

**From Victimization to a Culture of Peace: Applying a hybrid conceptual framework to theorize California's victim service organizations as a potential arena for positive peace**

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*Master's thesis in Peace and Conflict Transformation – May 2019*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although the name on this thesis is mine, I share this accomplishment with the many people whose kindness, courage and guidance have brought me here. I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Jemima García-Godos, for her time and extensive feedback, challenging me to become a sharper writer and better thinker. I would like to thank my mom and dad for all their love and sacrifice in giving me this opportunity, and my family— for supporting me in all my wild adventures. Lars, my bright star, that kept me grounded when I felt lost and hopeless and didn't know where to start. Ida—from start to finish we have shared our frustrations, procrastinations, motivation, and copious amounts of coffee; I am so grateful for your friendship. Lastly, to all my friends and peers, for their brilliant conversations and commiserations—Takk.

## ABSTRACT

Every day in American society, acts of violence are committed in the form of trauma, injustice and inequality. Within each victimization looms the potential for further destruction, but also lies an opportunity for healing and a pathway to peace. This thesis considers victim services as the frontline in encountering all forms of latent and overt violence—direct, structural and cultural. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the capacity of victim service organizations in fostering positive peace by treating direct violence, overcoming structural violence and challenging cultural violence through their services. This inquiry entails a close examination of the services available to victims of violent crime in California, analyzed for patterns and trends reflecting current State and community approaches to victimization. A mixed methods approach is employed for this purpose, producing an exhaustive database profiling all victim service organizations in the state of California for analysis through descriptive statistics and content analysis. A hybrid conceptual framework of *peace* and *victimization* studies is applied to the findings of the database in order to theorize victim service organizations as potential positive peacebuilding forums.

**Key Words:** Positive Peace, Victimhood, Victim Service Organizations, Cultural Violence

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

*“I look at intervention workers. Peace builders. Folks that understand the hood and understand the community that can help ease tensions instead of having these folks with guns and batons coming in from other neighborhoods.”*  
– Male, Los Angeles <sup>1</sup>

The above sentiment expressed by a victim participant in the 2014 *Untold Stories of California Crime Victims* survey speaks to the heart of this thesis in its exploration of victim needs and the larger discussion on intervention and peace building at the level where trauma, harm and violence find their stamping ground within American society.

In this statement of desire for peace in the community ‘from below’, the speaker echoes the concluding findings of two additional surveys from 2013 and 2019, in which victims of crime, often repeatedly victimized, have expressed the need for help beyond the current State response in policing and incarceration of the offender.<sup>2</sup> Turning an ear to the voices of victims and an eye to existing responses is the starting point for this thesis.

This chapter will first present the purpose, approach and research questions of this thesis, followed by the necessary background context for justification of the case study, concluding with motivations for research and a brief overview of the thesis structure.

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<sup>1</sup> Esq. Heather Warnken, LL.M, *Untold Stories of California Crime Victims 2014*, The Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law & Social Policy (Berkeley Law, 2014), <https://safeandjust.org/wp.../Untold-stories-of-California-crime-victims-3-31-14-1.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Survivors Speak 2019*, Californians for Safety and Justice (Alliance for Safety and Justice, 2019), [https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/resources\\_type/report-california-crime-victims-voices-findings-first-ever-survey-california-crime-victims-survivors/](https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/resources_type/report-california-crime-victims-voices-findings-first-ever-survey-california-crime-victims-survivors/); David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013* Californians for Safety and Justice (Alliance for Safety and Justice, 2013), [https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/BTB\\_XXII\\_IIIIE\\_3.pdf](https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/BTB_XXII_IIIIE_3.pdf).

## 1.1 Purpose and Research Questions

This thesis is informed by existing research and academic works on victimization and the shift in role that criminal justice systems can play in peace.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this research is to contribute to this discussion by exploring the potential of victim service organizations as an important social arena for fostering positive peace through meeting the needs of victims. To this end, this thesis is tasked with answering the following questions:

- How are victim service organizations in California currently organized, funded and made accessible?
- Do the victim service organizations reflect the needs expressed in the survey findings?
- How are victim services addressing victimization and agency of those they aim to serve?

This entails a close examination of the services available to victims of violent crime in California, to be analyzed for patterns and trends reflecting current State and community approaches to victimization. A mixed methods approach is employed for this purpose, producing an exhaustive database profiling all victim service organizations in the state of California for analysis through descriptive statistics and content analysis. A hybrid conceptual framework of *peace* and *victimization* studies is applied to the findings of the database in order to theorize victim service organizations as potential positive peacebuilding forums through their services addressing direct, cultural and structural violence.

## 1.2 Context

The following sub-sections provide critical background information from the criminology and victimology fields, as well as existing data and policy, thereby providing a justification and outlining both academic and personal motivation for this research. The term *victim* will be used at this point, as opposed to *survivor* or *defendant*, as it is the chosen jargon within the fields of study

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<sup>3</sup> Hal Pepinsky, "Peacemaking criminology," *Critical Criminology* 21, no. 3 (2013); Harold E. Pepinsky and Richard Quinney, *Criminology as peacemaking* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); Richard Quinney, "The way of peace: On crime, suffering, and service," *Criminology as peacemaking* (1991); Sandra Walklate, "Researching Victims of Crime: Critical Victimology," *Social Justice : a Journal of Crime, Conflict and World Order* 17, no. 3 (1990).



referenced here which are driven by the utility of the term and the need to clearly identify the actors and their roles within a specific, singular incident of crime.

Due to the inherent challenges in achieving reliable data on victimization, the rate of violent crime will be included in addition to rates of victimization in order to produce a more complete picture for context. The methodological and practical differences in data on violent crime (collected by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program and only includes crimes reported to law enforcement) and on victimization (collected by the Bureau of Justice through the National Crime Victimization Survey and excludes homicide) result in entirely different datasets but, when used together, work complimentary to each other and succeed in achieving the purpose of this background section – to gain an understanding of the current levels of violent victimization in California.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.2.1 Victim-Offender Overlap and Cycles of Violence

Traditionally in social research, *victims and offenders* were exclusive groups as distinct categories, consisting of different people, and thereby clearly and easily categorized, measured and evaluated; however, the reality of individuals being victims and/or offenders is more complex, and the victim-offender overlap is crucial to acknowledge when embarking on the subject of victimhood. The relationship between victimization and offending is well documented, and in fact remains the strongest empirical association documented within the field of criminology literature.<sup>5</sup> The overlap is supported by a plethora of findings stating that most victims of violent crime do not proceed to become offenders, however most offenders are also victims, having experienced victimization in their personal histories;<sup>6</sup> one study documents a correlation between repeat victimization and delinquency recidivism.<sup>7</sup> The victim-offender overlap is highly theorized in criminological study,

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, *The Nation's Two Crime Measures*, Bureau of Justice Statistics (2014); *The Nation's Two Crime Measures*, (2014).

<sup>5</sup> Wesley G Jennings, Alex R Piquero, and Jennifer M Reingle, "On the overlap between victimization and offending: A review of the literature," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17, no. 1 (2012).

<sup>6</sup> Margit Averdijk et al., "Violence Begets Violence... But How? A decision-making perspective on the victim-offender overlap," *Criminology* 54, no. 2 (2016); Robin Weeks and Cathy Spatz Widom, "Self-Reports of Early Childhood Victimization Among Incarcerated Adult Male Felons," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 13, no. 3 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.1177/088626098013003003>, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/088626098013003003>.

<sup>7</sup> Jen Jen Chang, John J Chen, and Ross C Brownson, "The role of repeat victimization in adolescent delinquent behaviors and recidivism," *Journal of adolescent health* 32, no. 4 (2003).

with some studies looking to general strain theory; this criminological theory proposes that individuals commit crime as a way to relieve psychological strain, by theorizing that victimization causes strain, which thereby leads to offending.<sup>8</sup> Other studies posit lifestyle theory to explain the victim-offender overlap<sup>9</sup>; regardless of the position taken, the relevant conclusion to this thesis is the consensus in the establishment of the fact that, in most cases, offenders are also victims and their experience of victimization cannot be ruled out as a significant factor in the perpetuating cycles of crime and violence.

Apart from the victim-offender overlap, it is also important to consider the violence and suffering perpetuation through repeated victimization and inter-generational cycles of violence.<sup>10</sup> The strong empirical correlation of repeat victimization shows that once victimized, the risk for future victimization increases.<sup>11</sup> A study<sup>12</sup> of homeless women supplements these findings by providing qualitative data in the form of narratives detailing the cyclical nature of victimization through exploring the personal experiences of women sexually and physically victimized in childhood; their victimization carried on into adulthood (from different perpetrators in the form of their chosen partners and associates) and, in many instances, their children became exposed to the same or similar victimization. This study is one among many that demonstrate the impactful and cyclical nature of violence and victimization.<sup>13</sup>

The cycles of violence and victim-offender overlap bring to the forefront the impact of violence not only on direct individual victims and their lives, but its damaging effects on the wider community as a whole through future offending and persistence through generations, perpetuating suffering. The significance of these findings, therefore, is not just their contribution to the study

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<sup>8</sup> Jillian J Turanovic and Travis C Pratt, "The consequences of maladaptive coping: Integrating general strain and self-control theories to specify a causal pathway between victimization and offending," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 29, no. 3 (2013).

<sup>9</sup> Mark T Berg, "The overlap of violent offending and violent victimization: Assessing the evidence and explanations," *Violent offenders: Theory, research, policy, and practice* (2012).

<sup>10</sup> Holly Bell, "Cycles within cycles: Domestic violence, welfare, and low-wage work," *Violence against women* 9, no. 10 (2003); Cathy Spatz Widom and Helen W Wilson, "Intergenerational transmission of violence," in *Violence and mental health* (Springer, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Wendi Goodlin and Christopher Dunn, "Three Patterns of Domestic Violence in Households: Single Victimization, Repeat Victimization, and Co-occurring Victimization," *Journal of Family Violence* 25, no. 2 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-009-9274-z>.

<sup>12</sup> Jennifer K Wesely and James D Wright, "From the inside out: Efforts by homeless women to disrupt cycles of crime and violence," *Women & Criminal Justice* 19, no. 3 (2009).

<sup>13</sup> Goodlin and Dunn, "Three Patterns of Domestic Violence in Households: Single Victimization, Repeat Victimization, and Co-occurring Victimization."

of the causes of crime, offending and victimization, but also on how it can inform the responses to victimization, in terms of the justice, medical and social needs that arise. The next section will argue for the case of California, presenting high rates of victimization and incarceration as support for the need of a system capable of addressing cycles of violence and accommodating the victim-offender overlap.

### 1.3 Case for California

The state of California is one of extreme contrast and color, evidenced by its vibrant ethnic diversity<sup>14</sup> as well as the economic disparity between counties, cities, and even adjacent neighborhoods.<sup>15</sup> California is home to the glamour of Hollywood, prosperity of Silicon Valley, and the vast suburban landscapes of the American dream; it is also home to the some of the higher rates of violent crime in the nation.



Figure 1.1 FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, "Crime Rates in California 2007-2017"

<sup>14</sup> Jacob Norda James Diebel, Orna Kretchmer, "California Demographics " (Statistical Atlas 2016). <https://statisticalatlas.com/state/California/Overview>.

<sup>15</sup> Caroline Danielson Sarah Bohn, *Income Inequality and the Safety Net in California*, Public Policy Institute of California (2016), <https://www.ppic.org/publication/income-inequality-and-the-safety-net-in-california/>.

Figure 1.1 is generated from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, a database of crime statistics collected from all law enforcement agencies in the nation allowing for comparison between counties, states and national averages.<sup>16</sup> The findings show a consistently higher rate of violent crime occurring in California in comparison with the average national rate; when compared individually to each U.S state, California's violent crime rate is significantly lower (between 10%-36%) than just 10 other states, out of 50 in total. To illustrate the impact of high crime rates on victimization, we can look to the California Crime Victim's Voices Survey, which found that 1 in 5 Californians were victims of crime in the last five years and over half of those were victims of violent crime.<sup>17</sup>

Additionally, the growing rate of incarceration illustrates that the current approaches to victimization are failing, and the finite government funds are being spent without effectively rehabilitating offenders nor meeting needs of victims. California is 18<sup>th</sup> lowest in ranking nationally for incarceration rates, at a rate of 331 per 100,000<sup>18</sup> following a series of criminal justice reforms to reduce incarceration after reaching its peak in 2006;<sup>19</sup> in comparison, the national average rate of incarceration is 655 per 100,000; however, the closest country with the second highest rate of incarceration is significantly lower – Turkey at 287 per 100,000 followed by Israel at 265 per 100,000. Countries such as the UK and Australia have an incarceration rate below 170 per 100,000, and neighboring Canada has a rate of 114 per 100,000, with Iceland currently achieving the lowest rate of 38 per 100,000.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to acknowledge California's rate of incarceration within both the national and global perspective, as it demonstrates that long prison sentences are one possible response to crime and victimization and is indeed the highly favored response in California when viewed relatively in the global context. The prolific reliance on incarceration as response to victimization, and the cost of doing so, is important to keep in mind when embarking on a discussion of victims' needs, the range of victim service organizations available and their capacities to meet those needs.

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<sup>16</sup> FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, "Crime Rates in California 2007-2017," (15 August 2018 2019).

<https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/explorer/state/california/crime/2007/2017>.

<sup>17</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013*

<sup>18</sup> "States of Incarceration: The Global Context 2018," The Prison Policy Initiative 2018, accessed June 4, 2018, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2018.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Hayes Justin Goss, *California's Changing Prison Population*, Public Policy Institute of California (2018 ), <https://www.ppic.org/publication/californias-changing-prison-population/>.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Wagner, "States of Incarceration: The Global Context 2018."

Not only does incarceration fail to disrupt cycles of violence, resulting in an ever-growing prison population, but it fails to meet the needs of victims in the process; the next section will illustrate this with facts on victimization and victim survey findings.

## 1.4 Victimization and Victim Needs

### 1.4.1 Voices of California's Victims and Survivors

Having discussed the rates of violent crime and incarceration, it is now necessary to consider the realities of victimization for a complete picture. The National Crime Victims Survey (NCVS) conducted annually by the Department of Justice through the Bureau of Justice Statistics program (BJS) does not provide state-specific victimization statistics, however the latest revised report released October 2018 (with data from 2016) establishes the disturbingly large dark figure of crime nation-wide, finding that less than half (44%) of violent victimization was reported to law enforcement.<sup>21</sup> This is a crucial fact informing further exploration of victim service organizations, including access to such services and compensation. An earlier BJS report, published August 2017, examined repeat victimization with data from 2005-14, concluding that the majority of victims experienced a single, nonfatal violent victimization; however, it remains that 19% of the victims were repeatedly victimized, of which 14% experienced up to five violent victimizations during the year.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, a research report conducted by Berkeley Law at the University of California, Berkeley utilized qualitative interviews and presented key findings demonstrating the lack of accessibility to trauma recovery services for repeat victims; of those who did access services, it was after a significant period of time and motivated by reasons other than their initial direct violent victimization experience, leading to the “collateral consequences of repeat victimization [to] grow without effective services and stability.”<sup>23</sup> The concluding recommendations state the need for development of trauma-informed and multi-disciplinary responses, and better promotion of access to victim services that are holistic, psychosocial intervention, working not only to address immediate concerns but *towards long-term stabilization and mitigation of risk.*<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Grace Kena Rachel E. Morgan, *Criminal Victimization, 2016*, Bureau of Justice Statistics (2018), <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv16re.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Jennifer L. Truman Barbara A. Oudekerk, *Repeat Violent Victimization, 2005-14*, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (2017), <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/rvv0514.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> Heather Warnken, *Untold Stories of California Crime Victims 2014*, 17.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

The repeated California Crime Survivors survey conducted by Californians for Safety and Justice in 2019<sup>25</sup> echoed findings from their 2013 survey on the reporting practices of crime victims, the impact of their victimization, the efficacy of existing services and the attitudes of victims towards the criminal justice system in California. Findings from the survey supported those of the Berkeley Law report, with key findings on the need for more community outreach for victims' services including better streamlining of victims' services with less barriers for access, as well as victims' expressed desire for a shift away from over-investment into incarceration and more investment in rehabilitative programs, crime prevention, and mental health/ substance abuse treatment programs for both offenders and the community. In light of the victim-offender overlap and the cyclical nature of violence discussed previously, the findings derived from victimization data make sense in their consensus on the importance of effective and accessible victim service providers to address not only the healing but the minimization of future violence in the community.

In summary, California's large population combined with high rates of crime, victimization, incarceration and large entitlement to the federal victim compensation fund, combined with the importance of effective service organizations, makes California victim service organizations a prime candidate for case study of victim service organizations as peacebuilders.

## **1.5 Motivation**

As discussed hereto, violent victimization is a reality for much of the population in California, and affects not only the direct victims of a particular crime but has wider implications for the community as a whole. Evidence has been presented regarding the complexity of the victim-offender overlap and the enduring cycles of violence, along with empirical evidence on violent crime, incarceration, and repeat victimization, for the purpose of establishing the important role occupied by victim service organizations in not only address healing in the aftermath of victimization but in building the capacity to mitigate risk and build back lives of those harmed by violent crime. Based on these empirical findings in combination with the unique characteristics of possessing a large population, high rate of violent crime and wide range of victim service organizations, make California a rich case for study. The aim of this thesis, therefore, is to investigate the current capacities for addressing the violence and harm in California through an

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<sup>25</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Survivors Speak 2019*.

exploration of victim service organizations, utilizing a conceptual hybrid framework of peace and victimology concepts.

Additionally, the personal motivation for this thesis is the researcher's own background in Criminal Justice and academic interest in the construction of crime, justice and peacemaking 'at home.' Despite their close implications of one another, criminal justice studies are predominantly concentrated on justice system processes and mechanisms at the local government level, while peace studies are largely preoccupied with large-scale conflict, violence, justice and peace mechanisms, often at the global level. The topic of this thesis, therefore, resides at the nexus of the criminal justice and peace studies that is rich in contribution for both disciplines yet is often overlooked in favor of their preferred scales for observation. This project is a result of the opportunity provided through an interdisciplinary approach and the curiosity for exploring the crime-justice-peace nexus through the application of concepts from the Peace discipline to a traditionally Criminal Justice domain. The pathway to this specific research design is further elaborated in the methodology chapter.

## **1.6 Overview**

Having provided a firm foundation for the study via background context, the remaining structure of the thesis will consist of a conceptual framework (Chapter 2), followed by research design and a justification of the chosen methodology (Chapter 3). The second part of the thesis presents the database (Chapter 4) and explores its findings at length utilizing primarily descriptive statistics and, to a lesser extent, content analysis (Chapter 5). The last section applies the conceptual framework to the database findings (Chapter 6), identifying forms of violence in the case study and how victim service organizations address them; this discussion informs the concluding arguments (Chapter 7) and provides suggestions for future research, as well as implications for future peace/ victimization research and policy.

