



Family Violence Across the Life Span

Praxis Lab 2019

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Meet the Team





TONI LASKEY MD

Dr. Toni Laskey is a child abuse pediatrician at the Center for Safe and Healthy Families at Primary Children's Hospital and the University of Utah Department of Pediatrics. Dr. Laskey received her medical degree and completed a pediatric residency at the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine. She completed a research and clinical fellowship and a master's degree in public health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and obtained her MBA at the David Eccles School of Business at the University of Utah. Dr. Laskey provides clinical care to potentially abused children at Primary Children's Hospital and is the medical director for Utah's Children's Justice Centers. She is the fellowship director of the Child Abuse Pediatrics fellowship at the University of Utah. She enjoys teaching anyone who will listen how they can make a difference by recognizing and responding to child abuse and neglect.



SONIA SALARI PHD

Sonia Salari, PhD is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family and Consumer Studies (FCS) and Fellow with the Gerontology Society of America. PhD educated at the State University of New York, Albany with a postdoc at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She is a sociologist with a specialty in gerontology, family violence, diversity and public policy. Known as an advocate for victims, she works with the Utah Domestic Violence Coalition and the Utah Commission on Aging. Her research on elder abuse and lethal domestic violence led her to study intimate partner murder-suicides across age groups. Her work is published in multiple journal outlets, a book Family Violence Across the Life Course: Research, policy and prevention (2015, Kendall Hunt) and she is currently editor of Family Violence and Abuse: An encyclopedia of trends, issues, and solutions. Dr. Salari was recognized with the CSBS college superior teaching award (2005) and the university distinguished teaching award (2008). Over the past two decades, she has taught FCS 5370 Family Violence and her family policy students have partnered with non-profit organizations to lobby the Utah State Legislature.



AYANA AMAECHI

Ayana Amaechi is currently a sophomore at the University of Utah majoring in Honors Biology with an emphasis in anatomy and physiology and minoring in philosophy, pediatric research, and chemistry. She enjoys volunteering at U-FIT and in the Bennion Center on campus. Her program that she works with in the Bennion Center is the YWCA. The YWCA a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating racism and empowering women who have been marginalized by society. At the center, Ayana has gotten to apply classroom learning and understanding to the greater Salt Lake community with her volunteer group of 15 Utah students who have worked all year to provide assistance in whatever way is needed for the shelter. She has fallen in love with this work because she has gotten to see the real-world application for many aspects of domestic violence from a real-life/real-time perspective. In her opinion, it's a gross disservice to obtain information about an area of the community who is struggling and not act on it. The reason she serves is to preserve the community she inhabits as best she can because she determined this is how she wants to give back to our world.



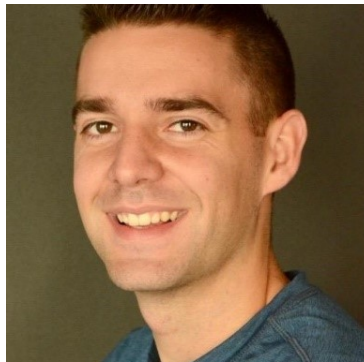
LYRA GILLS

Lyra Gills is a third year honors student at the University of Utah studying Family, Community, and Human Development with a minor in Ecology and Legacy. She is originally from Salt Lake City, Utah where she graduated from East High School. Along with her studies, she volunteers in her community and primarily focuses on homelessness and consumer health. She also works with the Bennion Center. With her newfound knowledge of family violence across the lifespan, she hopes to educate her peers, friends, and family about the impact of violence on victims and society, the role of professionals in working with victims and perpetrators, and what can be done to prevent this type of violence. After her undergraduate career, she plans to attend graduate school to get her Master of Public Health with a concentration in Environmental Health Sciences.



KALEN GUNTER

Kalen Gunter is a third-year honors student at the University of Utah. She is currently pursuing an undergraduate degree in Nursing, hoping to graduate with a Bachelor's in Nursing in Summer of 2020. Originally, she is from Price, Utah and graduated from Carbon High School in 2016. Since then she has been involved on campus with the Union Programming Council and through the Latter-Day Saint Student Association as the Vice-President of Freshmen and Dorms. Aside from schoolwork, she spends her time volunteering through the Jewish Community Center and has been a hospice program volunteer since 2015. She chose to take this Praxis Lab because she is passionate about helping others and wants to help victims of abuse by providing education to the community. With her degree she hopes to become a family nurse practitioner and work with underserved populations. She hopes that what she learned in this Praxis Lab will help her provide help and resources to those she encounters in her career.



DAYNE MOORE

Dayne Moore is a fourth-year student at the University of Utah. He is majoring in Kinesiology and has plans to attend medical school after he finishes with his undergraduate program this semester. Dayne is from Lehi, Utah, but currently lives in Sandy with his wife and love of his life Alyssa. They love hiking, camping, and having adventures. Dayne also is an avid sportsman and plays competitive basketball, golf, and is an avid hunter and fisherman. This Praxis Lab has allowed Dayne to focus on what he thinks is the most important thing in life, and that is people. The chance to help people brings the most joy in his life and helping those who have had to deal with abuse in their lives was very rewarding.



NATALIE VAN ORDEN

Natalie Van Orden is a sophomore pre-law student double-majoring in Philosophy and Anthropology with a minor in German. She is originally from Mapleton, Utah and graduated from Timpview High School in 2017. Outside of class, Natalie works as a Utah Reads tutor through the Bennion Center and is a member of the U's Model United Nations traveling team. She is also a member of Honors College Legal Scholars. In her spare time, Natalie has a passion for traveling, whether in person or through books. Throughout her work in this Praxis Lab, Natalie has been motivated by the strength and resilience of the human spirit and wants to channel that strength into her career. After graduating, she is planning on going to law school and is considering working in family law to do what she can to help people through what may be the most stressful thing they have gone through in their lives.



EMILY WAHLQUIST

Emily Wahlquist is a sophomore at the University Utah Honors College studying Nursing. She is currently working on the Surgical Inpatient Unit of Huntsman Cancer Hospital as a CNA and plans to join the Air Med team at the University of Utah Hospital as a Trauma Nurse. Emily lives in Salt Lake City, Utah and is excited to be marrying her best friend David this summer. She enjoys rock climbing, backpacking, and hiking in the summer and skiing, snowshoeing, and sledding in the winter. Emily joined the Praxis Lab studying family violence and interpersonal abuse to further her knowledge and understanding of the issue and to be a better informed health care provider, mom, and member of her community. She is committed to helping others overcome the effects of abuse and trauma and spreading truth about healthy relationships.



MICHELLE VALDES

Michelle Valdes is a second year honors student at the University of Utah studying Writing and Rhetoric with a double minor in Business and Spanish. She is originally from Moab, Utah where she graduated from Grand County High School. Along with her studies, she is involved on campus through the Associated Students of the University of Utah and the Honors College as an Honors Ambassador. She also volunteers through the Bennion Center. She places a great importance on advocating for students as well as working for student engagement on campus. She is currently on the committee for Sexual Assault Awareness Month where she hopes to engage her peers in the prevention of sexual assault on campus. Through her work in this Praxis Lab, she hopes to spread education and prevention to her community regarding the prevalence of family violence and working to move the general attitude from a “private matter” to a public health crises. After her undergraduate career, she plans to attend law school to work towards policy changes that assist the general public.



SYDNEY WORLEY

Sydney Worley is a first year pre-med student at the University of Utah majoring in Biology. She graduated as valedictorian from Mountain Crest High School in Logan, Utah. Besides studying, Sydney spends her time in the mountains, on a horse, or in the gym. Her decision to pursue a career in medicine was fostered by her love for helping others. She is currently the founding president of the Association of Future Female Physicians and volunteers with Connect2Health at the University Hospital. Her interests in understanding how health care and society overlap led to her joining the Family Violence Praxis Lab. Family violence is not only a hidden social epidemic, but an increasingly prevalent medical issue. As a future caregiver, Sydney believes it is vital to not only treat the patients’ physical being, but their overall health - including their mental and emotional wellness. Throughout her career, she hopes to carry this belief and encourage others to treat not only the present medical problem, but the various social determinants that affect a patient’s wellbeing.



Fall Semester



CHILD ABUSE

We spent a large amount of our time learning about the intricacies of child abuse. Child abuse is any act whether it be physical, emotional, mental, or neglect towards a child that causes harm. This could be an intentional or unintentional act towards a child. We learned that children are resilient. Child abuse is happening all the time, but children keep finding ways to push past these problems. Over 1 out of every 10 children will be sexually abused before they turn 18. We need to do better, and there are people that are out there trying their best to help.

We had multiple speakers in our first semester that have been pushing to create change in the community when it comes to reducing child abuse. We took a trip to the Children's Justice Center in Salt Lake City and learned about the resources they have there. We were able to tour the briefing rooms and saw that they were brightly colored and full of toys and drawing



materials. These rooms are used to bring the kids in that have been abused and to help them talk through their experiences. The CJs throughout the state of Utah offer children a safe and comfortable place to deal with issues that have been thrust on them by others.

LISA MARTINEZ

DCFS

We also heard from Lisa Martinez. She is an agent in the Department of Child and Family Services in Utah. She explained that the work being done with children and families is admirable, and they work tirelessly to try and keep families together whenever possible. She also showed us that Utah needs more DCFS officers to take on the huge caseloads. Lisa is working on dozens of cases at a time. Deondra Brown was another speaker that helped us learn more about the effects of child abuse over the life course. She and her sisters had been abused multiple times by their father growing up, and she has used those terrible instances to be a voice for good. Deondra is an activist on Utah Capital Hill working with legislators and helping them to pass legislation to promote the rights of victims and survivors of abuse. Utah is a parental right state, but there are compromises that we learned can be made to help protect children without taking the rights away from their parents.

THE LETTERS IN **PURPLE** STAND FOR

P	U	R	P	L	E
PEAK OF CRYING	UNEXPECTED	RESISTS SOOTHING	PAIN-LIKE FACE	LONG LASTING	EVENING
Your baby may cry more each week, the most in month 2, then less in months 3-5	Crying can come and go and you don't know why.	Your baby may not stop crying no matter what you try.	A crying baby may look like they are in pain, even when they are not.	Crying can last as much as 5 hours a day, or more.	Your baby may cry more in the late afternoon and evening.

THE WORD PERIOD MEANS THAT THE CRYING HAS A BEGINNING AND AN END

Our Praxis Lab also took the time to understand infant abuse cases. These child abuse cases can be difficult because a lot of abuse can be done without a parent truly wanting to hurt a baby. We saw this with head trauma that was caused by parents or shook their babies and with bruising left by squeezing them too tightly or suffocating them. Babies cry, eat, and cry some more. Dr. Toni Laskey showed us that babies that cry more are at higher risks for abuse than those who cry less. Parenting can be a struggle, but every effort needs to be made to allow ample time to cool off and avoid stress when you are alone with your baby. We learned that sometimes it is better to put your baby down and let it cry than to endure countless hours of trying to guess what your baby is needing. Good parenting practices can save lives.

