workshops and trainings, and holding space for folks (Jaime or Terry)</td>
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<td>37. Popular education is bringing the people into the room, they have everything they need (Jaime or Terry)</td>
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<td>38. Incredibly highly skilled work is required (Pat)</td>
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As stated by Conroy (2003),

Interpretive research must follow the twists and turns of the terrain in which we are interested. It is appropriate to think of participants as placing their footprints on the world and in the world in the dance of life. Footprints are unique, but they blend with the earth’s contours or with others’ tracks and fade or stray from a pathway in the woods. Metaphorically, I use “footprints” to refer to an individual’s contribution to the hermeneutical spiral. In the research process, as in life itself, many footprints join together through interpretation to create a new pattern of understanding. (pp. 37-38)

**Paradigm Shift**

Conroy (2003) asserted that the interpretive approach should “seek out modalities and fluctuations in any one person’s way of thinking” (p. 37). To maintain consistency with the “hermeneutical spiral” and the nonstatic nature of “being,” Conroy (2003) introduced notice of “paradigm shifts” (p. 54). Paradigm shifts are defined as “a change in a way of ‘seeing’ and coping in the world” or a “hermeneutic turn” (p. 54). Such shifts are found through the exploration of the initial data and tentative themes across a particular participant’s narratives (Conroy, 2003). An example of such a shift is provided in chapter 4.

**Role of Researcher**

As in any study, my own positionality is important to consider when thinking about the vantage point from which I approached this research. Positionality is particularly important to the interpretive phenomenological approach, given the emphasis in interpretative phenomenology on the role of context and subjectivity (Conroy, 2003; Gill, 2014; Tuffour, 2017). Thinking reflexively is also important in qualitative research because self-awareness of my position vis-à-vis the project can better equip me to address
any preconceived ideas and identity-based assumptions that might inform the work and my interpretations (Charmaz, 2006).

I highlight three relevant points here. First, my own experience with gender violence, both directly and having witnessed it in the lives of family members, is part of what crystallized the choice of topic for this study. I have also borne witness to the ways in which the state, through many of its systems of social control, such as child welfare, governmental assistance, and criminal justice, can be a source of violence towards people of color and low-income populations. These experiences developed in me a level of empathy both for those experiencing violence and those struggling to end it in a context where mainstream approaches have often only reproduced the gendered and racialized hierarchies that are at the root of gender violence itself. This realization has been an important guiding force in the shaping of this study and my desire to understand how organizations make meaning of gender violence and alternative responses to it.

Second, as a Black cisgender heterosexual woman from a low-income background, i.e., with my own intersections in terms of race, class, and gender, I approached the research with a broader aim than research alone, as important as it is. I also desired to support movements of social justice and liberation. This background proved important in my research process; I expressed a level of familiarity with a multidimensional life experience and strove to approach interviewees from a place of solidarity and understanding rather than as strictly an academic inquiry. Engaging with my research in such a reflexive and transparent way supports the principle that in qualitative research the researcher is part of the process of coconstructing knowledge, rather than being an objective analyst external to the study (Trainor & Graue, 2014).
Finally, I approached my research from a professional position of an individual working from a perspective grounded in principles of community-based research and scholar activism (e.g., Hale, 2008). Thus, I aimed to establish a relationship of trust with participants and involve them in as many aspects of the research process as possible. I approached this study especially with the goal of supporting transformative social change efforts.

This approach meant that on a broader level my priorities were well-aligned with those of my participants. However, I also had to reconcile my goals of more participatory research (i.e., participants’ involvement in development of research questions, interview questions, and data analysis process) with the realities of participants’ agendas and busy schedules. In the end, participation was limited to data interpretation and nevertheless aligned with the interpretive phenomenological approach, given the emphasis on double hermeneutics. The scholar-activist values undergirding this project also resulted in a commitment to translate this dissertation into a practitioner-friendly resource for participants.

Rigor and Relevance

As the study took shape, I was aware that, ethically, it was important to rely on a methodological process that supported the transformative justice efforts of the participants and did not leave them feeling evaluated or that I had "extracted" information from them (Ghanbarpour et al., 2018; Kagan & Burton, 2001). However, I was also aware that my research must be grounded in principles of methodological rigor, even if guided by a moral position. I used Guba and Lincoln’s (1981) tests of rigor for qualitative research as a guide. The following section outlines the ways in which I grappled with
issues of validity through truth-value, referring to the credibility of the research in the eyes of participants, and consistency, which relates to an evenness across all data collection strategies and analytical steps.

**Credibility and "validity as authenticity."** I sought to achieve a level of validity rooted in proximity to participants’ experiences and perceptions. This is what Lincoln and Guba (2000) referred to as "validity as authenticity" (pp. 180-181). Scholar-activist research, in Hale’s (2008) words, possesses a “built-in test of validity that is much more demanding and stringent than conventional alternatives: Is it comprehensible to, and does it work for, a specific group of people who helped to formulate the research goals to begin with?” (p. 12).

I relied on the iterative framework described above to develop my research questions through discussion with participants. By also reviewing interviews with participants and eliciting their interpretations, I gave participants the opportunity to assess the accuracy of the work. Conroy (2003) underscored this process of member checking as part of the rigor of hermeneutic research. Conroy also stressed the value of "blind reading of the narrative and interview texts by second readers" (p. 55). I engaged a second reader in an effort to balance any level of partiality of participants’ interpretations and my own.

As a result of this iterative process, each of the interpretations of the data was double-checked through the interpretations of participants reviewing their own words, my initial interpretations, and the interpretations of a second reader. I then reviewed these additional layers of interpretation to deepen my analysis. These steps adhered to the process of double hermeneutics in interpretive phenomenology and also instilled measures to strengthen the study’s reflection of the meanings intended by participants.
Consistency. Guba and Lincoln (1981) relied on the idea of "consistency" to refer to the extent to which researchers pursue qualitative research methods in a systematic and even way. Through consistency, readers can expect a clear and logical process accounting for all the steps in data collection and analysis. Guba and Lincoln labeled this process an "audit trail" (p. 122).

As this chapter illustrates, I adhered to a high standard of consistency by several means. First, I developed a semistructured interview protocol which derived from my research questions, and all participants were interviewed with the same questions. Second, I focused primarily on participants’ words as narratives to be coded and interpreted. Therefore, although some interviews were conducted by video, others by phone, and others in person, all were organized around the same questions and all narratives were subjected to the rigorous process described herein. I recorded these narratives for analysis and interpretation.

Third, all participants had the opportunity to review their words as well as the precis and my initial interpretations. That is, all participants were asked to provide input as to how proximate my understandings were to their intended meanings. Similarly, all participants’ words and interpretations—as well as my interpretations of their narratives—were additionally interpreted by a second reader. I considered all of this input as I created, constructed, and produced my master interpretive dataset.

Finally, all participants were asked to share relevant documents that could provide further information about their organizations and practices. Not all participants provided the same information. However, this step enabled the collection of what Conroy (2003)
called documentary evidence to support the iterative interpretation of the direct participant data.

**Summary**

The interpretive approach and iterative process used in this study closely aligned with the priorities of CBOs using RJ, TJ, and CA and my own keen interests. As noted above, the members of these CBOs were highly invested in the authentic understanding and interpretation of their approaches (M. Kim and M. Mingus, personal communication, March 5, 2015). My genuine interpretation of their experiences, participation in the research process, and the collective meaning-making of this project contributed to both the CBOs’ goals of community empowerment and the development and well-being of all the individuals and communities experiencing gender violence. This section also showed how the pairing of a strong moral commitment and interpretive phenomenology methods supported hearing the voices and understandings of participants as they made meaning of the topics of this dissertation.
Chapter 4: Findings

As established throughout the previous sections in this document, the focus of this study was to understand how CBOs use RJ and/or TJ/CA social change strategies to address GV within social settings. Interpretive phenomenological methods were used to better understand these CBOs’ experiences and answer the following research questions:

1. How do CBOs using RJ and/or TJ/CA to address GV understand the social processes (i.e., norms, relationships, participation in activities) that form their social setting?

2. How do CBOs using RJ and/or TJ/CA to address GV understand the resources and organization of resources (i.e., temporal, physical, economic, human) that form their social setting?

3. How do CBOs understand and employ RJ and/or TJ/CA as social change strategies that address GV?

In accordance with the iterative and analytic processes of IP, these research questions were formulated using an iterative framework (as discussed in chapter 3). In addition, the interview protocol (see Appendix A) was shaped by the research questions and literature reviewed (see chapter 2). The research questions and interview protocol were iteratively referenced throughout the data analysis process. As stated in chapter 3, there are no set rules or requirements for IP. Therefore, in efforts to stay in alignment with IP principles, I drew the data analysis, coding, and theme development from the suggested IP guidelines of Benner (1994), Conroy (2003), Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012), and Smith and Osborn (2007).
These recommendations led to the construction of a master interpretive dataset (see Appendix D) from which emergent themes, “superordinate concepts” (Smith & Osborn, 2007, p. 74), and subthemes were discovered and clustered to form major themes. Themes were located within and across individual transcripts. Themes were also noted for convergence across CBOs (crosscase analysis) and within each CBO as well. As proposed by Benner (1994) and Conroy (2003), a paradigm shift was also identified.

In this chapter, I first present themes developed from the data as they emerged within and across CBOs. The four major themes are these: (a) Time, Space, and Place: Sociohistorical Context and Their Story; (b) “Getting to the Root of It”; (c) RJ and TJ/CA in Action; and (d) Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture. Within each major theme, I incorporate multiple superordinate concepts (Smith & Osborn, 2007) and subthemes that help direct and focus the detailed analysis. Each section describes both individual participants’ and CBOs’ unique meaning-making processes, as well as the commonalities of their experiences that formed the major themes.

Importantly, as the themes are explicated below, the focus is on providing as much direct commentary from the advocates as possible to ensure that the chapter “retains the voice of the participants’ personal experience and gives a chance to present the emic perspective” (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012, p. 9). In this way, my own interpretations as researcher are made clear, thus staying true to the community-based approach that is also central to this work. To support this objective, I begin each theme with a quotation that expressively captures the essence of the theme. Thereafter, the theme is further expounded upon through the superordinate concepts that emerged to
create that theme. Finally, a paradigm shift is identified to highlight significant changes in perspective and overarching patterns in data, respectively.

**Time, Space, and Place: Sociohistorical Context and Their Story**

I first thought that I would not be able to do that kind of work [domestic violence shelter] because I had experiences growing up with domestic violence, and in relationships had a sort of understanding that because of professionalization, I think that maybe it did not make sense for a survivors to really be doing that kind of work and at least that was the best I kind of could make of it. And then I started volunteering [at domestic violence shelter] while working and I realized my experience was really helpful and useful and I was able to connect with folks in the shelter really well. –Nadine

This quotation captures the essence of the first theme, which speaks to the backgrounds of each participant and the sociohistorical contexts of their personal stories. Understanding the intimate links between the advocates’ personal experiences that led them to the work provides insight into their influential stances and perspectives. The work that these advocates engage in around community-based approaches could not be separated from their personal narratives. The participants spoke intently about their personal histories (“their story”), the environments through which those narratives played out (sociohistorical contexts), and the temporal underpinnings of it all (time).

Consequently, participants constructed the time, space, and place milieu around personal experiences that brought them to the work; the locale/local dynamics that shaped their responses; and the social movements that informed their choices to engage the work of dismantling GV through a community-based approach.

**Personal experiences.** As Nadine’s quoted sentiments express, on many levels personal experiences directly influenced the advocates’ journeys to their work around GV. Another example of the influence of personal experience is Jaime’s: “I really just experienced a lot of homophobia, anti-queerness, and all the things that come along with
that as you're being socialized that can also be very tied into sexual assault, which is often very invisibilized.”

This observation links to assault that the advocates experienced in the past and was a common thread among them, as demonstrated by Renee, who shared that she was a rape survivor, or Terry who intimated the following:

I was assaulted my senior year of high school and then going to college, my freshman fall, I was assaulted by another woman of color. I think that's when it became really clear to me that I didn't want her to be punished. I didn't want her to be kicked out. I didn't want her to have any of these problems, but at the same time, I didn't know what to do because I knew the way she understood intimacy that she would likely do it to other people in our community. That really put me on this pathway of being, like, how do we address this in a way that [truly] acknowledges the humanity in everyone involved. I didn't feel like I was equipped to do that.

Similar to Nadine, Terry (and others) expressed not only experiences with sexual assault but also with how the participants directly connected their experiences and the type of responses to harm they chose to take.

In addition to direct experiences with sexual assault, participants like Pat also spoke to personal experiences with friends who experienced it:

I had a specific situation with a friend where I was like what would I have needed to help this friend? . . . This is happening, I don't know what to do. You know, my-my friend was in a domestic violence relationship; I actually know her husband. I have a relationship with him—what can I do? Can I—. . . And I'm also scared of him if I end up like taking action because he is violent.