## 2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will discuss the conceptual framework initially explored through extensive literature review of the field but fully developed after learning database results, as part of a mixed methods approach driven primarily by inductive reasoning. The concepts presented here will be utilized as lenses with which to view the database and understand its findings in order to produce a meaningful discussion. In this way, the conceptual framework will serve as the vital link between findings and analysis.

The first subchapter (2.1) discusses the central conceptual pillar of *victimhood* from the perspective of radical victimology and informs the remaining pillars of the framework. The next subchapter (2.2) allocates this thesis within the peace studies discipline by first discussing the concept of *positive peace* as per Johan Galtung, arriving at the contested theory of peacemaking criminology, as per the works of Harold E. Pepinsky, Richard Quinney and John F. Wozniak, with a brief rumination on the constructions of *crime* and *justice*. In conclusion, the related concepts of *restorative justice* and *empowerment* will be discussed as a link for the established *victimhood* and *positive peace* concepts, producing a conceptual framework for analysis.

### 2.1 Victimology

#### 2.1.1 Radical and Critical Perspectives

The concept of victimhood finds its home in victimology, usually considered a specialization within the study of criminology, and is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach to victimization—the harm suffered by the victim.<sup>26</sup> The choice for utilizing this particular approach to victim study is derived from the fact that criminology has been in the past deemed largely a study of “offenderology”<sup>27</sup>; victimization, as understood in victimology, moves away from the preoccupation with the offense and the offender, and towards the examination of the ways that harm can be perpetuated on the victim and how this is handled by society, legal institutions and the individual victims themselves.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Andrew Karmen, *Crime victims: An introduction to victimology* (Cengage Learning, 2012).

<sup>27</sup> Harold Takooshian et al., "Remembering Catherine "Kitty" Genovese 40 years later: A public forum," *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless* 14, no. 1-2 (2005).

<sup>28</sup> Karmen, *Crime victims: An introduction to victimology*.



This thesis will primarily employ a *radical victimology perspective*, as developed by Richard Quinney and Hal Pepinsky, in contrast to the traditional *positivist* or *conservative victimology* perspective.<sup>29</sup> Radical victimology, developed in response to the critiques of positivist victimology, looks beyond the clearly quantifiable, measurable and visible victimization, and shifts its focus to exploring the complexities of victimization, victim identities and the role of the State.<sup>30</sup> While positivist victimology has focused on lifestyle risk factors and individual vulnerability, radical victimology is informed by Marxist thought, and considers the role of capitalism and the power structures, as well as the broader socioeconomic factors that disproportionately affect victimization, paying special attention to the geographic and social stratification of victimization. The radical perspective views the victim as part of a society divided by class, and thus contextualizes the victimization that occurs, as well as expands the concept of victim beyond interpersonal violence to all who have experienced victimization through police force, war, the correctional system, state violence, and oppression of any sort.

In response to criticisms of radical victimology, the critical victimology perspective goes one step further by incorporating a feminist perspective, acknowledging factors of gender, age and race, unlike the radical perspective which focuses primarily on class differences in increasing vulnerability to victimization.<sup>31</sup> Critical victimology also problematizes the State and challenges the social construction of crime and justice on the grounds of patriarchy, racial and gender inequalities; however, this perspective goes beyond the scope of this thesis' objectives, therefore the radical perspective, with its focus on contextualized victimization and socioeconomic stratification in victimization, is most useful for our level of analysis examining victim service organizations within the highly varying living standards in the state of California.

### 2.1.2 Victimhood

As stated, the radical victimology perspective conceptualizes victimhood in a much broader way than previously done, widening the definition of *who* is a victim, and considers not only the individual experience of a particular victim, but also accounts for the geographic and social space the victim occupies when considering victimization. If *victimization* is understood as harm that is

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<sup>29</sup> Pepinsky and Quinney, *Criminology as peacemaking*.

<sup>30</sup> David O Friedrichs, "Victimology: A consideration of the radical critique," *Crime & Delinquency* 29, no. 2 (1983).

<sup>31</sup> Walklate, "Researching Victims of Crime: Critical Victimology."

perpetrated upon a person, and *victimhood* is the identity that is socially constructed in response to the harm<sup>32</sup>, the concept of *victimhood*, at its very basic, entails an establishing of legitimacy; it is more than a claim to status but also a claim to identity<sup>33</sup>. Not only does it become a question of *who* is a victim and *what* their experience is, but also *where* and *when* this takes places in the existing political structures.<sup>34</sup> Political scientist Dr. Tami Amanda Jacoby's development of a theory of victimhood formulates victimhood as a grievance-based identity that involves a series of necessary political processes.<sup>35</sup> Not only is victimhood inextricably fused with a spectrum of intense emotion, she posits, it is also highly dependent on the particular political regime and political culture in which victims reside at the time of the victimization.

The dichotomy of the "ideal" versus the "blameworthy" victim is a useful starting point in understanding the concept of victimhood. Criminologist Nils Christie's concept of 'ideal victim' is at one end of the spectrum and designates a desirable type, one who is vulnerable and weak, morally superior, blameless in their victimization, being attacked by an unknown, big and bad offender.<sup>36</sup> Given the empirically established and verified phenomenon of the victim-offender overlap, cycles of violence and disproportionate victimization along socioeconomic lines, however, *victimhood* is evidently a lot more complex and ambiguous.

The last characteristic of the ideal victim is the possession of power; the ideal, or *pure*, victim has to possess the ability to not only be granted victim status, but to *claim* it, and thereby be entitled to the benefits that come with victimhood in pursuing justice, eligibility for compensation and having a voice.<sup>37</sup> This element ultimately constitutes a shift of power from the offender within the offense, back to the victim, through procedural and substantive rights (e.g. reporting of offense, testifying for oneself, impact statements on sentencing, receiving financial compensation, etc.) When employing the radical victimology perspective to the ideal victim, we

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<sup>32</sup> Tami Amanda Jacoby, "A Theory of Victimhood: Politics, Conflict and the Construction of Victim-based Identity," *Millennium* 43, no. 2 (2015): 527, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829814550258>, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0305829814550258>.

<sup>33</sup> Jacoby, "A Theory of Victimhood: Politics, Conflict and the Construction of Victim-based Identity," 512.

<sup>34</sup> Kieran McEvoy and Kirsten McConnachie, "Victimology in transitional justice: Victimhood, innocence and hierarchy," *European Journal of Criminology* 9, no. 5 (2012), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370812454204>, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1477370812454204>.

<sup>35</sup> Jacoby, "A Theory of Victimhood: Politics, Conflict and the Construction of Victim-based Identity," 528.

<sup>36</sup> Nils Christie, "The ideal victim," in *From crime policy to victim policy* (Springer, 1986).

<sup>37</sup> Joris van Wijk, "Who is the 'little old lady' of international crimes? Nils Christie's concept of the ideal victim reinterpreted," *International Review of Victimology* 19, no. 2 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034312472770>, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0143034312472770>.

recognize that differences in class, primarily the geographic and social status of an individual, determines his/her access to this power; for instance, in crimes where the victim, for whatever reasons, does not report their victimization to law enforcement, the victim is precluded from the ideal victim status and their victimhood becomes contested.

In further contrast to the ‘ideal victim’, the ‘blameworthy victim’ is posited as a stark opposite, seen as contributing and causing their own victimization, and thereby not entitled to the benefits of victimhood.<sup>38</sup> No longer considered *pure*, the blameworthy victim is denied victim status because of their past or current choices and/or actions, which are perceived as facilitating victimization, despite the continuing legitimacy of the crime committed against the victim. Claiming victim status, then, entails a more complex social process than simply a matter of identifying the victimized party within an offense. An illustration of this complexity from international conflict is the case of child soldiers, who are initially victimized and then go on to perpetrate violent crimes themselves. Their return to the general public is often problematic as their victimization is seen as less and starkly different to the victimization experienced by the community, often directly at the hands of those child soldiers<sup>39</sup>; this situation illustrates how the nature of victimhood as a political and social construction results in precluding the opportunity of victimhood for the child soldiers, despite a recognition of their victimization experience in being recruited and forced to offend at a young age and without the ability to consent or resist. An example in the sphere of interpersonal crime is the case of domestic violence, in which victimhood can be made complicated due to prevailing domestic violence myths—e.g. the victim’s “choice” to stay with the abuser; the victims are assigned a ‘blameworthy’ victim status, particularly in cases of abused women whose children are then also victimized by her partner due to the victim’s “choice” to stay.

Another current example illustrating the conceptualization of victimhood as grievance-based identity dependent on political processes, is the recent development of the #MeToo movement and the ensuing debates surrounding victimhood in regards to sexual and gender based victimization. The movement was conceived of as a call for awareness and can be seen as one

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<sup>38</sup> Christina Policastro and Brian K. Payne, "The Blameworthy Victim: Domestic Violence Myths and the Criminalization of Victimhood," *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 22, no. 4 (2013/04/01 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2013.775985>, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2013.775985>.

<sup>39</sup> T Betancourt et al., "Sierra Leone's Former Child Soldiers: A Follow-Up Study of Psychosocial Adjustment and Community Reintegration " *Child Development* 81, no. 4 (2010).

development along a long continuum in the historical fight for recognition and visibility for the rampant nature of sexual harassment and sexual assault. The movement posits the problem of sexual victimization as a product of toxic masculinity and social norms, and the underlying patriarchal structures that facilitate it.<sup>40</sup> It has led to reforms in all sectors of society, from federal legislation to the medical field, arts and sports, including several prosecutions of highly respected, accomplished, often celebrated, men in power across all domains. The movement presents an interesting case study in observing Jacoby's formulation of victimhood as identity forming within political processes, because the movement can be seen as an invitation into victimhood, extending eligibility for claim to grievance-based identity, to women previously recognizing their experiences as harmful without identifying as victim or partaking in victimhood until #MeToo. This case illustrates the key distinguishing characters of victimization versus victimhood; having one's experience recognized as suffering harm—our chosen operational definition of victimization—does not suffice for a legitimate claim to a grievance-based identity—our operational definition of victimhood—and the benefits that come with it.

## **2.2 The Concept of Peace**

### **2.2.1 Forms of Violence**

The second pillar of this conceptual framework is the concept of peace, specifically Johan Galtung's largely uncontested typology of negative and positive peace. Peace, traditionally understood as the antonym of war, becomes more nuanced in Galtung's conception depending on the types of violence present, which he also conceives of as being either narrowly defined—physical violence and killing—or expanded more broadly to encompass all activities which contribute to a growing gap between potential and actual achievement.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, types of violence are distinguished in their action dimensions; direct violence is differentiated from cultural and structural violence by the presence of manifest levels of violence as opposed to latent level of violence. Therefore, it is imperative to first understand the typology of violence to understand what constitutes a negative or a positive peace.

In Galtung's formulation, each type of violence constitutes a single point with direct, mutually affective connections to the other two, forming a Conflict Triangle. Direct violence takes

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<sup>40</sup> Jennifer L. Airey, "#MeToo," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 37, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>41</sup> Johan Galtung, "Violence, peace, and peace research," *Journal of peace research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 168.

shape as overt physical/ psychological harm – visible actions— and is therefore most readily detected, while structural violence is more subtle and cultural violence even more so. Structural violence houses a latent form of violence—harmful attitudes and assumptions— that is present in social structures, such as sexism, racism, discrimination, and other social injustices. Cultural violence also operates on latent level violence in its provision of legitimization for the direct and structural violence; this is accomplished through cultural artifacts such as religion, art, and norms that cultivate fear, hate, suspicion, etc.<sup>42</sup> In short, latent violence entails the harmful attitudes, assumptions and beliefs which produces structural and cultural violence, that can then – at a critical moment— become manifest through perpetrating harm directly (direct violence).

Given this typology of violence, peace can be either negative, in which there is absence of direct violence but persisting structural and cultural violence, or positive, in which the cultural and social structures are not only free of violence but actively promote means for peaceful, productive conflict resolution.<sup>43</sup> In this conception, positive peace cannot be said to have been achieved by any State or society to date; Galtung argues that even liberal democratic States today with their incorporation of gender equality, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws have achieved only a negative peace due to the continuing and perpetuating nature of institutionalized latent violence such as racism, sexism, nationalism, ethnocentrism, ableism, classism, speciesism, etc.<sup>44</sup> In fact, Galtung views the U.S. as having a dual identity as both a republic and an empire, in which the republican qualities of the U.S. espouse positive values of liberty, individual rights, dynamism and pioneering creativity while the U.S. as an empire is responsible for the culture and structures of violence embedded with values that promote extreme materialism, social inequity, arrogance hypocrisy and aggression.

Despite the lack of a war environment domestically, the U.S. can only be seen as enjoying a negative peace because of the persisting latent forms of violence – the harmful beliefs and assumptions held by American society – which results in continuing and powerful forms of structural and cultural violence. Evidence supporting the existence of these types of violence are many, from the *war on drugs* (which has contributed to soaring rates of incarceration with

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<sup>42</sup> Johan Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, vol. 14 (Sage, 1996), 200.

<sup>43</sup> Johan Galtung, *A theory of peace: Building direct structural cultural peace* (Transcend University Press, 2013), 46.

<sup>44</sup> Johan Galtung, "The state of the world," *Journal of Futures Studies* 12, no. 1 (2007); Johan Johan Galtung, "The Fall of the US Empire—And Then What?: Successors, Regionalization or Globalization? US Fascism or US Blossoming," (Oslo: Transcend University Press, 2009).

overrepresented minority and low-income populations, coining the U.S. justice system as a “warehousing of the surplus poor”) to the infamous *war on terrorism*, which has allowed large scale loss of human life through U.S. aggression abroad.

It is important to note that Galtung’s peace is defined in stark contrast to the liberal peace enjoyed by most Western states today, as it provides an entirely different framework for analysis. The liberal peace is supported as an ideal by the democratic peace theory, which is rooted in empirical evidence demonstrating the absence of violent conflict between liberal democratic states; this fact is championed as proof of liberal democratic States as being peaceful regimes— a conclusion readily adopted and widely used as justification for aggressive foreign policy towards non-liberal regimes.<sup>45</sup> Galtung’s nuanced formulation of violence and peace however, challenge this and other theories; it argues the rampant structural and cultural violence as precluding the possibility of positive peace; therefore, the liberal peace achieved to date can only be said to enjoy a negative peace—a narrow and simplistic understanding of peace.<sup>46</sup> Having established the threshold for negative peace—lack of overt violent conflict, the next section will discuss *positive peace*, and how this concept is important for our framework in analyzing victim service organizations.

### **2.3 Positive Peace**

Positive peace is not merely a lack of direct, cultural and structural types of violence but rather the presence of systems and institutions working to productively manage conflict, which is handled in such a way that all parties “win” in the outcome because they consider peace to be the ultimate goal.<sup>47</sup> While negative peace entails the cultivation of harmful attitudes and beliefs embedded in social culture (which then justify harmful social structures and institutions), positive peace requires the cultivation of attitudes and beliefs that open avenues for communication and understanding across society. Positive peace entails pro-active engagement at the grassroots level (in addition to macrolevel institutions in the form of policies addressing conflict) that serve to build up social

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<sup>45</sup> David E Spiro, "The insignificance of the liberal peace," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (1994).

<sup>46</sup> Spiro, "The insignificance of the liberal peace."

<sup>47</sup> Johan Galtung, *Conflict transformation by peaceful means: The Transcend method* (2000).

structures and institutions with the capacity to generate a sustainable peace. In this way, positive peace is not merely a state of being, but a never-ending process.<sup>48</sup>

Critics of *positive peace* have focused on the issue of employing a value driven concept in research, and the difficulty, perhaps impossibility, of operationalizing positive peace. Galtung originally defines positive peace as “the integration of human society,” which begs the question, *what does positive peace look like, in practice? What qualifies as affirming positive peace?* In response, Galtung re-defined the concept, acknowledging his changing definitions as part of the difficult process of developing the intentionally broad and inclusive concept of *positive peace*.<sup>49</sup> In a step towards operationalizing the concept, Galtung defined positive peace as *social justice*, specifically activities aimed at ending *structural violence*— a concept with more promise and possibility for quantification—demonstrated by Galtung and Hoivik’s research in estimating the toll of structural violence by utilizing demographic data.<sup>50</sup>

Despite this refined approach, the criticisms of positive peace and the typology of violence persisted, namely deeming the concepts as subjective and normative, and therefore problematic for rigorous academic study. However, the wide and inclusive nature of the concept which draws criticisms for their broadness are also precisely the strengths of the concept, particularly in its capacity for a wide range of study (from interpersonal to international). As Gleditsch et al. describe in their review of peace research, the failure of the peace research field to further grapple with developing the positive peace concept resulted in peace research which has come to be rather a study of conflict and war instead of peace, with its focus steadfast on traditional conflict— international and, more recently, civil conflict and intrastate conflict— and the liberal peace framework.<sup>51</sup> Gleditsch et al. demonstrate how even the small minority of articles on positive peace (evidenced by relative number of citations to conflict and violence articles), nonetheless are oriented in contributing to ‘overcoming negative peace.’<sup>52</sup> This thesis contributes to positive peace as victim service organizations will be examined in their utility, *not* in preventing recidivism or

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<sup>48</sup> Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Félix E Martín, "Critical analysis of the concept of peace in international relations," *Peace Research* 37, no. 2 (2005).

<sup>50</sup> Nils Petter Gleditsch, Jonas Nordkvelle, and Håvard Strand, "Peace research—Just the study of war?," *Journal of Peace Research* 51, no. 2 (2014): 149.

<sup>51</sup> Jørgen Johansen, "Peace Research Needs to Re-Orient," in *Peace Studies in the Chinese Century* (Routledge, 2017).

<sup>52</sup> Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, and Strand, "Peace research—Just the study of war?," 152.

re-offending (although they may well contribute to some extent), but rather in their contributions to facilitate healing processes and build resilience.

The prescriptions for negative peace involve peacemaking—the ceasing of overt violence – and peacekeeping – preventing overt violence but not addressing the latent forms of violence; however, positive peace requires peacebuilding – all manner of activities which confront the harmful thoughts (latent violence) and address root causes to work towards eliminating the fundamental contradictions underlying the conflict, unifying all parties under a shared goal of peace in the process.<sup>53</sup> Although the peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding are concepts developed within peace research to describe peace processes in international conflict, this paper applies these concepts to the present case study, in which high rates of violent victimization constitutes *direct violence*, classist and racist attitudes constitute *cultural violence*, which then results in a concentration of violent victimization to low income and low social status areas – *structural violence*. Chapter 5 will develop this application further and theorize victim service organizations as important arenas with capacities for peacebuilding, as defined in this framework.

## **2.4 Peacemaking criminology**

The convergence of peace studies and criminology has been most notably attempted with *peacemaking criminology*, primarily credited to Pepinsky and Quinney, and is housed within the critical criminology field. Though peacemaking criminology is primarily concerned with theorizing the role of the criminal justice system in society, it is a relevant theory to inform our conceptual hybrid framework because of the original way in which peacemaking criminologists envision the role of justice systems as not only addressing direct violence but promoting peace through being informed by social justice. Operating very much within a Galtung conceptualization, peacemaking criminology goes beyond addressing direct violence through traditional study of crime and deviance, and is aware of existing structures of violence, holding social justice as its core concern.<sup>54</sup> Rather than remaining as a solely reactive and largely punitive system, peacemaking criminology advocates for a pro-active approach where the criminal justice system

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<sup>53</sup> Galtung, *Conflict transformation by peaceful means: The Transcend method*.