**“The most important thing is to
BE A GOOD PARENT.”**

-Judge Dane Nolan

Most of child abuse simmers down to the importance of good parenting practices. Parents who put their children first, teach them good principles, and try their hardest to provide a good home and safe living environment will find themselves successful. Parents need to learn the signs of child abuse though because more than 90% of children abused are abused by someone that they know personally. Being a good parent will help your child succeed, but great parents will be willing to recognize the

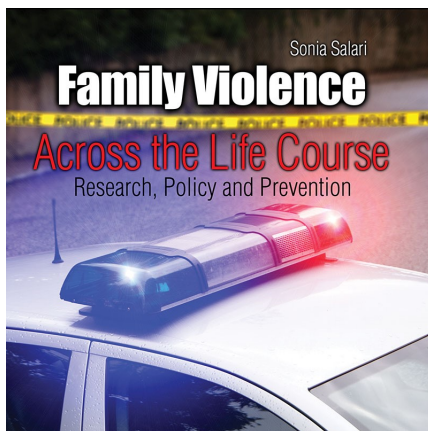
signs of abuse, whether those are petechiae (from burst capillaries that often signal suffocation), bruises, or comments from your children. Parents can learn a lot of how their kids are treated by others if they listen to what they say. Children will often try to tell a loved one that they have experienced something traumatic or that they didn't like, but if they aren't believed the first time they may not open up again. Every effort we can take to protect our children is worth it, and there are resources provided by the CJC, Utah Domestic Violence Coalition, and Prevent Child Abuse Utah for those that want to learn how they can protect and help their children prepare for the future.



children's
JUSTICE CENTER
SALT LAKE COUNTY

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Intimate partner violence is one of the largest public health epidemics sweeping through our nation. Yet, also one of the least talked about. Intimate partner violence can manifest in a physical sense as well as an emotional manifestation. Historically, intimate partner violence has been largely ignored by institutions such as police departments and government policy and procedure. Popular culture also plays a significant role in the complicit promotion of violence, especially against women. Popular movies and songs tend to encompass signs of misogyny and frightening commentary on relationships. Our class spent a great majority of the first semester looking at the effects that Intimate Partner Violence has across the life. It affects, as we learned, all ages and spreads across the entirety of our world.

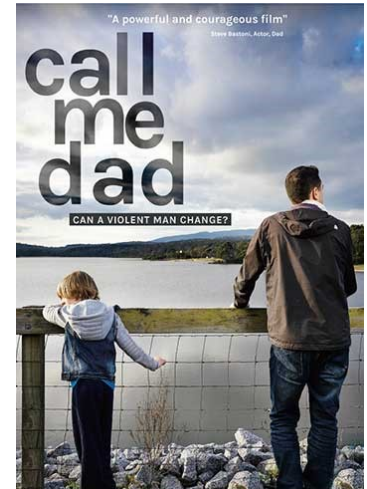


One of our professors, Sonia Salari, participates in an extensive amount of research on intimate partner violence focusing on the worst possible outcome of such a situation, acts of murder-suicide. She focused a significant portion of our course in making sure that we understood the prevalence and relevance that murder-suicides have in our society. Especially in our home state, Utah, where there is a staggering problem of Intimate Partner Violence that is met with inaction by many higher institutions. Dr. Salari asked us to think critically at the continual ignorance of the issue of violence against intimate partners and the historical structures that may influence the way we perceive this issue.

We considered the staggering numbers of women and men who are affected by Intimate Partner Violence on a multitude of occasions. Along with the facts, we delved into the theories that have been known to promote this type of behavior. We learned to differentiate emotional and physical abuse, as well as differentiating types of perpetrators that participate in these acts of violence and the psychology behind what they are trying to accomplish in a broad sense. In many cases, the perpetrator strives to break down the complete sense of self of a victim to gain complete control. This type of continual abuse for the common goal of control is referred to as intimate terrorism. We also looked at Social Learning Theory and how the seemingly “harmless” portrayal of violence in relationships shown in popular culture can have a deep impact on the behavior of people who view such material.

Our class read memoirs and accounts from victims as well as participated in the viewing of 'Call Me Dad' a documentary about the attempt at reform for perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence in Australia.

We looked at the effects of Intimate Partner Violence across all ages. Ranging from the effects that witnessing violence can have on children all the way to the staggering rates of murder-suicides done by elderly men.



Towards the end of our general education on the subject of intimate partner violence, we began to look at the policies and legislation that surrounded the topic. We were introduced to the lack of funding and prevention that has historically gone into the fight against violence in relationships, such as the "Walk Around the Block" policy that was prevalent in law enforcement for Intimate Partner Violence altercations in the greater part of the 20th century. This policy deemed that those calls were met with the perpetrator being asked to walk around the block and calm down. There would be no formal investigation or arrests. Along with this, many women were compelled to stay in abusive relationships due to the specific requirements of judicial approval for a divorce. .



After looking at the disappointing past of ignorance of the subject, we trended towards the amazing men and women who have done great work in prevention and education for intimate partner violence. We took a trip down to the YWCA here in Salt Lake City, our local shelter for women who are fleeing abusive relationships. Our trip consisted of learning about some of the great things that we could assist with in the fight against violence.

***1 in 3 women
and 1 in 4 men
will be victims
of violence by
an intimate
partner in
their lifetime.***

A mere three months into our class, tragedy struck on our campus. An act of violence volatile and rooted in evil, that ended the life of one of our fellow peers. After this act of violence, we as a class, found it incredibly important to focus a significant portion of our attempts at education and prevention in regards to Intimate Partner Violence. It was a staggering reminder that these concepts are not only theoretical but occur every day and close to home. We hoped to mitigate the pain and suffering of our campus community with action. Our main project revolved around this notion and the attempt at looking deep into the problem of Intimate Partner Violence and ways to remedy the problem.

ELDER ABUSE

In our Praxis Lab titled Family Violence Across the Life Course, we learned during the fall 2018 semester from Debbie Booth from Adult Protective Services that likely targets are people who may have no family or friends nearby, and people with disabilities, memory problems, or dementia. Unfortunately, we also learned that many people tend to disregard elder abuse. Something very influential we heard was that, “children are our future; elders are our past.” Since the newer generations are growing up, people tend to focus on them rather than their elderly counterparts.

Most of the time, when we hear about the different types of abuse, we tend to think about a child or children who have come to school with bruises and cuts all over their body and are experiencing someone who is hitting, pushing, or slapping them at home. On the other side of the spectrum, there are elderly persons who are being exposed to physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, neglect, abandonment, along with financial abuse and healthcare fraud. According to the National Council on Aging, approximately 1 in 10 Americans aged 60+ have experienced some form of elder abuse, and some estimates range as high as 5 million elders who are abused each year (National Council on Aging).

An elder adult is anyone who is 65 or older, and according to Debbie Booth, Adult Protective Services can investigate reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, perform needs assessments, and coordinate with and refer to community resources for services. Adult Protective Services cannot take custody of an adult, place an adult in a nursing home or other facility, or provide any service without the voluntary consent of the alleged victim. There are warning signs of the different types of abuse, and those can include anything from unexplained signs of injury, such as bruises or welts; unusual weight loss; sudden changes in the elder’s financial condition, and evidence of overmedication or under-medication.

In order to prevent elder abuse here in the U.S., and in our home state of Utah, we must not confront the abuser by ourself. This may put the older person in more danger. Secondly, even if the elder refuses your help, keep checking in with them. Thirdly, make sure the older adult is connected with medical services. If possible, share your concerns with the elder’s doctor. And finally, remember that feelings of shame can often keep elder abuse hidden. When an elder chooses to talk with you about something that they might be going through, always accept the fact that they are telling you the truth. They are sharing this information with you for a reason.



DEBBIE BOOTH

APS

ABUSE IS GLOBAL

Early on in the semester our class learned that abuse is global, meaning it is present in every country, culture, and religion. Family violence is a human problem, and although different countries and cultures vary in the rate of occurrence of family violence, it can be found anywhere.

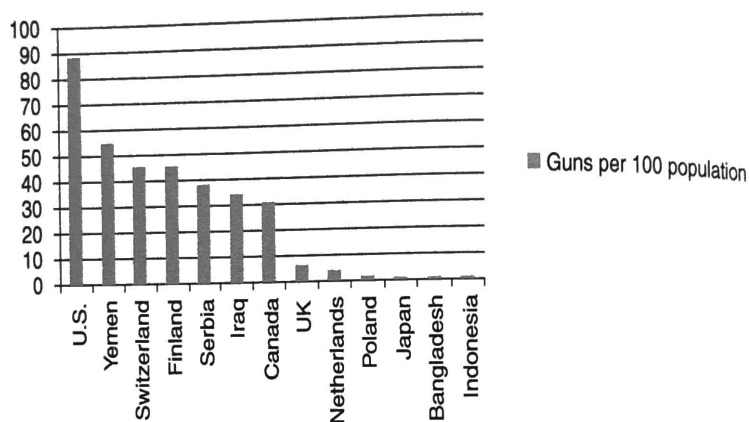


FIGURE 2.1 Guns per 100 population

Source: Chart composed by author using data from UNODC Small Arms Survey, Washington Post 2012c.

The first day of class we learned that the United States has the highest rate of domestic violence of all developed countries. This could be attributed to many factors, the most prevalent being firearm laws. The United States has the highest number of guns per capita with 120.5 guns for every 100 people. Other factors that could influence the prevalence of domestic violence in various countries is the culture. For example, in Japan, people spend less time

with their family and children which could potentially lower the rate of family violence. In some underdeveloped countries, such as Egypt, domestic violence occurs at rates as high as 80% and some cultures even consider spousal abuse justified.

In many underdeveloped countries abuse is built into the culture and thus creates a vicious cycle of generational abuse. Oftentimes underdeveloped countries lack programs that can help men stray away from harmful cultural practices. It is important that a change must be made, but programs must take in consideration respect for the culture. It is often difficult to draw a line between cultural practice and abuse especially when the cultural practice is being practiced in a foreign country. For example, in some African cultures Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is practiced. This is considered abuse and is against the law in America, but if these young girls do not undergo this procedure they are ostracized from their communities, therefore placing the mothers of these girls in a tough situation. This situation often results in the young girls flying back to Africa to have the procedure done.

During week eleven of the course we learned about abuse in diverse populations such as in military, LGBTQ+, Native American, disabled, and polygamist populations. In all of these populations domestic violence rates tend to be higher. For example, military families feel added stress due to uncertainty, a lack of co-parenting, financial strains, and many other stressors. It is the added stress that ultimately may lead to abuse, particularly in children. Another example is that often abuse in polygamist families goes without being noticed. Much of the abuse in this community is mental. For example, the polygamist women are taught very little and rely wholly on their husbands. This creates a problem when the husband becomes abusive. The woman feels trapped because she is uneducated and has no source of income. The men are well respected in the community and thus she would likely be ostracized from the community if she were to leave. The same can be said for the children in these families.

COREY J. ROOD

MD

During weeks six and seven of the course, we learned about sex trafficking and human trafficking from Dr. Corey Rood. We discussed many common misconceptions with human trafficking including that human trafficking does not readily occur in the United States. Dr. Rood explained that human trafficking does in fact occur at alarming rates in the United States and also in Utah, but often goes unnoticed because people don't recognize what's happening as human trafficking.



Dr. Rood also talked to us about sex trafficking and its prevalence in the state of Utah. Because Salt Lake is on the way to Las Vegas, it is a hot spot for sex trafficking. It is estimated that every 1 in 7 children that go missing are sold into the sex trafficking system and are typically not discovered by police until they are adults. In sex trafficking cases, children, as well as adults, are sold to buyers of sexual acts in exchange for money by their trafficker. One children can have up to fifty partners a night.

The take away from Dr. Rood's presentation is that community education in trafficking is necessary to recognize and prevent human trafficking.