These experiences spoke to the authentic participation (Murphy, 2014) of the advocates. Although the introduction of this work introduces this concept in terms of a community’s collective participation with regard to the day-to-day activities (Murphy, 2014), participation was seen through the lens of their shared experiences with the community issues they sought to address through their work. This level of participation, that is,
shared experiences with gender-based violence, made their positionality in the work more direct and deeply connected to their own lives. Furthermore, the shared experiences gave way to larger contexts that informed participants’ trajectories, as explained in the next two categories.

**Local dynamics.** Moving from the individual experience, participants spoke to the ways in which their localities responded to social issues, which in turn led to their own approach to engaging in community-based approaches to GV. For example, Jessie stated:

I’m saying that [Northwestern city’s] discourse about race mirrors that of the country overall. That is, a nonnuanced understanding of oppression. We’re constantly making the argument, constantly educating people on the intersectionality every single time we talk about sexual assault and why money should be going to marginalized communities. With regard to [Northwestern city] being able to hire a Black woman to cut programming that they didn’t want a White woman to do because then the argument about racism for the city would have been more clear, it was harder to make the case about race.

In a similar fashion, Terry spoke about her university experience and its contribution to how she was brought to the work:

I was coming out, doing whatever, and I was specifically in Women of Color organizing and in queer stuff. I was a rugby player. I was mostly drinking and doing rugby all the time. I think that's how I met Jaime was through queer organizing and peer educator programs. Fast forward, we're doing that organizing on campus. We kept noticing that the organizing that was happening on campus would—the administration and folks would be like, Oh, we hear you. Totally, we're going to change. Then the people would graduate, and it would all happen over, and over, and over again. We'd just be like, what the f--k? You're just lying to our faces. This is absurd.

Terry’s reflections demonstrate the ways in which locales, in her case the university, feign an interest in making changes that support marginalized groups. This subterfuge takes place when the changes are attached to people as opposed to the institutional leaders’ desire for sustained change. Highlighting this rupture in the move toward
transformation, participants spoke to how they all connected to social movements in order to advance their work.

**Influential social movements.** Extending beyond the individual and community-level experiences, the participants also acknowledged the influence of various movements on their outlooks and how the movements played a role in developing a collective understanding of social issues. This level of experience highlights the importance of going beyond the individual experience in order to connect with the immediate community as well as the larger society. In these connections, movements served as a lens through which the participants bridged their individual selves to the bigger social mobilization and the complexities embedded therein. As Ingrid stated, “So, all of those things made a community and collective response really important for us to look at as opposed to always individual.” Overall, the movements they identified with fell into four categories: racial justice, feminist, antiviolence, and prison abolition.

In reflecting on the impact of racial justice movements, Jessie described:

He [Black male leader] wasn't there, but we had these older Blacks in our face telling us we needed to recognize this brother's leadership and how we're going to—feminism is a White girl's thing and how you going to help the movement [racial justice movement] when you're trying to tear a brother down?

Jessie spoke to the complexities of applying a feminist lens to her work; doing so elicited critiques from those whose work centered on racial justice. She brought out the need for an intersectional approach to the work of dismantling oppression so that one lens (i.e., race-based focus) does not take a hierarchical position over another (i.e., gender-based focus; Collins, 1991).

Although Jessie experienced tension around another individual’s perceived lack of attentiveness to showing racial solidarity as she employed a feminist lens to her work,
Lois highlighted a need for a feminist lens to community-based work, particularly as it pertained to eradicating violence against women, girls, and nonbinary people:

You are using the word “community,” and I also think it is connected to movement like social movement. But there are certain social movements around the issues that we are talking about, around violence against girls and state violence against girls . . . . And so I think for us we see our work as connected to a movement to end state violence against women and girls and nonbinary people; movements for restorative and transformative justice intervention as opposed to punitive intervention; and movements for gender inclusivity.

In reflecting on antiviolence movements, Ingrid asserted the following:

But that, to assume that that was the only way that people are going to deal with violence was, again, a kind of White western dominant approach—a way of thinking that women get their liberation from being really, you know, self-sufficient in an individual sense as opposed to self-determined in a kind of a more collective sense. So, I think that was another way in which we had developed a different kind of politic—that I mean collective community self-determination had been, you know, a very grounded part of social justice movements for centuries. But, it hadn't been part of the antiviolence movement, so that was another thing that we thought was really important.

Here, Ingrid clearly connected the Western approach to violence with the missing component of antiviolence movements, namely, this idea of community self-determination. She spoke to the individual level as one that is insufficient to bring about genuine change.

Renee also addressed the influence of antiviolence movements on her current work but did so with a lens highlighting the need to be centered on the work around two issues, domestic violence and sexual assault:

Our goal was to do this [work] in a way that communities can sustain themselves with regard to sexual assault and domestic violence. It was focused on sexual assault, but what we know is there’s lots of overlap between domestic violence and sexual assault. We were at both coalition tables. We were doing that work in both those movements.
Here, Renee aptly captured Mutua’s (2013) notion of the complexities of systems of oppression and the interconnectedness of those systems.

Likewise, Kris spoke to these complexities and also illuminated her own view of the necessity for prison abolition movements to exist in tandem with work that centers on gender-based violence. She began by acknowledging that community organizations have this same view and want to adopt alternative approaches to the current legal system. She further emphasized the importance of relationship-building with communities:

My position was created because my boss has been working here for 20 years and was realizing that there needed to be somebody who was able to look at alternative sort of perspectives to the existing legal system and offer an alternative approach. A lot of my work is about relationship building and trying to maintain the relationships that I have with communities and organizations. I been working in this region for the last 12 to 13 years and have built strong relationships.

However, Kris went on to assert that her CBO aims to seek out alternative approaches, but only in theory. That is, when they have staff like her who actually can provide an alternative approach (i.e., prison abolition), tensions arise, and those alternatives are ultimately rejected:

I do not think that my organization understood that when they were hiring me that they were bringing in a piece of like an abolitionist, like a prison abolitionist movement, right? I don’t think that that connection was really there for them prior to my starting. It may have been like a part of what I did was maybe there, but what has come up is a disdain or misunderstanding of what that [prison abolition] movement is about and how important it is and how much it intersects with gender-based violence and domestic and sexual violence work. It’s misunderstood and there is an immediate rejection of it.

For Kris, prison abolition was not a just a worthy consideration but an essential one.

From her perspective, this component was essential because it addressed the very root of the issues she was working to combat.
“Getting to the Root of It”

So basically, our philosophy is that everybody deserves support and love and care and accountability and so, it doesn't matter if you identify across the board, right. So whether you work in corrections, whether you have committed harm, whether you someone like the whole world deserves to be held with compassion and like accountability if that’s what’s needed and so we just provide like ways of building communication and building like containers for communication with folks kind of across the board. –Charlene

Within this theme, the advocates offered their lens of analysis pertaining to the root causes of violence. Their root analyses were centered on gender, race, ability, age, and power. The advocates applied these analyses to all levels of violence in society—interpersonal, community, state/institutional, and systemic/structural. Further, for the CBO participants, it was possible for mixed or compounded harm to occur, whereby multiple levels of violence were taking place at once. Thus, CBO alternative approaches had to address the different levels of violence. The root causes of the violence were key indicators of how to approach their GV work.

**Root causes of violence.** Analyzing violence through multiple lenses proved beneficial to the CBO participants in helping them determine the appropriate ways to approach their work. Using a gendered analysis, Jaime spoke to the root of gender-based violence and how it pushes her to think of GV with an all-encompassing lens:

We really think of gender-based violence in a very inclusive way. To us, it almost starts with the violence that male bodies experience in our society. That would be lower empathy and support for male children, and violence that they're expected to embrace, and be tough, including circumcision as a male trauma that is experienced. All of those things are equally a part of gender-based violence and are actually a lot of the causal factors of violence against women and are also reinforced and maintained through homophobia. That's where homophobia and transphobia is a really key part of that, and then the way in which women and feminine people are treated as almost a consequence of that.
One can see in Jaime’s analysis a tracking of the genesis of GV, beginning with male bodies and the violence they are subjected to and are expected to engage in. In turn, this experience connects to not only violence against women and feminine people, but also to violence expressed as transphobia and homophobia. It is clear that Jaime identified a thread, which then implies that there is an interconnectivity among all human bodies, i.e., all genders.

Building on this gendered view of GV, Keri added another two layers by including race and age as components of her lens on root causes:

We talk about state violence in our work because many of the young people we are intersecting with are systems-involved. So just by virtue of the fact of their systems involvement, they are surviving state system violence, and we’re looking at the unique way girls interact with the state, which is often based on their gender markers, like the way they show up in their gender and/or the stereotypes and implicit bias around their gender.

For example, Black girls with— and its gender and race for us, it’s very intersectional for us. So Black girls, because of their natural hair or because of their so-called attitude, or because of their so-called anger, or because of the way their body looks in their school uniform, are more likely to be thrust into the pipeline to prison than White girls or White boys. So, we are interested in gender-based violence as it relates to state violence in a way that folks are thrust into really harmful, violent, horrific state systems and the same way around foster care, the way our [Black] kids are taken from their homes, the way neglect is being framed.

For Keri’s work, although gender was important, she was clear to include race as an integral marker when looking at the population she served and the state-level violence they experience. For her, understanding that their experiences were intimately connected to various aspects of their identities was a crucial component of addressing their needs adequately.

Rather than focusing on identity markers, Renee’s analysis was centered on power:
That is a lot of people. The problem, of course, is that the institution of police is highly, highly, highly corrupt, and filled with power-hungry, egotistical, tiny-dicked men who want to lord their racist and sexist power over people. The institution of law enforcement, the relationship that it has to society, is a power and control relationship. They are legislated to have the power. That's what makes them a cop.

Although it is clear Renee was race conscious, her emphasis was on how integral power was in the equation. For her, power defined the ways in which the other markers expressed themselves. Further, she saw the importance of power and its connections to societal control.

**Perpetrators of violence.** All participants said their CBOs acknowledged that interpersonal violence was not the only type of gender violence experienced or perpetrated. Participants shared stories of experiences with community violence, institutional harms, violations by the state and state actors, and systemic violence. Transformative Solutions Initiative (TSI) provided a helpful and detailed analysis of the multiple forms and contexts in which gender violence occurs. Figure 3 provides a visual representation of TSI’s analysis and includes characteristics of harms explained by all CBO participants in the study.

To start, all participants understood and defined interpersonal gender violence. A member of Community Restoration Project (CRP) explained,

I think about interpersonal violence, which is what people are usually talking about when they're talking about responding to violence. They're thinking X person harmed X other person, and then we're going to respond by holding the process with those two people or more people.
Characteristics of Interpersonal Harm
- Incident involving two or more parties
- Intervention needed or sought
- Physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological and threatening actions
- Ex: Domestic violence, sexual assault, hazing, hate crimes. (Keri, Pat, Charlene, etc)

Characteristics of Community Harm
- Incident involves at least two parties and group norms and practices
- Interventions range from informal to formal (e.g., family, faith-based orgs, CBOs, agencies, state actors and institutions)
- Ex: Victim-blaming, silencing, norms that sanction gender violence. (Ingrid, Lois, Renee, etc)

Characteristics of Institutional/State Harm
- Enforced through organizations
- Interventions address interpersonal and community violence through policy, laws
- Ex: Gender-based violence by state actors, enforcing/ implementing gender binary definitions, laws, and policies. (Jaime, Lois, Kris, etc)

Characteristics of Systemic/Structural Harm
- No direct enforcer
- Composed of social norms, culture, paradigms, social narratives
- Interventions influence/shift interpersonal, community, and institutional/state violence
- Ex: Gender binary, toxic masculinity, heteropatriarchy. (Jaime, Terry, Jessie, etc)

*Figure 3. Harm analysis (researcher-designed).*
As CBO participants began defining gender violence, while inclusive of multiple-identified individuals experiences, all but one gave examples of interpersonal level violence (i.e., domestic violence, sexual assault, intimate partner violence). As the participants moved through their definitions, analysis, and RJ and TJ/CA processes, they included more types and contexts of gender violence.

Other participants referenced the community to layer their understanding of interpersonal violence. By doing so, they supported a wider understanding of GV, that is, community gender violence. For example, the members of Rise Up shifted from recognizing the interpersonal harm to implicating the community in which the harm occurred. A member of Rise Up looked at the process this way:

[A] community restorative process . . . looking at ways that the community was complicit, or looking at ways that people in other positions of power were complicit, or enable things to happen, or want to take responsibility for their role in these dynamics and not protecting members of the community from this person, and thinking about restorative responses going forward.

Several participants gave examples of communities protecting or ignoring problematic behaviors of prominent members for the sake of community solidarity and/or to prevent harms from the state (i.e., harms of the criminal justice system). A member of the Center for Community Change (CCC) shared that when a Black male leader caused harm to multiple young members in the community,

Nobody was holding him accountable or they were told [the young members] they needed to keep their mouth closed . . . Older Blacks in our face telling us we needed to recognize this brother’s leadership and how we’re going to—feminism is a White girl’s thing and how you going to help the movement when you’re trying to tear a brother down?
The community not only refused to respond to the concerns of the young members and take “collective responsibility,” as this member said, but it also enforced “cultures of silence and cultures of violence.”