<sup>54</sup> John F Wozniak, "Toward a theoretical model of peacemaking criminology: An essay in honor of Richard Quinney," *Crime & Delinquency* 48, no. 2 (2002): 220.



and corrections serve as a catalyst for harm reduction and transformation<sup>55</sup>. Simply put, the essence of peacemaking criminology mandates diagnostics of underlying causes for harm within the social structures as opposed to solely addressing the symptoms, as traditional criminology has done. This understanding of justice in society is useful in informing our analysis of victim service organizations and their approach.

Another hallmark of peacemaking criminology is the broader understanding of crime as harm; therefore, peacemaking criminology extends its unit of inquiry beyond street crime to include political corporate white collar, environmental crime, organized crime and “victimless” crime—and links these crimes with social harms of the interpersonal kind – negative stereotyping, aggression, hostility, despair, addiction, social structural – alienation, poverty, religious persecution, sexism, racism, and international – imperialism, terrorism, nuclear destruction, trade deficits, and ecological damage.<sup>56</sup> In this way, peacemaking criminology as a theoretical model is concerned with linking crime type with social harm type(s).<sup>57</sup> Although facing a similar challenge of theorization as Galtung’s conception of peace, peacemaking criminology draws upon a rich pool of varying sources for its construction—feminism, anarchism, Marxism, Buddhism, humanism (to name a few)—and thereby exemplifies the potential for understanding what legacies and current social structures lead to harm that is potentially entirely avoidable and *how* they do so, by critically examining all faces of social organization and looking outside the current, accepted frameworks.<sup>58</sup>

Lastly, peacemaking criminology presumes the need for a process of change that begins with the micro – a transformation within the individual – and only then proceeds to enact change in the macro – society at large;<sup>59</sup> similar to an emancipatory human security framework,<sup>60</sup> peacemaking criminology envisions the process of trust-building as the necessary first step.<sup>61</sup> In this way, structural and cultural violence—the harmful ideas and attitudes that become embedded in the social structure as violence-perpetuating mechanisms—are targeted within the individual

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<sup>55</sup> John Fuller Michael Braswell, Bo Lozoff, *Corrections, Peacemaking and Restorative Justice* (ROUTLEDGE, 2001).

<sup>56</sup> Pepinsky and Quinney, *Criminology as peacemaking*; Quinney, "The way of peace: On crime, suffering, and service."

<sup>57</sup> Paddy Hillyard and Steve Tombs, "From 'crime' to social harm?," *Crime, law and social change* 48, no. 1-2 (2007); Michael Braswell, *Corrections, Peacemaking and Restorative Justice*.

<sup>58</sup> Wozniak, "Toward a theoretical model of peacemaking criminology: An essay in honor of Richard Quinney."; Michael Braswell, *Corrections, Peacemaking and Restorative Justice*.

<sup>59</sup> Michael Braswell, *Corrections, Peacemaking and Restorative Justice*.

<sup>60</sup> Ali Bilgic, *Rethinking security in the age of migration: Trust and emancipation in Europe* (Routledge, 2013).

<sup>61</sup> Michael Braswell, *Corrections, Peacemaking and Restorative Justice*, 37-39.

psyche first and foremost. This process will be argued for as taking place in the way that victim service organizations cultivate peace by treating individuals first and targeting communities through individual transformation. Critics of peacemaking criminology have pointed to the lack of blueprint, much like the critiques of Galtung's positive peace, as an inapplicable concept in its ambiguous definition. However, the same defending argument applies, in that the broadness of the definition can also be construed as its strength, allowing for rich contribution through interdisciplinary engagement of the concept.

## **2.5 Restorative Justice**

In our conceptual framework, *positive peace* and *victimhood* are the core concepts for analysis of the empirical findings on victim service organizations and for theorizing the role of victim service organizations in peacebuilding. The concept of *restorative justice* serves as the third and final component. It is a link between *positive peace* and *victimhood* because it contains the premises of both by a) challenging traditional notions and pathways of justice, and b) centers around the experience of victimization and victims as agents through their engagement as equal stakeholders in restorative processes. To further develop this idea, it is first necessary to understand restorative justice as a concept or a theory and divorce it from restorative justice as a practice.

### **2.5.1 Beyond Recidivism**

Restorative justice (RJ) has been written, theorized and implemented in practice for over three decades and continues to be debated and developed to this day.<sup>62</sup> The applications of RJ—often called restorative practice or process— have been far reaching—in indigenous traditions of peacemaking circles, RJ alternatives to punitive disciplinary action in schools, Victim-Offender Dialogues/ Mediation for rehabilitation of criminal offenders, etc. Restorative justice in the mainstream has become inextricably linked with offender rehabilitation, primarily in its widely documented impact on reducing recidivism and (to a lesser extent studied) positive impact on the lives of victim participants.<sup>63</sup> However, our interest is to go beyond recidivism rates and

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<sup>62</sup> David Miers et al., *Mapping restorative justice : developments in 25 European countries* (Leuven: European Forum for Victim-Offender Mediation and Restorative Justice, 2004).

<sup>63</sup> Jeff Bouffard, Maisha Cooper, and Kathleen Bergseth, "The effectiveness of various restorative justice interventions on recidivism outcomes among juvenile offenders," *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice* 15, no. 4

rehabilitation and consider the principles of restorative justice that apply to positive peace and victimhood in their approach to addressing violence, both structural and direct. This section will therefore discuss the philosophical foundations of restorative justice as a concept to demonstrate how RJ presents one possibility for bridging the tenants of positive peace and the concept of victimhood within the context of violent crime.

### 2.5.2 Restorative Justice and Social Harm

RJ has no singular, accepted definition, but is often cited in John Braithwaite’s largely accepted summation as a “*process* where all stakeholders affected by an *injustice* have an opportunity to discuss how they have been affected by the injustice and to decide what should be done to *repair the harm* [emphasis added.]”<sup>64</sup> This formulation echoes the positive peace concept (2.2) namely as being process of social justice which confronts both the underlying mechanisms of harm (structural violence) and treats the immediate damage (direct violence) caused by harm. The overlapping of restorative justice with peacemaking criminology is evident in one of its distinctive premises; not only does peacemaking criminology challenge the social construction of crime by considering social harms as its unit of inquiry, but in its ontological orientation that the harm and the offender causing harm cannot be removed from society, as is posited in the traditional criminal justice conceptualization. Rather, “peacemaking criminology calls upon us to refuse to invest in a social ethic that separates us from one another and instead to visualize all people—



Figure 2.1 Wozniak, "Toward a theoretical model of peacemaking criminology: An essay in honor of Richard Quinney," 221.

(2017); Kristin Bain et al., "Restorative justice and recidivism: A meta-analysis," (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012).

<sup>64</sup> John Braithwaite, "Restorative justice and de-professionalization," *The good society* 13, no. 1 (2004): 1.

including those responsible for serious harms—as being connected”<sup>65</sup> echoing the restorative principles of RJ. Figure 2.4 illustrates the theoretical model of peacemaking criminology, demonstrating the five mutually affective elements.<sup>66</sup>

Restorative justice similarly constructs crime as social harm and achieving justice as a process requiring coming together rather than a separating process.<sup>67</sup> However, as within peacemaking criminology, restorative justice necessitates a process that is to take place first and foremost at the individual level and within individuals.<sup>68</sup> This is because the construction of justice adopted by RJ differs from the mainstream Western tradition. To see this difference clearly without resorting to the false dichotomy of *retributive/ restorative*, it is important to understand that RJ not only has a different approach to justice but a different conceptualization of it. Traditional criminal justice systems, though heavily reliant on punitive measures as penance, have always retained a degree of rehabilitation for the offender, no matter how relatively minor. However, this rehabilitation occurred in isolation, separate from the community and the parties harmed; RJ, as peacemaking criminology, rejects this notion of separatism and conceives a justice of transformative and, ultimately, restorative quality, for both offender and victims, that can only be achieved through full participation of all.<sup>69</sup>

## 2.6 Empowerment

The epistemological position of restorative justice is that the supreme and legitimate source of knowledge in criminal justice are the victimized and offending parties, as they are the only ones who hold first-hand knowledge of their own experiences and needs, and have the most at stake; therefore, RJ holds victims to be necessary agents and ultimate experts in determining justice, not merely additional welcomed parties in an inclusive but otherwise bilateral system of State vs.

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<sup>65</sup> Wozniak, "Toward a theoretical model of peacemaking criminology: An essay in honor of Richard Quinney," 213.

<sup>66</sup> Wozniak, "Toward a theoretical model of peacemaking criminology: An essay in honor of Richard Quinney," 221.

<sup>67</sup> Miers et al., *Mapping restorative justice : developments in 25 European countries*; Hillyard and Tombs, "From 'crime' to social harm?."

<sup>68</sup> Dennis Sullivan and Larry Tifft, *Restorative justice: Healing the foundations of our everyday lives* (Willow Tree Press Monsey, NY, 2001).

<sup>69</sup> Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel, "Restorative justice theory validation," *Restorative justice: Theoretical foundations* (2002); Paul M. Klenowski, "Peacemaking criminology: etiology of crime or philosophy of life?," *Contemporary Justice Review* 12, no. 2 (2009/06/01 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580902879344>, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580902879344>.

offender.<sup>70</sup> Although criminal justice reform is an important goal of RJ, the premise of RJ echoes that of the “peacemaking vs. peacebuilding” and “orthodox vs. emancipatory” models of the liberal peace in conventional peace academia, by advocating a shift away from a primarily top-down approach to a primarily bottom-up approach with parallel “top-down” engagement.<sup>71</sup> In this way, RJ is also understood as a system of empowerment. For this, we turn to Aertsen et al.<sup>72</sup> critical examination of *empowerment* and the conceptualization of *active victim* within restorative justice.

One of the premises and championed attributes of RJ is not only the engagement of victims as influential stakeholders in the justice outcome, but their own empowerment through the restorative process.<sup>73</sup> Rappaport defines empowerment from a community psychology perspective as the “phenomenon by which people, organizations and communities gain dominion over issues of concern to them”<sup>74</sup>, occurring not only at the outcome but throughout the process. It is constituted of three parts: *intrapersonal*—beliefs about one’s own competence and ability to influence, *interactional* – critical understanding of one’s environment and how to gain access and navigate it successfully, and *behavioral* – one’s actions that influence outcomes.<sup>75</sup> Our concern, however, is the latter part and how empowerment extends beyond the individual’s inner world to influence change. It is this aspect of empowerment – developing a capacity for problem solving rather than “[relegation] to mere passive receivers of external help”— that grants agency; in this way, empowerment is not merely a psychological experience for participants, but can also be considered an “organizational, political, sociological, economic and spiritual one”<sup>76</sup>.

This conceptualization of empowerment presents a link to the philosophical foundations of positive peace and its framing of overcoming structural violence through a process of social justice at all levels, including the individual level. To illustrate in practice, Shearing and Froestad have presented the capacity of restorative justice theory to include empowerment through their Peacemaking and Peacebuilding Forums model.<sup>77</sup> While the peacemaking stage concerns dealing

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<sup>70</sup> McCold and Wachtel, "Restorative justice theory validation."

<sup>71</sup> Roger Mac Ginty, "Hybrid peace: The interaction between top-down and bottom-up peace," *Security dialogue* 41, no. 4 (2010).

<sup>72</sup> Ivo Aertsen et al., "Restorative justice and the active victim: Exploring the concept of empowerment," *Temida* 14, no. 1 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.2298/TEM1101005A>.

<sup>73</sup> Aertsen et al., "Restorative justice and the active victim: Exploring the concept of empowerment."

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*,10

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*,12

<sup>76</sup> Aertsen et al., "Restorative justice and the active victim: Exploring the concept of empowerment," 10.

<sup>77</sup> Heather Strang and John Braithwaite, *Restorative justice and civil society* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 28.

with the direct problem within the framework of the offense, the peacebuilding stage graduates the process to consider the general core concerns at the heart of the original issue, meanwhile also engaging a comparison to similar cases, at which point *offender* and *victim* labels are no longer prescribed; most importantly, this stage involves considering and developing community capacities for addressing the core issues.<sup>78</sup> This approach demonstrates the capacity for espousing *positive peace* through empowerment by starting with the specific case of harm, attending to the needs of the individual parties first, and finally allowing for empowerment through collaboration on the wider structure.

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter has laid out a hybrid conceptual framework of peace and victimology concepts for future analysis of database findings. This framework presented the concept of *victimhood*, distinguishing it from victimization, and establishing it as an important function in victim service organizations. Next, the concept of *positive peace* was defined according to a typology of violence, which shall be applied to the present case study in an effort to explore the potential of victim service organizations in fostering positive peace. The connection between victimhood and positive peace was tentatively explored here in theory, leading to a discussion on peacemaking criminology and the influence of this critical theory in the orientation towards restorative alternatives. Lastly, restorative justice and empowerment was presented as a link between positive peace and victimhood in reframing the needs of victims and traditional notions of justice.

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<sup>78</sup> Clifford Shearing, "Transforming security: a South African experiment," *Restorative justice and civil society* (2001).

## 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the initial development, subsequent adjustments and evolution of the current research design and methodology, which is then explained and justified in terms of its strengths and challenges. The first subchapter provides a disclosure of the original research project, along with a brief synopsis of the methodological challenges encountered by the researcher in the field during data collection. The next subchapters delineate the transformation of the research design from qualitative to a mixed methods approach, followed by the development of a data collection instrument and an explanation of data analysis tools. The last subchapters consider the place of the mixed method approach within the pragmatic research paradigm, concluding with a discussion of the respective strengths and challenges of the chosen method.

### 3.1 Finding This Project

#### 3.1.1 Plan A

In the interest of valuable disclosure and full transparency, this section will delineate the complex process of arriving to the resulting research project. The original research project was prompted by an academic background in criminal justice and an interest in restorative justice (RJ) practices. With the current predominant focus being entirely that of RJ's impact on offender rehabilitation and recidivism rates, the project aimed to contribute in filling the gap by, instead, addressing the other half of the equation— mainly, the role and experience of victim participants in a long-standing restorative justice program entitled the *Insight Prison Project*. Specifically, the study intended to gain insight into the motivations for victim participation and glean meaning from the impact, if any, on victims' lives through their participation in the mediated *Victim Offender Dialogues* program, a guided face-to-face meeting with individuals or groups of victim-survivors of violent crime and either the direct individual or surrogate panel of incarcerated offenders at San Quentin Prison, California.<sup>79</sup> The methodology best suited for this purpose was a qualitative approach, set in the constructionist paradigm, in order to achieve the purpose of discovering meaning of victim participation through their responses; the data to be collected was victims'

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<sup>79</sup> Fabiana Silva and Christopher Hartney, "Evaluation of the insight prison project," *Washington, DC: National Council on Crime and Delinquency* (2012).

spoken experiences, collected via semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexibility in elaboration.

### 3.1.2 Ghosted: Issues of Access

The gatekeepers of access in the original research project were the Outreach and Executive staff of the *Insight Prison Project*, an independent NGO that works closely with the CDC (California Department of Corrections) in order to facilitate the restorative justice curricula available to offenders and their victims. After initial contact via e-mail to the general information department was positively received, practical plans for facilitating fieldwork were made. However, in ethical research, access is not secured indefinitely; rather it is negotiated and re-negotiated constantly in many phases— before, during and after exiting the field.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, as sometimes happens, communication was aborted, and gatekeepers remained unreachable for the duration of the fieldwork timeline. Phone calls, messages, and in-person visits were met with no response and closed doors. After several months without communication and with no opportunity for re-negotiation, the original research design was abandoned. The next subchapters describe the steps and strategies leading to the current research design, justifying the current methodology and concluding with a description of the data collection method.

## 3.2 Changing methodology

### 3.2.1 Adjusting research design

As the primary research design was oriented in the broader literary context of victims shift in legislation, practice and construction of justice, it was vital that the new alternative project adopt a methodology that would maintain the victims shift in focus and would serve the original aim of assessing the alternatives available to victims beyond the limited, symbolic procedural rights in an otherwise adversarial and binary court system, in which the ultimate players remain to be the prosecution (the State) and the defendant (the offender).<sup>81</sup> While the issues of access exponentially unfolded in devastating consequence, a preliminary search was simultaneously conducted in

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<sup>80</sup> Ann L. Cunliffe and Rafael Alcadipani, "The Politics of Access in Fieldwork: Immersion, Backstage Dramas, and Deception," *Organizational Research Methods* 19, no. 4 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428116639134>.

<sup>81</sup> Jessica M. Marshall, "(I can't get no) satisfaction: using restorative justice to satisfy victims' rights," *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution* 15, no. 2 (2014).



search of a *Plan B* in terms of locating other possible and accessible sources that would yield an empirical study and fulfilling the original purpose of the research aims. A cursory search of other victim-participatory restorative justice programs in the hopes of possible sources for interviews led to the idea of creating a database of victim service organizations, governmental and private, for the purpose of uncovering patterns, trends and current state of victim needs and interactions beyond the prosecutorial phase. The original intent on furthering understanding of how victims can access healing quickly evolved into an interest in the way victim service organizations were structured and how their services addressed victimization and violence in society. The next subsections expand on the research design process at both the theoretical and practical levels.

### 3.2.2 Strategies and Sources

The original strategy in seeking out new data sources was a *go hunting* approach, in the sense that an overview of the current state of victim services was necessary before any theoretical perspectives could emerge. As with the original research design, the project maintained its exploratory character, as well as staying true to an inductive approach to research. Rather than generating a hypothesis regarding the state of victim services in California and testing it against the collected data (a deductive approach), this research design originates with the outlined research questions and a collection of empirical data—in this case, the database—which will then be viewed in the Findings and Analysis chapters through a hybrid analytical framework of positive peace, victimhood and restorative justice.

The strategy employed in finding new sources of data was informed by the kind of common research conducted every minute – internet search engine. This strategy was employed for two main reasons: restriction on resources and appropriateness. Searching online can be done remotely, inexpensively and without impediment provided the lawful usage of a virtual private network (VPN) for accessing governmental databases from the researcher's location in Norway. Additionally, online searches are most aligned with today's practices of consumers seeking out services; therefore, we can assume as the primary consumers of the victim organizations, victims looking for help, are indeed also more likely to seek out such services through an online search rather than a manual directory (e.g. library, phone directory, social service center).

### 3.2.3 Victim Service Organizations as Data

Research of California victims and victim services led to the discovery of two large Surveys on California crime victims<sup>82</sup>. These surveys were an important part of the research design as they served as a launching point for designing the research and in designating victim service organizations as the data to be collected. A brief summary of the findings is provided here.