**Force, Fraud,
or Coercion**

**“There is no such thing
as a child prostitute.”**

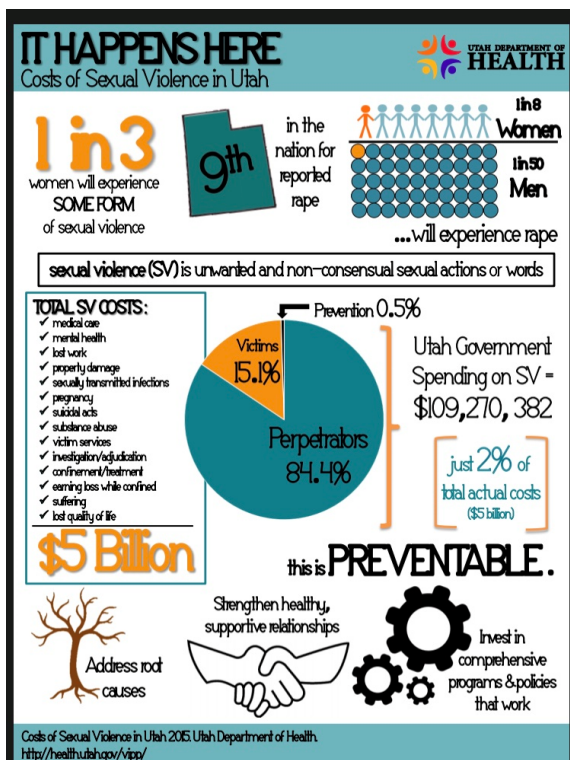
MEDICAL IMPLICATIONS

During the first semester, we frequently looked at how family violence negatively impacts the health and wellbeing of victims. Our healthcare system is expected to diagnose, treat, and prevent abuse - an increasingly pervasive problem in the medical field. Both physical and emotional abuse harm the victim, resulting in dire economic and health consequences. Dr. Toni Laskey, a child abuse pediatrician, provided great insight on diagnosing and treating abuse from a medical perspective.

First, there are a number of cognitive errors doctors can make while diagnosing abuse. Throughout their practice, doctors tend to rely on automation, which allows increased efficiency, but decreases their response to deviations, such as abuse. They also have implicit stereotypes, confirmation bias, anchoring, and triage cueing, all of which affect the accuracy of a diagnosis. Acknowledging and managing these biases while caring for patients allows doctors to make informed decisions on how to best treat their patients.

During class we also discussed sexual assault. In most cases, the perpetrator is someone the victims knows - not a stranger. Utah is 9th in the nation for reported rape, with about one-third of women predicted to experience some form of sexual violence throughout their life. However, due to the social stigmas surrounding sex in our state, many cases of sexual violence go unreported. It's important to note that the idea of a 'virgin' is not a medical term - rather, it is a social concept. We also learned about the time limit on forensic evidence of sexual assault. The chance of obtaining usable evidence from the rape kit has a time window of only 72 hours, confirming that the sooner one reports rape, the better.

When analyzing the medical cost of any form of abuse, it's important to not only consider the actual cost of medical care, but also the ripple effects of the crime. As illustrated by sexual violence, there are also social, mental, and community costs including lost work, substance abuse, victim services, sexually transmitted infections, confinement, and lost quality of life. Rather than spending resources on the treatment and management of the issue, it is more cost effective to prevent the crime from happening in the first place. One of the most important takeaways when learning about abuse is that is a PREVENTABLE medical issue.



Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is emerging within the medical field as a new approach to treating abuse victims due to clinical studies such as the ACEs. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study examined the correlation between past trauma and current medical issues. When traumatic experiences such as child abuse are unresolved, the situational toxic stress rewires the brain and contributes to the intergenerational cycle of abuse. Breaking this cycle requires trauma-informed caregivers who are able to foster resiliency and empower victims to overcome their past struggles. Being aware of how the brain chemistry changes due to trauma allows medical practitioners to better heal patients - both physically and mentally.



TARA HARRIS

MD

We had the privilege of speaking with Dr. Tara Harris over video conference during our fall class. She is a child abuse pediatrician who focuses on the overlap between companion animal abuse and domestic violence. She noted that if an animal is receiving treatment for abuse, there is a high likelihood that verbal, physical, or emotional abuse is occurring in the household. Many abusers will threaten the victim's companion animal as a way to impose control over their life. One of the reasons animal abuse impacts domestic violence is because many shelters don't accept animals, meaning the victims must choose to leave their companion animals in the hands of the abuser. Thus, many victims find it harder to leave a dangerous situation if there is also an animal involved.



The overlap between domestic violence and animal abuse is an important connection to make within the medical realm, because early detection can save lives. Recently, the significance of animal abuse is being recognized within Utah legislature. In Senate Bill 45, Domestic Violence Revisions have added aggravated cruelty towards animals to the list of offenses which qualify as a domestic violence offense, thus increasing the penalty for animal abuse.

POLICY & LEGISLATION



When Senator Osmond and Deondra came to our class, they recounted the events that took place in their childhoods and explained why they were motivators for their involvement in legislature. Their stories both came to light by unfortunate circumstances. Senator Osmond had was arguing on behalf of a bill that was about to go under when he thought it may be best to provide personal testimony. Deondra's parents had gotten in an accident when the truth came out. Both of them had to relay tragic events by means of public discourse. People are prone to probe the lives of others, especially when taboo events occur. Senator Osmond and Deondra were powerful in that they allowed the public to probe, but used their situations to make the process educational.

AARON OSMOND

Former Senator

When it comes to interpersonal abuse, it really can affect anyone at any given time. Most adults have the opportunity to stick up for themselves but the most helpless stage in life is childhood. This being said, Senator Osmond and Deondra Brown emphasized the faultiness in valuing a parent's wishes over a child's safety. They both pushed for legislation that informs children of the dangers that constitute domestic abuse. The fact that others view domestic abuse education or 'warning signs educational' as anything but pro-child is beyond aggravating and wrong being that many domestic abusers come from within the home.



DEONDRA BROWN

Pianist

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Our class also had the opportunity to look at family violence from the perspective of legal professionals and law enforcement through several guest speakers.

Laws and legal enforcement mechanisms are in place to protect and serve victims of abuse, but as we learned, victims of domestic violence are not equally able to benefit within a one-size-fits-all system. For example, in traditional legal terms, victims of abuse have been typically best recognized as female, white, and heterosexual. Physical violence has been almost exclusively recognized, separation has been the only really accepted remedy for abuse, and mandatory arrests policies have taken away some victim's autonomy. When Deondra Brown visited our class, one point she made to us was that the legal system worked well in helping her and her sisters fight for justice, but they were able to recognize that the system doesn't work as well for everyone, and now they advocate to make the system more inclusive. What we learned is that there is no standard victim of domestic violence. Our stereotypes are bound to fail us because they simply cannot capture our diversity, and legal reform and attitude changes for legal professionals and law enforcement are necessary for our system to move forward towards inclusivity.

DEBORAH MENDEZ

Trial Attorney with Salt Lake Legal Defense

As a defense attorney, Deborah's message to us is that "we need to make sure everyone has a voice," and in her career that has meant being willing to defend perpetrators of abuse.

It can be hard to grapple with the idea of defending someone you believe to be guilty, but as Deborah told us, while you may think you know who is guilty and who isn't, we are all fallible in our judgements of character. We use stereotypes and biases to inform who we believe to be guilty, and everyone deserves to be defended in a fair trial.



"We need to make
sure everyone has a
voice."

Even when you believe someone to be a perpetrator, Deborah told us that there is always another side of the story, and the defense team's job is to give an alternative picture of what might have happened. She told us that "domestic violence is almost always intergenerational," and perpetrators are often victims of abuse themselves. The issue of domestic abuse cannot be defined in terms of black and

white, and the truth almost always lies in gray areas. Viewing perpetrators of abuse as entirely evil ignores the combination of suffering and abuse that continues generational cycles of family violence, and our legal system relies on the perspective of defenders like Deborah Mendez to promote true justice.

JUDGE DANE NOLAN

Juvenile Court Judge

When Judge Dane Nolan came to speak with our class, he brought out a stack of newspaper clippings he'd cut out all about the topics of domestic abuse and sexual assault. He passed around the paper clippings for us to each look at, wanting his presentation for us to be a conversation. We saw headlines about #MeToo, Brett Kavanaugh's Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Ray Rice, and Larry Nassar. Each headline was a reminder that the issues of family violence and sexual assault are persistent and more relevant than ever in our society.



Our conversation with Judge Nolan centered around changing attitudes, because the legal system can't work the way it needs to if our culture is stuck in the past. One example Judge Nolan brought up with us was the attitude of female jurors in domestic violence and sexual assault cases, saying he typically saw that "women on a jury didn't want to believe [that a man could do that without reason] and were more likely to blame the victim." Even though females are more often the victim in these types of cases, they were still more likely to blame other women.

Judge Nolan also addressed his own biases with us, saying that in his youth he was engrained with the attitude that drug addicts are typically lazy, criminal, and have gotten themselves addicted for lack of care for themselves and others. As a juvenile court judge, Judge Nolan saw that these stereotypes didn't fit many of the youth he worked with who came from painful and broken backgrounds, but letting go of the stereotypes we learn in our youth isn't easy.

Judge Nolan lastly addressed our culture's changing attitude towards sexual assault in our #MeToo Era. In his perspective, men who are antagonistic to the culture change are afraid of themselves losing power and falling behind. They're in a world where men and young boys are starting to fall behind in school in comparison to girls, where women are just starting to catch up in

***"Don't let your own
issues lead you into
bad habits. Be aware
and fix them."***

executive positions and other positions of power, and they're letting this fear ground them in old familiar beliefs about women and sexual assault. Judge Nolan's comments were not only a powerful reminder to consider the viewpoints of those who have different beliefs than us, but also cautioned us to be constantly checking our own biases the best we can.

DETECTIVE CHRIS WALSH

West Valley City Police



Detective Chris Walsh shared with us that his role as a member of law enforcement is to first and foremost provide a support network for victims and their families in domestic violence situations.

Contrary to a traditional “take a walk around the block” method when dealing with a family violence call, Walsh expressed the importance of training each and every officer in how to appropriately respond to domestic violence calls. In some cities, domestic violence calls can make up the largest category of police calls, and training officers to respond to the calls as high priority and life-threatening as well as approaching the scene with caution can make all the difference.

Walsh expressed that it is the duty of officers to try to keep abuse victims from slipping through the cracks of the system by supporting and listening to victims and holding perpetrators accountable. Trainings and policies for officers play an important role, but the basis of an adequate law enforcement response begins with the attitude that victims have a story to tell and should be listened to and taken seriously. Walsh left us with the words that “victims must have a support network to climb out of a situation,” and law enforcement has a crucial role to play in that support network.

***“Stranger rapists
are very rare.”***

**“Know and
understand your
constitutional rights.”**



**Come support
child victims of
crime!**

Each year over 1,600 children will come through the doors of the Salt Lake County Children's Justice Center seeking hope, healing and justice to overcome the impact of child abuse.

We need YOUR help to support our mission by attending this fun event. Your tips become the donations to the charity!

(right) Advertisement for the police department volunteering at Sizzlers to raise funds for the Salt Lake CJC

COMMUNITY SERVICES

During the course of our first semester, we had the opportunity to learn about and interact with several community resources local to Salt Lake City that provide shelter, services, and advocacy for victims of family violence and interpersonal abuse. These included the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Children's Justice Center (CJC), and the Utah Domestic Violence Coalition (UDVC).

Early in the fall of our first semester we had the amazing opportunity to actually visit a CJC in the Avenues of Salt Lake City. There are 22 total CJC's in Utah and they function under the direction of the Attorney General's Office to coordinate services, investigations, medical exams, and legal proceedings surrounding child abuse and particularly child sexual abuse. They are a friendly, home-like environment where children can be interviewed, receive medical treatment, and where children and family members of the abused children can receive counseling and legal services.

Later in the fall, we were also able to visit the YWCA of Salt Lake City. The YWCA is an organization dedicated to empowering all women and eliminating racism. We toured their Salt Lake City facility that houses hundreds of women and children seeking asylum and safety from abusive and sometimes even lethal situations. The facility provides religious and non-religious support and services, three meals every day for all guests, a free boutique shop where women and children can visit to pick out clothes, shoes, and accessories as needed and indoor and outdoor play space for children to enjoy with added safety from potentially dangerous family members. There are many activities, crafts, and projects daily at the YWCA for children and families to enjoy during their stay. The YWCA also provides counseling, law enforcement, legal, and academic services for women to help remove them from their abusive partners and gain independence, empowerment, and safety.