Most CBO participants in the study highlighted this refusal of the community to respond as a type of gender violence by the community. Here, community-level violence was described as a combination of interpersonal harm (e.g., incident at hand) and systemic or structural harm (e.g., community norms, beliefs, and cultures that condone or ignore harm). A member of TSI explained that the systemic level feeds into and influences all of the other levels (i.e., interpersonal, community, state/institutional; see Figure 3), making the systemic level a fundamental target for change.

All the participants expressed an understanding of the systemic level in one or two ways. First, as mentioned in theme 3, many participants highlighted the importance of affecting the systemic level through shifting norms, mind sets, and building culture. These changes were believed, as one participant said, to “shift the landscape of violence, and you can shift the landscape of protocols and policies” (member of Progressive Youth Community Restoration [PYCR]). Another way of talking about systemic violence was to define it:

Looking at the social historical context of this country that’s entirely based on oppression of the intersection of race and gender. (member of CCC)

And:

So that it's not all harm based like one person—and not it's not all in a personal harm based. Some of it is like what is the harm living in the society does to us. (member of Second Chance Restoration [SCR])

And:
Systematic which for me is the least embodied and the more abstract . . . more of the collective unconscious . . . where narratives live and where myths and stereotypes and the ways that folks make sense of the world around them lives. . . That lives within all of us and within our minds and within the media that we watch. That's the most intangible one. (member of TSI)

Each participant spoke of the various different aspects or social processes of society they believed constitute the systemic/structural level or “collective unconscious.” Many participants, in defining systemic/structural violence, spoke about the ways in which violence becomes normalized and then ultimately supported by individuals and communities alike. A member of TSI asserted that gender socialization, for example—when a person is assigned a sex before birth and gets “a whole identity and life that’s projected onto them”—becomes a fertile ground for violence as a result of both of those projections and societal enforcement of the projections, despite the individual’s self-proclaimed identity. Whether the participants believed that interpersonal, community, state and/or systemic/structural violence were the main targets of their interventions, all used the community level as a context or base to work from. Furthermore, each participant emphasized the importance that the systemic/structural aspect played in the creation and prevention of gender violence.

The last types of violence and context the CBO members addressed were state and institutional. All of the CBOs in this study were founded on critiques of the state/institutional responses to gender violence and state/institutional infliction of gender violence. Some CBO members explained how state responses were punitive and did not effectively address the needs or wants of the people most affected by the harm. Other participants asserted that the states/institutions inflicted violence through the actions of state/institutional actors and policies and laws.
Members of PYCR explained that they focused on addressing gender-based violence as it relates to the interpersonal and institutional violence against nonbinary people and nonbinary and gender nonconforming erasure, as if the identity does not exist at all. They also focused on the violence forcing nongender conforming people into the binary norms. This violent conforming takes place especially in state institutions such as prisons, detention facilities, and schools.

Like community violence, members of PYCR showed the overlap of violent acts by the state (e.g., binary prisons) and structural/systemic violence (e.g., enforcing gender binary norms). Many participants also highlighted the ways in which institutional and state actors harmed people they were supposed to protect. For example, a member of the Center for Community Change shared the following:

People with disabilities experienced sexual assault at disproportional number[s]. . . . They are not seen as sexual people or people having sexuality . . . because of the way rape is in the mind of the majority society . . . that people with disabilities were experiencing sexual assault in facilities where they were supposed to be getting their needs met . . . it was happening in an institution where they were perceived as not just nonsexual but as subhuman . . . they’re not believed . . . or it’s easier to discount that allegation from a person with a disability because they’re not seen as having equal claim to a quality of life.

Not only was there direct interpersonal violence perpetrated by an institutional actor (institutional violence) but also the participant explained that because of the victims’ identity, the violence was often discredited by the community (community violence) and the narrow beliefs held (structural/systemic violence) about who qualifies as a “rape victim.” The interlocking of gender and other identities, such as ability, greatly impacts individuals’ risk and experiences of gender violence. Furthermore, access to safety and help from states and institutions are no longer assumed or certain.
A member of the Center for Community Change declared that the disproportionately high numbers of sexual assaults in marginalized communities take place in part because of the legacy of their history . . . there’s a lack of trust in the criminal legal system and law enforcement and there’s a lack of trust in the medical industrial complex. . . . We couldn’t rely on the same systems that claimed to protect us [when they] are the ones who are harming us.

Given both the contemporary and historical experiences of harms and the multiple perpetrators of violence, many participants found that marginalized individuals and communities seeking support and safety had to find viable alternatives. This situation created the desire, as one participant said, for “interventions to violence that took into account state violence and that we were not going to use the criminal justice system.”

**RJ and TJ/CA in Action**

It’s a healing justice branch. I feel like defining transformative justice, I would never see it as being in opposition to restorative justice unless they’re really coming from different ideologies. I would see transformative justice as being an umbrella that this education narrative work and shifting scripts, healing, and then circle processes and addressing harm all fit into. –Representative of Tomorrow’s Promise (TP)

When asked to describe the approaches their CBOs used, each of the participants often began with a broad but definitive focus on RJ or TJ models, identifying RJ as addressing “interpersonal problems” and TJ as addressing “interpersonal problems” and “larger systems.” As participants moved throughout the conversations, exemplified by TP, the differences between the RJ and TJ/CA models became less central, and more integrated practices began to emerge. With participants’ exploration of aspects of the approaches, a greater understanding of the CBOs’ social change strategies came into focus. This shift began to illuminate the practices and cultures members upheld that were
fueled by RJ and/or TJ/CA as the CBO participants navigated changing and/or creating their social setting.

**Practices and tools.** When asked to describe the approaches they used to address gender violence, some participants initially grounded themselves in RJ. For example, A member of PYCR stated:

> Restorative justice is the end goal. That’s what we’re working towards. That’s what we’re striving for. Restorative practices are the things that help us try to get there. A circle is one restorative practice, so that restorative circle to sit down and go through the process of trying to repair harm is one practice with community building circles, restorative inquiry. There’s lots of other practices that are also part of that restorative justice skill set.

Like the other participants in the study who claimed RJ as their primary approach, this member defined restorative circle practices as a defining marker of the work. A member of Second Chance Restoration (SCR) emphasized, “But really a lot of like circle process and small group process.” These processes explained not only restorative practices but also the tools and skills used for applying restorative justice. Although most of these participants endorsed using circles, a member of Rise Up cautioned that people can believe that circles “solve everything.” This member of Rise Up observed that these people sought circle practices without wanting to “look at the root sources of the conflict” and cautioned:

> A circle’s not going to fix racism, so if you’re not going to deal with the structure of racism that created the conflict in the first place, a circle’s not going to fix that for you. . . . White supremacy will collect everything into a tool of White supremacy. [Circles] can just be used by people who are not aware of those things to replicate those same impacts and dynamics within a setting that’s supposed to be restorative but was being centered as still the most privileged.

Another participant from Rise Up underscored the way in which restorative tools, such as circles, are limited in their impact on larger structural problems. If circles are used
without such awareness, they will be coopted and become another tool for White supremacy.

**Transformative justice and/or community accountability.** Participants who claimed TJ as their principal approach focused on explaining community accountability practices as “transformative education,” addressing “larger forms of oppression” and “holding space” for community members to address their concerns. A member of the Center for Community Change explained:

Transformative justice can be transforming those people into agents of change, so not just addressing the harm between them but giving them the tools and the infrastructure and the system to be able to be agents of changing their community around them. But it can also be intervening on the community level to make things more—not just make harm less likely but to make intimacy and positivity and healthy relationships more possible. . . . It's a form of intervention that for us and for me, I think, there are two forms that I primarily take, which would be transformative education, so making tools, doing workshops and trainings, and holding space for folks.

Creating shareable archives that will not “die” was another focus of all the participants’ employment of TJ in this study. A member of Tomorrow’s Promise noted,

A lot of those people have been doing the work for so long; like Support New York left a legacy of like a tool kit—so people are leaving behind . . . documentation that moves things forward . . . . I don't want to be that room—“Wasn't there something Tomorrow’s Promise, and I wonder what happened to them? Didn't they have a booklet once?” And then I can't—you can't find it anywhere. No, that’s going to kill me . . . if that happens, that’s so wrong.

These participants expressed real concerns about losing knowledge, and as such, worked to form organizational structures:

That's all about creating tools, creating frameworks . . . so much of the work that we do in transformative justice and in community healing becomes so abstracted that it gets lost as cycles of people change and creating artifacts and things that actually embody what we're talking about in a way that can spread farther than some of what we're talking about.
Given that some of the TJ participants in this study had strategically planned to dissolve, leaving a “legacy” for others to “build on or just create” was integral to their goals and contributions.

**Merging practices and tools.** Each CBO member in the study was able to articulate clearly the foundation of their approaches firmly in RJ or TJ/CA strategies. As each participant provided stories of the practices, experiences, and individual skills, some explained a practical merging or combining of RJ and TJ/CA practices and values. A member of Tomorrow’s Promise (TP) stated:

> I want to see what this knowledge circle processes can do to make our work more likely to support somebody to transform as I feel like the work I did didn’t necessarily get there. . . . I don't call it transformative justice because again I don't want to water down the term transformative justice. Some of the people that are partners here don't believe in transformative justice at all. But they're willing to try this method and they know that there's a lot of people that they serve that can't use the police even if they believe in the police. I mean that's just a reality. . . . We're going to call it restorative justice but we're going to be the kind of restorative justice that doesn't use the system.

Hoping to improve their outcomes, TP started a new project using restorative circle practices. Likewise, faced with clients who did not want to engage the criminal justice system, restorative justice practitioners engaged a nonsystem-involved “transformative justice informed” process. Ultimately, the TP organization provided a practical community-informed RJ/TJ/CA approach to address the needs and concerns of the parties involved. A member of TP further commented that the merger allowed them to reach “all kinds of people that would never, ever go through Tomorrow’s Promise.”

Another form of merging or nesting was expressed by two of the participants. As stated in the introductory quotation of this theme, the term “umbrella” (also identified as “umbrella politic” by TSI) was used by the Center for Community Change to connect RJ
and TJ/CA practices, processes, and tools. A member of TSI provided extensive and nuanced details into the foundation of its ideal nesting “vision” for RJ and TJ/CA:

I think that when you think of gender-based violence, I would say that probably 80% of what we're talking about is not considered illegal, and so the state just does not respond to it. It's not really an alternative because people just don't care. People just don't do anything about it. . . . I would say that people are socialized to think things that are harmful are normal and then they're socialized to think that things that are illegal are harmful.

There's a big distinction between what is harmful and what is illegal. We as transformative justice practitioners are much more concerned with what is harmful . . . restorative justice in state-diverted cases. I think that then people end up working much more closely on what is considered illegal whereas when you're doing community-based TJ work. You can respond much more to what is harmful even though people might bring things to you that might also be illegal. . . .

In my vision of the world, I think that restorative justice can largely be an alternative to a large percentage of what the criminal justice system is responding to because it is a formalized structure that can be implemented on a large scale. . . . There are certain things that are considered illegal that are not harmful. Let's say drug usage . . . that shouldn't be handled by the state in that way. That doesn't make sense. Then actually harmful things that are illegal I think could be handled largely by restorative justice, or through mental health practices. . . . What transformative justice does is that there's a lot of stuff that still wouldn't be handled by that system that I think communities would need to know how to respond to within their own infrastructures. . . . There's a lot of stuff that's harmful that just shouldn't nor doesn’t get handled by the state.

Members of TSI wove together their understanding of gender-based violence, that is, the harms that stem from the gender binary, and concluded that not only are these types of harm currently not illegal, but that “people just don’t care” and “don’t do anything about it.” These are the harms that CBOs have assigned community-based transformative justice models to address. Furthermore, in criticizing the mislabeling of nonharmful acts as illegal, participants envisioned a “formalized” or institutionalized systems-based restorative justice model that would address harms that are illegal, that is, those the “punitive” criminal justice system is currently addressing. With this vision, all harms would be addressed, and RJ and TJ/CA models are nested together in a kind of
“healing justice” branch. The practices and tools within the “umbrella” can be intermingled and used as deemed appropriate.

Although most participants talked about this natural merging of the practices and tools of RJ and TJ/CA, one of the older members, of the Center for Community Change (CCC), articulated some of the tensions:

And then you have other people that also said “This speaks to us and all we’re already doing it” but they’re not and they want to—“Oh I like the word transformative justice. I’m going to just start using that for anything that we’re doing.” I’m like, “No you can't use that so easily.” Like we don't want to have kind of like this you know dictatorial thing like “we’re the only ones that”—no—but we also don't want it so watered down that now it's being used for things they are in law enforcement? No. No, no. Don't use that. And, I mean that's—if I'm going to be adamant about anything, I'm like you cannot use words like transformative justice if you’re working with law enforcement.

In their CBO that had been existent during the early development of TJ/CA, members of CCC felt that the merging was bringing about approaches that were not “genuine” TJ. It then became imperative for CCC to both preserve the definitive marker of TJ as a non-law-enforcement-involved approach and use it as a “litmus test” for others wanting to label their approaches TJ.

Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture

Some of the communities are geographical. They are placed based. We are in this school, we are gonna build community with school, including the principal, including the teachers. We are in this group home, we are gonna build community with the case managers, and the counselors, and the youth and we’re building community, we’re thinking about how are other ways we can treat each other, how are other ways we can be in close collaboration with each other. We are modeling “free zones” that are not based in all of the punitive, and like, rigid responses to normal youth behavior that exists in these places, right. We are building community in the places where we are intersecting with youth, and I’d say we’re also community that’s about movement like community, that’s about how folks are pushing these ideas [gender inclusivity] in sort of a larger way in like a national conversation. –Representative of Progressive Youth Community Restoration (PYCR)
As CBO members reflected on their experiences of engaging community in their antigender violence work, a theme of “community capacity” began to emerge. As amplified by PYCR, all participants stressed the importance of building community and community capacity to address not only interpersonal and community-level violence but also to contribute to larger cultural shifts. Although some members expressed perceptions of communities as equipped but not resourced, others reflected on the complexities of gender violence, RJ, and TJ/CA and deemed communities in need of skilled help.

Both resources (i.e., human, economic, physical, temporal) and the arrangement and allocation of resources (e.g., who does what) are theorized to be influential in the overall functioning of social settings (Tseng & Seidman, 2007). For many CBO members, resources and the organization of resources (e.g., social organization) impact the types of social change strategies they use. For some participants in this study, their perceptions of “working with” communities helped to create an understanding of the coconstruction of community capacity through the merging of technical, experiential, and spatial resources. The participants’ perceptions of “working in and/or for” communities defined the engagement as linked by geographical location, outreach, and advocacy.

**Building resources.** Tseng and Seidman (2007) identified at least four types of resources, including temporal, physical, economic, and human, that influence the functioning of social settings. In this study, all participants mentioned their relationship with each type of resource, explaining that RJ and TJ/CA processes took “a lot of effort,” “a lot of money,” “a lot of preparation,” “so much manpower and resources,” and “more infrastructure.” Although each type of resource was referred to, participants primarily discussed economic and human resources. Furthermore, many CBO members reflected
on both resources within communities and resources within their own CBOs. When talking about communities, a member of Community Restoration Project (CRP) spoke about the relationship between individual economic and physical resource needs and the violence:

Everyone in this situation needs stable housing. Everyone in this situation needs stable employment that will cover their basic needs. You’re just going to create more conflict if you don’t address those resources. Those get to bigger places that are harder to impact but still have to be part of the context of looking at what created this conflict.

A member of Rise Up expressed the need to address the resources and structural issues for individuals and communities that contribute to their experiences of “conflict.” Here, the CBO member recognized that the community’s resource needs must be understood when members try to address gender violence. The member further highlighted the economic needs of the community, explaining that communities are “ready but we need more help” and “it’s really hard for a community group to figure out how to come up with that money.”

The member of CRP grappled with the genuine interest that communities had in using restorative justice and determining how to pay CRP “when likely neither the person who’s been impacted or the person who has created the impact has funds to pay for something like that.” The economic needs of both the community and the CBO create a precarious situation. Many CBO members worked to address this dynamic by developing different funding structures.

Some participants spoke of other nonfunded volunteer collectives that “never got any money . . . they were doing this all on, you know, their collective energies.” However, most of the CBOs representatives in the study stressed these points:
You need to put in a lot of effort, a lot of preparation, a lot of care and consideration . . . That’s not free work. . . . It was just really hard, and people should be compensated for highly-skilled work.

Human resources, including training and skill level, time commitment, and beliefs and goals, were necessary to implement RJ and TJ/CA responses. Each participant pointed out that resources were needed to carry out all functions of the process, and importantly, that those working should also be compensated.

Many CBO members developed unique strategies for building economic resources. A member of TP decided to form a temporary CBO:

I knew that if we had a permanent nonprofit structure . . . it cost a lot of money; you have to beg for funding all the time, by the time—I really thought that if I build something permanent like that it was just a matter of time before—and what we're doing is pretty high risk and a little under the radar. Honestly—it would be only be a matter of time before we were going to like, get in trouble with the law, or feel we have to water down what we were doing, or how to play some kind of funder game where we change what we were doing to please them. Understanding the need for funding but also not wanting to “play funder games.”

A member of TP reported that the CBO got “a little start-up money” and strategically began with a planned end date. The members created goals and projects that fit within their budget and focused on developing tools and resources that could be used by others to continue the work in the future.

Another TJ-focused CBO member cautioned against using “elite people in power . . . to solve some problem that is an outcome of their [the elite] actions.” Unlike TP, the 501c3 (nonprofit) Transformative Solutions Initiative (TSI), was formed with the belief that the communities being served could afford its services. The representative stated:

What's really important here is there's a reason why we're a for-profit. As a social enterprise, we believe that the people who are funding us should be the people we're trying to serve. . . . It would be the people who are affected, prioritizing that in their life, and gaining something that is genuinely valuable to them that solves
problems in their life . . . so you could have small crowdfunding, community-sourced funding.

Opting for a “for profit” structure, a member of TSI expressed confidence in the communities that it is a part of and works with. This stance reinforced the understanding of the communities’ capacity to address gender violence effectively.

**Building community capacity.** Although resources were discussed as important to the functions of the CBOs, the CBO representatives spoke extensively about the importance of building community capacity. The participants in this study explained that capacity could be built in at least two ways. These were building positive community relationships and building the skills of community members.

**Community relationship building.** Every CBO representative in the study explained that the “health” of the community and their “ways of relating” were fundamental to successfully addressing and preventing gender violence. One participant stated that Second Chance Restoration (SCR) worked to really invest in the community building piece with the tagline that you can’t restore something that doesn’t exist. If you don’t have good relationships in the first place, you can’t just jump into a circle to repair harm when there is no foundation to repair from.

Thus, supporting relationship development in the communities that were requesting help or “circles” became an essential component of their efforts. As a member of Community Restoration Project (CRP) related,
The issue is that when folks are so actively individualistic and in isolation and then we're trying to build community and response to harm, it's so much harder than when we're trying to build community and build relationships and build connections as a proactive strategy.

A representative from the TSI explained that community building is a type of organizing, not the typical “political organizing.” Community building is a “relationship-building organizing” that is about “strengthening the ties between people and strengthening the ties between communities and systems that they are trying to address.” There was no misperception in the necessity of relationships that can support the implementation of RJ and TJ/CA practices. All of the CBO representatives in this study understood the importance of the communities’ needs and capacity, yet there were divergent perceptions of community agency and needs beyond relationship development.

Building community members’ skills. In two CBOs that used RJ as their primary practice and defined themselves as “mid-level community-based relative to other people,” the representatives expressed concerns about the “potential [of RJ processes] to create more harm,” particularly to the person who had been harmed. A member of Rise Up believed that using RJ to address gender violence requires “incredibly highly skilled work to do well” and that “most volunteers . . . are generally not as highly skilled as is actually required to make these things successful. . . You don’t just call someone into a room and jump into it.” The CBO representatives stressed their concerns about the safety and capacity of all community members involved.

Combined with this narrative was an appeal for economic and physical resources. That is, as one participant said, “it requires such an investment of training into the volunteers to get them to be able to do this work. . . . It would require investing in paying restorative practitioners the way that we pay attorneys.” These participants recognized
that communities needed highly skilled workers and/or well-trained volunteers when using restorative justice to address conflict, specifically, gender violence. These community needs moved beyond the relationship development previously mentioned and extended to identifying the high level of skill that is also necessary for the use of restorative justice practices.

SCR complexified the need for “highly skilled workers”; the representative spoke about the principles that guide the CBO’s restorative and transformative justice work:

In all of restorative justice and transformative justice plan that there's this deep desire amongst many of us to make it all community led, right. Like folks directly impacted can do this. Like, can figure out how to resolve the harm and have some tools and processes. And the way it exists right now is that at the moment, people seem to call restorative justice community transformative justice orgs because there's a need for like sharing skills and learnings.

Here, the member of SCR focused on the shared goals (RJ and TJ/CA) of developing responses that are community-based and led by those who are directly impacted. Although members of SCR acknowledged the community needs for “skills and learning,” they believed too that “folks have their own agency and actually need to be asked what they need and are supported in investigating what those needs are.” PYCR focused on communities’ need for “accessible” tools and skills versus a need for “highly skilled workers”:

What all of us want to be spending more time on is really sharing, doing skill shares with folks in the community so that they actually feel like they don't have to call someone outside . . . be accessible to everybody.

A member of Tomorrow’s Promise (TP) called out the “safety concerns” mentioned earlier as a reason why communities reach out to their CBOs:

I mean people would call TP for help because probably somebody told them that we were doing something different, and our approach wasn't to provide something different. Our approach was to support people to think about what they
could do different given what they had. So, it was not them turning to their own resources, to their own communities.

But, I knew that if you asked that from conventional domestic violence program, sexual assault program, they weren't going to either—they probably wouldn't even go that way, you know? “Oh, that's too dangerous. Oh, you know we have a restraining order. You can go get a divorce.” But, if somebody said, “Well, I really want to think about something really different, I don't want to do those things,” there wasn't much that could be said. Whereas, in TP, we were like, “Tell us any—you know—what do you think you want it?” And to just be given the space to really do that without having the hindrances of all it's too dangerous you should do that or, you know?

The member of TSI supported the perspectives of SCR and TP. Another member of TSI expressed the need to continue to be mindful and sensible in understanding the agency and capacity of communities:

I think there can be a misunderstanding of . . . to believe that if you bring the people into the room, they have everything that they need. I think they are the solutions to what they need, but I think also sometimes they need actual tools or information in order to activate that or in order to practice that in their community. I think that for me, transformative justice is being a catalyst, so a container to hold that transformation and to provide certain tools or certain things that activate that community to become a more fruitful environment for the type of society that we're advocating for, not just to prevent or respond to the harm that's currently existing.

Although there seemed to be some clear differences between how some RJ-focused and TJ/CA-focused CBO representatives in this study understood community agency and need, all the participants agreed that communities overall need more resources, whether human, economic, or physical.

**Building culture.** “Preventing it in the first place” was a message shared and spread by all of the participants in this study. They spoke of “proactive,” “systemic,” “prevention intervention work” that is “community-based” and “shifting mindsets and . . . changing culture.” Tseng and Seidman (2007) noted that mindsets, norms, and culture constitute the main social processes of social settings and that changes to them are
integral to changing social settings. When asked about creating social change, some participants identified transformative justice as “a way of life” and stressed the importance of creating “infrastructure where we don't have to just respond to incidences of harm and violence but instead, we're trying to proactively create the kinds of communities that we think will be able to respond to harm and violence better.”

For TSI, systemic and structural level changes started in the community. For example, a member of TSI noted it used community-based trainings on consent and sexuality to “shift the mindset and the mentality of the community.” The CBO members believed that

violence is rooted in embracing or rejecting norms. If you can shift those norms, you completely change the landscape of violence in that community, not only what solutions there are... but also to the nature of how the violence looks and what people are able to identify as violence... and you can shift the landscape of protocols and policies, as well.

All of the participants expressed a shared understanding of and focus on the significant role that norms and culture play in the creation and understanding of and solutions to violence.

**Paradigm Shift**

And I think they totally blew my mind about the gender-based violence, very much so. Now, I like, I can't quote them directly because I don't remember everything they said. But it was kind of like the gender binary—the gender binaries are like enforced on all people and so like much and all violence really comes from, the violence, it's like that come from enforcing the gender binary. And so, it kind of like blew my mind and is like that is all the stuff about how much is gender-based violence but it's not like what I have historically, like, assumed people meant. It's like these are crimes against women committed by men. Like no, it's just that the ways that we enforced masculinity—people however they identify and like all of that is—I don't know. That, like, I can't figure out how to say it, so I’m just going to say it. –Charlene
Paradigm shifts are movements between the participants’ past and present thinking that demonstrate “a change in a way of ‘seeing’ and coping with the world” (Conroy, 2003 p. 54). One can feel the “mind-blowing” shift that Charlene experienced as she gained a new analysis and understanding of gender violence. Although she did not have a full grasp of the new conceptualization, the quotation above exemplified the ways some of the CBO members in this study, in both old and newly formed CBOs, assimilated the gender binary analysis on gender violence.

As Charlene moved forward in explaining her own analysis of GV, she attempted to integrate the new socialization theory into her previously-held beliefs about intimate violence:

I think just going back to part of why maybe I called it intimate violence is that I want to just hold that people of all genders are harmed, people of all genders do harm and the socialization that we experience informs both how we do harm and how we react to being harmed and the places we can go and we cannot and so maybe I mean intimate violence is like domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, sexual harm, and I just want to make sure that everyone knows like this affects people of all genders.