The study conducted by the Alliance for Safety and Justice<sup>83</sup> included all victims of crime—both property crime and violent crime—and produced key findings on victimization, victims’ needs and wants. The survey found that 1 in 3 Californians were a victim of crime in the last ten years, and only fourteen percent of victims said they felt adequately supported by the criminal justice system. Over eighty percent of victim respondents expressed the need for better support in mental health, financial assistance, medical costs, emergency housing and access to information about available support services. Seventy-five percent of victims favored reducing sentence lengths by twenty-percent for low-risk offenders in prison, and more than eighty percent supported the re-allocation of state prison funds to mental health treatment, substance abuse and trauma recovery services—both for offenders and victims. The California Crime Victim’s Voices survey<sup>84</sup> corroborated these findings, emphasizing the lack of accessibility of services for victims as a major factor in repeated victimization. Alarming, young, low income individuals from communities of color experienced the most victimization and were also the least likely to report crimes. Lastly, four of the five major victim services were unknown to the majority of victims; those who did access them found the pathway to access difficult.

The combined findings from the surveys demonstrated the unique position victim service organizations occupy in confronting violence and victimization, in contrast to the criminal justice response, and cemented the idea for my research to investigate the role of victim service organizations in a framework of peace studies.

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<sup>82</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013* ; Heather Warnken, *Untold Stories of California Crime Victims 2014*.

<sup>83</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013*

<sup>84</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013*

### 3.3 Developing a Research Instrument

Having established the reason for selecting victim service organizations as the data to be studied, this section explores why an Excel database is the best suited data collection tool.

#### 3.3.1 Fluid and Interactive

The California Crime Victim's Voices survey and Alliance for Safety and Justice survey findings served as a launching point for further inquiry. Without formulating a hypothesis of what research findings may yield, the decision to utilize a simple Excel spreadsheet for collecting data was made in order to accommodate changes through the introduction and removal of variables to include or exclude. This fluid and interactive nature of data collection and data analysis processes in qualitative methods has been discussed at length in methodology literature, particularly the advantages inherent in this method with respect to efficacy, quality of data collected and the transparency of the research.<sup>85</sup> Every choice to include or omit a variable in the database shifts the resulting picture of the data collected as well as profoundly shaping the subsequent analysis and conclusions. However, the ability to modify the data collection criteria as an ongoing process, the data is then managed and organized in a much cleaner, and thereby more efficient manner. For example, having first controlled for [COM] (communication type of organizations), it quickly became apparent that the same three options – telephone, physical address and website— were consistent features with no variation among organizations and therefore, redundant. Removing this unnecessary column from the spreadsheet made for more efficient data gathering, i.e. less time spent gathering those pieces of irrelevant data, as well as a cleaner database with only potentially relevant information, i.e. higher quality data.

An additional blank field was provided for any additional information that may be of interest to note or contribute to the creation of a new category, as was the case with developing the [MAT] other material support and [ADV] advocacy categories which were added at a later stage after it was observed to be often noted in the additional information field. In this way, the fluid and interactive nature of data collection with the mixed methods approach became especially apparent here as categories were removed and added as deemed necessary throughout the data collection process.

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<sup>85</sup> Raymond M Lee and Nigel G Fielding, *Tools for qualitative data analysis* (na, 2004), 527.

Lastly, with regard to the advantage of transparency, the explicit nature of this data collecting style mandates justification for the choices made; this full disclosure of inclusion/exclusion criteria leads to a more transparent research and opens up opportunity for critical thought and opportunities for future research. Chapter 4 will further elaborate on the decision-making process that took place in data collection, selection and exclusion criteria, and the justifications for those decisions with regard to quality of the research and meeting the purpose of the study. This next section will instead discuss the methods of managing and analyzing data through descriptive statistics and content analysis, concluding with an explanation of how the philosophical foundation of the chosen methodology is appropriate in this thesis.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

#### **3.4.1 Managing Data**

The data was collected and managed within a simple Excel spreadsheet. The data collection process was characterized by a fluid and interactive process of collecting the data, analyzing the emerging patterns, and choosing to include and omit variables of the data collection. This involved the revisiting of previously catalogued agencies for the newly vital information and was a labor-intensive task; however, this process has resulted in a well-managed, near-exhaustive (selection criteria withstanding) database of the profiles of victim service organizations across the entire state of California, 148 profiles in total. One advantage of creating the database in a simple Excel spreadsheet is the versatility it offers in content analysis. The next subsection explores the two methods used— content analysis and descriptive statistics—their strengths, and their challenges.

#### **3.4.2 Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics are the best approach for this project as it is an exploratory research with an original database of all 148 victim service organizations in California outside law enforcement and prosecutorial institutions. This approach produces simple quantitative summaries of the measures and the collected sample—how many organizations exist, how many receive funding from which source, how many services provided on average, etc. Further use of Excel tools and features allows for the possibility of identifying patterns and trends in distribution of services, correlation of funding and types of services or types of victimization targeted, and more, without the use of inferential statistics methods, requiring advanced operations and better suited for more in-depth analysis of

data. Producing these findings with the simplified descriptive statistics method entailed manipulation of datasets and data columns through grouping, direct comparison across rows, sorting features, and simple mathematic formulas for calculations. Findings were then easily extrapolated into graphs and pie-charts for visual representation.

Using the descriptive statistics method has obvious limitations in the lack of in-depth analysis, and therefore more simplistic observations. Some interesting patterns, trends and correlations are likely to have been missed without the application of the inferential statistics method. However, acknowledging this limitation does not take away from the value of the findings from descriptive statistics; because this research is exploratory and provides a broad overview, simple data summaries are sufficient for the purpose of this research and continue to maintain potential for advanced statistical analysis in future research.

### 3.4.3 Content Analysis

Collecting data on victim service organizations required exploring the organization's homepage online and condensed information (e.g. brochures, Facebook profiles), at which point quantitative data was included by designating a [0] for no or absence of variable and [1] for presence of variable. However, organization homepages included a large variety of additional information, both quantitative and qualitative, that could not be quantified in the database; for example, the specific type of outreach activities, the organization mission statements and philosophies, the descriptions of programs and events, the images used and the web design; this required a qualitative method in addition—content analysis. The content analysis utilized here is not quantitative (counting how many times a specific image or keyword appeared) but rather of qualitative character, relying on organization website material as the unit of analysis and requiring coding of information into units of meaning.

Codes were defined during analysis of the data—while researching each website and adding each profile to the database— and stemming from the observations made in real time; no keywords were identified beforehand. This type of content analysis is called conventional content analysis, beginning with observation rather than theory or keywords, making it most appropriate for the exploratory purpose of this research.<sup>86</sup> In practice, this process involved observation of

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<sup>86</sup> Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E Shannon, "Three approaches to qualitative content analysis," *Qualitative health research* 15, no. 9 (2005).

websites, key phrases and live-coding information into a separate column for “Notes” in the Excel database. As more profiles were collected and more observations made, going back to previous entries was often necessary with the changing level of observations for refining codes. For example, the code “empowerment” was replaced by differentiating “teaching skills” and “agency” to designate different methods of engagement in an organization; “empowerment” was instead included as an over-arching theme. Other themes included cycle of violence, family, survivor, women, progressive, community, education, safety and happiness.

Challenges of using the conventional content analysis method included the common risk of qualitative methods in the possibility of failing to identify the key categories, thereby not accurately representing the data.<sup>87</sup> This challenge is overcome in this project through the reliance on quantitative data and utilizing the conventional content analysis method in supplement to the key quantitative findings, as well as focusing on victim service organizations portrayal of their organizations and services rather than an evaluation of the organization or its services. The next section explains further how the mixed method approach was adopted in this project to strengthen research validity.

### **3.5 Mixed Method Approach**

The format of the Excel database was chosen due to its simplicity in use, modifiable character, and potential for future analysis; however it is also a versatile tool in terms of collecting a range of data, including qualitative data. On the quantitative side, the database can be exported into easily readable charts, graphs and diagrams as well as manipulated in statistical software for more advanced quantitative operations. In terms of qualitative advantage, the fields consisting of descriptive answers supplement the quantitative patterns observed. This is accomplished is through the provision of blank fields in the Excel database for additional, descriptive, qualitative information gleaned from the explicit statements and imagery employed by the organization. Additionally, content analysis contributed additional qualitative data, successfully incorporated into the key finding; in practice, this was achieved by supplementing the quantitative finding—the majority of victim service organizations target domestic users—with a qualitative finding—that websites are framing domestic violence victims as primarily women and children—to give

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<sup>87</sup> Hsieh and Shannon, "Three approaches to qualitative content analysis."

meaning and better understanding of who are the majority target users of victim service organizations.

The challenge of mixed methods approach is its inherent weakness in the matter of comparison, as qualitative and quantitative are not directly comparable pieces of data.<sup>88</sup> Overcoming this challenge can be a matter of coding responses further, thereby translating descriptive answers into quantifiable results, or, conversely, utilizing the existing qualitative data already in the database as a launching point for select points of in-depth analysis. In this project, a reliance on quantitative data first revealed trends that were then examined closer through content analysis—qualitative data—to give meaning to the uncovered patterns; this is a (QUAN+qual) approach.<sup>89</sup> In this way, there is much value in utilizing the mixed methods approach as each piece of data contributes knowledge, whether interpretive or factual, to present a clearer picture of the current state for victims seeking to access services after suffering violent crime. The next subsection will discuss this philosophical position the chosen method of this research occupies in greater detail.

### **3.6 Pragmatism and the Concurrent Transformative Mixed Method**

#### *The Best of Both Worlds*

The pragmatic research design is the philosophical backbone of the mixed methods approach used in this study due its accommodation of qualitative and quantitative methods in a complementary way rather than adversarial, and indeed incompatible, nature as presented in traditional positivist versus constructivist paradigms.<sup>90</sup> In rejecting the either/or approach as purported by the traditional paradigms, pragmatism advocates a pluralist approach and asserts value in the diversity of qualitative and quantitative data as both equally contributing to the discussion.<sup>91</sup> Traditional approaches in the field of victimology have historically been rigorous scientific research within a

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<sup>88</sup> R. Burke Johnson and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, "Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come," *Educational Researcher* 33, no. 7 (2004), <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033007014>, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0013189X033007014>.

<sup>89</sup> Lawrence A Palinkas et al., "Mixed method designs in implementation research," *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research* 38, no. 1 (2011).

<sup>90</sup> Gert Biesta, "Pragmatism and the philosophical foundations of mixed methods research," *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research 2* (2010).

<sup>91</sup> Biesta, "Pragmatism and the philosophical foundations of mixed methods research."; Steven R Terrell, "Mixed-methods research methodologies," *The qualitative report* 17, no. 1 (2012).

positivist paradigm, usually concerning the causes of victimization; however, the field has been experiencing a shift towards more incorporation of qualitative research and a humanistic approach.<sup>92</sup> This thesis project joins this trend by rooting the research questions in pragmatism, seeking not only measurable patterns but their meaning, and utilizing a mixed methods approach for answers and solutions.

Pragmatism is driven by the ontological position that true nature of reality is secondary in relevance to the more pressing concern of *what actually works*.<sup>93</sup> Like the constructionist position, pragmatism views current ‘truth’ and knowledge as constructed and ever-changing, however our daily engagement with it in research must be viewed as a “provisional truth”<sup>94</sup> derived from real experience in order to achieve actual goals and solve real problems.<sup>95</sup> By rejecting the dualism of traditional approaches, pragmatism gives equal recognition to both the natural world and the constructed world of culture, language and subjective thought.<sup>96</sup> In the case of this research, victimization rates and distribution of services are measured (natural world) alongside the way in which services are provided and victimization is constructed, addressed and targeted (constructed).

Such an instrumental approach, however, is far from a free-for-all; in fact, pragmatism warrants a degree of caution in research. Some traps to avoid in grounding this research project in a pragmatic philosophy is the common critique of pragmatism’s lack of promotion of significant change and failure to provide a satisfactory answer to the question “For whom is a pragmatic solution useful?”<sup>97</sup> For this reason, it is of the utmost importance for the researcher to define the workability and usefulness explicitly; in this project, the research questions set forth are oriented towards actionable findings—the results of the database in distribution of victim service organizations and their accessibility, as well as valuable in their contribution for developing concepts of peace, violence, victimhood and restorative justice. In this way, the paradigm is employed in a fruitful way, producing dimensional findings and contributions, rather than as a way

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<sup>92</sup> Constance T Fischer, "A phenomenological study of being criminally victimized: Contributions and constraints of qualitative research," *Journal of Social Issues* 40, no. 1 (1984): 162.

<sup>93</sup> Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, "Introduction to mixed method and mixed model studies in the social and behavioral sciences," *The mixed methods reader* (2008): 9.

<sup>94</sup> Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, "Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come," 16.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 18

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, "Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come," 19.



to circumvent traditional philosophical disputes, as has been a common critique on the developers of this paradigm.

In this research project, steps taken to avoid the aforementioned pitfalls have been to focus on utilizing quantitative and qualitative approach within the database as complementary methods, in order to gain maximum understanding of the current state of victim service organizations. Though originally exploratory in nature, the database nonetheless produces striking findings and contributes to the field of victimology on a pragmatic level. In this research, utilizing a quantitative and qualitative combination produced a more complete knowledge that has better informed the theories and concepts, while also retaining the potential for informing better practice and policy concerning victimization.

Occupying the philosophical position of pragmatism, the purpose of this research project was best suited with a concurrent transformative mixed method approach. In developing the research instrument—the database—it was important to retain a qualitative approach that would allow for an examination of organization values in binary through the cataloguing of services provided, yet also allow for interpretation of the information made available on organization websites, e.g. additional services, descriptions of outreach efforts, etc. The concurrent transformative mixed method approach is one in which quantitative and qualitative data are taken concurrently at the same time, with one type of data usually taking priority.<sup>98</sup> In this research, the primary nature of the database is quantitative, with some fields recording qualitative data. Embedded in the purpose of the research, this method maintains the perspective of the theoretical framework and guides the decision-making process throughout the research project, from design to data sources and analysis. In this project, the concurrent transformative mixed method approach has been best suited by leading to the development of a research instrument, namely the creation of a database, designed to answer the research questions and research goals set forth.

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<sup>98</sup> Terrell, "Mixed-methods research methodologies."

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter has traced the research design process, from initial methodological issues of access to the development of a research instrument. Informed by existing research on California victims of crime and their needs, the idea for investigating the utility of victim service organizations in addressing violence was born. Rooted in the pragmatic paradigm, this research is less concerned with the “truth” and primarily oriented towards providing valuable insight on victim service organizations addressing victimization and contributing to the development of concepts in peace and victimology fields. Fulfilling this purpose required adopting a mixed methods approach to adequately answer the research questions set forth. Victim service organizations were the chosen data and creation of a database was the data collection tool, the analysis of which entails both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Although utilizing mixed methods presents challenges in terms of compatible data comparison, the advantage of a pluralist approach in this research is the ability of gaining better insight into the key quantitative findings of the database. Using content analysis and collecting qualitative information in the database presents a more dynamic picture of the quantitative findings and produces a meaningful discussion when analyzed in the conceptual framework.

## 4 DATABASE

This chapter will discuss the database at greater length, explaining the purpose of its structure and the variables chosen. The database was devised as the quantitative portion of data collection. It provides a detailed overview of victim service organizations by cataloguing organization characteristics and service variables. Through systematic research of each organization, the database became a collection of detailed, individual profiles in a format that allows for direct comparison across the 148 different victim service organizations in California.

### 4.1 Creation of database

An online search was conducted for existing sources and listings of victim services organizations through a web search engine, utilizing a California location VPN, thereby enabling a prioritization for geo-specific results. One of the largest sources for listings was made available in the online directory of the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), which provided over 1,000 hits in the state of California alone<sup>99</sup>. These listings were not exported to the database as they were, but rather regarded individually as a treasure map for in-depth research on each particular entry. Upon closer examination, many of the 1,000+ entries were in fact repeated multiple times within the directory and therefore greatly inflated the apparent number of victim service organizations. Additionally, several organizations were inactive, became incorporated into other organizations, or went out of existence, and were therefore omitted from further research. In addition to the organizations listed in the OVC directory, a wider search of online social forums, digital pamphlets, records events and law enforcement entities led to discovery of other victim service organizations not included in the OVC directory. Several independently researched additions along with a large exclusion of the false entries in the OVC listing resulted in a final collection of 151 different organizations across the 58 counties within the state of California.

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<sup>99</sup> Office for Victims of Crime, "DIRECTORY OF VICTIMS SERVICES," (10 August 2018).  
<https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ovcdirectory/mobile/searchdirectory.aspx>.

#### 4.1.1 Selection criteria

Consistent with the purpose of this study, the decisions for selection criteria of organizations to include in the database had to fulfill the following parameters: a) have victims as primary users/consumers, b) focus on victims of crime (as opposed to other loss, death, tragedy, etc.), and c) be publicly available. To this extent, only organizations with crime victims as the target user were included. This was determined by the researcher through an observation of the explicit mission statements, sources of funding and the detailing of services offered. Organizations that are primarily community social service based, i.e. targeting the community at large, without explicit and dedicated services to victims of crime were excluded. Similarly, organizations that focused on education and preventative campaigns against victimization, however offered little in terms of explicit victim support services, were also excluded. Although both types of service agencies described above may be of great value to victims of crime, their target objective is the community at large and therefore deviate from the narrow purpose of the study in evaluating victims service organizations specifically.

Both governmental and non-governmental agencies were included in selection, on the condition that an explicit statement is made regarding the provision of services for victims of crime *or* that the agency self-identifies as a victim support organization. Agencies whose primary focus included lobbying and political activism regarding criminal justice law and procedure were also included as they can be seen as agencies for empowerment by providing a space for victims affected by crime to exercise their legal rights and supply an outlet for victim-survivor voices to be heard. Grassroots organizations that may not seem ‘official’, for example those operating their homepage from a Facebook account and without a robust funding network, were also included as the researcher deemed them valid not only due to the comparable range of services being offered through these organizations as through larger or franchised agencies, but also due to their community/grassroots character; usually, these organizations were almost exclusively victim-founded and directed.

The rationale for selection was also guided by the consideration of fulfilling the narrow purpose of the study and minimizing irrelevant information that may yield too broad of a database for the scope of this research. Over 50 victim services agencies were excluded due to their affiliation with law enforcement and attachment to the judiciary system. As a rule, every California county prosecutorial office includes a victim advocacy component, ranging in degree of support.

However, a pre-requisite in accessing this support is mandated reporting of the crime, filing of charges, and other criteria.<sup>100</sup> These pre-requisites for accessing services are troubling, given the high unreported and underreported victimization rates reported by national crime surveys, known as the *dark figure* in criminology.<sup>101</sup> Additionally, direct services offered through prosecutorial agencies are few, consisting mostly of assistance in filing reports and victim compensation claims, and in some cases, referral to basic psychological counseling resources. For these reasons, court and law enforcement-based agencies were excluded from the database. Additionally, organizations that did not provide direct services of any kind and were akin to a resource database or serving as a referrals office, were also excluded to avoid redundancy and inaccuracy in actual direct services available for victims. Lastly, selection criteria included some practical considerations; organizations with conflicting information, missing contact information, broken links, and/or inactive status were excluded from the database due to the impossibility of logging an accurate profile of the agency and its services.