KERI JONES-FONNESBECK

Chief Operating Officer of YWCA

Keri Jones-Fonnesbeck, LCSW is the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of YWCA Utah. She gave us a guided tour of the YWCA when we visited its facilities in Salt Lake City and spoke to us about its great importance and impact in the lives of victims and survivors of domestic violence. During her time working for YWCA Utah, she also has served as the Chief Program Officer, Director of Children's Services, and as a Child Advocate. She also worked for Intermountain Primary Children's Hospital as an on call crisis social worker for children and families in the hospital.

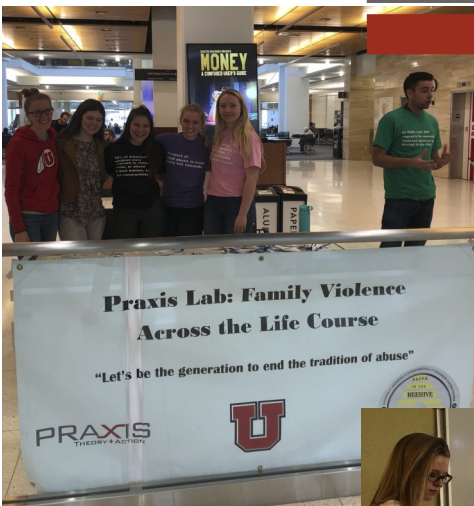


Finally, the UDVC is victim advocacy group links survivors to resources 24/7. Victims, survivors, affected family members, and concerned friends and neighbors can reach the UDVC by calling their 24/7 LINKline number. We wanted a personal experience calling in on this number and were impressed with the rapid response, kindness, compassion, and professionalism with which they interacted with us. We would recommend anyone concerned about a situation they are currently in or that a friend or family member is in, to contact the UDVC at 1-800-897-LINK. They will assess the situation and recommend and provided connections for the next steps that the person calling in can take to receive support, services, and get safe.





Spring Semester

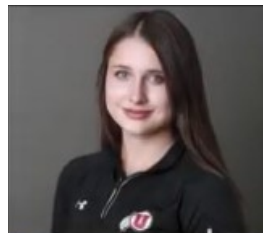


CURRENT EVENTS



Throughout the year, our class has been working on getting people to know and understand exactly what family violence and interpersonal abuse is. Unfortunately, in the fall and spring semester, while we were learning about interpersonal abuse, we had two tragic events that impacted our University of Utah community. On October 22nd of 2018, Lauren McCluskey, a U of U

student athlete was fatally shot outside of her apartment building. On January 27th of 2019, Dr. Sarah Hawley, a medical resident at the University of Utah Hospital, was also shot and killed. In order to make our ideas come to life in the spring semester, we created a motto (A.L.I.V.E. in the Beehive) and made t-shirts with frightening facts on them. To reach out to students, faculty, and staff here on the University of Utah Campus, we had four of our classmates present at C.O.D.E. and help give understanding as to why interpersonal violence is a public health epidemic. Shortly after this, we held an event called Interpersonal Abuse & U with four guest speakers on April 2nd, 2019 to help fight against the problem of interpersonal abuse, violence, and trauma on our campus and in our communities. Shortly after our event, we decided to make a film that would be presented at the Honors College Praxis Lab Summit. With this film, we were able to ask students on campus exactly how they felt and what they thought the University of Utah could do better. At the Praxis Lab Summit, we were able to talk more about this wicked problem that is not only facing our communities, but perhaps our own lives as well. While tragic events of interpersonal abuse have rocked our campus community, we must never forget the victims and what they went through.



*In Memory of
Lauren McCluskey*

2.12.97—10.22.18

&

Sarah Hawley

3.13.91—1.27.19



A.L.I.V.E. IN THE BEEHIVE

As we developed our project as a team we felt our project needed a motto. We wanted the motto or title to be something that personally reflected our specific purpose and passions. With this in mind we chose the motto, “A.L.I.V.E. in the Beehive”. A.L.I.V.E. stands for Alliance Lessening Interpersonal Violence Everywhere and ‘in the Beehive’ is representative of the state of Utah, the Beehive state. This motto has helped to achieve our overall goal of educating our community and being advocates or alliances for those around us.



After creating a motto, our group felt that we needed an array of free items to give away to people on our campus and in our community to help spread awareness for both our project and family violence. We printed bracelets, stickers, and pins to give away to people who were willing to receive them.



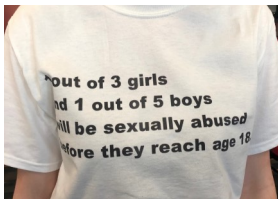
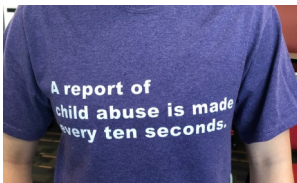
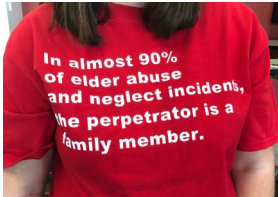
Throughout the second semester of our class we scheduled several tabling events. The purpose of the tabling was to promote our upcoming event as well as give out free items to those who walked past. The bracelets, stickers, and pins proved to be an excellent way to attract individuals to our table and let them know more about our project and passions.

The bracelets especially were an important part of our class. The bracelets not only provided awareness of family violence but also provided a valuable resource to those experiencing any type of violence. The bracelets were a success because they were small, easily visible, and a great conversation starter. When designing the bracelets, we started by choosing colors associated with different types of family violence: blue, purple, and silver. Blue for child abuse awareness, purple for domestic violence awareness, and silver for elder abuse awareness. Next, we decided to include our motto on the front of the bracelet, and the telephone number for the Utah Domestic Violence Coalition LINKLine on the back. The LINKLine is a 24-hour abuse report line that is a great resource for anyone who is experiencing domestic violence, is worried about a friend, or needs to report domestic violence.



One of the initial challenges with the bracelets was how to get them to people who were in need. We assumed that most of the individuals who came in contact with us and wanted to learn more about domestic violence were likely not experiencing it themselves but were very likely to know someone who was. The statistics are that every 1 in 3 women, and every 1 in 4 men, have experienced physical or sexual violence, so the likelihood that every person we gave a bracelet to, knew someone who was a victim, or will be a victim within their lifetime of physical or sexual violence. Upon discovery of this staggering statistic we made it a challenge to give two bracelets to every person: one for them to wear, and one for them to give to a friend in hopes that those individuals in need were reached. As time went on we found people taking more than two of the bracelets, sometimes even three or four, wanting to give them to others in their lives. These bracelets were a huge success and we hope that people continue to spread the word. We also hope that the bracelet proves a valuable resource for anyone who needs help, that they are able to call the LINKLine as well as realize that we are there to support them.

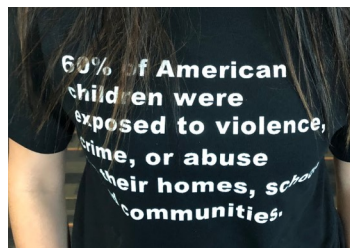
STARTING THE CONVERSATION



During the second semester of this course, we sought to spread awareness on family violence and interpersonal abuse. Historically, one of the biggest road-blocks advocates have run up against when trying to educate the public on such topics is an old-school philosophy of “not airing one’s dirty laundry.” But one of the greatest lessons we learned first semester is that abuse thrives in secrecy and isolation. We determined that in order to be “the generation to end the tradition of abuse,” we needed to bring the topics and conversations of family violence and interpersonal abuse out of obscurity and into an open dialogue.

One way that we did this with our fellow classmates was through wearing T-shirts that we had specially made with “frightening” but very real facts and about child, intimate partner, and elder abuse to get conversations started with people. We started conversations with students, professors, community members and anyone else who walked by our tables to spread awareness and comfortability in talking about such hard topics. We also directed those we talked to, to resources they could turn to for help and advocacy in the event that they or someone they knew were in situations of violence or abuse. Finally, we invited everyone we spoke with, to join us for our campus event with guest speakers educating us on family violence and abuse, and resources for prevention and healing. While there were some people who didn’t want to talk to us or who attempted to convince us that this was “someone else’s problem,” there were many who were very interested in our message and joined in meaningful dialogues with us. We found that the vast majority of the people we spoke with were unaware of the help and resources available to victims, family members, and survivors and found this information to be extremely helpful to those we spoke with.

Overall, we feel that our generation is much more willing to speak up about abuse and seek professional help. We felt a strong desire among our peers to protect children and members of the community from situations and relationships of abuse and trauma. We feel confident that we started an important conversation on campus that will continue into the community.



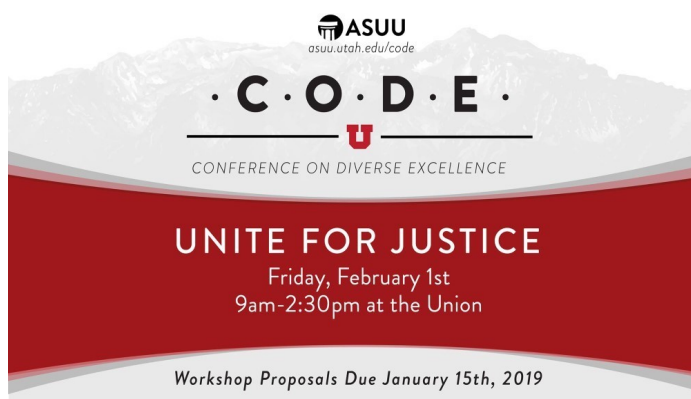
C.O.D.E. PRESENTATION

Once we began transitioning into our project development in January, we were on the lookout for events on campus where we could present and open up a dialogue on domestic violence for students. The university's Conference on Diverse Excellence (C.O.D.E) gave us the opportunity to present at an already established and annually held event at the center of campus in the A. Ray Olpin Union. C.O.D.E. is a come and go event with three workshop sessions and a keynote speaker throughout the day, with a stated mission "to create dialogue and build consciousness around systems of oppression, privilege, and solidarity through a social justice lens."

When we first learned about C.O.D.E. in January, we had to work quickly to submit a proposal by January 15th to be chosen to present. We felt that our praxis lab's topic was an important message for C.O.D.E. because interpersonal violence is a public health epidemic that disproportionately affects marginalized communities, often because of lack of education and resources. With the conference itself taking place on February 1st, right after the start of Utah's 2019 legislative session, our workshop proposal was to highlight current legal barriers to those experiencing forms of interpersonal violence and to offer bills from the legislative session as potential solutions. We were chosen for the first workshop session and given 50 minutes to present.



When we presented on February 1st, not as many people showed up to the first workshop session as we would've liked, but we did have lively participation from those who attended. We were able to discuss each scenario in-depth and form personal connections with our audience, learning about the work they too are doing in their communities to advocate for justice. Those who came took handfuls of bracelets to give to friends who couldn't be at the workshop.



We wanted to have an interactive presentation, so we wrote four different scenarios corresponding to current bills that were going through the Federal and Utah State legislatures. We wrote scenarios for HB 19: Pretrial Release Amendments, HB 334: Human Trafficking Amendments, SB 45: Domestic Violence Revisions, and the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Each scenario posed a difficulty for people experiencing interpersonal violence, with the idea that our audience could find holes in current interpersonal violence legislation by imagining themselves in the situation and asking themselves what they could do to get help within our current legal framework. All of the scenarios inevitably ended in dead-ends, but the corresponding bill for each scenario offered hope and potential for action because our audience could see concrete examples of how this new legislation would help real people and could act by contacting their legislators in support.