Charlene justified her own intersectionality-informed gender violence phrase “intimate violence” and started to weave in the newly-realized knowledge. She excitedly and superficially shifted her way of seeing things while also reemphasizing her previous views and beliefs. Another older CBO member exposed to the newer CBO member’s analysis expressed similar assimilatory shifts:

And then now having TSI come up and that’s really impressive what they're doing and they’re filling on another role . . . they have, they are moving our understanding of the issue. So, you know their whole conversation around the gender binary is quite provocative and really starts to just open—has opened up the issue in a very different way. . . . I's not an add on, it’s like central.
Like members of SCR, a member of TP found the gender binary analysis presented by TSI to be “impressive,” “provocative,” and “central.” The TP representative noted that TSI’s analysis not only shifted their CBO members’ understanding but was creating a fundamental shift for the antigender violence CBOs in their network.

In discussing the formation of the CBO, a member of TSI provided some insight on how the CBO members developed their lens and subsequently shaped and contributed to the larger paradigm shift for some of the other CBOs. The representative of TSI highlighted how the members’ personal identities induced their positions:

I think that we can have that perspective being social . . . at being queer people who are socialized in a hetero-normative world because you see that everyone experiences what we would see as gendered-based violence as soon as they start to transgress on gender norms, as soon as they start to step out of their box that they’re supposed to be in. That’s where it’s very obvious that—then at the moment a man wears a pink shirt, he’s, you’re a sissy. Why are you wearing that? You’re a homo. When you can see that happening to kids and then it’s—just the language around why people should uphold the gender binary—it’s always rooted in homophobia and transphobia. That’s how you can tell that it’s not about hating women; that it’s about needing to maintain a stable social system in which there are only two genders.

The queer identity of the members of this CBO placed them head-on with heteronormativity, becoming a target for homophobic and transphobic remarks. They defined these experiences as gender-based violence, challenged the beliefs that gender-based violence was about “hating women.” These members further asserted that what they experienced was about maintaining gender hegemony.

The TSI representative also spoke candidly about the community experiences of the members that “sharpened their lens.” For example, as they tried to participate in their college’s antisexual violence movement, they critically analyzed the rhetoric of gender-based violence:
I think one thing that I’ll say is that I think that often when people use the language of gender-based violence, it really reinforces the binary, and really reinforces biological determinism, and this concept that men are aggressive, and are the ones who do the harm. Women are the ones who experience the harm. I think especially from coming from the college anti-sexual violence movement, it just so actively is so gendered in the language that it uses and centers certain voices so much that it feels like it almost re-entrenches and reinforces the violence that we are talking about. The solutions to the identified problem of violence against women reinforce violence against—violence that’s rooted in the gender binary.

Here, the CBO member called attention to the ways in which the term gender-based violence is still tethered to violence against women, supports the dominant heteronormative narrative, and fortifies the gender binary. The member argued that the college community’s ingrained rhetoric, and as a result its solutions, strengthened violence because that rhetoric is “rooted in the gender binary,” which the participants deemed to be a violent cultural belief.

Finally, members of TSI grounded their understanding of gender-based violence and its causes on a parallel with the evolution of the larger feminist movement. As a participant said,

I feel like for the third wave, intersectionality is a core concept, but I would say that for the fourth wave, deconstructionism is a core concept and the gender binary being the problem as opposed to patriarchy or masculinity being the problem. I think is a big shift into the fourth wave. I think that it's a very—I think third wave is a very embodied practice or you embody the trauma and the violence. I would say fourth wave for me is really returning agency to the individual to shape the solution.

For this participant, understanding of the fourth wave of feminism or, as stated, “to us is queer feminism,” deconstructed gender, thereby affirming their queer identity and situating the causes of gender violence in the enforcement of the gender binary. The members’ personal experiences of gender violence, their critiques of their community, and the ways in which they related to the fourth wave of feminism all helped form an
analysis that moved past gender violence as “violence against women” or violence that is “intersectional.”

When asked to describe what social issues their CBO focuses on, a member of TSI replied:

I would say that we address violence rooted in the gender binary. That includes things that are seen as explicit violence, like sexual harm, homophobia, transphobia, and hate crimes. It also addresses things that are seen as more implicit or systematic violence rooted in the socialization of femme and masculine folks, and the violence that happens to certain bodies because of the sex that they were assigned at birth or because of the way that they express their gender.

The members of this organization provided an understanding of gender violence that centralized the gender binary, but they also emphasized the intersectional analysis shared with the other CBO participants in the study, therefore showing the connections or nesting of the two analyses. This CBO was in the process of creating a different analysis than the other older CBOs in the study. Interestingly, this CBO, as a part of their “transformative education,” begin to inform other CBOs addressing gender violence about their analysis. As a result, some of the participants in this study, as noted previously, began to shift their ways of “seeing” and thinking about the causes of gender violence.
Chapter 5: Discussion

What we got right was a profoundly important universal essentialized analysis of gender and how it causes violence and degradation. We got that right. What we got wrong was we did not even think much about how gender is nuanced, complicated, contextualized and challenged by other identities. . . . [We] did not think about the violence of poverty or homophobia or cultural genocide. . . . So the work that emerges from that narrowed definition of what counts as gender violence is still very closely aligned with narrow state practices and policies. (Richie, 2015, p. 264)

For more than 60 years, multiple organized efforts have been made to address gender violence (GV) with a primary focus on violence against women (VAW). Although many strides have been made, the limitations of the violence against women frame, including the separation-focused and criminal-law-focused responses, left many victims of gender violence invisible (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Goldschied, 2014). In the quotation that begins this chapter, scholar and activist Richie (2015) suggested that one limitation of the VAW framing is its restricted understanding of gender violence. Although some mainstream organizations have expanded their visions, many efforts to address GV with the VAW frame are still used to guide the practices.

Nevertheless, some community-based organizations (CBOs) are aware of the limitations of the VAW frame, have formulated more nuanced understandings of GV, and have developed approaches accordingly. Members of these CBOs assert that, given their understanding of GV, new and alternative approaches are needed not only to respond to gender violence, but also to create social change strategies within social settings that prevent GV. RJ and/or TJ/CA are several of the community-based approaches that CBOs are using effectively in this effort. The purpose of this qualitative study was to highlight the CBO members’ understanding of and experiences with using RJ and/or TJ/CA to affect social change.
This chapter compares and contrasts the literature reviewed and the study findings to address the research questions and discuss the following three salient factors that were revealed: structural changes, resources and sustainability, and community capacity. In addition, I discuss the theoretical framing of multidimensionality (Mutua, 2013) and creation of social settings (Burton & Kagan, n.d.; Cherniss & Deegan, 2011; Seidman & Tseng, 2010; Tseng & Seidman 2007) to explore the implications for theory, practice, and research. I also provide recommendations and suggestions for future research. Finally, I discuss the limitations of the present study and provide researcher’s reflections and concluding statements.

At the outset of this study, I used Srivastava and Hopwood’s (2009) iterative framework to incorporate participants’ meaning-making and interests in refining my research questions. As participants engaged my research question-informed interviews, it became apparent that their answers were layered, dynamic, intertwined, and nonlinear. Therefore, although I have presented the participants’ meaning-making in a linear format, their rich descriptions and understandings were profoundly complex.

To answer the first research question about understanding social processes that form the CBOs social settings, the findings demonstrated that CBOs build the community’s capacity to effectively use RJ and/or TJ/CA by targeting the social processes of the social setting. For example, many CBOs created prevention-centered workshops that focused on shifting community norms about GV and developing healthy relationships around consent. Overall, CBO participants stressed the importance of structural changes in creating positive culture change and effectively addressing GV.
To address the second research question regarding participants’ understanding of both their resources and the organization of their resources, one limited finding suggested that participants understood resources as primarily physical and economic. Through this understanding, the CBO members strategically and ingenuously used and organized resources to mitigate their concerns about funders’ influences and the subsequent cooptation of the CBOs’ mission and goals. The participants’ orientations towards resources also contributed to the sustainability of their work. These participants’ use of action levers to address dominant setting concerns provided insight into the dynamic process of the use of RJ and/or TJ/CA community-based social change strategies.

To answer the third and final research question, this study illuminated the action levers of the social settings that the participating CBO members targeted. These levers should be interpreted and understood as also informing the development of alternative approaches to addressing gender violence. The findings that are presented examined the functions of CBOs’ social settings and provided strategies on how RJ and TJ/CA can become established ways of addressing gender violence.

In this manner, the findings of this study contribute to the broader body of scholarship addressing alternative responses to gender violence, including RJ and peacemaking, TJ/CA, critical approaches to treatment (e.g., Men Stopping Violence, Cultural Context Model), and bystander education and organizing (e.g., Man Can Stop Rape, INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence; see also Coker & Macquoid, 2015). Furthermore, the findings presented answer the three research questions by addressing three takeaways found in the current knowledge base, namely, structural changes, resources and sustainability, and community capacity.
Structural Changes

In addressing the first research question, the CBO representatives in this study described social processes in two ways: (a) explaining those of the CBO social setting and those of the dominant social setting; and (b) explaining the importance of social processes in creating structural change. First, the participants focused primarily on explaining the relationships and norms that comprised both their settings and the dominant social settings. The findings supported Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) changing social settings theory inclusion of norms and relationships in defining social processes, as several of the participants explained that the health of the relationships in the community were structurally important to using RJ and/or TJ/CA.

As supported by the theme “Time, Space, and Place: Sociohistorical Context and Their Story,” each representative stressed a kind of “relationship-building organizing” or action plan to build strong relationships and social networks in the individual social setting. Several participants provided a nuanced understanding of positive relationships both with community members and with members of other CBOs, as well as precarious relationships with state institutions, such as child protective services and local law enforcement. However, the participants had far less to say about Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) defining factor of participation in activities.

These differences may be explained by the representatives’ emphasis on their mission of positive structural change. The theme “Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture” summarized how many participants believed that relationship development is integral to fostering positive changes on the interpersonal, community, and structural levels. By focusing intensely on the social processes of shifting norms and
developing healthy relationships within communities, the participants minimally explained the ways in which community members, staff, and other entities participated in the activities of the CBOs’ social setting. Still, the aspect of participation in activities of Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) theory should not be completely disregarded; a few participants briefly mentioned the challenges to the RJ and/or TJ processes because of the reluctance of some offenders to participate in activities.

When discussing norms, CBO representatives spoke passionately about their beliefs, values, attitudes, and expectations within their social setting. These aggregates of belief formed many of the participants’ values of social justice, inclusivity, equity, and self-determination. For instance, the theme “Restorative Justice and Transformative Justice in Action” showed how all the participants believed in community-based approaches that center community voice, needs, and agency. They also believed that the people who caused harm needed not only to be held accountable, but also deserved empathy, support, and healing. The representatives advocated for structural/cultural shifts and connected these to the importance of embracing multiple identities.

These findings respond to the RJ literature that criticizes RJ’s inadequate analysis of how systems of oppression inform GV. The study participants explained that RJ practices such as circles promote respect and dignity for all parties involved, and such activities foster healthy relationships and provide the norms for multiple identities to flourish. From this base, the participants employed their own systems interaction analysis to effectively address GV.

The participants also expressed a firm understanding of their own norms, but they often did so in relation to the norms of the dominant social setting. They focused
primarily on the dominant setting rules of conduct and expectations. To illustrate, when discussing their own ideas about gender socialization, members of Transformative Solutions Initiative explained that in the dominant social setting female bodies and male bodies were expected to behave in accordance with the gender binary system, and rules had been created to enforce such expectations. Furthermore, many other participants compared their beliefs and consequent behavior towards justice to that of the dominant setting.

Burton and Kagan’s (n.d.) theory on the creation of settings provides an explanation for the CBO participants’ keen attention to the norms of the dominant setting. As these participants developed their setting that challenged the dominant order, they were in a “prefigurative” radical state (Burton & Kagan, n.d., p. 5). As they tried passionately to assert their norms, they felt the “recuperative,” traditionalist, and conservative tendencies of the dominant social setting (Burton & Kagan, n.d., p. 5).

In attempts to survive as an organization with an alternative social setting and enact their ideology, the participants thoroughly analyzed and made comparisons with the dominant social setting. In this process, they gleaned arguments and evidence for their own existence. Not only did the participants spend a great amount of time explaining dominant social norms, they also exerted a significantly immense amount of effort stressing the importance of social processes (i.e., norms, relationships, participation in activities) in creating their new or alternative social setting and ultimately effecting social change.

The second way that CBO participants discussed social processes was with regard to their ability to impact the “landscape of violence,” as one participant said, in
communities. Exemplifying the theme “Getting to the Root of It,” Lois of Progressive Youth Community Restoration (PYCR) identified the landscape as the nature of how the violence looks, what people are able to identify as violence, how communities typically respond to the violence, and ultimately what solutions are developed. Consistent with Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) claims about the important and central role that social processes play in changing and/or creating new and alternative social settings, the CBO representatives interviewed in this study believed that changing social processes of the dominant social setting—what they referred to as structural forces—was a fundamental target in addressing gender violence.