## 4.2 Developing Categories

### 4.2.1 Organization Type: Coding and definitions

To fulfill the purpose of compiling a database of victim service agencies and their profiles, the categories were divided into four parts: *organization type*, *services offered*, *eligibility criteria*, and *accessibility*. Figure 3.2.1 illustrates the *organization type* block, which includes information sub-categories classifying agency characteristics, such as [EST] date of establishment, [FUND] funding source, [TYP] type of organization and website address for source.

Organization type	Website/ contact	Date of establishment	Type of org	Funding source(s)
Trauma Recovery Center	<a href="http://traumarecoverycenter.org/">http://traumarecoverycenter.org/</a>	2001	UCSF, Public Health City of San Francisco	California Victim Compensation Board (CVC); private donors
The Compassionate Friends	<a href="https://www.compassionatefriends.org/">https://www.compassionatefriends.org/</a>	1978	Non-governmental	Private donations
Journey of Hope: From Violence to Healing	<a href="https://www.journeyofhope.org/">https://www.journeyofhope.org/</a>	1993	NGO; victim founded	Private donations
Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation	<a href="http://mvfthr.org/">http://mvfthr.org/</a>	1976	NGO; victim founded	Private donations
National Center for Victims of Crime	<a href="https://www.ncvc.org">https://www.ncvc.org</a>	1985	Non-governmental	Private donations, government grants

Figure 4.1 Database Sample: Organization Type

This block of variables is self-explanatory as they contain the most basic information on the organization. Although seemingly redundant at first, the choice to differentiate type of organization and funding source was motivated by a desire for a more nuanced understanding of

<sup>100</sup> "Victim Services Eligibility ", accessed 10 August 2018, <https://da.smcgov.org/victim-services>.

<sup>101</sup> Wesley G Skogan, "Dimensions of the dark figure of unreported crime," *Crime & Delinquency* 23, no. 1 (1977).

the organization’s scope (e.g. how robust are the services offered) and their primary agenda. The differentiation allowed for more analysis in comparison, for example between counseling services offered at non-governmental organizations with religious affiliation and those offered at a local non-government organization that was victim-founded and without a religious component. The degree of organization or formality can also be determined in [TYP], as the organizations surveyed ranged widely from franchised (e.g. YWCA, Bikers Against Child Abuse) to very small and local (e.g. Bay Area Women Against Rape, La Casa de las Madres). Lastly, date of establishment was not always clear as many organizations consisted of many previously independent centers and groups that became incorporated into one service organization; in such cases, date of incorporation was recorded as official date of establishment. If an organization merely experienced a change in title or status (through expansion in funding sources) but operating under the same mandate, the original date of establishment was recorded.

#### 4.2.2 Services Offered: Coding and definitions

Next, the *services offered* block consists of quantitative information columns in which a [1] indicated service was offered, a [0] indicated service was not explicitly offered. The single exception is the [MAT] category which is a space for qualitative information, detailing any other material support offered. Categories chosen for this block included: [COUN] professional counseling, [THP] support group/ informal therapy, [MED] medical services, [EDU] education/ resource, [SOC] community building / social events, [ACT] space for voice/ activism, [CRT] court accompaniment, [LGL] professional legal aid, [ADV] advocacy, [FIN] financial aid, [MAT] other material support. This block constitutes the quantitative side of the mixed method approach, as this block of data is analyzed in terms of numbers and percentages of services offered across the different agencies.

What is offered	Support group	Medical services	Education/ resources database	Community building / social events	Voice/ activism space	Court proceedings assistance	Legal aid	Advocacy	Financial Aid	
Professional counseling/ mental health support	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Figure 4.2 Database Sample: Services Offered

A distinction between professional counseling and support group was made because, although both share the goal of providing mental health support, the function and the cost of the two are arguably different enough to warrant a distinction. While professional one-on-one counseling may provide expert insights and tools, informal support groups may help foster the sense of community that aids with recovery and empowerment.<sup>102</sup> An organization was recorded as possessing the education and resource variable if they included structured or semi-structured programs (skills training workshops, domestic violence education series, parenting classes, etc.) and/or in-depth learning materials. A mere compilation of links to outside resources or other agencies was not sufficient for [1] in this category.

Medical services were defined as any medical aid besides counseling, such as psychiatric treatment. Community building was considered offered if the organization had a scheduled calendar of events, past or present, for gatherings with varying purposes of a social and collective nature (outreach, social dinners, fundraising, lobbying, etc.), in contrast to events that served to facilitate providing a service (counseling, education workshops, childcare). Space for activism was considered present if the organization explicitly demonstrated civic engagement opportunities (lobbying events, rallying support for one of their members, a call for spreading awareness, etc.) Court accompaniment and advocacy was differentiated in the nature and degree of support; advocacy encompasses support across relevant agencies (health, work, law) while court accompaniment applies specifically to physical presence in court hearings and procedures. Legal aid was applicable in instances of help with filing legal paperwork (restraining orders, compensation applications, other practical official documents) and pro-bono attorney consultation and representation. Additional fields of information include an "other material support" column and "other services" column due to the impracticality of coding and quantifying all possible alternative services and assistance offered.

An important note to make here is that although a service may be offered in practice, if it was not stated explicitly in the website information, outreach materials or annual report of the organization, it was recorded as not offered [0] in the database. Conversely, it may be that an organization claims to provide a particular service but in practice fails to do so effectively, shifting the investigation into evaluating the efficacy of the services provided, which is outside the scope

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<sup>102</sup> Aertsen et al., "Restorative justice and the active victim: Exploring the concept of empowerment."; Paul McCold, "Restorative justice and the role of community," *Restorative justice: International perspectives* 85 (1996).

of this thesis; the inquiry of this thesis is not whether victim service organizations work but rather how they attempt to do so and what their potential contribution to peacebuilding is.

#### 4.2.3 Eligibility Criteria: Coding and definitions

This dataset establishing criteria for eligibility of users included various columns that required descriptive answers, limited in choice; categories included [CRIM] crime type, [VICT] victim type, [OTHER] other pre-requisites to access services. Available responses consisted of a limited option of descriptive answers; for example, options within the [CRIM] category included the possibilities: homicide, aggravated battery, sexual violence, domestic violence, violence against children, cybercrime, hate crime, stalking, gang violence, robbery, human trafficking, elder abuse, terrorism, abduction, and more.

Eligibility criteria		
Crime type	Victim type	Other specifications
Physical / mental trauma, violence (interpersonal, sexual, war, torture, gender-based)	Direct victim, family member(s), asylum/ refugee seekers	Adult victims only (18+); not current
Homicide, death	Family of deceased	
Homicide	Family of deceased; family of offender	

Figure 4.3 Database Sample: Eligibility Criteria

Controlling for eligibility in terms of the status of the victim and their relation to the crime was important in order a) to observe the relationship of services offered to type of crime victims, and b) to allow for a comparison of rate of specific crime to rate of victim types eligible for services. The challenge of collecting this data lay within the variance in terminology (adult sexual assault vs. rape, physical assault vs. battery) and umbrella terms (crimes against children, domestic violence). The choice to retain the original terminology in the database was made to avoid compounding inaccuracies that may appear with translation during data collection, as well as for their insight value, since the choice of terms used by an organization should be regarded as deliberate. Statistical analysis in Chapter 6 categorizes the crimes listed above into six general categories for purposes of analysis: domestic violence, sexual violence, crimes against children, trafficking, homicide and trauma. An additional field of “other specifications” was added for detail but is not reliable as excluding factors are not often advertised and may be determined on an individual case basis.



#### 4.2.4 Accessibility Criteria: Coding and definitions

The last block of categories was designed to measure the accessibility of a given organization, meaning the way and degree to which organizations made themselves accessible to the public and how accessible the services are for the target groups, by observing the [OUT] outreach methods, [LANG] languages supported, and [INT] explicitly stated intercultural competency.

Accessibility		
<i>Outreach</i>	<i>Languages supported</i>	<i>Intercultural</i>
	Spanish	1
		0
		0
Social events in the community to raise awareness of issues and the organization		0
Community outreach education events	Spanish	0
		0
Community outreach	English, Spanish	0
Community involvement	Spanish	0
Heavily focused on outreach to community	Spanish	1
Mainly operating in prisons, jails and in communities		0
		0
Asian communities	Other	1
Community outreach	8 Asian languages +	1
Asian communities	41 languages spoken	1

Figure 4.4 Database Sample: Accessibility

These categories necessitate qualitative descriptions due to the large variance in type and specificity of outreach efforts and languages. Intercultural competence was recorded as either being present [1] or not present [0] through examination of organization’s website for explicit expressions of intercultural competence, sensitivity and capacity for appropriate support. This is the block of variables least developed due to less readily available information; this data block would greatly benefit in a more thorough surveying, for example further inquiry via direct contact with the organization staff.

### 4.3 Summary

The database was constructed for the purpose of collecting quantitative and qualitative information on victim service organizations. This chapter presented the selection and exclusion criteria and presented the four datasets. Each dataset focused on a group of variables—organization characteristics (establishment date, type, funding sources), services offered (various mental, material support, and social support), eligibility (type and degree of victimization, specific target groups), and accessibility (outreach efforts, language and cultural competence). Now that rationale and potential for each category and variables has been established, the next chapter presents the findings of the database.

## 5 VICTIM SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS IN CALIFORNIA

### *FINDINGS FROM A DATABASE*

This chapter presents the results of the database derived through mixed methods of descriptive statistics and content analysis to generate key findings. It begins with an explanation of the central funding structure of victim service organizations to set the context for the first dataset: organization types and funding. Next, the results of each dataset are presented in order of the database, followed by key findings across datasets.

### **5.1 The Funding Structure of Victims Services**

The launching point of this section must be the Victims of Crime Act in 1984, as it directly establishes the Crime Victims Fund (also known as ‘The Fund’)<sup>103</sup>—the main funding source of all victim service organizations. The Fund is a federal deposit collected from offender fees and penalties, the latest balance in 2018 amounting to \$12 billion USD, and administered by the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)—a federal government office. Some of this amount is used by the OVC for evaluation and development projects, however the majority of funds are distributed to State offices in the form of victim assistance grants and victim compensation; in the case of California this is the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) and the California Victim Compensation Board (CVCB). The majority of these funds are “victim assistance grants”, competitively awarded as grants to victim service organizations, both public and private; the rest of the funds are “victim compensation grants” paid out as individual compensation, and accessible via application for eligibility, which must establish that all other resources available to the victim have been depleted while compensation needs remain. Figure 5.1 illustrates the distribution process. The amount granted per state includes a base amount of \$500,000 for victim assistance grants in addition to the amount allocated based on population; the amount for victim compensation grants to states varies depending on the grant amount of previous fiscal years.

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<sup>103</sup> "Crime Victims Fund," accessed 28 July 2018, <https://www.ovc.gov/pubs/crimevictimsfundfs/index.html>.



Figure 5.1 Office for Victims of Crime: VOCA Dispensation

As the most populated state in the US, California possessed over \$31 million in compensation funds and \$396 million in victim assistance funds in 2018.<sup>104</sup> For reference, the maximum compensation amount for an individual victim in California is \$70,000 as of January 1, 2017. CalVCB conducted a review in 2013 and identified 13 underserved categories of crime victims (homeless, tribal community, gang-impacted community, domestic violence, LGBTQ, limited English proficiency, immigrants, elderly, disabled, human trafficking, deaf, Asian/Pacific Islander, Indigenous); the review also found victim compensation, housing, mental health and advocate needs were not being sufficiently met and emphasized the importance of improving linguistically and culturally appropriate materials for access and outreach<sup>105</sup>. Similarly, the 2017 Joint Legislative Budget Committee Report by CalOES cites a significant increase in funding from the OVC beginning fiscal year 2015 in order to address deficiencies in meeting needs of crime victims such as: advocacy, treatment services, legal aid and housing. To this end, twelve new programs were created and positively evaluated in the report as significantly contributing to better meeting

<sup>104</sup> Office for Victims of Crime, "2018 Crime Victims Fund Compensation and Assistance Allocations by State," (2018), <https://www.ovc.gov/grants/cvfa2018.html>.

<sup>105</sup> CALIFORNIA VICTIM COMPENSATION AND GOVERNMENT CLAIMS BOARD, *Gap Analysis Report: California's Underserved Crime Victims and their Access to Victim Services and Compensation*, Office of Justice Programs (2013), <https://www.victims.ca.gov/victims/ovcgrant2013/deliverables/CalVCPGapAnalysis-OVCGrant2013.pdf+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=firefox-b-1-d>.

victim needs, emphasizing the importance of maintaining and increasing funding for these programs.<sup>106</sup>

The funding structure and results of the State review serve to inform the database findings presented in this chapter, as they illustrate the opportunity for more efficient and larger funding as well as the gaps in services that the funding should address. With this in mind, the following subchapters present the findings according to database structure, by summarizing the results of each of the four major datasets— Organization Type, Services, Eligibility, Accessibility—before concluding with some key findings across datasets.

## 5.2 Organization Types and Funding

The first variable in this dataset was the date of establishment, which revealed the majority of organizations (seventy-two percent) were founded between 1970 and 1989, with the passing of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and establishment of the Crime Victims Fund taking place in 1984. Over twenty percent, twenty-eight organizations in total, were founded between 1990 and present day, with the most recent being a pilot organization funded for 2018-2019.

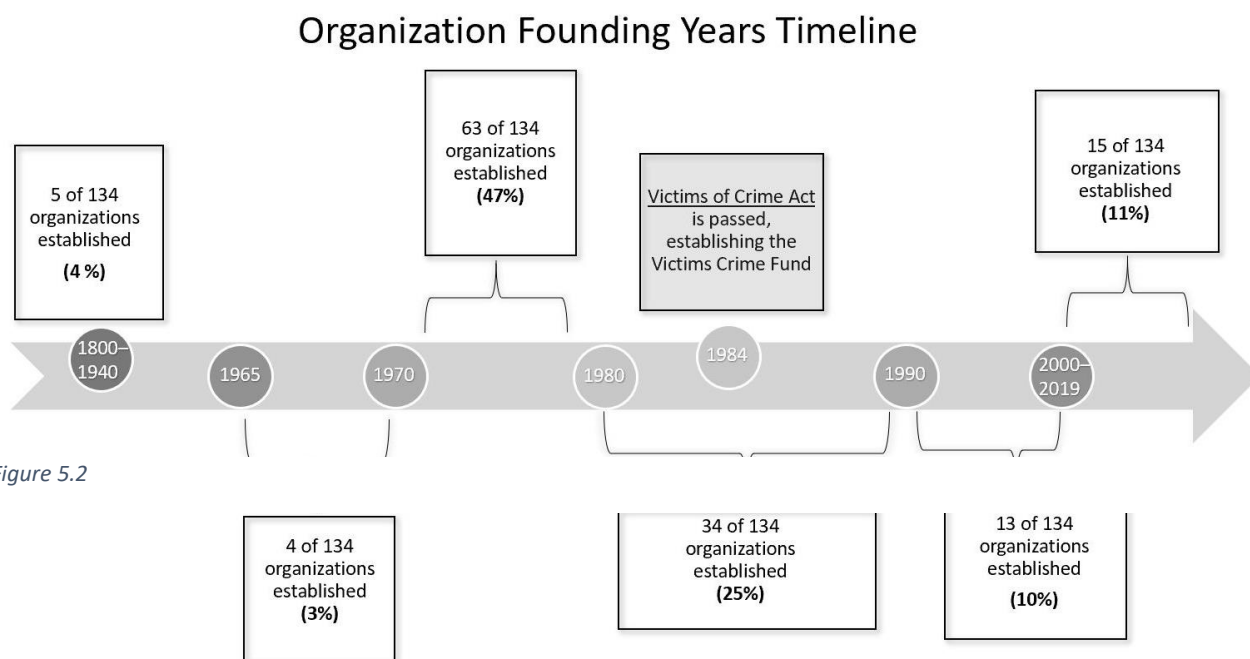


Figure 5.2

<sup>106</sup> Joint Legislative Budget Committee California, *Joint Legislative Budget Committee Grants Managements & Victims Services Report* (2018), <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/.../Documents/Final%202017-18%20JLBC%20Report.pdf>.

Just five organizations were founded before 1950, including the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), a franchise organization established in the 1800's that includes victim services as just one part of its multifaceted community services. Fourteen organizations had conflicting information or unavailable dates of establishment and were therefore not included in the calculations; percentages were calculated after excluding these organizations for accuracy. Figure 5.2.1a below illustrates organization establishments timeline.

Organization types consisted of a majority (sixty-eight percent) non-profit organizations. Most often, organizations identified as a combination of non-profit and community, religious, or charity. The second most common type was non-governmental organization (NGO), which is differentiated from non-profit in legal status, however is very similar to non-profit organizations in terms of actual operations and funding. Both types of organizations are eligible to receive a variety of grants, including government (state, local and federal), private foundation grants, donations, and may hold corporate or business partners and sponsorships. Often, NGO's had more diversified sources of funding and were more robust in terms of programming and range of services offered. Fifteen percent of the organizations identified as NGO. The remaining seventeen percent consisted of religious, grassroots, local community-based, public health, county-based and franchised organizations. Two federal organizations were also included—the Office for Victims of Crime and the I-CAN foundation, as they fit selection criteria in having local service locations in California and providing direct services for victims. County-based organizations were funded by local government and often located in local government offices but were not housed within law enforcement or prosecutorial divisions and did not require crime reporting to establish victim eligibility; organizations mandating crime reporting to receive services were excluded in the database, as explained in Methodology. Figure 5.3 illustrates organization types.

