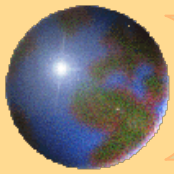# *Living in the eye of the storm*

10th Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act Symposium
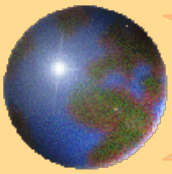
Rachel Rodriguez, PhD, RN

Assistant Professor, School of Nursing

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Special Thanks…

- National Institute of Justice
- Office of Violence Against Women
- Office of Justice Assistance, State of Wisconsin
- Keiko Nemoto, MS, RN, Doctoral Candidate
- Lucy Mkandawire-Valhmu, MSN, RN, Doctoral Candidate
- Doris Ellison, MS, RN
- Tiffany Richards, MS, RN
- Roxanne Gorbach, MS, RN
- Monica Voss, BSN, RN, graduate student
- Cynthia Covarrubias, BS
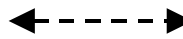- Celsa Rodriguez, nursing student
- Naomi Gonzalez, nursing student

Liberation　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**Social Justice**

Circle of Praxis

Goal : Women living in peace　◄ - - - - ►　**Response** : Living peacefully in
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　"The eye of the storm "

UNIDOS

Structural Violence

Partnership
Alma

Fight for justice

Othering　Barriers　　　Fears

Intimate Partner Violence

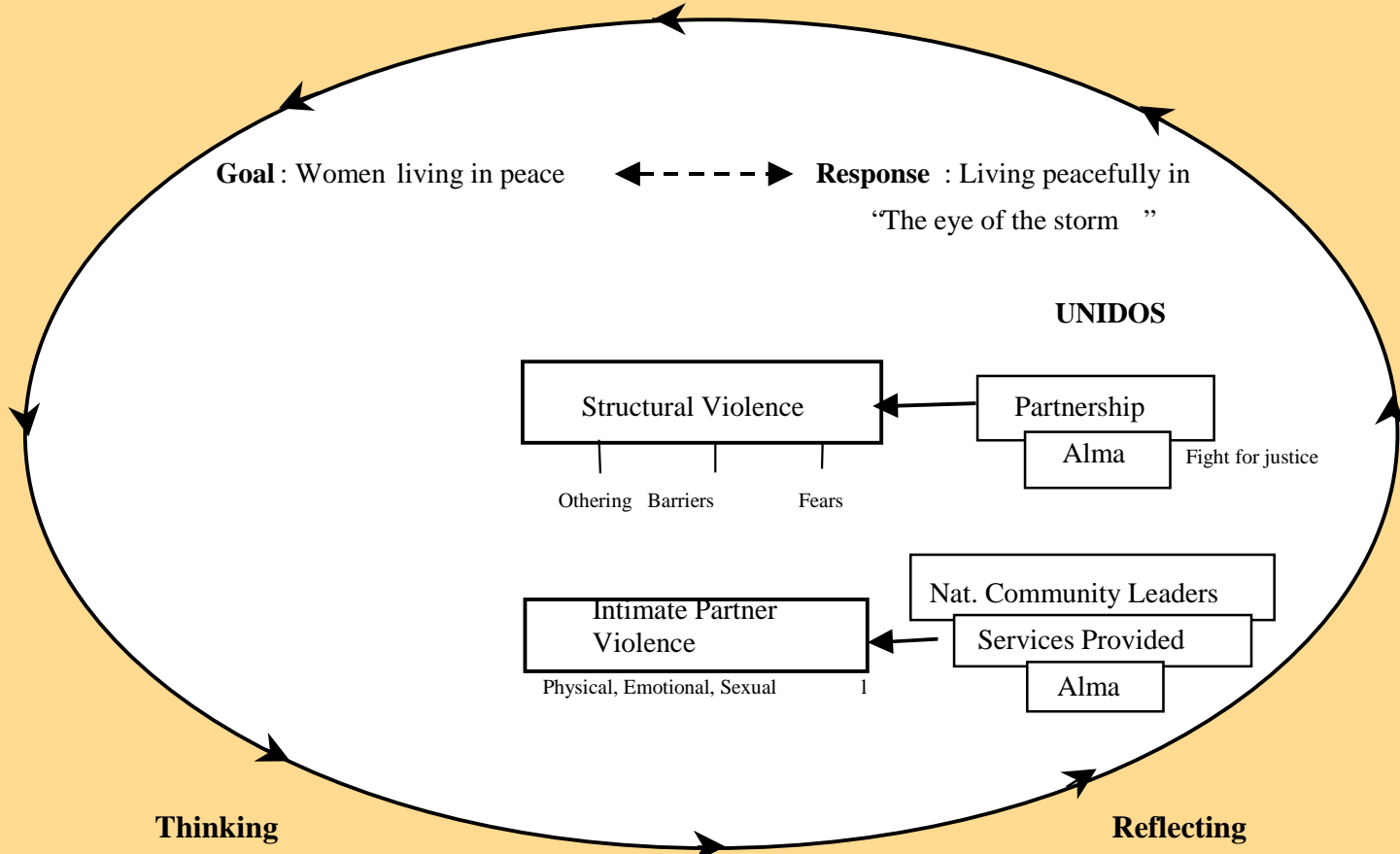| Nat. Community Leaders |
| --- |
| Services Provided |
| Alma |