The participants in this study explained that healthy relationships in the community are needed to support the vision, values, and practices of RJ and/or TJ. In efforts to target relationships and maintain their mission to “cultivate a culture of consent and liberty for all,” TSI created community-based trainings on consent and sexuality to help communities foster an understanding of healthy relationships. Not only did the participants address relationships, but, as they enumerated within the theme “Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture,” “shifting mindsets,” “changing culture,” and “rejecting harmful norms” were central goals of all the CBOs.

Towards those aims, Second Chance Restoration (SCR) used a restorative-justice-based, 15-month curriculum. This curriculum focuses on self-reflection, critical consciousness of the effects of the dominant culture, and understanding of interpersonal violence through an inclusive lens. Ultimately, each CBO representative used the majority of the interview to discuss the importance of social processes for structural change and the prevention of gender violence.
Much of the literature reviewed focused on the importance of RJ and/or TJ/CA interventions to interpersonal violence. Scholars provided examples of restorative justice conferences, circle processes, and community accountability practices and highlighted the challenges and concerns in the efficacy of such approaches. The present study extends the literature by highlighting the importance of GV prevention through shifting social processes at the community level. Because interpersonal violence is often regarded as the primary form of gender violence to target and is directly perpetrated by individuals, one would assume that responding to and addressing individuals’ behaviors would lead to a decrease in gender violence, particularly interpersonal violence. However, participants argued that building just communities could prevent GV. Currently, there is a paucity of research on RJ and/or TJ/CA and offender recidivism for interpersonal violence (Ptacek, 2017). Additionally, studies of general RJ processes and offender recidivism show mixed results (Ptacek, 2017).

In light of the current findings, it is important to focus on and develop prevention strategies. Community psychologists theorize that human behavior is shaped by factors at multiple levels and that social settings are appropriate targets for prevention efforts. Furthermore, studies investigating other areas, such as health and safety issues, bullying, and community violence, have successfully used multilevel prevention strategies to effect positive change (Casey & Lindhorst, 2011). For example, Karp & Frank (2016) reported using restorative circles in sexual misconduct prevention efforts on college campuses. These studies and community psychologists support the preventative focus of the CBO representatives in the present study who advocated proactively to create alternative social settings and promote well-being through transformative structural changes.
**Resources and Sustainability**

The study participants devoted a concerted amount of effort to explaining social processes, but they gave less attention to the resources and organization of resources in their social settings. Still, in answering the second research question, participants were briefly able to provide insights into their understanding of the relationship between the economic and human resources of their social settings. Furthermore, they provided an indication of the ways in which they organized their physical resources to foster an unconventional sustainability strategy.

Findings from the theme “Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture” revealed that CBOs spent time thinking about the economic resources for their work and how it impacted their human resources, that is, how their staff and communities were being served. For example, many organizations expressed frustrations or concerns that people (e.g., nonprofits, community members) expected the labor of RJ and/or TJ/CA work to be free. Pat of Rise Up asserted that these beliefs were rooted in a societal assumption that “feminized and emotional labor” is always expected to be free.

Feminist relational cultural theorists’ research on gendered labor confirms the participants’ assertions arguing that labor composed of “relational activity,” which included any indication of an expression of “empathy, mutuality, reciprocity . . . sensitivity to emotional contexts, empowerment, team building, and support of both people and projects” is labeled as feminine and will “feminize” the labor. This label will lead to devaluing of the work. As RJ and TJ/CA are fundamentally relational, CBOs using them to create new and alternative social settings will face challenges to their economic resources at the structural level. Each participant emphasized the awareness
that organizational members are skilled workers who are providing a service that should be supported by all interested parties. These findings suggest that CBOs should consciously address the value placed on their work by others to mitigate the effects of the dominant gender norms.

Finally, in terms of resources and sustainability and with regard to the relationship between CBOs’ economic resources and their communities, the theme “Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture” demonstrated how some participants expressed grave concerns about the possible influence of elite sources contributing to their economic resources and the subsequent effects on the CBOs’ support of community identified needs. These concerns aligned with criticisms of the nonprofit industrial complex (NPIC). The result is cooptation of radical social justice movements by the professionalization of their community leaders and social justice activists; the creation of nonprofits funded by government and elite (e.g., developers, large foundations, politicians, corporations) organizations; the resulting funding parameters and interests of the systems that the now coopted community leaders were originally criticizing; and the bureaucracy of maintaining such interests through organizational development and sustainability (Kivel, 2007; Finley, Esposito, & Hall, 2012).

Given the potential for negative consequences of obtaining elite funding, many of the CBO representatives strategically planned ways to support their work financially without accepting funding that would compromise their community-based missions. For example, Transformative Solutions Initiative created a for-profit CBO that primarily uses crowdfunding and community-sourced funding (e.g., stakeholders who are affected by both the issue and the solution). Tomorrow’s Promise (TP) also created an alternative
funding structure. With awareness of the NPIC analysis, TP became a nonprofit but started the organization with a closing date in mind.

For TP, although receiving funds from a multitude of sources, by setting a closing date from the outset, the CBO avoided the risks associated with the necessity of ongoing fundraising required to build a continuing sustainable organization. Instead, the CBO focused on developing physical resources, that is, archives, written stories, and toolkits that communities and newly formed CBOs could use to further the work of addressing and preventing gender violence. Sustainability thus emphasized documenting and transferring knowledge, tools, and skills rather than the sustainability of a specific organization which could be at risk of cooptation over time.

The CBO representatives’ descriptions in this study of the development of physical resources provides an example of the way other CBOs have organized resources in their social settings. Many of the participants advocated documenting, archiving, and creating accessible tools and resources for their communities and other interested parties. Their desire was to provide sustainability to the work in addressing GV over time and across organizations. In doing so, they also created mechanisms that directly support structural change (i.e., shifts in social processes) efforts in their social settings.

This objective is consistent with Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) theory on the functions of resources and organization of resources in social settings. Tseng and Seidman claimed that, although resources and organization of resources are important aspects of social settings, changes in resources or their organization are more likely to act as levers that stimulate change in social processes versus changes to the social setting. Furthermore, Tseng and Seidman (2007) asserted that social change agents who are
addressing inequities or attempting to transform the dominant social setting will often target the social processes of the social setting as their primary strategy (Tseng & Seidman, 2007).

Clearly, the study participants’ brief overview of their understanding of resources and their organization alongside the participants’ extensive focus on shifting structural forces supported Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) theory. As illustrated in the theme “Restorative Justice and Transformative Justice in Action,” Tomorrow’s Promise, the Center for Community Change, and Transformative Solutions Initiative all created toolkits, online curriculums, and educational materials to disseminate knowledge on healthy relationships, restorative practices, community accountability, and the countering of stereotypes and myths. The physical resources were created as a way to help shift norms and relationships within the CBOs’ social settings.

These findings illuminate the ways resources and their organizations function in CBOs as both “action levers” (Seidman & Tseng, 2010, p. 2) to shift social process and as mechanisms for sustainability. The CBO participants’ minimal focus on resources and their organization in this study aligned with Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) theory. Nevertheless, important questions remain unanswered regarding the functioning of the resources. For example, how do CBOs organize their resources to address their goals, given both their capacity and their community’s capacity? Also, as community needs change, how will CBOs’ resources and their organizations come into play? Future research should be conducted that focuses specifically on understanding how resources and the organization of resources function within the CBOs.
Community Capacity

Findings from this study answered the third research question, revealing that CBO representatives understood and used RJ and/or TJ/CA to meet their multileveled missions. At the interpersonal level, participants described RJ and/or TJ/CA as tools to respond directly to multiple forms of gender violence. For example, each participant in the study created specific plans, protocols, and procedures for addressing harms that were brought to them by individuals, concerned community members, and/or larger collaborative organizations and institutions. Although each intervention was tailored to the parties involved, the primary structures and tools used were RJ and/or TJ/CA.

This application is consistent with the literature, as RJ and/or TJ/CA are most commonly referred to as alternative and community-based interventions to interpersonal-level harms. The research reviewed on RJ and/or TJ/CA focused on the evaluation of conferencing (Coker, 2019; Koss, 2014; Pennell & Burford, 2000; Ptachek, 2017), circles (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Mills, 2019; Mills et al., 2013; Watchel, 2016), and community accountability processes (Coker & Macquoid, 2015; Kim, 2011). The findings of this study extend the literature and add to the overall understanding of RJ and/or TJ/CA at the community and societal levels.

Both themes “Restorative Justice and Transformative Justice in Action” and “Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture” in the study encapsulated how CBO members identified RJ and/or TJ/CA as practices or “ways of life” to be developed and fostered at the community level. Here, the participants explained that not only was it their mission to be proactive and instill a “culture” of RJ and/or TJ/CA, but that the communities’ capacity to use RJ and/or TJ/CA processes to respond to
interpersonal-level harms necessitated grounding in RJ and/or TJ/CA practices and frameworks. Watchel (2016) supported the participants’ understanding and use of RJ and/or TJ/CA as both a process and a “way of life”. Watchel (2016) encouraged proactive relationship and community development through RJ practices and noted that organizations that only use RJ as a process are less successful than those that use RJ processes and practices concurrently (see also Davey, 2007).

Finally, CBO representatives understood RJ and TJ/CA as frameworks that contribute to larger societal efforts (particularly social movements) in addressing gender violence. Within the theme “Time, Space, and Place: Sociohistorical Context and Their Story” many participants maintained connections to other social justice organizations and movements that are critical of the dominant practices for responding to gender violence and advocate for more alternatives. In alignment with these movements, the CBO members in this study used RJ and/or TJ/CA, as one participant said, as “alternative community-based” frameworks to bolster the impact of the larger movements’ aims and goals. The present study elucidates the ways in which RJ and/or TJ/CA can be implemented across multiple ecological levels, providing both intervention and prevention strategies, and supporting the creation of new and alternative social settings.

An important finding supported by the theme “Creating/Supporting RJ and TJ/CA Communities and Culture” underscores the fundamental role that community capacity plays in the success of community-based RJ and/or TJ/CA. CBO members can passionately create missions and goals based on an RJ and/or TJ/CA framework; however, the communities that they work with must have the desire and capacity to make use of such tools and practices. Participants acknowledged that their communities may
not be able immediately to apply RJ and/or TJ/CA tools. Therefore, many of the participants made it their primary mission to help build community capacity through sharing practices, holding trainings and workshops, and developing self-teaching resources and tools that are readily accessible to interested communities.

Some scholars in the extant literature have expressed concerns about community capacity, warning that communities that do not have the capacity for change may precipitate the result of causing more harm (Armatta, 2018; Kim, 2011). The CBO members were keenly aware of what communities need to utilize RJ and/or TJ/CA and were engaged in strategic and multileveled plans and actions to address these needs. As participants acknowledged the capacity of their communities, they also clearly articulated the limited capacity of RJ and/or TJ/CA to address all instances of gender violence.

Like scholar and activist Kaba (Transforming Harm, 2017), the CBO members in this study asserted that, although community-based RJ and/or TJ/CA could effectively address many of the harms experienced by individuals and communities, these justice responses cannot be “one size fits all” (Armatta, 2018, p. 4). Given these limitations, members of TCI suggested a new and intriguing structural frame. This frame is for identifying harm, determining the legality of the harm, and then addressing harm through RJ (in conjunction with the criminal justice system), mental health practices, or TJ/CA processes.

It is important to note that the CBO members in this study were not condoning the ways in which the dominant approaches operate. Nor were they stating that the current dominant approaches are the most appropriate ways to address harms not addressable by community-based approaches. Rather, as collectively identified by the four themes in this
study, the participants recognized the reach and scope of community-based approaches at the interpersonal level, worked to create innovative structures to shift understanding of harm and approaches to it, and continued to advocate for justice systems that center on safety, accountability, and healing for all.

Implications

**Implications for theory.** The findings regarding the CBO representatives’ understanding of social processes, resources, and the organization of resources were closely in agreement with Seidman and Tseng’s (2010) theories on the functions of social settings. The findings, however, did not align with Seidman and Tseng’s conceptualization of social change agents approaches (i.e., Reduction of Inequity and Utopian-driven). Furthermore, the concept of capturing the phenomenon of social change within social settings through a framework of changing and/or creating new and alternative social settings was not supported by the findings.

As in Tseng and Seidman’s (2007) theory, participants placed social processes at the center of effecting social change within social settings. The participants also agreed that resources and their organization were important components that feed into and support changes to social processes. Although Seidman and Tseng (2010) postulated that social change agent strategies of interventions are often driven by five implicit but distinct approaches, including the most common Reduction of Inequity as well as Utopian-driven, the present study findings indicated that this classification was not distinguishable in practice.

The CBO participants in this study not only employed a multitude of strategies across approaches but they also shared a unique set of ideologies and values. These
blurred the lines between wanting to alter the “role relationships, power differential, or resource balance” and viewing the dominant setting as “ill-conceived, dysfunctional, and/or unchangeable . . . [and one that] . . . needs to be . . . completely overhauled” (Seidman & Tseng, 2010, p. 14). Many of the participants found themselves doing both simultaneously, that is, working on reducing inequities as well as creating alternatives.