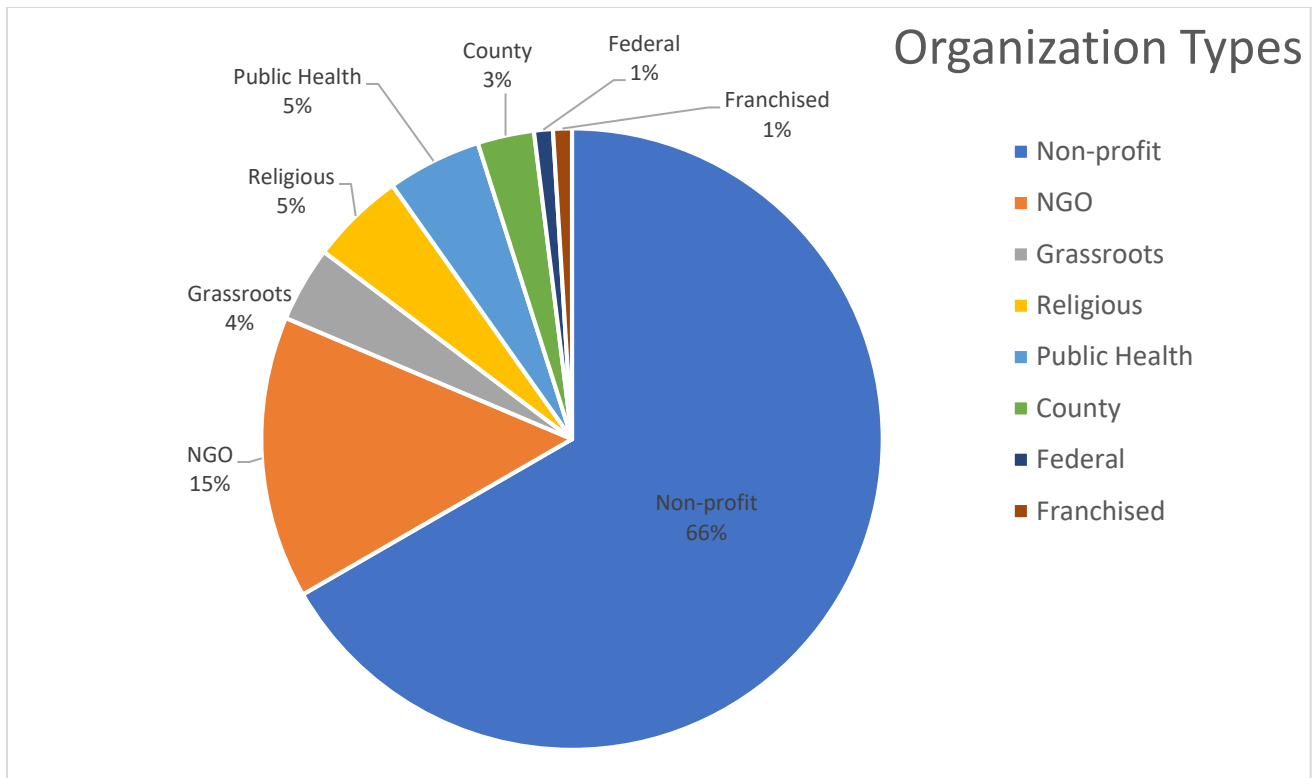


Figure 5.3

Lastly, establishing organizations' main funding sources was a challenge due to lack of consistency in disclosure. Smaller organizations did not have available annual reports; those that disclosed funding sources did not always indicate how much funding was received from each source. Most organizations had a combination of funding sources, following a pattern of more diversified sources of funding correlating with how many services were offered. Figure 5.3 below illustrates the funding sources across all organizations.

Although private donations were most universal as a funding source (forty-eight percent), government grants (at local, federal and state levels) were second most important (forty-one percent). Twelve percent of funding sources were private partnerships and sponsorships through corporations, local businesses and collection of membership (private individuals join organization in membership title through subscription fees).

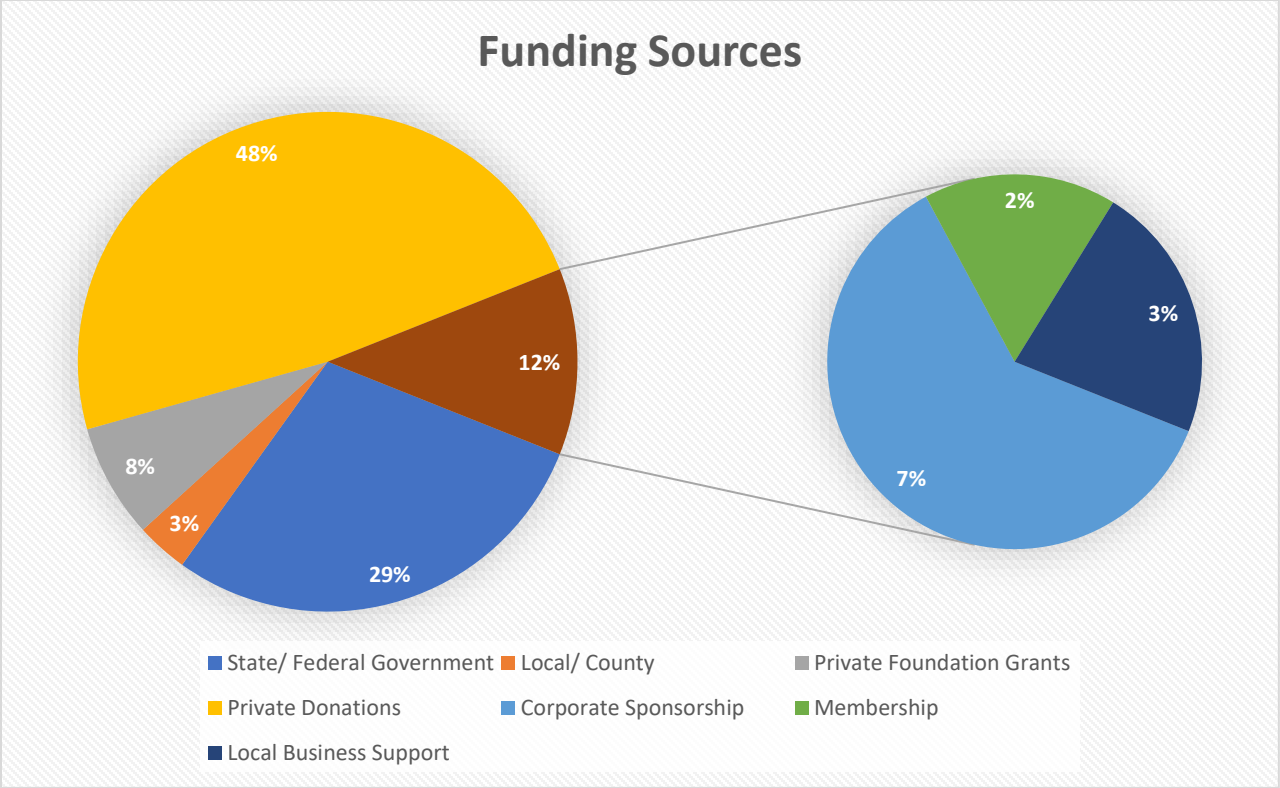


Figure 5.4 \* Seven organizations did not provide accurate information or had conflicting information regarding funding and were therefore excluded.

Due to lack of disclosure on exact funding amounts, Figure 5.4 does not seek to accurately depict the proportion of funding in value; rather, it is general look at the extent to which different types of funding sources utilized across organizations. It is also important to note that the majority of organizations were dependent on several funding sources, in different combinations. Given the large sum allocated for California through The Fund, it is likely that government grants sustain a large bulk of organization operations and private donations are present for most organizations as supplemental funding. However, this can only be determined with more research, requiring specific and accurate data on funding amounts from each source and for each organization.

In summary, analyzing data on organization types revealed the localized nature of victim service organizations, with a minority of organizations holding the status of NGO and only outlier amounts of large, franchise organizations. The results of the timeline demonstrated the majority of organizations were created before the passing of VOCA, with less than half established around/after VOCA. Data on funding revealed the reliance of organizations on a combination of funding sources, most commonly government grants dispensed from The Fund through the

California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services and/or state and local government distributors of the fund, private foundation grants and private donations.

### 5.3 Distribution of Services

This section presents database findings on what kind of services are provided and how they are distributed in relation to the types of organizations. The average services provided per organization was six, out of ten possible. The maximum range of services provided by an organization was nine, provided by six organizations that were highly community-specific in their purpose: *Strong Hearted Native Coalition*, *Two Feathers Native American Family Services*, *San Diego Family Justice Center*, *Alliance for Community Transformation*, *Alternatives to Domestic Violence*, and *Rainbow Services Ltd*. The minimum amount of services provided was two, in three organizations with narrow purposes (e.g. legal aid). Of the seventy (forty-seven percent of) organizations that provided seven or more services, eighty-nine percent were for domestic violence victims. Figure 5.3 shows the distribution.

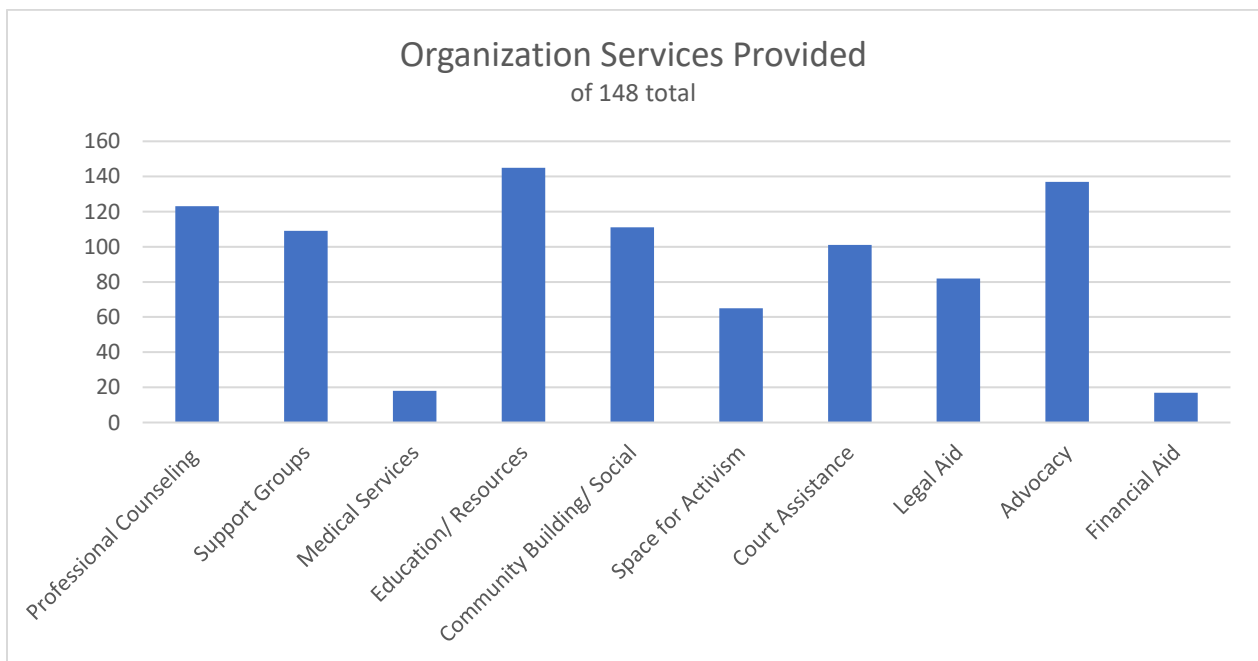


Figure 5.5



In addition to education and advocacy (as depicted above), crisis intervention was also found to be an almost universal trait, listed by over ninety-five percent of organizations as part of their services. Crisis intervention encompassed a range of services, from 24-hour telephone assistance to safe housing. Of the eighty-five (seventy-five percent) organizations that offered emergency shelter, over half also provided transitional housing and assistance with permanent housing solutions. These organizations served predominantly victims of domestic violence and tended to be shelter-based, often covering essential needs such as food, clothing and necessary hygiene and self-care products. Twenty-four organizations offered individual case-management, working closely with individuals and individual families with financial planning and preparation for transition into safe and independent living arrangements. A similar number also provided extensive employment assistance; this took form either through direct employment if the organization also ran a non-profit charity shop (e.g. thrift shop) or through vocational training, educational qualifications (e.g. GEDs) and work skills training. A smaller number of organizations also provided childcare services and, in some instances, transportation. These services are provided with the intent of harnessing individuals’ potentials for independent living. Figure 5.6 illustrates the distribution of the additional services that were not originally controlled for as variables in the dataset.

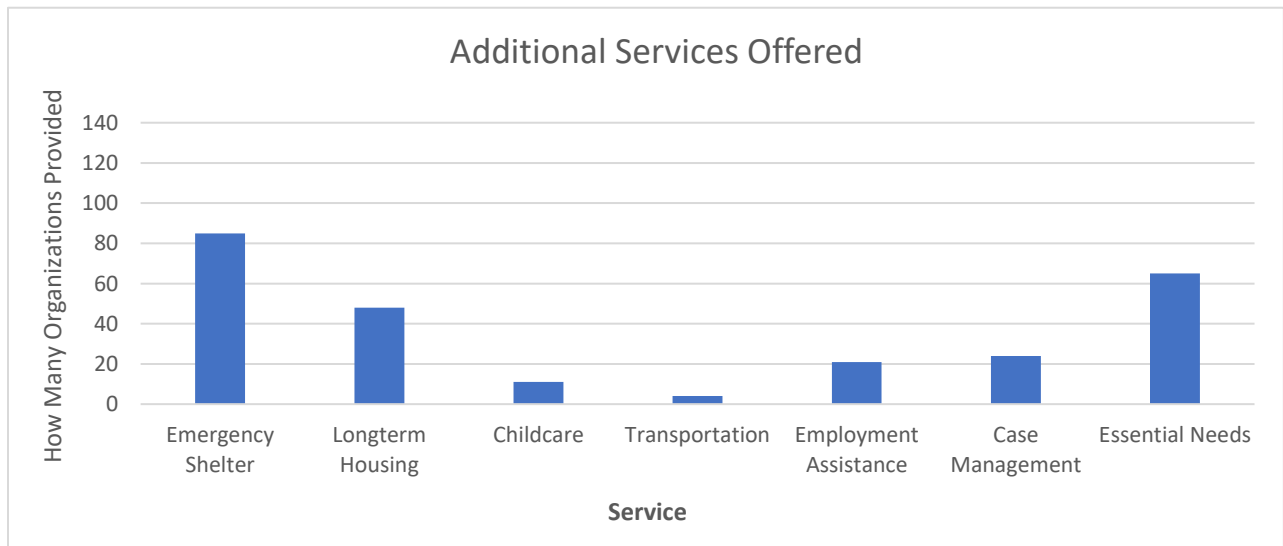


Figure 5.6

Several strong correlations were observed regarding the organization type or the organization's target user and their offered services. All organizations designated as grassroots and/or community-based, without exception, included a space for activism/ voice and hosted community building/ social events. Provision of legal aid was linked with organizations that served domestic violence victims and, to a lesser extent, sexual violence and human trafficking. Legal aid also had a strong correlation with the accessibility marker of outreach into immigrant communities and bilingual organizations. Assistance in filing paperwork for direct, financial victim compensation from The Fund was largely universal across organizations and was not sufficient in constituting "legal aid" service (see Methodology Chapter 3 for criteria). Lastly, all organizations providing medical services (just twelve percent) relied heavily on government funding and were receivers of substantial federal government grants. Financial aid in the form of small loans, coverage of burial expenses, scholarships, and small reimbursements for costs, was provided by just six organizations (four percent) with significant corporate sponsorship and government funding.

Although they had no measurable significance, there were several notable observations of services that are meaningful when understanding the purpose and role of victim service organizations. The first is the nature of educational programs and workshops offered. Ninety-eight percent of organizations provided educational information and resources; many of those included workshops and programs on mental health as well as development of practical skills. There was much variety in the way these educational sessions were structured and their content, ranging from vocational training, information on legal rights, procedures, and processes, financial planning and family budgeting, to workshops on healthy relationships, recognizing red flags and signs of unhealthy behavior, anger management classes and parenting classes. Programs were often designed for specific users, such as LGBTQI specialized, women/male specific programs, teenage and children programs, and special substance abuse counseling for victims struggling with addiction. Several organizations offered alternative approaches to healing (e.g. indigenous ritual, acupuncture therapy, healing circles, meditation). One organization (Law Enforcement Chaplaincy) includes a unique service of on-scene support to victims and their families during police emergency response to violent trauma and homicide; this organization was founded to fill the need of support to victims who have experienced alienation and insecurity in their interactions with law enforcement in incidents of violent victimization.

In summary, the universal services that victim service organizations provide can be summed up as mental health support, social support, and advocacy, both in the initial aftermath of crises and in follow up treatment. The exact forms that these services take shape depends heavily on the following factors: the organization type, the target population it seeks to support, and the funding it receives. The services provided are highly localized and aim to foster a sense of community through their service.

#### 5.4 Eligibility for Services

The eligibility of users was determined by each organization based on the type of victimization experienced. Several organizations provided services to more than one type of victim, however domestic violence and sexual violence was most prevalent. The other major categories (crimes against children, trafficking, homicide and trauma) had significantly less service organizations available. Figure 5.7 puts into perspective the differences.

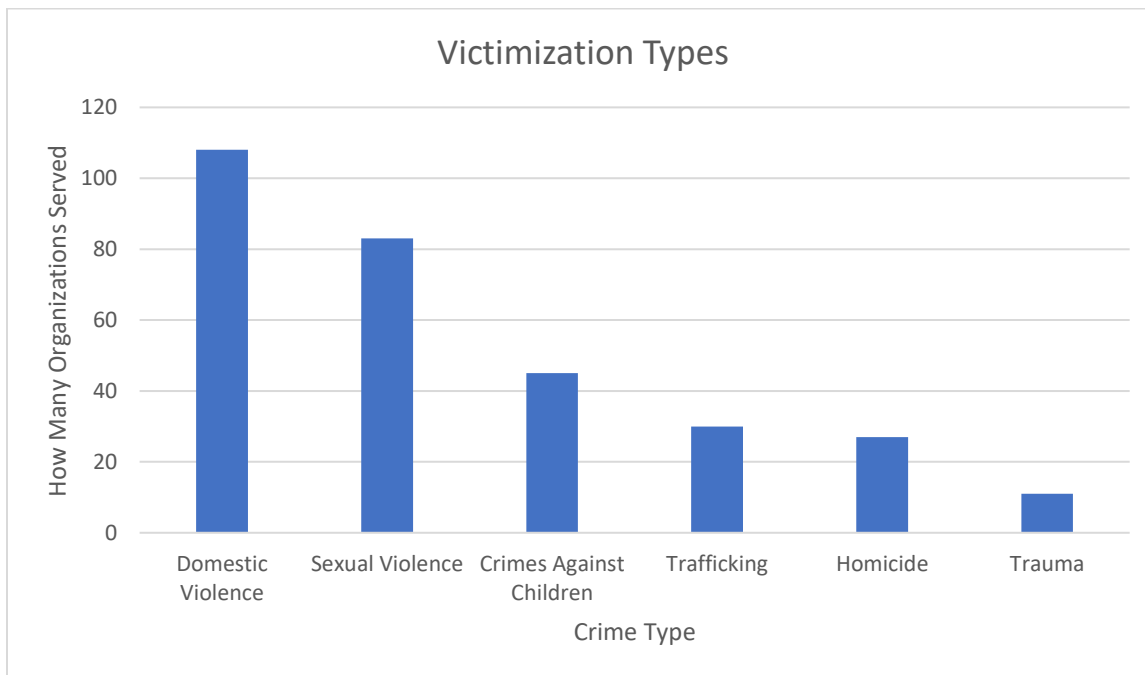


Figure 5.7

Of the twenty-seven organizations providing services to homicide victims—technically secondary victims as they are the families of the direct (deceased) victim— two organizations (*Justice for Murdered Children* and *Regents of UC Davis Wrap Around*) specifically targeted gang related

violence and prevention of victim retaliation. All other organizations provided services for direct victims; around fifty percent also extended services to immediate families of victims that may be impacted or at risk of impact of violent crime. Five organizations included offenders and/or victims with offending history and were eligible for services. The organization *Journey of Hope* serves secondary victims—surviving family and loved ones of homicide victims—and includes the families of the offenders in their services and programs.