SCENARIOS

And Corresponding Legislation

Tucker had been dating Nina for 3 months before she started getting aggressive with him; smacking him during arguments etc. When Tucker cut it off and went to the police, Nina was arrested. Nina got out on bail, very angry and with a target in mind. Pretend you are Tucker who is frightened and wanting protection-- what would you do? What legal action would you take?



HOUSE BILL 19

Pretrial Release Amendments

This bill amends and clarifies the reasons a judge can give a protective order.

VAWA

Violence Against Women Act

Has been renewed multiple times since 1994

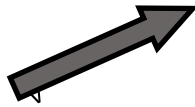
Protects undocumented individuals, members of the LGBTQ+ community, Native Americans, older individuals, students, and other under-served populations

Serves men in many of the same ways as women

Lily is an undocumented individual who married her current partner in her country before coming to the US. She still isn't a citizen, and her partner has become aggressive and consistently hits her. She wants to get out of the relationship with that person. What should she do?



Samantha brutally beat Clara's husky, Sunny, after she came home angry and tired from work. When Clara tried to stop the abuse, Samantha didn't listen. Although Samantha has never physically hurt Clara, Clara is scared that one day she might lose her temper again. However, Samantha has never actually 'abused' Clara. If you were in Clara's situation, what would you do?

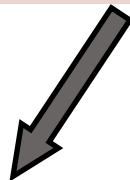


SENATE BILL 45

Domestic Violence Revisions

Adds aggravated cruelty to an animal to the list of offenses that may qualify as a domestic violence offense.

Danny is a young teen who used to spend her evenings hanging out at the mall. She got recruited to be a model by a stranger she met at the mall, and her new friend Karli offered to drive her to her modelling shoots. Even when Danny's modelling started to transition into sex work, Karli kept pushing Danny to go to work because she was getting paid by Danny's employers to drive her, fully knowing that Danny was now doing sex work. Danny wants to escape sex work, but does not know the names of anyone she is working for. She wants to prosecute, but doesn't know where to start.




HOUSE BILL 334

Human Trafficking Amendments

This bill clarifies certain language regarding human trafficking and creates an offense for trafficking a vulnerable adult. Victims of human trafficking may pursue civil actions against anyone who knowingly benefitted from the trafficking.

INTERPERSONAL ABUSE AND U

To combat the problem of interpersonal abuse on our campus and in our communities, we held an event on April 2, 2019. We had four extremely knowledgeable panelists that spoke about the effects of interpersonal abuse across the lifespan. They have dedicated their life's work to preventing and educating on the subject of interpersonal abuse. Our first panelist was Toni Laskey, a child pediatrician that specializes in child abuse. The second panelist was Dr. Corey Rood, a child pediatrician that focuses on child abuse as well as placing a large emphasis on human trafficking. Our third panelist, Sonia Salari, touched on the aspects of intimate partner violence especially as it relates to the worst outcome of a violent relationship, the murder of a partner. Our last guest was Jennifer Campbell, who focused her conversation around the prevalence of intimate partner violence as well as the resources available in our community.



Do you know what to do if you suspect someone you know may be a victim of abuse?

INTERPERSONAL ABUSE & U

APRIL 2, 2019
4:30 – 6PM
SFEBC 1110

Join us for a panel discussion about what **U** need to know about family violence across the life course.

There is **hope**. There is **help**. There is **healing**.

Antoinette Laskey, MD, MPH, MBA
Division Chief of the Center for Safe and Healthy Families at Primary Children's Hospital

Corey J. Rood, MD
Child Abuse Pediatrician focusing on commercially sexually exploited children and human trafficking

Sonia Salari, PhD
Family Sociologist and Gerontologist specializing in elder mistreatment, intimate partner violence, and public policy

Jennifer Campbell
Executive Director of South Valley Services and board member of Utah Domestic Violence Coalition

The campus event was structured as follows: there was time allotted for each panelist to speak about their specific topics, then a questioning period at the end. The attendance was impressive and the audience was very engaged with the questioning period at the end. Each panelist was asked to prepare a PowerPoint to go along with their conversation that focused on the ability to be resilient. A large part of the overall conversation revolved around prevention and education to our campus community on interpersonal abuse. At the beginning of the event, we placed infographics with 'frightening facts' that related to interpersonal abuse, some stickers about our campaign, and a bracelet for the Utah Domestic Violence Coalition that had the LINK line on each seat. The LINK line is a twenty-four hour hotline that can connect callers to resources and support that may be in danger at the drop of a hat. We wanted to make sure that the audience left with the resources to connect themselves to support and prevention if needed.

The event was successful in many ways, and those who were unable to attend, were able to read about it in the Daily Chronicle. The Daily Chronicle wrote a great piece about our event and worked with us to spread the importance about knowledge regarding family violence. Our campus community especially, is still healing from the tragedies that have occurred over the past school year. We wanted to go out to meet students and faculty where they were and answer any questions they might have about family violence. Our campus event had a tone of resilience in it because we felt it was extremely important to make sure that the audience understood that it doesn't have to end with the abuse. Victims can turn into survivors and it starts with their communities believing them and understanding them. Each panelist made sure to emphasize this point with resources at the end of each presentation.



Our event was marketed with the diligence of our peers on the Praxis Lab who worked with University marketing organizations to get the word out. There were students, faculty, and administration that attended the event. We were reassured during Interpersonal Abuse and U that our work did not go unnoticed by the attendance, as well as, the engagement. Our campus community has sidebar conversations between students frequently about campus safety and we wanted to make sure that there could be a tangible conversation with people who dedicate their lives to preventing abuse.

The event name, Interpersonal Abuse and U, was very important to our Praxis Lab. We wanted to continually push the rhetoric and conversation surrounding abuse to make sure that everyone knew that they were entitled to a life free from abuse. Violence and aggressive behavior is especially prominent in our culture with popular media and rhetoric. However, we wanted to combat that with an event based around the truth. No one deserves to be a victim of abuse and there are many dedicated people who work towards an abuse free culture. We wanted to make sure that our campus community was aware of this.

Our event was short, but the impact will be long. We wanted to make sure that the problems of abuse were not swept under the rug and instead, we brought the problem out of the shadows and to the forefront of our community. Interpersonal Abuse and U is only the start of a much larger push from our Praxis Lab and other campus organizations to prevent abuse on our campus and in our lives. We wanted to start the conversation but it doesn't end here.

INTERPERSONAL ABUSE & U

A.L.I.V.E. IN THE BEEHIVE

April 2, 2019

4:30-6:00 PM

SFEBB 1110

Do you know what to do if you suspect someone you know may be a victim of abuse?



THERE IS HOPE. THERE IS HELP. THERE IS HEALING.



FILM

It is no secret that the University of Utah has struggled with the public health epidemic that is interpersonal abuse. This epidemic struck home during the 2018-2019 academic year twice. Once on October 22nd, 2018 with the death of Lauren McCluskey and again January 27th, 2019 with the death of Sarah Hawley. These tragedies have not only been devastating to our campus environment, but to the sense of home here at the University of Utah.



Many students in the Praxis Lab were passionate about the internal issues with the university and wanted to get a sense as to what other students felt. This led the idea that creating a film centered around student mindsets post-tragedies could potentially be a wakeup call to administration and the overall climate on campus regarding interpersonal abuse. Ron Mittelhammer, Washington State University Economics Professor, was also concerned for the safety of students on campus when he wrote an Op-Ed in the Salt Lake Tribune titled, "Commentary: Failing Lauren McCluskey before and after her murder. Are women taken seriously at he U?". Through this article, a member of the praxis lab reached out to Professor Mittelhammer explaining who they were and what their intentions were. He then connected them to Jill and Matt McCluskey who not only gave their blessing to go forth with the film, but also pointed them in the direction of those they should interview and get in contact with.

Later in the month, Sarah Hawley had been murdered under circumstances that were believed to involve domestic abuse. Being that Sarah was not a resident on campus, this got the lab to consider steering the video to consider University of Utah as a home in general for students and faculty alike. They wanted to explain that on campus or off, this issue is widespread and lethal. Another member of the praxis lab reached out to the Hawley's in hopes that by receiving their permission, they could spread this message to the overall campus community.

With permission of both the McCluskey's and the Hawley's, the lab began working on the general structure of the film. They recruited Dylan Marusich, a freshman majoring in Film and Media Arts, to put together their vision. They also recruited students on campus to give their testimony in respect to campus safety and their understanding of interpersonal abuse. Dylan even partook in the testimonial by explaining that he had not grasped the prevalence of domestic violence. He appreciated the filmmaking process because he knew he was contributing to awareness for both interpersonal abuse and for communal recognition that needs to take place on our campus.



The film has been completed and was presented at the Praxis Lab Summit but has not been published to any media platform yet.

MEDIA OUTREACH

Our projects in the second semester of the Praxis Lab required a lot of different media outreaches and use of advertising to help them be successful. Most of our media outreach came in the form of marketing. We used the University of Utah as the stage for most of the marketing for our CODE event and our Interpersonal Abuse & U event. The University's Marketing Services gave us access to A frame posters that were set around campus. The Honors College and other University Services helped us announce our events through flyers and their respective email services. We couldn't have done it without the help of some many different organizations at our disposal.

Other media outreach came in the form of the newspaper. We had several students complete the following Op-eds for the Salt Lake Tribune as a call to action for our community about the prevalence of abuse that is tolerated in our state. At our event Interpersonal Abuse & U, the Daily Chronicle of the University of Utah did a story on our speakers that night. The online news report is from April 3, 2019 and can be found at:

<http://dailyutahchronicle.com/2019/04/03/the-honors-college-praxis-labs-holds-interpersonal-violence-seminar/>.

The different publicity that these newspapers provided to us helped spread the word beyond our university campus and to the rest of the Salt Lake Valley and beyond.

We hope that the sharing of our signs and media will continue the conversation that we tried to start on campus. This raise in awareness shouldn't die with the end of the Praxis Lab because there is an open dialogue on campus about the importance of doing all we can to stop abuse. President Ruth Watkins started a task force with various members of the U community to help the faculty come together and make changes to protect students. We hope that hers and our motivation for change will also act as a catalyst at other schools to provide opportunities for change everywhere.



THERE WAS NOTHING MORE WE COULD DO

AYANA AMAECHI

This phrase has been known to send shivers down one's spine because it is usually indicative of a near-future explanation for a tragic event. We often hear this verbiage in legal proceedings, criminal instances, and medical settings. I have noticed this language reappear in one environment; college campuses. Pennsylvania State, Oxford, Michigan State, Baylor, and a number of other universities all have something in common—these are all sites where heinous crimes took place that could have been avoided or stopped if the university as whole did their job and recognized fault within their infrastructure. I am a sophomore at the University of Utah and am no stranger to the fact that aside from social formalities, colleges coexist as businesses. Students are falling through the social net because the holes within this net allow for University officials, donors, and the Board of Regents to prioritize business and politics over the lives of students. This is proven to be true because it has taken place across several college campuses and struck home at the University of Utah on October 22nd, 2018. Every college campus will grapple with impropriety, but to let the same instances occur again because one school could not take ownership is grossly preposterous. Schools fail to take ownership because, as a business, they rely on admittance to maintain funding and therefore, by accepting liability, they appear to be a weak university. This mindset is not only wrong, but dangerous because not only does it defer any problem recognition, but it inherently defers any change. Being that universities double as businesses, each college campus should abide by a set of corporate ethics in order to prevent this particular kind of poor practice. If colleges would follow corporate ethics by disregarding their fears of social backlash, low admittance rates, and lack of funding, then genuine change could take place. Due to the fact that each university is in competition with one another, every tragedy that occurs is dishonored by the individual universities' failure to acknowledge their transgressions, all for the sake of avoiding the fears mentioned above. I would be proud to go to a university that recognized their wrongdoings and made efforts to change. In my time at the University of Utah, I have been encouraged to establish my sense of self and determine how I feel about the world I live in along with how I will one day give back to it. I am hoping to do so by practicing common decency—by becoming a citizen of humankind through world servitude by living life consciously, simply because I am human. Being commonly decent means that there is always more we can do. To the university adherents, who determined that there was nothing more to be done, I have a question: Would the legal advice or the Independent Review of the Actions of the University of Utah Department of Public Safety in the Lauren McCluskey Case be different if Lauren McCluskey were your child?