These findings are more congruent with Kagan and Burton’s (2001) community psychology and social-movement-informed theory on the prefigurative-recuperative tensions or the change-creation continuum. As the participants navigated the change-creation continuum, they employed many of the strategies that Seidman and Tseng (2010) identified as a part of the reducing inequity approach, yet the participants also used these strategies to change (reduce inequities) and create new or alternative social settings (utopian-driven) simultaneously. Seidman and Tseng (2010) acknowledged that social change agents mix and match strategies. However, their classifications of approaches are not supported by the findings of this study. Kagan and Burton’s (2001) more fluid interpretation of the change-creation process of social settings would help integrate Seidman and Tseng’s (2010) theory in both the functions of and the strategies used within social settings. Still, given the findings of this study, neither theory provides an applicable understanding of how new and alternative social settings are created.

The CBO members in this study explained the social change strategies that they employed within their social setting and the ways in which these approaches deviated from or were alternatives to the approaches within the dominant social setting. Although the findings of the study support the structural components of Seidman and Tseng’s (2010) and Kagan and Burton’s (2001) theories on changing social settings, the
overarching phenomenon of changing and/or creating social settings was not supported. These theories imply that the “alternative” social change strategies within social settings will change and/or create social settings, but the theories do not provide substantial information on how to distinguish the strategies from the social settings.

Moreover, without a clear defining of the differences, many questions were left unanswered. For example, are the CBOs’ changed dominant social settings, new social settings, or alternative social settings? And when is this distinction definite? An understanding of these distinctions will help social change agents evaluate the impact of their social change strategies and determine the degree to which they accomplish their missions and goals. Finally, while the aforementioned theories on changing social settings may be helpful, existing organizational theories such as adaptive capacity (Sussman, 2003) or hybrid organizational forms (Minkoff, 2002) have already provided more integrated and CBO-focused explanations. To be more effective, theories on social settings must address the distinction issues identified. Therefore, future development of theories that help differentiate between the types or phases of social settings are recommended.

This study was also designed to utilize the theory of multidimensionality. Although CBO representatives discussed the influence of their own multiple identities, the identities of their communities, and their involvement with various identity-focused movements in their analyses of gender violence, no major findings emerged to support, negate, or inform multidimensionality. Several participants referred briefly to the importance of intersectionality in understanding gender violence and the structural
inequities that reinforce gender violence, but findings suggested that multidimensionality was not the most relevant topic to what the participants were trying to convey.

Most CBO members quickly moved on to discuss and stress the importance of improving the community’s capacity to use RJ and/or TJ/CA. The scant findings regarding multidimensionality that emerged from the study do not allow for sound speculations or implications about the theory. Still, given the participants’ inclusion of intersectionality in their analyses, future studies that focus specifically on CBO members’ understanding of the relationship between gender violence and intersectionality (and multidimensionality) may provide important theoretical insights into the understanding of gender violence.

**Implications for practice.** An unexpected finding that emerged from the data was the difference in the amount of agency the participants ascribed to communities. Some participants acknowledged community agency with regard to utilizing RJ and/or TJ/CA to respond to gender violence; other participants expressed concerns about the communities’ capacity to respond, including their abilities to apply RJ and/or TJ/CA processes. These findings indicate that communities are not innately equipped with the structures and skills needed to support RJ and/or TJ/CA processes. However, all participants indicated that they were invested in supporting community-based, community-driven approaches.

Such approaches by default promote community agency. Given this investment, it is important that the CBOs support community agency by creating community-accessible tools and resources and developing RJ and/or TJ/CA processes and practices that minimally involve highly skilled workers. Such efforts will create a feedback loop in
which building community capacity will strengthen community agency, and fostering community agency will increase the community’s capacity to effectively utilize RJ and/or TJ/CA.

**Implications for research.** A major finding of this study emphasized the need for strong community capacity. The community’s ability to support and apply RJ and/or TJ/CA is imperative for its success. Developing and strengthening the relationships, skills, culture, and resources of the community will not only improve CBOs’ utilization of RJ and/or TJ/CA but will also contribute to the communities’ overall well-being. Community psychologists are well aware of the need and benefits of building and supporting community capacity across issues (Kelly, 2007; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Trickett, 2009).

Further research should focus on understanding of the most effective strategies for improving community capacity for communities that are specifically attempting to implement RJ and/or TJ/CA processes and practices to address gender violence. Such research can provide CBOs with well-informed strategies to use when addressing the needs of the communities that they serve. Finally, given the findings, more CBOs working to use RJ and/or TJ/CA in their communities should prioritize building community capacity as both a GV prevention strategy and as a way to increase the effectiveness of their RJ and/or TJ/CA GV interventions.

The findings regarding community capacity also inherently draw attention to the importance of prevention strategies. As the CBO participants discussed the benefits of supporting healthy relationships, shifting norms, and creating a culture that supports RJ and/or TJ/CA practices, they also explained the structural inequities (i.e., racism, poverty,
sexism) communities encounter that put them at higher risk of and reinforce their experiences of gender violence. More empirical research is needed to help understand the connections between structural inequities and gender violence. Furthermore, CBOs that include a strategic understanding of these connections will be better able to address the issues that impact the prevalence of GV in their communities and inclusively fortify the community’s capacity.

**Future Research**

In addition to the future research suggested, the study findings create an opportunity for further investigation of additional questions that emerged through the course of the study. First, given that CBO members tried to put into action their alternative ideologies and beliefs, ethnographic methods can be used to better understand the processes through which CBOs create, implement, use, and maintain RJ and/or TJ to address GV. Second, although briefly explained in this study, the similarities and differences between newer and older CBOs is worth further exploration. Case study analysis of the two populations could shed light onto the sustainability of the created social setting. Structural changes over time, including what factors sustain over time, what is adapted over time, and how the CBOs currently inform one another should be examined.

Third, although this study provided an important qualitative analysis of CBO representatives’ experiences and their understanding of their impact, critical community psychologists should undertake coconstructed community-based research to evaluate the efficacy of CBOs’ social change efforts. Such research should prioritize community perspectives, create knowledge that contributes to CBO members’ accomplishment of
their social change goals, and diversify the understanding in the field of interventions for addressing GV.

Finally, focus should be placed on the social setting aspects of CBOs using RJ and/or TJ to address gender violence on a larger scale. Such a focus can test if the identified themes continue to resonate in more diverse populations of CBOs. More comprehensive, nuanced, and empirically validated understandings of the CBOs’ strategies, practices, and mechanisms can also be established.

**Limitations**

This study had at least two limitations that should be considered when the findings are reviewed. First, because of my limited access to participants and the time limitation for the data collection process, the goal was to recruit 18 individuals from six different CBOs for interviews. Only 11 participants from seven CBOs participated in the study. Five participants were CBO founders and six were staff members. Overall, the small sample size did not capture the experiences of all the different types of individuals associated with the CBOs and cannot be generalized to larger populations.

Interviewing additional individuals could have changed the discourse and understanding of the CBO members’ perspectives; however, this study was still able to maintain homogeneity (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Given the aim of homogeneity, generalization was not the goal of this research. This study aimed at understanding of CBO members’ experiences, producing knowledge that is “useful” and “meaningful” to the CBOs and sharing findings that help to deepen CBO members’ understanding of their reality (Lincoln, Lynam, & Guba, 2011, p. 174). From these aims, an increase in the
awareness and understanding of CBO members’ experiences would contribute to the broader body of scholarship.

With reference to the second limitation of data gathering by interviews, this study was based primarily on the analysis of qualitative semistructured interviews. According to Patton (1999), use of only one type of data source limits development of a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study. As a result, comparison of participants’ interview responses with their observed practices was not possible. In addition, the study findings may have been susceptible to errors that are associated with interviews (e.g., interviewer errors, equipment errors, transcription errors; Easton, McComish, & Greenberg, 2000). Although interviews were the primary data source in this study, use of an iterative method, and as suggested by Conroy (2003), documentary evidence and the review of the data by participants and second readers were also incorporated. In the future, other data collection methods, such as observations and prolonged engagement, should be implemented to mitigate errors and enhance the richness and authenticity of the findings.

**Researcher’s Reflections**

When this inquiry first began, I brought my prior experiences of interpersonal violence, my educational understanding of gender violence, and my experiences working with communities. Some may label the influence of these experiences as bias, but in the interpretive phenomenological approach, it is understood that such experiences are often silent and taken-for-granted background aspects that the researcher contributes to the sense-making process (Conroy, 2003). For example, although I was very aware of a criticism that the VAW frame was not identity-inclusive, I had not realized the existence
of additional criticism that moved beyond inclusivity and spoke to the overall problems of use of a gender system of the gender binary.

When I formulated my participant criteria, I based them on my prejudgment, that is, my prior experience and knowledge, and solicited CBO representatives who had an identity-inclusive understanding of GV. As such, my prejudgments guided the knowledge produced by this study. As I undertook this research, I used a researcher’s journal to document my reflections regarding my own understandings, reactions, and the ways in which they governed my actions and interpretations (Patton, 2002). Researchers’ prejudgment is an inevitable aspect of the research, as “research is a process, not just a product” (England, 1994, p. 82). What is of most importance are a keen awareness, reflexivity, and commitment to transparency of the process.

In addition to the influence of my prior experiences, I shared with many of the participants experiences and identity connections (e.g., race, class, gender). Some would argue that this similarity would affect my ability to remain neutral (Patton, 2002). I believe that the similar experiences and identity connections helped me build rapport and created openness for the participants to share their experiences fully. However, it is important to note that, although we had shared experiences and identities, I worked diligently not to presume their understanding. As Delgado-Gaitan (1993) stated, “Sharing the same ethnic background as the participants does not necessarily make the researcher more knowledgeable about the meanings of the participants’ feelings, values, and practices” (p. 391). In this vein, I made efforts to probe the participants’ responses to mitigate any assumed shared knowledge.
Lastly, through the forming of common themes and a paradigm shift, this study enhanced my personal understanding of CBOs’ use of RJ and/or TJ/CA to address and prevent gender violence. In addition, the paradigm shift has prompted new thinking around the importance of the sociohistorical context in research. For instance, the paradigm shift amplified the ways in which information is shared and integrated into movements over time and between CBOs.

As one of the newer CBO representatives shared the gender binary analysis, other organizations began to assimilate it into their own definitions and understandings, ultimately trying to integrate it into their practices. Simultaneously, the integration of the analysis is fueled by shifts in the movement’s demographics and subsequent topics of focus, as explained by the differences between third-wave and fourth-wave feminisms. This unique phenomenon has created numerous questions regarding the effects of gender socialization and the evolution of social movements. The participants’ understanding has broadened my scope and fueled my desire to continue building upon this research topic.

**Conclusion**

As the need to address gender violence persists, the findings from this study revealed how some CBOs are using a community-informed analysis of gender violence to thoughtfully change and/or create social settings. Specifically, the use of RJ and/or TJ/CA tools, practices, and frameworks supported the community-driven approach that many scholars and activists such as Richie (2014) have advocated. This research also highlighted the important sites within social settings to target and effect change. The findings encourage movement beyond intervention in gender violence at the interpersonal level to addressing the health of the community’s relationships, supporting the
community’s capacity and agency, and innovatively orienting resources to prevent gender violence. All of these efforts not only help address gender violence. As communities’ mindsets and norms shift to a more nuanced and integrated understanding of gender violence, so too will the mainstream understanding and subsequent approaches change.

Finally, the findings of this study reinforce the understanding of and need for multileveled approaches that center the agency of those most impacted by the issue at hand, in this case gender violence. Gender violence is a complicated and pervasive problem that transverses ecological levels. Studies like this that are informed by both critical community psychologist theories of change and the researcher’s positionality as a minoritized female researcher are the types of projects that can lead to the creation of knowledge necessary to support critical consciousness, critical theorizing, critical action, and critical reflections of community members, CBOs, and RJ and/or TJ advocates and practitioners, researchers, and scholars. This developed knowledge will continue to assist in the pursuit of justice, healing, and well-being for all.
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Appendix A

Semistructured Interview Protocol

Summary: The research assistant, Ahjane Billingsley, will conduct semistructured interviews with participants selected to represent the selected community-based organizations (CBOs) using RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address GV.

Purpose: The purpose of the semistructured interviews is to collect data about participants’ experiences with and understanding of RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address gender violence.

Participants: Participants will include a leader, staff member, and/or community member from each of the selected CBOs.

Study Duration: Interviews will last for approximately one hour (60 minutes).

Informed Consent: Informed consent will be obtained through the online form (see Appendix C, consent form). Verbal informed consent (see script below) will also be obtained at the beginning of each interview.

Semistructured Interview Procedures: The research assistant will call each participant by telephone or video conference or meet in person for the interview. The research assistant will digitally record the interview and write down field notes. The research assistant will ask open-ended questions as well as open-ended probing questions based on the interviewee’s responses.

Sample Interview Guide

Verbal Informed Consent Script: The following questions are about your CBO’s work using RJ, TJ, and/or CA in response to gender violence. We would like your perspective on this work. The purpose of this research is to document what CBO members’ responses to gender violence are taking place in the United States, and find out how they understand the problem.