As important as the criteria for eligibility is the criteria for exclusion of users. Very few organizations articulated the parameters for exclusion, e.g. one must not be receiving services elsewhere, not be an offender or possess a criminal history, must have exhausted personal health insurance funds to be eligible for clinical services, housing or other financial assistance. The significant lack of exclusionary information across all organizations results in a large knowledge gap in the research of victim service organizations. This missing data is crucial and its significance will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

Additionally, there was an element of gender specificity in many victim service organizations for domestic violence. This was reflected both explicitly—in specific workshops designed for women—and implicitly—through gender specific imagery and chosen brand names e.g. *My Sister's House*, *La Casa de las Madres*). A small minority of organizations serving domestic violence victims specified inclusivity of all victims regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Lastly, an important remark regarding domestic violence services eligibility is the construction of domestic violence as a crime vs. as a social harm (but not meeting the criminal threshold yet). This important differentiation of legal victimization and the experience of victimization will be a salient point for discussion in our Analysis (Chapter 6). For now, it is prudent to note that victim service organizations serving victims of domestic violence operate under much broader definitions of domestic violence than the narrow criminal justice definition; this is evidenced through the educational materials, workshops and programs that include psychological abuse, emotional abuse, financial and social control, and coercive behavior as forms of domestic violence.

In summary, the eligibility of users dataset revealed the target users of the majority of service organizations to be direct victims of domestic violence, victim families and dependents to a lesser extent, and secondary victims (surviving families of homicide victims) were eligible for a small minority of services through organizations. Within the category of domestic violence

victims, content analysis revealed explicit gender specificity in eligibility, usually women and children as their target users. A handful of organizations attempted to fill this gap by providing male-specific, LGBTQ and language-specific programming, targeting non-traditional victims of domestic violence.

## **5.5 Accessibility and Outreach**

A significant portion of the organizations possessed bilingual or multilingual capacities, expanding their accessibility for victims of different backgrounds in the highly diverse state of California. Forty-three percent of organizations either had full alternative websites in Spanish or expressed bilingual capacity in their services and educational resources. Many of those had parallel workshops, one in English and another in Spanish; the similarity of the programs and how much the Spanish program was tailored to address Latino culture, if at all, is not known. Additionally, fourteen organizations offered bilingual and multilingual services in a variety of languages; of those, over seventy percent offered between four and seventy languages, including Indigenous languages. Many other organizations claimed accommodation through interpreter services but were not included as bilingual. In total, thirty-five percent demonstrated awareness and efforts in utilizing a culturally informed approach in their services and claimed intercultural competence and accommodation.

Outreach efforts were able to be clearly identified in forty-three percent of organizations surveyed. There was a strong correlation between language accessibility and their outreach efforts, usually ethnic groups and their associated languages. Some examples include Asian and Pacific Islander communities, Latino youth and tribal communities. Sixteen percent of the outreach efforts targeted youth through workshops and talks in schools, focusing on sexual violence, abuse, and signs of violence in teenage relationships as precursors to domestic violence. Twenty-percent included activities such as event tabling, information stands, social events and public fundraising campaigns out in the community as their outreach strategy. About half of the organizations expressed heavy involvement in developing accessibility within the community but did not specify the nature or specific strategy of their outreach efforts.

As previously noted, several organizations were oriented towards specific users, reflected in their intercultural approach and language accessibility; for some, this was also reflected in their outreach efforts. For example, some organizations focused their outreach to LGBTQI communities

through dissemination of information and contact information at LGBTQI social events. Four organizations performed routine street outreach and other underserved areas (strip clubs, massage parlors) intended to reach particularly vulnerable populations, e.g. sex workers, homeless, at-risk youth. Some organizations identified underserved populations in their communities and targeted them, e.g. distributing leaflets in seniors homes regarding senior abuse and sexual abuse, ad campaigns targeting teenagers, special campaigns targeting male victims, etc. Lastly, the outreach of a few organizations, typically the larger and more robust organizations, was incorporated into existing target rich locations (hospitals, one-stop health centers, community hubs) and relied mainly on dissemination of informational materials and contact information (e.g. brochures, help lines).

In summary, the accessibility and outreach of organizations were related and echoed findings of previous datasets, demonstrating the localized nature of victim service organizations and their narrow focus on the communities they serve. Although far from reflecting the linguistic and cultural diversity present in the demographics of California, a significant number of organizations demonstrated linguistic accommodation and intercultural awareness. Unfortunately, not enough data regarding outreach efforts was available, either due to lack of outreach efforts or lack of disclosure; in either instance, this gap in knowledge prevents conclusive findings.

## **5.6 Key Findings**

The following is an articulation of the key findings from the combined observations across the datasets. The next chapter will discuss these findings in the context of the conceptual framework to answer the research questions set forth.

- 1. Domestic violence victims are largely understood to be women and their children; this victim group is significantly more targeted by victim service organizations and receives the largest range of services on average.*
- 2. Education, in different forms and varying in degree and content, is a universal trait across all victim service organizations, both in victim service programming and outreach.*

3. *Most organizations provide a combination of mental health and social support through extensive provisions of crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy and education.*
4. *Less than half of organizations included voice/space for activism in their services; all community-based and grassroots organizations included this service through opportunities for civic engagements and empowerment.*
5. *There was a severe lack of victim service organizations, or even specialized victim services integrated into community organizations, for Native people.*
6. *In total, there is limited outreach efforts and questionable accessibility.*
7. *There is almost no explicit data on criteria for user eligibility of victim service organizations.*
8. *Victim service organizations designed for victims of violent victimization other than domestic violence and sexual assault were not as robust in their services as domestic violence service organizations.*

## 6 ANALYSIS

This chapter will apply the conceptual framework to the key findings of both the database and the CA Crime Victims Survey to understand the role victim service organizations occupy and theorize these organizations as catalysts for peacebuilding in a positive peace framework.

### 6.1 Analysis of Findings

*How do database findings compare to the survey findings?*

Before proceeding to the main discussion, it is important to contextualize the database findings. The key findings used for analysis will be informed by the results of CA Crime Victims' Voices Survey (CVVS) pertaining to victim/survivor demographics, victim/survivor experiences with services and victim/survivor views on crime response<sup>107</sup>. By identifying corroborations, this section strengthens the key findings, while discovering inconsistencies provides a launching point for further research.

Although these categories are not exclusive and often overlap, one challenge in comparison is the use of differing categories by CVVS and the database; while the CVVS utilizes crime type terminology, e.g. *stalking*, *assault* and *rape*, the database adopted the language of victim service organizations and utilized victimization terms, e.g. *domestic violence*, *sexual assault* and *trauma*. Although not ideal, this technical discrepancy does not bar a productive analysis as we can still identify the essential harm at the core of the experience. A case can be made for corroboration regarding the database finding that the majority of service organizations are designed to provide services for domestic violence victims; both CVVS findings and official data (Uniform Crime Reporting and the National Crime Victimization Survey) report domestic violence crimes (*assault*, *rape*, *battery*) as both prolific and underreported.<sup>108</sup> The universally recognized dark figure of domestic violence in combination with the finding that domestic violence may be a precursor/

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<sup>107</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013*

<sup>108</sup> Michael Planty Lynn Langton, James P. Lynch, "Second Major Redesign of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)," (2017), [https://ccjs.umd.edu/sites/ccjs.../langton\\_et\\_al-2017-criminology\\_public\\_policy.pdf](https://ccjs.umd.edu/sites/ccjs.../langton_et_al-2017-criminology_public_policy.pdf).



contributor to other violent crime (for offender)<sup>109</sup> supports the need for such extensive domestic violence victim service organizations.

However, the large emphasis and significantly smaller range of services available for other victimizations are also important to note, particularly in light of the CVVS and NCVS findings that shows young, Black males as the demographic that experiences the most violent victimization.<sup>110</sup> Of all violent crimes, assault and homicide (recorded as *trauma* and *homicide* in the database) received the smallest proportion of service organizations despite affecting a large population; CVVS corroborated other findings in their study which found twenty-five percent to be victims of robbery, twenty-one percent victims of assault and eleven percent to be secondary victims as family members of a murdered loved one. Only a handful of organizations surveyed addressed this type of victimization directly, notably the pilot program of the Regents of UC Davis (a prominent research hospital) called the *Wrap Around* program, which targets patients of gun violence and violent injury with intensive psychosocial treatment and consistent follow up.<sup>111</sup>

It is important to re-iterate here the difference between rate of crime and rate of victimization, as one instance of crime may account for the victimization of several persons, therefore the relation between crime and victimization is not 1:1. This complexity presents a challenge outside the scope of the database, however opens up an important discussion on the possibility of at-risk groups falling through the cracks, even in the organizations that are established to address all forms of victimization. Because this research did not survey organizations without direct services specifically for victims, there is a possibility that groups at high-risk of victimization are being targeted by other organizations who do not cater to victims specifically, adopting a preventative model of action, and were therefore missed in the database.

Another important observation of the database is the lack of information on accessibility, which, although does *not* mean lack of accessibility itself, nonetheless corroborates CVVS findings regarding the lack of awareness that surveyed victims possessed regarding the availability of services and compensation, and their eligibility for them. Whether this failure is due to lack of

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<sup>109</sup> Elizabeth K. Drake Robert Barnoski, *WASHINGTON'S OFFENDER ACCOUNTABILITY ACT: DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS' STATIC RISK INSTRUMENT* (2007), [www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/977/Wsipp\\_Washingtons-Offender-Accountability-Act-Department-of-Corrections-Static-Risk-Instrument\\_Full-Report-Updated-October-2008.pdf](http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/977/Wsipp_Washingtons-Offender-Accountability-Act-Department-of-Corrections-Static-Risk-Instrument_Full-Report-Updated-October-2008.pdf).

<sup>110</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Survivors Speak 2019*, 3.

<sup>111</sup> Tricia Tomiyoshi, "Wraparound program helps steer youths away from cycle of violence," *Newsroom* 2018, <https://health.ucdavis.edu/publish/news/newsroom/12728>.

effective outreach strategies, institutional duty of care failure, or entirely other factors, this finding is important for several reasons. If a large percentage of victims are not being made aware of organizations providing the crucial psychological, social, advocacy, community and financial support, the capacity for victim service organizations to truly make a difference is severely diminished. Just as important as it is for victim service organizations to continue developing and improving to better meet the needs of violent crime victims, they cannot be considered effective in changing the landscape of communities plagued by cycles of violence if they are not made truly accessible to all victims.

## **6.2 Breaking Down “Violence”**

Operating under the definition of positive peace as a process of social justice which addresses all layers of violence present in society—direct, structural and cultural—we turn to the current case study to apply these concepts before discussing the role victim service organizations can play in addressing them.

### **6.2.1 Structural Violence**

We begin our analysis with the latent forms of violence at a more visible level— structural violence—before delving into cultural violence. Utilizing the critical approach outlined in the theoretical framework, disparities in victimization are most strongly dependent on three factors: race, class and gender. The role that race plays in the disproportionate experience of harm in American society is evident in the institutions and social structures that result in structural and direct violence. Utilizing Galtung’s conception of harm, detailed in Chapter 3, broadens the definition to mean any substantial gap between one’s potential and one’s achievements— inequality in both opportunity and actuality.<sup>112</sup> Taking a moment to consider each factor reveals how race, class and gender are currently operating and contributing to this gap.

In terms of gender, the structural form is sexism— a gender-based discrimination or prejudice, ingrained in social structure and institutions, that maintains status and power differences. A large body of research, academic works and social studies acknowledge the harmful

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<sup>112</sup> Galtung, "Violence, peace, and peace research," 168.

effects of gender discrimination, from the “glass ceiling” professional women face<sup>113</sup> and alarming rates of femicide<sup>114</sup> to the social stigma around mental health preventing men from seeking help (suicide rate 4x higher than women).<sup>115</sup> We observe patterns of gender-specific harm. It is not that women necessarily experience more victimization than men, as victimization rates show that men comprise the majority of offenders and are also violently victimized at a higher rate than women, with the exception of sexual assault.<sup>116</sup> Rather, the current damaging construct of gender, feminist theory proposes, is at the root of many social harms and inequalities experienced by both sexes, with women experiencing the most harm.<sup>117</sup> In other words, women experience the largest gap between potential and achievement as a result of the social structure of male domination at the expense of women—a structural violence—and operating on sexist ideas and beliefs—cultural violence; this important counterpart to structural violence will be explored further in the next section.

Structural violence in the case of race, then, takes form in racism. The persistence of racism has been argued for extensively, evidenced not only in the disparity of minority Black, Latino and Native people in incarceration rates, victimization rates, and officer-involved shootings, but in the documented effects of those experiences, ranging from disenfranchisement to loss of life.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, the systematic disenfranchisement of the uneducated, underserved working class and underclass in American society, consistent with the overrepresentation of this demographic in prisons, victimizations and lower life expectancy, builds a strong body of evidence for conceptualizing classism and racism as structural violence. A wide range of phenomenon have

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<sup>113</sup> David A Cotter et al., "The glass ceiling effect," *Social forces* 80, no. 2 (2001).

<sup>114</sup> Jane Caputi and DE Russell, "Femicide: speaking the unspeakable," *Ms.* (1990).

<sup>115</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Suicide Facts* Suicide Awareness Voices of Education SAVE (2016), <https://save.org/about-suicide/suicide-facts/>.

<sup>116</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Victims' Voices: Findings from the First Ever Survey of California's Crime Victims and Survivors 2013* 7.

<sup>117</sup> P. Glick and S. T. Fiske, "An ambivalent alliance. Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality," *The American psychologist* 56, no. 2 (2001).

<sup>118</sup> Natasha C Pratt-Harris et al., "Police-involved homicide of unarmed Black males: Observations by Black scholars in the midst of the April 2015 Baltimore uprising," *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 26, no. 3-4 (2016); CalvinJohn Smiley and David Fakunle, "From “brute” to “thug:” The demonization and criminalization of unarmed Black male victims in America," *Journal of human behavior in the social environment* 26, no. 3-4 (2016); Dorothy E Roberts, "The social and moral cost of mass incarceration in African American communities," *Stan. L. Rev.* 56 (2003).

been studied and linked to structures of classism and racism, from the school-to-prison-pipeline<sup>119</sup> to the warehousing of the surplus poor.<sup>120</sup> An individual's status in belonging to several groups (e.g. being a woman of color from an impoverished area) is conceptualized as *intersectionality* within feminist theory, and results in intensified experiences of structural violence, as these individuals move through obstacles in society and institutions fundamentally pitted against them. Finding the mechanisms fueling these structures of violence—racism, classism, sexism—requires further unpacking latent violence.

### 6.2.2 Cultural violence

Evident even in the few examples provided, the harms of society's violent structures are apparent and destructive. It begs the question of *what is causing this?* and, by extension, *why do we let it happen?* Identifying the lifeblood sustaining the violent social structures and institutions involves peeling back another layer of society to its core level—culture.

Cultural violence is defined as the attitudes and beliefs within the collective psyche of our society, within the culture, which are negative and harmful.<sup>121</sup> These attitudes are adopted in response to normal human feelings of fear and suspicion, and are cultivated into fear-based hate within a *zero sum game* mentality;<sup>122</sup> This mentality is reinforced through cultural artifacts—imagery, art, language, religion, science, norms — that sustain the ill feelings and cement the harmful attitudes into beliefs, which then provide the legitimacy for structures of violence. Applying this concretely to the structural violence of sexism, for example, it becomes clear that society's core beliefs about women and their role in society is that of sexual and service utility to men. Because women are believed to be irrational and emotional, they are considered to be better caregivers and inadequate decision-makers. This leads to conclusions that women are inherently *less than* their male counterparts, suited exclusively for supportive and service roles in society, and in need of male leadership and possession.<sup>123</sup> Reinforcement of these beliefs and attitudes are constant and often re-inventing itself under the cloak of women's liberation, through popular music

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<sup>119</sup> Nirmala Erevelles, "Crippin' Jim Crow: Disability, dis-location, and the school-to-prison pipeline," in *Disability incarcerated* (Springer, 2014); Tyson Lewis and Elizabeth Vazquez Solorzano, "Unraveling the heart of the school-to-prison pipeline," *Reinventing critical pedagogy: Widening the circle of anti-oppression education* (2006).

<sup>120</sup> Paul Wright and Tara Herivel, *Prison nation: The warehousing of America's poor* (Routledge, 2013).

<sup>121</sup> Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, 14, 198.

<sup>122</sup> Bilgic, *Rethinking security in the age of migration: Trust and emancipation in Europe*.

<sup>123</sup> Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, 14, 203.

and film, politics, advertising campaigns, religious dogma and a plethora of other cultural outlets.<sup>124</sup> The result of holding these beliefs so deeply ingrained in the culture is the acceptance of the lower status women enjoy in society through a persisting imbalance of women in power, gender tax<sup>125</sup>, and other “gaps” of achievement.

The cultural roots of racism are similarly reinforced through imagery and art; William Oliver formulates these practices as *cultural racism*, defining it as “the systematic manner in which the white majority has established its primary cultural institutions (e.g., education, mass media and religion) to elevate and glorify European physical characteristics, character and achievement and to denigrate the physical characteristics, character and achievement of nonwhite people”<sup>126</sup>. Apparent in a range of behaviors from hiring practices to cosmetic industry standards, the belief held by society is that White, European heritage, by default, is more beautiful, good and capable; this is contrasted with the idea that non-White is inherently ugly, dangerous and criminal.

There remain three possible logics to deduce from the reality of disproportionate search and arrests, prosecutions, and imprisonment of Black Americans<sup>127</sup>: *the criminal justice system is racist, reflecting our harmful cultural beliefs on race, and is therefore disproportionately targeting people of color, or the criminal justice responds objectively and people of color commit more crime due to structural violence, or the criminal justice system is responding objectively and people of color commit more crime because they are inherently worse people*. All three statements necessitate the existence of damaging beliefs and attitudes present in the cultural core of society. Furthermore, the complacency with which the systematic incarceration of people of color has occurred for decades, without significant challenge or change, makes a strong case of the latter statement.

The structure of classism is supported by similar cultural beliefs about the working class and underclass of American society. Many scholars have tied the damaging ideas of capitalism, both an economic and political system, with the overrepresentation of the uneducated poor in

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<sup>124</sup> Glick and Fiske, "An ambivalent alliance. Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality."

<sup>125</sup> Lea Hunter, "The" Tampon Tax": Public Discourse of Policies Concerning Menstrual Taboo," *Hinckley Journal of Politics* 17 (2016).

<sup>126</sup> William Oliver, "Cultural racism and structural violence: Implications for African Americans," *Journal of human Behavior in the Social Environment* 4, no. 2-3 (2001): 4-5.