“NON-PREVENTABLE” IS THE EASY ANSWER— LET’S START BY TAKING ACCOUNTABILITY

NATALIE VAN ORDEN

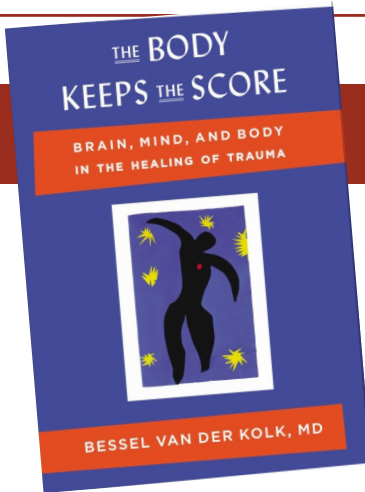
Growing up post-Columbine, this generation of students attending the University of Utah isn’t a stranger to lockdown drills and threats of shootings. Across Utah, every year from elementary to high school we practiced lockdowns, turning off the lights, shuffling into closets and hiding from windows as school administration came by our doors and wiggled them to see if they were properly locked. Years of practice still don’t prepare you for when the lockdown is real. I’ve been in two campus lockdowns since being a student at the University of Utah. The building I live in on campus uses the parking lot that Lauren McCluskey was shot in on October 22nd. Two campus lockdowns, and the drill is the same. The first message goes out, and even though you don’t have any idea what is going on, you have to stay put where you are. As more and more details come out during the night, you stay up, unable to sleep. You get texts and calls from friends you have across campus, checking to see if you’re safe, worrying that the person shot might have been you. You learn a student, someone just like you and your best friends, has been killed. And now it’s happened twice. You try to keep the sick thought out of your head, but you start to wonder if this will happen every year. Classes are canceled for one day, but the campus has to keep moving forward even if we are not ready. When a campus community experiences such a devastating loss, we mourn deeply for the individual and miss their presence, but students and faculty are also instilled with dread that this will not be the last time. A campus is traumatized, and each successive lockdown only deepens the wound and makes healing more difficult. It’s too easy for us to say that cases like Lauren’s are individual and unpreventable. You’ll hear there was one “bad guy” who was determined to do a bad thing, and there is no way we could’ve known and stopped him. But don’t ever forget that we are a generation that has grown up all too familiar with lockdowns and shootings, and hearing that one bad guy was able to fly under the radar doesn’t bring lives back, and it doesn’t give us any peace of mind when we know how much damage one bad guy can do. The University of Utah’s official statement is that the murder of Lauren McCluskey “could not have been prevented.” Our first impulse is all too often to ask what the victim could have done differently, or to tell ourselves that we cannot prevent individuals from doing bad things, but this mentality does not save lives. I speak for students at the University of Utah when I say that now is the time for all of us to take accountability and listen to the concerns of students. Students at every university, we need fight to learn the truth about safety on our campuses, and we need to continue to speak up about our concerns. We can’t continue to accept “non-preventable” as an easy answer. I urge University leadership to reconsider how we are publicly choosing to take accountability in Lauren’s case. Students should be listened to, and that doesn’t just mean a small handful of “student representatives” on a policy council. We need to start holding ourselves accountable even if we feel we were trying our best. We all need to ask ourselves what we could’ve done differently. We need to start by saying Lauren’s death was preventable.

STOP TEACHING WOMEN IT'S UP TO THEM TO "STAY SAFE"

MICHELLE VALDES

We walk briskly to our cars with our keys clutched nervously in between our fingers. Glancing over our shoulders repeatedly for silhouettes of men waiting to take what is not theirs. We rush to class with our heads down, earbuds in, and silently avoid eye contact from those who take up too much space on the sidewalk. We smile at each other on the way, fear glistening in the outlines of our eyes. We were taught to do all of these things. We were taught to be responsible for our own personal safety, a burden that holds more weight for women than the education and responsibilities we desire to pursue. We were taught to never walk alone, never walk at night, and to never engage with strangers. We were taught to smile and laugh and say "please" or "no thank you" even when fearing those may be our last words. We were forced into these lessons, as if attendance was mandatory. They taught us to be complicit in our own danger. Women across college campuses throughout our nation are continually responsible for their own welfare. The infrastructures of our Universities continually fail us with every tragedy, death, and sexual assault that occurs. We are taught to silently accept these things as though they are undeniable facts that cannot be overturned or a mere reality that must be 'put up with'. The disconnect between individual security and University policies/procedures that guarantee safety are obvious. It is apparent in the death of our peer Lauren McCluskey and it is apparent in the sexual assaults that have occurred on campus. We, as women, should not be solely responsible for our safety. There should be more than pepper spray and buddy systems to ensure our graduation. The University of Utah should be more diligent, relentless, and intentional in their strive for campus safety. The repeating statement of "nothing more could have been done" is both insensitive and untrue. There is more to be done in the fight for women's safety. There must be more we can do because frankly, it is killing us. There are many dedicated men and women who wish to see a change in our society. This change is not only policy wide, but culturally necessary. It should not be held on the shoulders of women walking briskly every night, for if so, it will fall. There are many Universities nationwide who are taking strides to ensure safety for women on their campuses. From Arizona State's Blue Box policy to Dartmouth's healthy relationships and avoiding misconduct course. There are steps in the right direction from the University of Utah, such as the campus safety task force and the initiatives that have been introduced since the report. However, these will prove to be ineffective until we switch the responsibility and dialogue from women avoiding danger, to preventing violence against women.

BOOKS, PODCASTS, & MOVIES



THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE

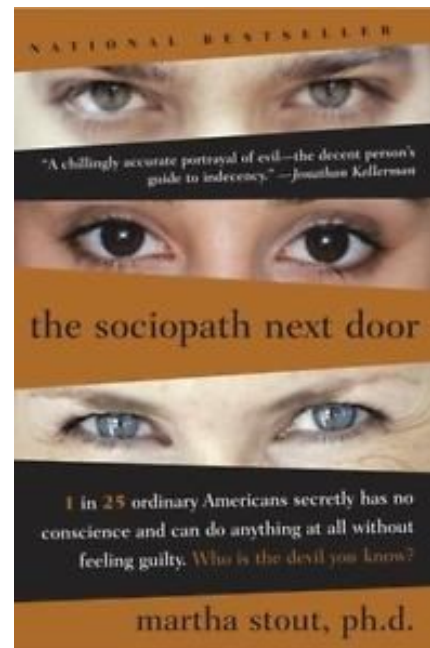
By Bessel van der Kolk

The Body Keeps the Score is divided into a linear, five-part exploration of trauma. In Part One: The Rediscovery of Trauma, Van der Kolk introduces trauma in the form of PTSD in war veterans. Part Two: This is Your Brain On Trauma, uses actual brain scans to explain how the brain works. It identifies the parts used in developing a sense of self, the effect of the nervous system mechanics on our reactions, and how trauma actually changes the brain's functions. Part Three: The Minds of Children, argues that children process trauma differently than adults. In Part Four: The Imprint of Trauma, normal versus traumatic memory is addressed and memory's influence on life is explained. Finally, Part Five: Paths to Recovery, explores several paths of recovery, including EMDR, yoga, neurofeedback, and PBSP psychomotor therapy. These all contain some element of "rewiring the brain" to function properly, as one of the major points Van der Kolk makes is that the negative symptoms of trauma are due to a 'disconnect' in the brain.

THE SOCIOPATH NEXT DOOR

By Martha Stout

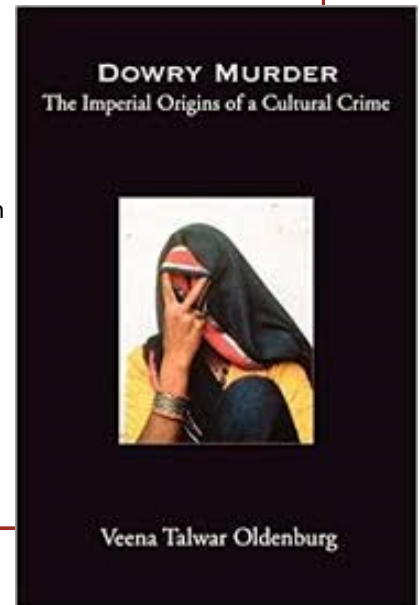
The Sociopath Next Door is a nonfiction eyeopener published in 2005 that is dedicated to helping the average person identify, understand, and deal with a sociopath when they encounter one. Martha starts off the book by explaining that consciousness is our seventh sense following our normal five and how we refer to our intuition at six. Through this explanation, we can better adapt to the 4% of people that are sociopaths. This book will make one feel thankful they feel sad, angry, guilty, and attached. While those may not be favored emotions, those feelings are the flags of humankind and we are lucky to be a part of it.



DOWRY MURDER: THE IMPERIAL ORIGINS OF A CULTURAL CRIME

By Veena Talwar Oldenburg

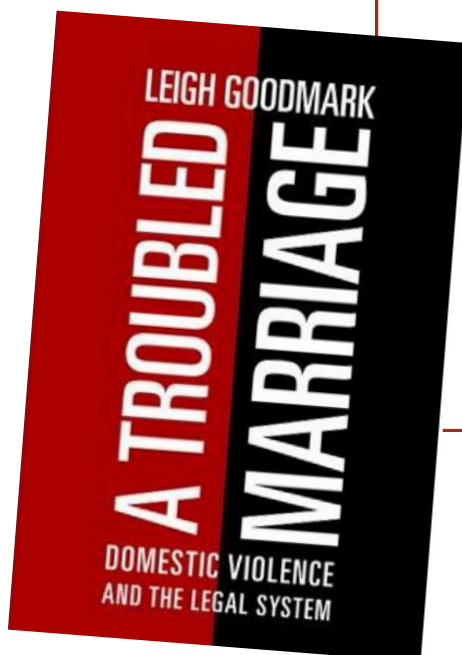
In *Dowry Murder: The Imperial Origins of a Cultural Crime* the author Veena Talwar Oldenburg writes about how bride burnings in India have long been blamed on dowry but can rather be attributed to Imperial origins of the country. The book is a thrilling account of how British colonization created a culture which harbored bride burnings and murder. This culture very much still persists, and as the author recounts from her own past, Indian women feel they have no way power and no way to escape abusive relationships, only worsening the problem.

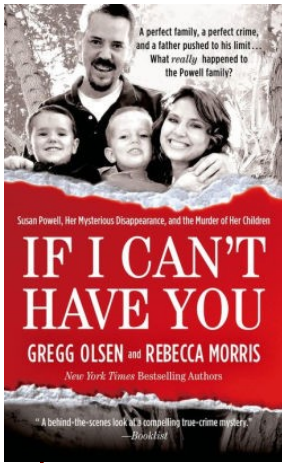


A TROUBLED MARRIAGE

By Leigh Goodmark

A Troubled Marriage is a non-fiction book that explores how the legal system's response to domestic violence developed over time, particularly from the 1970s through the present. Leigh Goodmark critiques our current legal response to domestic violence that was forged by the second-wave feminist movement, respecting the positive changes that happened as a result of the movement, but focusing on the significant limitations of a system that essentializes victims and denies women autonomy.





IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU

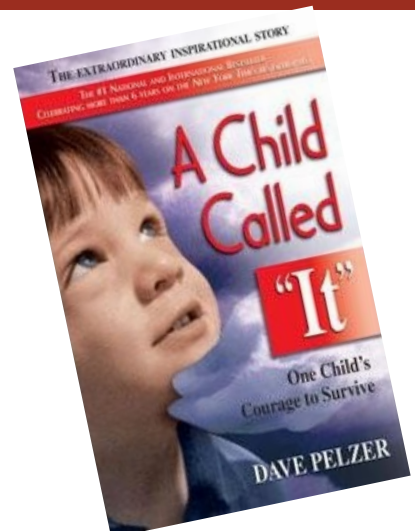
By Gregg Olsen & Rebecca Morris

In “If I Can’t Have You: Susan Powell, Her Mysterious Disappearance, and the Murder of Her Children,” the authors, Gregg Olsen and Rebecca Morris, created an extensive dive into the tragic case of Susan Powell. It was published in 2014 and is a true story. In hindsight, the case of Susan Powell seems obvious. She feared for her life and the lives of her children. She felt uncomfortable around the Powell family and knew of her father-in law’s sexual obsession with her. Her husband demonstrated verbal abuse frequently and often told her there was no room for divorce, that if he couldn’t have her, no one could. Though all of this evidence was clear to readers in the book “If I Can’t Have You” it appears that West Valley Police Department was oblivious to the gravity of the case. Even after three years, they refused to prosecute a case against Josh Powell in the disappearance of his wife. There was physical evidence, as well as testimonies from multiple sources that connected Josh to the disappearance, Josh also constantly gave conflicting stories. Even after all of this, he was still allowed visitation time with his two sons who he in turn, viciously murdered. He hatcheted them to death and then set the house on fire. This book and tragic case truly highlight the culture surrounding abuse and the continual ‘sweep under the rug’ actions that are common in policy and procedure in cases of abuse. The book, though a tough read, was necessary to understanding the culture that perpetuates abuse.

A CHILD CALLED IT

By Dave Pelzer

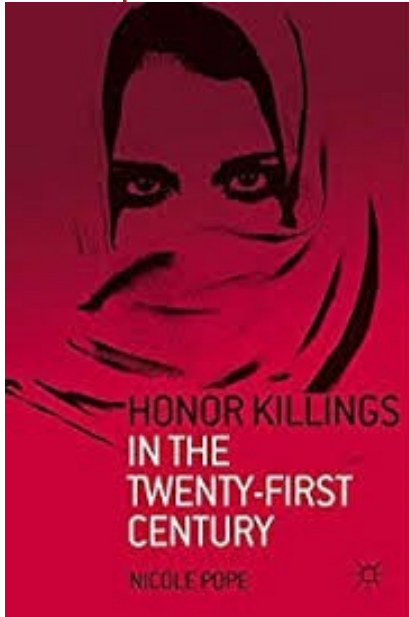
This book was incredibly difficult to read yet equally difficult to put down. Dave Pelzer takes the reader by the hand into his abused and battered life and the exquisite details are both excruciating and awful to read. “A Child Called It” is a biography of the abuse he received from his mother and father as a child until the police stepped in and removed him from his home. But most powerfully, this book shows the undying will of a child to survive. Dave’s unfaltering determination to live is powerful and awe-inspiring and his message is clear: abuse is real. And the most powerful, life-altering thing any of us can do, is believe the child, believe their story.



HONOR KILLINGS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

By Nicole Pope

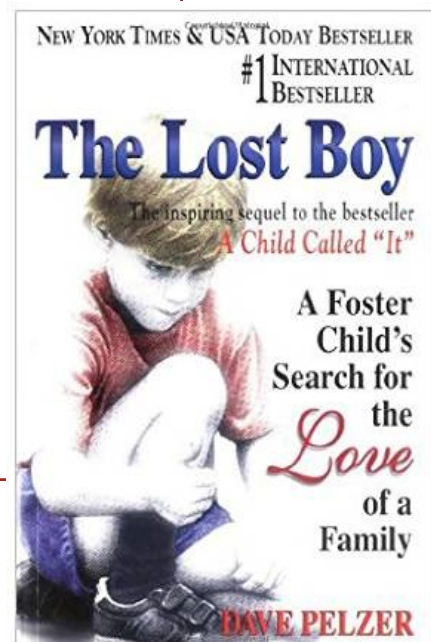
“Honor Killings in the Twenty-First Century” are the observations of one reporter as she travels the Middle East. She sees women and girls abused, taken advantage of, and killed all in the name of honor and familial sacrifice. Why do the women continue to allow themselves to be abused like this? Why aren’t men willing to stand against traditions instead of continuing to uphold these sacred values? The women and stories that Nicole Pope finds will invite you into a new way of thinking that most of the Western World couldn’t dream of.



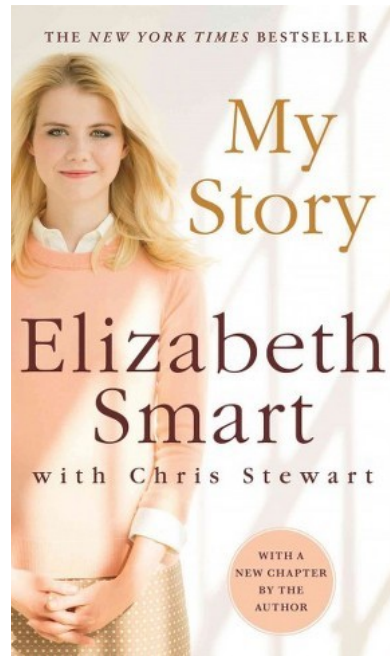
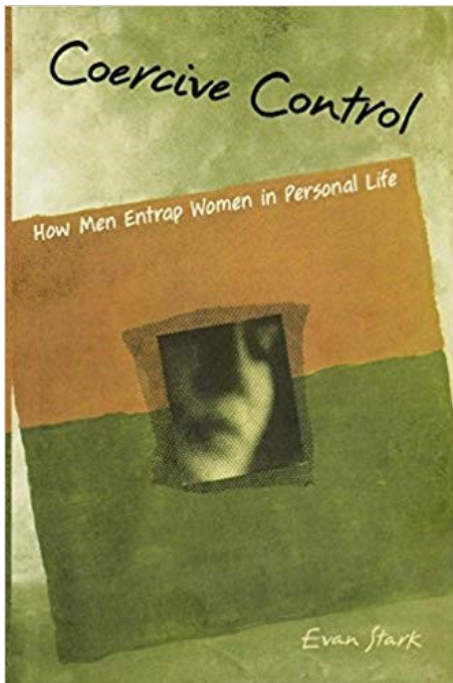
THE LOST BOY

By Dave Pelzer

“The Lost Boy: A Foster Child’s Search for the Love of a Family” is a true story about Dave Pelzer and what he went through as a child. Mr. Pelzer talks about his mother slapping, shoving, or only feeding him food scraps once a day, and we learn that she is doing this out of anger because she is fighting with her husband. The personal stories that Mr. Pelzer brings in to “The Lost Boy” will open your eyes about the topics of family violence and child abuse, and will also help you to know that this problem can happen to anyone at anytime.



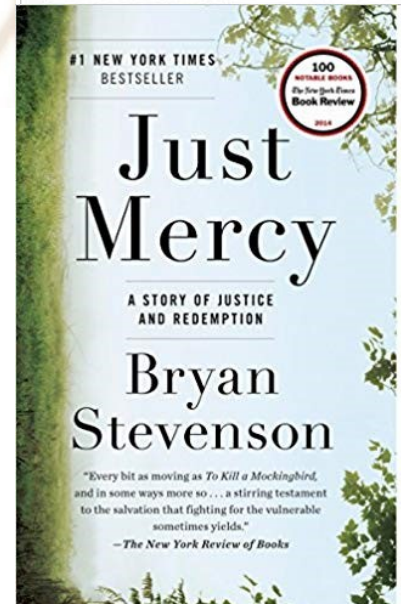
EVEN MORE BOOKS



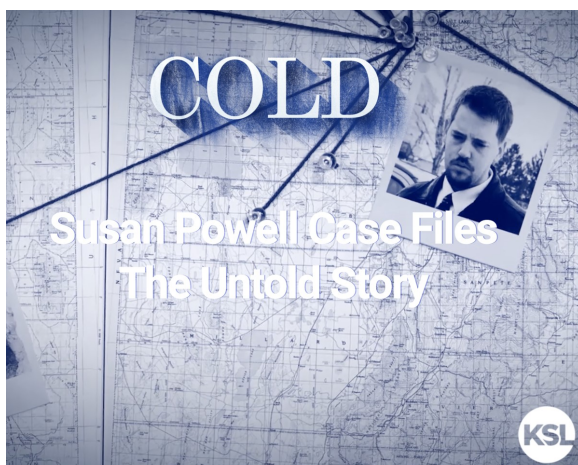
BLOOD AND EARTH

MODERN SLAVERY, ECOCIDE, AND THE SECRET TO SAVING THE WORLD

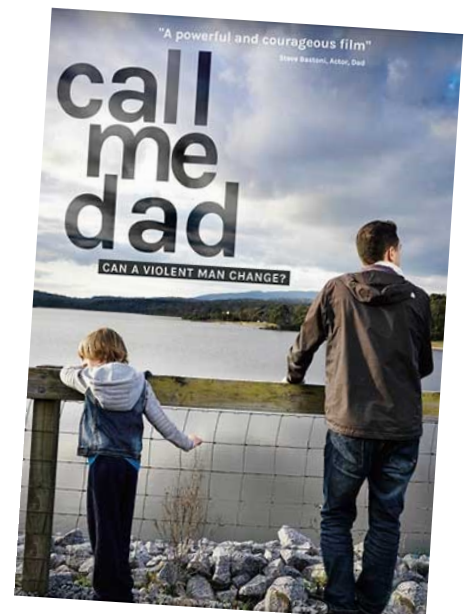
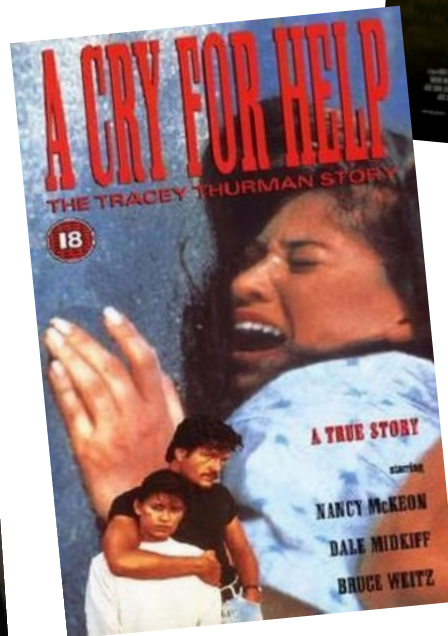
KEVIN BALES



PODCASTS



MOVIES



REFLECTIONS



So, I've learned turnabout is fair play it seems...give your students a reflection journal assignment and you as the teacher may well end up with a similar assignment in your future! This year has been an extremely gratifying learning experience for me. As I told the class on the first day, I may be a "Professor" but I don't consider myself a "real teacher" since this was my first class. I feel passionately about this topic—I have wanted very much to teach on Main Campus

because I feel like getting the information out to people who are early in their academic journey was critical to changing the dialogue in our community. Family violence affects us all—whether as an individual or as a friend or family member of someone who is a victim or survivor. When abuse of any type is allowed to be kept secret, people are hurt. To truly effect change, we have to understand that this can happen to anyone, even people who look like us, seem put together and strong in every other way and who have no outward indication of the pain and turmoil they are experiencing behind closed doors. By exposing the secret to light, we will create a generation of helpers who want to do something to make a change. This year has been empowering for me—seeing students take on a difficult subject, one that hit incredibly close to home for us all, and take it on with a passion to create a conversation to make a difference. To see others engage with a topic that means something to so many and not shy away from it, even though it is hard (it's a classic "wicked problem") gives me hope that this may be the generation to stop the tradition of abuse. With deep gratitude to an outstanding group of tomorrow's leaders in all professional arenas...I am now officially over my word limit.