You are being asked to participate in the study because you are involved in a CBO, whether as a leader, a staff member, or a community member. This interview will be digitally recorded. The information you provide is important to us. Your responses will only be shared in the context of a research report describing what is happening in community-based responses. The information you provide will not include your name. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to refuse to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. You are free to skip any questions that you do not want to answer.
If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact Ahjane Billingsley, a.billingsley@umiami.edu or (617) 999-5614. For additional questions about your rights as a participant in this survey, please feel free to contact the Human Subjects Research Office at the University of Miami at (305) 243-3195.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Interview Question Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Background and Rapport | Tell me a little about yourself and your CBO.  
  a. Education?  
  b. Professional Background?  
  c. Antiviolence advocacy experience?  
  d. How CBO got started? |
| 1. How do CBOs using RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address GV understand the social processes (i.e., norms, relationships, participation in activities) that form their social setting? | What are the key values, beliefs, and principles of your CBO?  
  How would you characterize the CBO? in the communities your CBO work with?  
  How would you characterize the relationships in the CBO? in the communities your CBO work with?  
  What beliefs and values are important to the development of your CBO?  
  What’s the culture or “way of being” in your CBO? in the communities your CBO work with?  
  (Probe) What kind of culture does your CBO aspire to foster?  
  What types of CBO activities do people (i.e., staff, leaders, community members) participate in? |
2. How do CBOs using RJ, TJ, and/or CA to address GV understand the resources and organization of resources (i.e., temporal, physical, economic, human) that form their social setting?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defining Questions</th>
<th>Interview Question Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions regarding understanding and framing of gender violence that is the problem.</td>
<td>Given your focus on [insert CBOs language], how does your CBO describe gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Probe) What types of violence do you include when you are thinking about gender-based violence as an organization?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions regarding defining community and community-based</td>
<td>Given your focus on [insert CBOs language], to what extent is your organization community-based?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Probe) How you do define or describe community? community-based work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mapping CBOs RJ/TJ/CA approaches (as opposed to CJ system or punitive responses) to addressing gender violence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Research Question #3</th>
<th>Interview Question Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* See how these alternative approaches can inform (being a resource, share tools, techniques) one another.</td>
<td>What other alternative approaches to [insert] violence have you heard of, considered, or used?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Initial interview question</td>
<td>Are there aspects of [insert] alternative that may be beneficial to your approach?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there aspects of your approach that may be beneficial to the alternatives you mentioned?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Email Message and Informational Flyer

Email Message

To all my social justice warriors, peacemakers, and healers,

My name is Ahjane Billingsley and I am a PhD student at University of Miami. After attending the CONVERGE! Re-Imagining the Movement to End Gender Violence conference in 2014, I became passionate about understanding community-based responses to gender violence, particularly Transformative Justice, Community Accountability (TJ/CA). In partnership with UM Law Professor Donna Coker and Media for Change’s Founder Sanjeev Chatterjee, I cocreated the following website to support alternative responses to gender violence: https://mediaforchange.org/reimagine.

For my dissertation research, I would like to interview key stakeholders, scholars, and advocates of TJ/CA in efforts to elevate, advance, and support a comprehensive understanding of and use of Transformative Justice and Community Accountability across the United States.

In addition, with this information I would like to support TJ/CA awareness by developing a user-friendly resource (website, handbook, zine, etc.) that will be readily accessible by the public and all interested advocates. I am reaching out to you because your group, community, collective, and/or organization has been identified as key stakeholders, scholars, and advocates of TJ/CA.

I am looking to conduct 45-60-minute phone/video interviews with any persons that uses(d), understands, or has been exposed to TJ/CA.

If you are interested, please click HERE [name, organization, best times to connect, preferred method of interview, phone/email for direct contact], complete the short form, and I will be sure to contact you. If you are unable to respond to the link, please feel free to email me at a.billingsley@umiami.edu or call/text at (617) 999-5614.

Please feel free to forward this email to anyone you feel may be interested! Also, please find attached a flyer that can be printed and posted freely!

Thank you.

With gratitude,

Ahjane Billingsley
ALTHERNATIVES IN ACTION
COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY
& TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

~INTERVIEWS WANTED~

In continued effort to support alternative community-based responses to gender violence, we are interested in interviewing individuals with experience using community accountability and/or Transformative Justice. Interviews will be used to increase awareness about current community-based responses to gender violence.

*Interviews last 45-60 minutes, all participation will stay private and confidential.*

If interested in participating contact us by text, call, or email at 617-999-5614 or a.billingsley@umiami.edu

INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSES TO GENDER VIOLENCE?

INTERVIEWS NEEDED

ELEVATE OUR ALTERNATIVES!

What are the words you do not have yet? What do you need to say? What are the tyrannies you swallow day by day and attempt to make your own, until you will sicken and die of them, still in silence? We have been socialized to respect fear more than our own need for language...I began to ask each time: “What’s the worst that could happen to me if I tell this truth?”

Adapted from Audre Lorde
The Cancer Journals
Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

Community-Based Responses to Gender Violence

**Principal Investigator:** John Murphy, Professor, School of Sociology, University of Miami

**Research Assistant:** Ahjane Billingsley, Doctoral Candidate, School of Education, U of Miami

**Introduction**
We are asking you to be part of a research study so that we can learn about community-based responses to gender violence. You are being asked to participate in the study because you are involved in a community-based organization that uses Restorative Justice (RJ), Transformative Justice (TJ), and/or Community Accountability (CA) to address gender violence.

**Research Purpose**
We are interested in learning about your organizational experience with community-based responses to gender violence, specifically those that involve RJ, TJ, and/or CA. We also want to hear your organization’s perspectives on the problem of gender violence. Finally, we are interested to learning more about how your community and your organization come together to address gender violence.

**Description of the Research**
If you agree to participate in this study, Ahjane Billingsley will interview you for approximately 45 minutes but no longer than 60 minutes. The interview will be digitally recorded and hand noted as needed. Your responses will only be shared in the context of a research report describing what is happening in community-based responses. The information you provide will not include your name. Your participation in this study is voluntary. There is no compensation or cost for this study.

**Potential Risks and Benefits**
The questions you will be asked in this study have no more risk of harm to you other than what you would experience in everyday life. This study is designed for the researcher to learn more about community-based responses to gender violence. The results of this research may help community-based organizations respond to gender violence to improve their practices. The results of this research may be presented at meetings or in published articles.
Withdrawal From the Study

You are free to refuse to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. You are free to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact Ahjane Billingsley, a.billingsley@umiami.edu or (617) 999-5614. For additional questions about your rights as a participant in this survey, please feel free to contact the Human Subjects Research Office at the University of Miami at (305) 243-3195.

I consent (Name and Date)___________________________________

I do not consent (Name and Date)_____________________________
# Appendix D

## Example of Master Interpretive Data in Table and Text Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Transcript</th>
<th>Precis</th>
<th>Researcher Interpretation (RI)</th>
<th>Participant Interpretation</th>
<th>Second Reader Interpretation</th>
<th>RI of Participant Interpretation</th>
<th>RI of Second Reader Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pat:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s very, very common that every restorative process starts with some kind of group agreement building, and in practice, they’re not particularly functional usually. (15:01) these people.</td>
<td>Use of group agreements in restorative processes deemed not functional. (1-3)</td>
<td>Use of group agreements in restorative processes are not functional because people use it to police other people’s behavior. (224-233 old) (1-3)</td>
<td>Yes, we need training in root cause analysis, specifically. We can't change behaviors without understanding &quot;the why&quot; of the behavior first. (6-11)</td>
<td>Seems like this analysis is very important to Pat, and understanding how white supremacy will 'coopt' RJ (27-31)</td>
<td>Are you saying that the participant is skeptical of the ability of the RJ process to bridge the racial gap or are you saying that the participant is aware of how RJ without awareness contributes to the racial gap? (17-21) Doubleback with second reader: confirmed awareness statement as understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Especially out here, it’s a passive-aggressive conflict avoidance kind of nature. I think we just all need some training instead of dealing with this conflict directly or telling someone they need to change their behavior directly. Let’s just talk about group agreements instead of talking about what actually happened. Who was impacted? Looking at, oh, can we just get people to behave differently? You’re trying to change behavior instead of looking at the root sources of the conflict.</td>
<td>Identified location in Northwest and passive aggressive/conflict avoidant characteristics as reason why group agreements don’t work (5-6)</td>
<td>Seem like the participant is a little upset or irritated, she also gave off the tone that the clients had a “its a simple fix” attitude about addressing the problems or that a circle was a fix all/magic pill/ magic wand (13-16)</td>
<td>Frustrated for sure! There is no silver bullet and this is real work that requires deep analysis and</td>
<td>So does this mean that RJ has to have an inherent analysis of oppression, or is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
People use circles like that. We get calls for circles like that all the time where people just think, oh, can we just have a circle, and that will solve everything without looking at the root sources of the conflict, particularly when there’s racial or other power dynamics happening within the group. A circle’s not going to fix racism, so if you’re not going to deal with the structure of racism that created the conflict in the first place, a circle’s not going to fix that for you. It’s just going to make a person of color who’s been impacted by ongoing racism have to sit there and endure more white fears or something.

Researcher: Are you saying that restorative processes are a tool for addressing – providing space to address those kinds of issues?

Pat: They can be but only with a lot of care and dedication to keeping race and power (17:05). Otherwise, white supremacy will collect everything into a tool of white supremacy. It can just be used by people who are not aware of those things to replicate those same impacts and address problems and solve everything. These requests are often made when racial and other power dynamics are happening within the group. No consideration, mention, or acknowledgement of root sources of the conflict by clients (13-16)

Participant expresses belief that restorative circles will not resolve the structure of racism that created the conflict in the first place. And if clients are not willing to address that then it will result in a person of color who’s been impacted by ongoing racism have to endure more White fears. (16-21)

Researcher probing to understand the use of circles. Researcher provides language of tool and space. (23-24)

While restorative processes can be tools to address the issues, race and power dynamics must be kept central. This reflection. Anything less is faulty, at best. (13-16)

Seems like the participant is saying that clients request circles because of their white fears, it also seems like she is implying that those people who ask for circles are white and that those people who have been impacted by either the incident or by racism in general are POC. Furthermore, here the participant is talking about incidents that are happening within an organization, not necessarily some type of domestic dispute or societal issue. It is clear that race and racism matters to the participant. The participant is talking about looking at systemic issues that in part cause the conflict. (16-21)

Using circle will create a bigger racial gap when used without addressing the underlying structure of racism. (17-21)

I was trying to understand what the participant meant by restorative processes. Using restorative processes was new to me and I was trying to figure out the differences between restorative processes and restorative justice and restorative circles. I was also trying to figure it RJ practitioners that must have it? Do RJ practices still work without understanding how oppression works? (36-39)
| Pat: | dynamics within a setting that’s supposed to be restorative but was being centered as still the most privileged. | requires care and dedication (26-27) If race and power dynamics are not kept central, white supremacy will collect everything into a tool of white supremacy. People are unaware of the dynamics and end up replicating the same impacts and dynamics within a supposedly “restorative” setting that is actually still centered on the most privileged. (27-31) It is a tool, and how skilled you are and what you want to do with the tool determines what you can do with it. If you want to use it for conflict avoidance you can. (33-35) If you are not conscious of racial and power dynamics you can use the tool to not only replicate the same dynamics you were trying to address, you can use it to intimidate and coerce. (36-39) | out a tool vs space as in holding space not a physical space or maybe a physical space as in circles. (23-24) Exactly. We end up perpetuating the very things we’re trying to obliterate. (27-31) Kind of strange to say that because it seems like it is inherently a conflict resolution tool. What exactly is she trying to say here. This doesn’t sit well with what she said earlier, even the most skilled person who is unaware would still perpetuate the dynamics right? But perhaps that’s were what you want to do comes in and takes precedence. (33-55) I think she is saying that part of the skillfulness of using the tool, means center racial/power dynamics as the tool is used. Otherwise, you end up replicating the very things you are working against. (36-39) |
| Pat: | Yeah, it’s a tool. What you can do with a tool depends on how skilled you are with that tool and what you’re trying to do with it. If you’re trying to use it as a tool of conflict avoidance, you can use it that way. Unintentionally, you’re not being conscious of racial and other power dynamics, you can use that tool to replicate the same dynamics you think you’re trying to address and use it as another tool of intimidation and coercion. Inherently, it is a healthier approach to dealing with conflict than many of our standard processes and modalities, and it will just replicate the same impacts and dynamics within a supposedly “restorative” setting that is actually still centered on the most privileged. (27-31) | It does have the potential to be healthier and give better outcomes for some people sometimes. |
Overall restorative circles are healthier approaches that many standard processes and modalities when dealing with conflict, still, if clients are not basing the circles in that race and power analysis, the same dynamics will be replicated. It is not a magic wand. (39-42)

Seems like one set of dynamics is the race and power, another dynamics are the dynamics of the issue itself which may not have been identified as race and power dynamics. So, is the participant is saying that either way if you aren’t aware of the root dynamics you will perpetuate both types of dynamics. (36-39)