Physical, Emotional, Sexual　　　　1
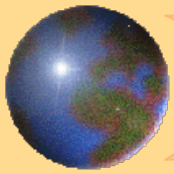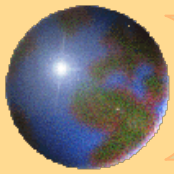
Thinking　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　**Reflecting**
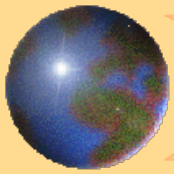
Acting

Social Action Research

Community-Based
Social Action Research

- **What makes it community-based?**
  - Created in partnership with staff from our 2 programs (defined variables, outcomes, etc)
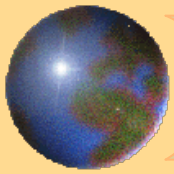 - Focused on counties we have been working in for several years

Community-based
Social Action Research (cont'd)

- **What makes it social action research?**
  - **Focus is on system change in specific communities**
  - **Follows the principles of action oriented research**
    - No hierarchy of "subjects" and "investigator"
    - Includes education, policy, and research
    - Reflexivity is an essential component
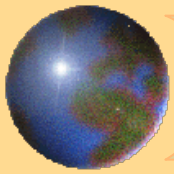   - Popular education as well as scholarly publication

Philosophical Foundations

- **Social justice/Human rights**

- **Liberation Theology sans "theology"**
  - **Preferential option for the poor***
    - ***definition extended to not only economically poor, but other oppressed groups as well**
  - **Creation of base communities for liberation**
  - **Researcher has "one foot in the center of study and one foot in the community"**
    - **(Boff & Boff, 1994, p. 19)**

Circle of Praxis

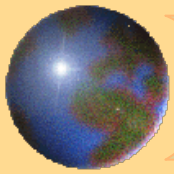- **Thinking: e.g. program development; research design**

- **Acting: eg. program implementation; conducting research**

- **Reflecting: e.g. program evaluation; data analysis**

Why are we doing this work?

- **Goal: Women want "to live in peace"**
  - (Women's definition of "health"; Rodriguez, 1993)
- **Response: Living peacefully "in the eye of the storm"**
  - From Rodriguez, 1993, unpublished dissertation, "Female migrant farmworkers: The meaning of health within the culture of transience"

- **Peace is defined as the "absence of violence"**
  - From Galtung, J. (1969) Violence, Peace and Peace Research. International Peace Institute, Oslo

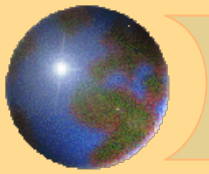# What keeps women from "living in peace"?

◈ **VIOLENCE…..**

◈ <u>**Definitions of Violence**</u>**:**

"…the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual; between what could have been and what is."

▪ Galtung, J. (p. 168)

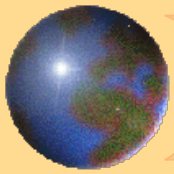"…an act that does not rely on intention, but on consequence."

James, Johnson,Raghaven, & Lemos, et al. (2003). American Journal of Community Psychology,31,1/2, p. 129.
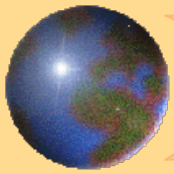
Two types of violence described in the model

Structural

Intimate Partner

Structural violence

- ⊕ **"…built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances."** (p. 171)

- ⊕ **"social injustice"** (p. 171)

- ⊕ **"…is silent; does not show…it IS the tranquil waters…"** (p. 173)

- ⊕ **"may be seen as about as natural as the air around us."** (p. 173)

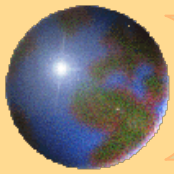- ⊕ **Ref: Galtung, J. (1969) Violence, Peace, and Peace Research**

Structural violence (cont'd)

- **3 levels:**
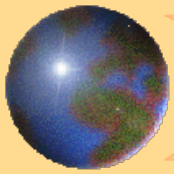 - <u>Sociopolitical</u>: governmental institutions that organize society (macrolevel)
  - <u>Intermediate</u>: social institutions that endorse the cultural ideology of the macrosystem (mesosystem)
  - <u>Microsystem</u>: shared consciousness of persons who embrace and promote the belief system and messages from the macro- and meso-systems.
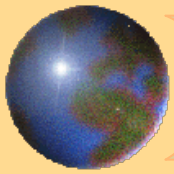   - James, et al. , p. 130

Evidence of structural violence in our data

- **<u>Othering</u>**: the process of relating to another who is seen as being different from self; sameness is positive, "other" is negative **(Canales, 2000; MacCallum, 2002)**
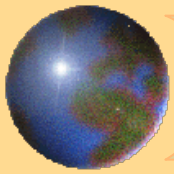
Othering (cont'd)