—Toni Laskey MD



Over the course of this Praxis Lab I've earned a great deal of things. Things I had no idea about before this class, such as staggering statistics and effects of abuse. Things I didn't even know existed, such as child sex trafficking in Utah. Through this class I've found a new passion and even been able to determine my path of study. Before I wasn't sure which area of nursing I wanted to go into, but after learning about family violence and more specifically child abuse, I feel passionate about going into a career dedicated to helping children. I'm thankful that I can now teach others around me what I've been taught. I feel that it is important

that society is educated on family violence and its prevalence in our own society. I'm grateful that I can be a source of help for those who have been a victim of abuse. Before taking this course, I would not have known how to help if someone in my life was in a dangerous situation, but now I know many resources and know when and how to act. This Praxis Lab has taught me how to see

things a little bit differently and understand that a change needs to be made. I hope to continue to be an advocate for family violence awareness and hope that my knowledge of these things makes even the smallest change in our society.

–Kalen Gunter



I have grown so much from this experience as a whole. I am taking on new projects and tasks next year and I feel like I am fully equipped with all the tools to make me legitimate and influential in my community. I owe my preparedness to this Praxis Lab, and more specifically, my two wonderful instructors/mentors. If I ever need to reach out in the future or receive help for something, I can count on those individuals to be there for me and that is unique to any other classroom environment I have been in.

Because of this Lab, I was connected to a Professor who invited me to work in his research lab next fall centered around understanding trauma within kids and how we can combat the repercussions trauma brings. I will continue this research for the remainder of my collegiate career. My pediatric interest is deeply integrated into my college experience being that I will be completing Pediatric Clinical Research minor. I will also be dedicating my time as a Bennion Center Scholar to find a way to remedy the issue of interpersonal abuse in my community so that I can understand this issue from all fronts.

–Ayana Amaechi



What an awesome experience! After teaching FCS 5370 Family Violence for 22 years, I had the opportunity to team up with Dr. Laskey and work with students on an Honors Praxis Lab. Little did I know I would learn so much myself. Sharing the course gave it diverse perspective – and new experiences, including the snacks! Two professors contributed to our guest speakers, off site victim advocacy locations, and policy perspectives – for a more comprehensive experience. In the fall, I wondered if I could actually keep up with the readings Toni had assigned. I could empathize with students, but it was refreshing to know – yes, I kept up with my own class! In the process, I learned new child mistreatment terms –such as sentinel injuries, period of purple crying, and cognitive errors. And I also

discovered my ‘go to’ terms such as Munchausen’s by Proxy had a new name ‘medical child abuse.’ My own contribution was to expose romanticized violence (ruining Disney movies!) and challenge us to carefully reflect on language regarding abuse –recommending terms such as ‘completed suicide’ rather than ‘successful’ and pointing to words which infantilize adults. Student reflection journals were well thought out, and the assignments taught me to feedback on feedback—which gives the opportunity to really ruminate on what we had learned.

On the 22nd Day in October, the campus community experienced a profound loss- of Lauren McCluskey. This was where the brutality of our course topic went from hypothetical, to reality

and the grip was unyielding. Late January brought another intimate partner violent event when Sarah Hawley was murdered in her own home. Students felt the loss in their ranks. Dr. Laskey and I both have our daughters, attending the U. This could happen to them...or even those victims in mid/ later life. Praxis members encouraged campus wide and community commitment to improve our response in the face of interpersonal abuse. We learned more about the Lethality Assessment Protocol, the LINKline, victim advocates and other work being done on campus.

The second semester course structure challenged my own comfort zone, as I had not yet truly experienced the full level of student led interactions. The Honors Praxis Lab has changed my perspective permanently – and my future courses and students will be encouraged to be creative and produce a preventative message. At first I was nervous, but it was a delight to push through these feelings and listen to student project ideas. Production toward the goal seemed fluid and natural. I was amazed by the weekly progress made and most of all, the energy in the room. I wish to express my gratitude to Toni for having this idea, each student with their individual strengths and the magic of the group dynamic to really get things done! Congratulations to everyone!

- Sonia Salari PhD



While family violence has been an issue close to my heart for most of my life, being part of this Praxis Lab was a first step for me towards opening up about an often unspeakable history. I wanted to be part of this Praxis Lab in part because I'm trying to understand who I am and where I come from, but I came out of this lab with a spirit of empowerment—an understanding that even with cultural issues as deeply rooted as domestic violence, change can start with me and my own willingness to be open and stand up for others.

As the structure of our class exemplified, the foundation of social change is communication. It's the dispelling of ignorance through listening to the experiences of others, it's taking the time to learn and reflect on perspectives different from our own. As we learned over and over again in our class, often the people who are making the most important decisions aren't informed enough about these heart-wrenching topics. When we act out of ignorance, we are destined to make mistakes, and this class taught me that if I want to be a strong advocate for others, I need to be knowledgeable about the suffering people go through and what they need.

I am proud that our Praxis Lab took the time to listen and absorb new perspectives first, and then most importantly went out into the community to enact change, for far too often our learning grows and dies in the classroom.

Although it would be naïve to think our one little class could change the world by ending family violence, our own perspectives will be changed forever. I hope that as we each go out into our different fields we continue to be open and share what we have learned with those who we will love and work with every day. We can't change everyone's minds at once, but we can start with ourselves and speak the truth we've learned for all to hear.

—Natalie Van Orden



This Praxis Lab has been one of the most challenging yet rewarding things that I have accomplished throughout my college career. From the very beginning, I felt I was doing meaningful work and learning skills that will progress my life. The first semester I felt extreme gratitude to have learned about many things that were daunting yet important. I now know about the prevalence and reach that family violence has on our communities and in our lives. I find myself questioning a lot of structures put in place and wanting to better policy/procedure in particular to help victims of family violence. We learned to push the sentiment that every person is entitled to a life free from abuse from those who should keep them safe. I will carry this with me in everything I do. The second semester got me motivated to go out in my community to make a difference in the world. It is possible so long as you have passion and education. The meaning of higher education is to not only learn about a subject but to apply it in real world implications.

This Praxis Lab experience has been nothing short of amazing. Working alongside seven other motivated peers and two dedicated faculty has inspired me to be the best version of myself. I think that the Honors College has successfully implemented a program that takes students from diverse backgrounds and facilitated an environment for them to succeed in the journey of bettering wicked problems in their community. I am so grateful to have been a part of this process and hope that our catalyst of speaking about abuse and family violence will continue to impact our communities.

–Michelle Valdes



As I reflect on this past year, I know that I have become a better person through the research and work that we have put into this huge problem. Abuse isn't a problem that is going away unless we can change the character of every man woman and child in the world. We can at least begin the change here. The advocacy, speaking, tabling, and presentations that we have done will touch the lives of individuals and families for generations. I learned that working with a group of people that are all devoted to learning about a topic they want to change is so powerful! The things that we were able to accomplish while only meeting together one day a week for less than a year has changed hundreds of lives. I love this group of women that I was able to work with, and I learned so much from hearing their point of view.

This praxis lab has changed me for the better! I am going to be entering medical school this next fall and will take this new mentality with me in my career. I learned that it takes a village to help someone that is dealing with or has dealt with abuse in their lives. I will continue to be a reporter of abuse and an advocate for those who need my help. We did such great work together and now it is our job to keep it going.

–Dayne Moore



Although it may sound cliché, my participation in the Family Violence Praxis Lab has changed my life. I connected with the past by discussing the topic with my mom and interviewing Noah Hughes, a long-lost friend from elementary school. I realized the prevalence of domestic violence, and then questioned why I hadn't noticed it before. I became more compassionate and less self-centered. I wanted to engage in my community and adopted a mindset of "How can I help?" rather than "How does this benefit me?" or "What if I mess up?" Through action, I became empowered. I realized it's not hard to network with influential people in

the community when you have a goal in mind and are determined to make a positive impact. I also began to learn the art of asking for help. Working as a team has never been my strong suit, but with a class as great as this one, how could I not enjoy it? When a group of people driven by the same goal get together, they are unstoppable. As I continue to pursue a career in medicine, I hope to incorporate the belief that collaboration leads to a greater outcome. I also want to focus on the importance of trauma-informed care within the medical realm. Physical health begins with mental health, or as I now like to call it: brain health. This summer, I am excited to apply the knowledge gained in this class as a volunteer advocate with CAPSA. I want to give back to my community and open my eyes to the hidden epidemic of domestic violence in my rural hometown. I believe when we take chances and step outside of our comfort zone, we create opportunities for change both within ourselves and our communities.

—Sydney Worley



While this Praxis Lab has been very difficult at times, it has also been very rewarding to learn and understand what exactly is happening in our community. Our first semester was primarily based on hearing about different topics ranging from animal abuse to child abuse. Understanding that these issues were all very real problems here in Utah and in Salt Lake City was very shocking and hard to comprehend. After each discussion with our guest speakers, we would talk about how each problem impacted a victim, perpetrator, family member, and/or a witnesses, and we discovered ways that people from all professions can help, including developing solutions for intervention to

reduce these social problems. In the second semester, we were more focused on getting out on campus and spreading the word about our Interpersonal Abuse & U seminar. While tabling at the Marriott Library and a couple of different events, we were able to hear what people thought of our class and some stories people wanted to share about what they or a friend had gone through. This class motivated me to get out of my comfort zone, and the Honors College is truly helping its students to go out into the world to make a difference with each Praxis Lab class that they offer. With all of the work that we successfully did in this class, I know that my future will be more abuse and family violence oriented. I can't thank everyone enough for putting their best foot forward and striving to be the change. It was truly an honor to work with all of you.

—Lyra Gills



When I discovered the Family Violence Across the Life-Course Praxis Lab in spring 2018, I knew I needed to be a member of it. I joined the Praxis Lab for personal reasons – my family on both sides are survivors of every kind of family violence and interpersonal abuse you can think of. As for myself, I am a first-hand witness to the trauma and pain that domestic abuse wrecks on parents and children for generations and the years of work it takes to bring healing and peace. As a child witness to family violence in my own home, I took this course to better understand the events that took place in my life and the lives of those around me. To my greatest surprise and everlasting gratitude, I gained the knowledge and understanding I was seeking and much, much more.

As I studied about the violence and abuse that happens world-wide, I grappled with the comforting yet simultaneously discouraging realization that my family members are indeed, not the only ones; there were difficult days as lessons and topics hit close to home. But as I stayed in the struggle to learn and understand, I also met many people through guest speakers and class lecturers that were not just victims, but survivors. These people became my inspiration as I realized, I too, can be a survivor. I feel empowered through what I've learned in this Praxis Lab about my capabilities to heal and grow and help others through the healing process as well. I've learned that healthy relationships ARE possible and family can be the greatest source of joy, love, kindness, honesty and support.

I'm looking forward to starting my own family with my new husband and I believe the knowledge I've gained through my experiences in this course have prepared me in many ways to be a more kind and compassionate as well as informed and educated mother, Nurse, and leader in my community. And most of all, I gained some of the most loyal and supportive friends through the members of this Praxis Lab. These students and professors have become family to me. Perhaps this was the greatest gift of all.

–Emily Wahlquist