- Population is either transient or invisible; "We don't have any Latinos here"
- Myth of sameness (discounts the needs of immigrant women)
- Cultural stereotyping: "All Latinos are illegal"
- Misrepresentation of the culture: "Machismo rules all Latino families" (and is only present in Latino families)

Evidence of structural violence (cont'd)

- <u>Barriers</u>: assumed to be "owned" by the client; need to be re-framed as "owned" by the system.
  - Language: 57%
  - Childcare: 48%
  - Transportation: 44%
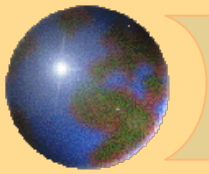 - Culture: 44%
  - Telephone: 42%
  - Immigration: 40%

Evidence of barriers (cont'd)

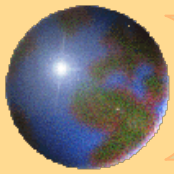- Language as a barrier re-framed as structural violence:
    - It is not the woman's fault for not being able to speak English, it is the system's fault for not keeping pace with a diverse and multilingual society
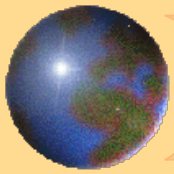
Evidence of structural violence in our data (cont'd)

- ## Fear: fear of police and other service providers

  - Women are afraid that police and INS are one in the same

  - Providers are unaware of the protections for immigrant battered women, e.g. "what is VAWA?"
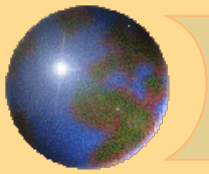
How does our model address structural violence?

- ◆ **Working at both the grassroots and the agency level (partnerships)**
  - ■ **CCRs**
  - ■ **Individual agencies**
- ◆ **Consistent presence of stable staff over time, i.e. years (trabajando con alma)**
  - ■ **Administrative staff ("bridges")**

*NIJ grant data

Intimate Partner Violence

◈ violence between intimate partners which can include physical, sexual, and psychological abuse and/or coercive tactics. Saltzman, Fanslow, McMahon, & Shelly, 1999

◈ "deliberate and repeated physical aggression or sexual assault inflicted on a woman by a man with whom she has or has had an intimate relationship. Abuse is thus a pattern, not a single incident, and the man and woman are not necessarily married." Campbell & Humphreys, 1993, p. 69

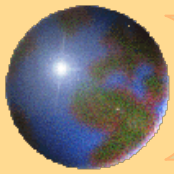# Evidence of IPV in our data from 1st quarter 2004

- **Emotional: 60%**
  - Includes 5 reports of threatened suicide
- **Physical: 31%**
  - Appears to be higher level over time, e.g. throwing objects, using weapons
- **Sexual: 9%**
  - Cases of forced penetration and forced sexual act appear to higher than in the past

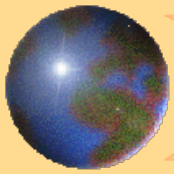# How does our model address IPV?

- **Natural community leaders**
  - **Categories of characteristics**
    - Skills:
      - Share responsibility rather than take control
      - Help others step forward
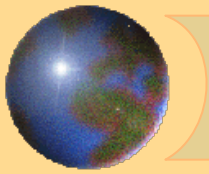   - Create an environment that espouses a genuine sharing of ideas and power

Characteristics (cont'd)

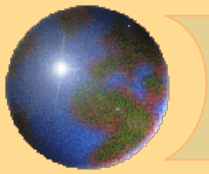- Categories of characteristics (cont'd)
  - "Inherentness"
    - Real and authetic
    - Develop from living the realities of the community
    - Do not have power, position, or status
    - Know that they themselves are the key to change within a community

Evidence of characteristics of natural community leaders in our data

- Skills

    "…after you find one woman in the Latino community it's kinda like…a chain reaction…So the more people know about it, the more people will be interested in finding out about the education we provide…"
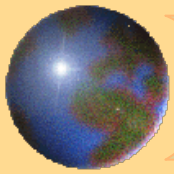
Evidence of natural community leaders (cont'd)

- Inherentness

  "…I meet them *(women)* at the laundromat, at the supermarket, the Mexican grocery stores, you know…everywhere….I just start talking to them and then I tell them what I do…"

Model (cont'd)
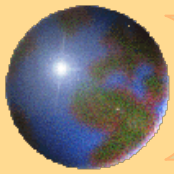
- Services provided: Location
  - Agencies: 87
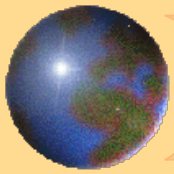 - Home visits: 105
  - Shelter: 54
  - Telephone: 119

  *1st quarter data 2004
  *1 full-time and 1 part-time staff covering 4 counties

Model (cont'd) Types of services

- Law enforcement advocacy
- Work on VAWA cases
- Safety planning
- Medical services
- Employment
- Agency referrals

- Support groups
- General information
- Housing
- Transportation
- Translation
- Education re: DV
- Justice system/legal advocacy

Model (cont'd)

- **Trabajando con alma**

   "Every day is a struggle…we face a new challenge every day…like I told you before we're not always welcome to all of the service providers….we have to work with the mentality that we're just going to have to keep fighting the system…this is gonna end or things are gonna change.."