<sup>127</sup> Marc Mauer and Tracy Huling, "Young black Americans and the criminal justice system: Five years later," (1995).

prisons, coining the incarceration practices as being a “warehousing of the surplus poor<sup>128</sup>”. The cultural beliefs sustaining the violent structures in the case of classism is the idea that equality of opportunity is sufficient, regardless of unequal structural and institutional barriers, and it is within the power of each individual to overcome his/her own suffering to achieve success, constructing poverty (at the very least *remaining* in poverty) as a choice;<sup>129</sup> this belief is in direct contrast to research counter-indicating economic mobility for the poorest, providing evidence that less than ten percent of children born into poverty manage to escape into working or middle class.<sup>130</sup> Strong beliefs in individualism prevent the consideration of the impact that intergenerational trauma (substance abuse, addiction, broken homes) and structural obstacles (lack of education, unstable housing, lack of nurture in formative years due to overworked caregivers) have in maintaining poverty.<sup>131</sup> Echoing the rationale of cultural racism, the complacency with which the systematic incarceration of the poor and destitute has occurred for decades, without significant challenge or change, supports the existence of a cultural belief in poverty as a choice.

The remaining crucial quality of cultural violence to note is its deeply imbedded character; through consistent and long-lasting reinforcement of the harmful beliefs and damaging attitudes, direct violence becomes *accepted*. Every instance of cultural exchange and expression premised on these beliefs—strengthens the belief, justifies the attitude and legitimizes the existing structures. In practice, this means every instance where a woman is challenged in her allegations of discrimination, or a young person of color is subjected to “stop and frisk” on a public street, or a single father is told to simply work harder to move neighborhoods in response to another burglary victimization, bolsters credence of the violent structures in society. These incidents are neither fatal nor crime, one may argue, as both structural and cultural violence houses a latent form of violence, until these harms are actioned. The latent violence present in the structures, institutions

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<sup>128</sup> Wright and Herivel, *Prison nation: The warehousing of America's poor*.

<sup>129</sup> Barbara Harriss-White, "Poverty and capitalism," *Economic and Political Weekly* (2006); R. Freeman, "Poverty and the politics of capitalism," *Business Ethics Quarterly*, no. 1 (1998): 1.

<sup>130</sup> Caroline Ratcliffe and Emma Kalish, "Escaping Poverty," (2017).

<sup>131</sup><sup>131</sup> Caroline Ratcliffe and Signe-Mary McKernan, *Childhood poverty persistence: Facts and consequences* (Urban Institute Washington, DC, 2010); Jennifer A Bailey et al., "Parenting practices and problem behavior across three generations: monitoring, harsh discipline, and drug use in the intergenerational transmission of externalizing behavior," *Developmental psychology* 45, no. 5 (2009); Jake M Najman et al., "The generational transmission of socioeconomic inequalities in child cognitive development and emotional health," *Social science & medicine* 58, no. 6 (2004).

and sociocultural fabric of American society manifest in over violence— physical and psychological forms of direct violence.

### 6.2.3 Direct violence

The latent violence present in society, illustrated hereto as the harmful beliefs held and reinforced through cultural expression, contributes to the formation and perpetuation of violent structures that facilitate instances of direct violence; direct violence is then justified by the cultural violence, completing the triangle of violence in Galtung's conception.<sup>132</sup> As illustrated with the examples, the relationship between the types of violence is not causation but mutually reinforcing.

In this case study, the high rates of violent victimization in California, coupled with the phenomenon of victim-offender overlap on one hand and intergenerational trauma and cycles of violence on the other, constitutes *direct violence*. Violent victimization disproportionately affects people of color, poor neighborhoods and are gender-specific, where men are victims of assault and homicide at higher rates and women are more likely to be victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.<sup>133</sup> Victims of violent crime come in all shapes and sizes, of all status, color and gender, and their experiences are equally important; the purpose of this discussion, however, has been to highlight the undeniable patterns and trends to support the evidence of violent structures, informed by a violent culture. In this way, structural, cultural and direct violence are framed in the context of violent victimization to consider the capacity of victim service organizations in shaping peaceful cultures and structures—a positive peace.

## 6.3 Applying the Conceptual Framework

Having conceptualized violence in the case study, we can now apply the framework laid out in Chapter 2 to the database findings, presented in Chapter 5 and contextualized above in existing empirical data, to theorize victim service organizations as important arenas in addressing all forms of violence.

1. *Domestic violence victims are largely understood to be women and their children; this victim group is significantly more targeted by victim service organizations and receives the largest range of services on average.*

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<sup>132</sup> Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*, 14, 197.

<sup>133</sup> David Binder Research, *California Crime Survivors Speak 2019*.

This finding presents several points of discussion regarding victimhood and cultural violence. Firstly, it engages the *victimization* versus *victimhood* distinction established in our conceptual framework. Adopting the definition of victimization as one's experience of harm is differentiated with the operational definition of victimhood—a grievance-based identity. The content analysis of victim service organizations for domestic violence (domestic violence), specifically the approach to target users with the rhetoric and imagery employed on the service webpage, reveals the transitional process of identifying the experience of victimization to attaining the status of victimhood (and access to the resources that come with it).

The extension of invitation into victimhood begins first with creating awareness—establishing that harm has happened/ is occurring. Most often this took form in questions directed at the webpage user or statements in a questionnaire format to uncover abusive behaviors and rationalizing patterns of thought (*It was my fault, I did/said something to upset him, His apology was sincere, He had a rough day*). In this way, the “first step” was one often employed in large public service campaigns, by engaging the user in first recognizing their experience as victimization (as opposed to disagreements, relationship/marital problems, financial issues, cultural misunderstanding, etc.) Additionally, every domestic violence victim service organization website contained a large, visible and toggled object for “quick escape” purposes, along with a warning of web-history monitoring possibilities and browser clearing options, serving dual purposes— providing an immediate exit function and framing the organization as a reliable, discrete source for help.

Importantly, domestic violence victim service organizations operated under a broader definition of domestic violence, different to the legal parameters of domestic violence crimes (physical battery, child/elder abuse, threat of physical harm, revenge porn, stalking). Abusive behaviors such as coercive control and indirect/unspoken threat to harm (e.g. displaying aggression without physical contact with the victim by punching the wall next to the victim's head or destroying shared property) were included in the organization's formulation of domestic violence victimization. By doing so, domestic violence victim service organizations extended the status of victim to those who may not be recognized as so under criminal law, falling in the precursory grey areas of “harm but not a crime.” This instance illustrates two points of contention: *when does the victimized become a Victim?* and *what are the effects of this approach?* By broadening the



definition of domestic violence through educating users on abusive behaviors (outside the scope of criminal jurisdiction), the user (potential victim) is able to—maybe for the first time—recognize their history of experiences, long before physical violence is perpetrated, as victimization. Following this first step, the domestic violence organization then extends the invitation into victimhood by providing available resources for help, which necessitates action on the part of the victim; by utilizing this opportunity to exercise agency through seeking help, whether it be online or in-person services, the user joins into victimhood.

This transition from creating awareness and providing an opportunity for action—moving from being *the victimized* to *the Victim*—is a direct addressing of cultural violence on the individual level. It takes place beyond just the user's first engagement with the website but is reified in the process through each interaction of victims accessing services, learning about domestic violence and re-framing their own experiences. Since we have established cultural violence as the *accepted* attitudes and norms justifying the behaviors constituting structural and direct violence, the journey of domestic violence victims constitutes a *rejection* of the attitudes and norms that led to the experience of domestic violence. The programs and workshops in domestic violence organizations lead an attack on cultural violence by using the context of victimization to confront the damaging beliefs and structures in society. In broadening the definition of domestic violence, domestic violence organizations bring awareness to cultural violence, and in doing this, brings the victimized into victimhood by first acknowledging their victimization as legitimate and, more importantly, providing a safe space to reach out for resources and for a voice. The important impacts of education in victim service organizations on cultural violence will be further examined in a later section.

Due to the nature of domestic violence being an intimate and complicated situation because the perpetrator is a loved one and/or the breadwinner, victim service organizations occupy a special position in their ability to offer help that is not damaging to the victim. The law enforcement response is to remove the perpetrator from the home; however, due to the devastating consequences of losing a partner who shares the burden of domestic tasks and with whom one is also financially intertwined (often times completely dependent upon), domestic victimization often goes unreported and victims are hesitant to seek help from law enforcement<sup>134</sup>. Victim service

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<sup>134</sup> Richard B Felson et al., "Reasons for reporting and not reporting domestic violence to the police," *Criminology* 40, no. 3 (2002); Christine E Rasche, "Minority women and domestic violence: The unique dilemmas of battered

organizations, on the contrary, occupy a non-threatening role in extending help. In cases where the victim chooses to stay with the offending partner, either temporarily or permanently, inclusion of the offender (when the offender is willing and the victim permits it) into relevant programming (batterer's program, parent training, anger management, therapy) offers the victim another choice besides criminal reporting and potential loss of home, children and financial support. In this way, victim service organizations utilize restorative justice principles by referring to the victim and offender, the two biggest stakeholders in the situation, to address the harm, rather than the traditional criminal justice route via arrest and prosecution. Through seeking help from victim service organizations, the victim has another option and is empowered to make that choice.

The next point of analysis in this finding is the way in which domestic violence victim service organizations provide a unique opportunity to challenge cultural violence by disrupting the cycle of violence. Many of the surveyed domestic violence victim service organizations emphasized the impact of domestic violence on children. Not only can witnessing domestic violence be traumatic for children, it becomes a learned norm; this is supported by vast research and studies on domestic violence that show consistent exposure to violence in the home as inheriting a damaging legacy, either in children becoming violent adult offenders themselves or gravitating towards circumstances leading to repeated victimizations later in life.<sup>135</sup> Because cultural violence is defined as not only attitudes and beliefs but also norms in society, the very first and fundamental source of social norms are those shaped and learned within a child's nuclear family. The family home becomes the crucial frontline and the significant targeting of domestic violence victims is essentially a challenging of cultural violence at ground zero. This intervention of direct violence has much larger implications than simply preventing the further physical/psychological abuse of a spouse; rather, they are facilitating a break in the cycle of violence and providing a chance for all victims, direct and indirect, to end the cycle of violence with their victimization.

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women of color," *Journal of contemporary criminal justice* 4, no. 3 (1988); Caroline Akers and Catherine Kaukinen, "The police reporting behavior of intimate partner violence victims," *Journal of family violence* 24, no. 3 (2009).

<sup>135</sup> Akers and Kaukinen, "The police reporting behavior of intimate partner violence victims."; Anu Manchikanti Gómez, "Testing the cycle of violence hypothesis: Child abuse and adolescent dating violence as predictors of intimate partner violence in young adulthood," *Youth & Society* 43, no. 1 (2011); Bell, "Cycles within cycles: Domestic violence, welfare, and low-wage work."

2. *Education, in different forms and varying in degree and content, is a universal trait across all victim service organizations, both in victim service programming and outreach.*

This finding echoes a similar function in addressing cycles of violence and contributes in addressing cultural violence through education and incorporating restorative justice principles. Educational agendas in victim service organizations varied in content, breadth, accessibility, structure, and specificity (relative to the victimization type); however, they shared one identical quality—their purpose. As the saying goes, *knowledge is power*, and the first and foremost purpose was providing victims with the information they need for recovery and empowerment. This knowledge base consisted of practical information on policies, procedures and processes, and taught individuals how to successfully navigate the difficulties directly related to their victimization (e.g. applying for victim compensation, filing restraining orders, seeking civil litigation, navigating health insurance costs and concerns, and many more.) Most importantly, victims were provided with information regarding the options and alternatives available to them, empowering them to make their own choices beyond just accepting the direct services being provided at the organization. This category of educational materials addressed the consequences of victimization.

The other type of educational materials provided served another purpose and addressed the violence itself. This agenda was incorporated most often in organizations’ outreach events and workshops and in-house workshops and programming, for both victims and the public. The outreach efforts into schools and youth centers were specifically designed to teach young people about “red flag” behaviors and encouraged youth to consider where those damaging ideas stem from and to confront the harmful attitudes about gender, race, and stereotypes. Workshops centered on age-appropriate discussions on healthy communication, values, anger/ stress management, and expressions of love. Guest speakers were often employed to share personal histories of victimization and/or offending behavior and their journey to healing. These programs urged participants, both in outside workshops and (to a lesser extent) direct victim services, to challenge existing, ingrained beliefs that they had due to the values in their microenvironment and the cultural violence in wider society. For example, a workshop on *what it means to be a man* challenged cultural beliefs (in pop culture, mass media and possibly in their own homes) on masculinity equated with domination and “toughness” by illustrating the problematic ways in

which this manifests in real human relationships. In this way, victim service organizations challenged some widely accepted harmful beliefs that help justify rampant structural and direct violence. Another significant example is in organization programming of domestic violence and family-centered organizations that included parenting classes and anger management workshops that taught victim participants (and offender participants in some cases) the healthy communication strategies needed to help repair and improve their relationships with people. These workshops and classes, combined with therapy, seek to enable victims to experience a stronger sense of control in their lives, the loss of which is often a result of repeated victimization.

Similar to the analysis of the first finding in which targeting of domestic violence can be understood as “ground zero” and serve to disrupt cycles of violence, so the educational workshops and programs administered by the victim service organizations (both domestic violence oriented and others) attempt to address the cycles of violence. This is accomplished through teaching awareness of harmful beliefs and attitudes present within society and equipping participants with the emotional, cognitive and practical tools to change them.

*3. Most organizations provide a combination of mental health and social support through extensive provisions of crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy and education.*

This finding constitutes one of the most important aspects of victim service organizations and accounts for the bulk of victim service organizations’ potential in overcoming structures of violence. This section will demonstrate how the psychosocial approach utilized by the organizations can overcome existing structures of violence through empowerment.

Despite the large range in needs of individual victims accessing services, most organizations seemed to embody a dual approach by attending to both the psychological (mental health) and social (practical) needs of their users. The psychosocial approach has been advocated for by many conflict intervention experts, both in the aftermath of largescale conflict<sup>136</sup> and for

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<sup>136</sup> Wietse A. Tol et al., "Sexual and gender-based violence in areas of armed conflict: a systematic review of mental health and psychosocial support interventions," journal article, *Conflict and Health* 7, no. 1 (August 05 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1186/1752-1505-7-16>, <https://doi.org/10.1186/1752-1505-7-16>; WHO, *Mental health and psychosocial support for conflict-related violence: Principles and Interventions*, (Geneva 2012).

victims of interpersonal crime.<sup>137</sup> A large body of evidence for best-practices in victims aid have shown the need for trauma informed responses and harmonized services that operate on a continuum of care, addressing the immediate needs of victims as well as support for their long term challenges.<sup>138</sup> Though not the majority, a significant amount of victim service organizations seem to subscribe to this effort, as the service distribution data illustrates. While psychological support was a staple service offered everywhere, either via professional individual counseling, group therapies, or support groups, many organizations also used integrated methods of addressing mental health through previously mentioned parenting classes, anger management classes and communication workshops. Some organizations, a minority, also utilized alternative methods such as meditation sessions, acupuncture therapy, healing circles and spiritual healings (either through prayer, musical worships or other forms of expression). These activities mainly addressed the mental health of victim users.

The second component of the psychosocial support is the range of services that organizations offered (detailed in subchapter 5.3). These services can be understood as multipurposed—giving help and facilitating empowerment. Services such as transportation, childcare, essential needs, shelter, translator services, clothing and financial aid ensured that victims were not only receiving counseling but also practical help that addressed their basic and urgent needs. Due to the often-displacing nature of victimization, mental health aid is only secondary in the hierarchy of human needs; therefore, the provision of these practical, crisis intervening services are an important part of victim services.

Proponents of holistic psychosocial intervention posit that meeting the practical, essential needs and mental health needs of victims is not enough when the aim is to provide opportunities for lasting impact and build resiliency against future victimization.<sup>139</sup> In addition to the emotional needs and practical needs, they argue, human social needs must also be considered for a true holistic approach, as social support contributes significantly to resilience.<sup>140</sup> In victim service

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<sup>137</sup> Viola Schreiber, Babette Renneberg, and Andreas Maercker, "Seeking psychosocial care after interpersonal violence: An integrative model," *Violence and Victims* 24, no. 3 (2009); Cate Buchanan, *Gun violence, disability and recovery* (Xlibris Corporation, 2014).

<sup>138</sup> Buchanan, *Gun violence, disability and recovery*.

<sup>139</sup> Buchanan, *Gun violence, disability and recovery*; Mj Jordans et al., "Implementation of a mental health care package for children in areas of armed conflict: a case study from burundi, indonesia, Nepal, sri lanka, and Sudan," 10, no. 1 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001371>.

<sup>140</sup> Martine Hébert, Francine Lavoie, and Martin Blais, "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder/PTSD in adolescent victims of sexual abuse: resilience and social support as protection factors," *Ciencia & saude coletiva* 19 (2014).

organizations, the other type of services provided consisted of financial planning workshops, family budgeting, job seeking assistance, vocational training, educational qualifications, and community building. These types of services went beyond addressing victims' immediate needs by providing them with the knowledge and skills for their empowerment. In the case of domestic violence victims, working towards personal autonomy and financial independence was crucial for safety from current victimization but also for a healthy and happy living situation in future. Similarly, for victims of other violent crime, these workshops provided a chance for accessing skills that may have been previously out of reach due to the obstacles in place within structures of violence—racism, sexism, classism. Through their victimhood, they were empowered in a society structured on their disempowerment. Some examples illustrating this point include employment services; a victim who does not possess legal work history benefits from the organization's employment services by building up a reputable history through voluntary work at the organization or the organization's business sponsors, receives assistance in writing resumes, is guided through mock interviews and provided a network for job vacancies. These skills, normally easily obtained by default for people of a privileged background, are often a large barrier in the lives of victims, many of whom are from underprivileged backgrounds.<sup>141</sup> By providing not only direct help but avenues for self-help, victim service organizations help empower victims to overcome both the direct violence and the structural violence of their victimization.

Other organizations were established with the exclusive purpose of addressing cycles of violence, providing holistic services to alter the likelihood of future violent outcomes. One such program is the Regents of UC Davis "Wrap Around" project, which specifically targets one neighborhood with high violent victimization rates due to gang violence and, often, accidental violent injury. This pilot project has a narrow purpose of providing young people who have experienced a violent assault or trauma with "wrap around" services, from treating the physical injury to mental health support and social support. The explicit purpose of the project is to prevent retaliation and cycles of violence through consistent and long-term follow-up by health professionals and community partners. By covering the spectrum of needs from the psychological to social, victim service organizations provide victims with the power to make informed,

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<sup>141</sup> Mikko Aaltonen et al., "Socioeconomic differences in violent victimization: Exploring the impact of data source and the inclusivity of the violence concept," *European Journal of Criminology* 9, no. 6 (2012); Shane D Johnson, Kate Bowers, and Alex Hirschfield, "New insights into the spatial and temporal distribution of repeat victimization," *The British Journal of Criminology* 37, no. 2 (1997).

independent choices for their own lives and better access the tools needed for their individual recovery.

*4. Less than half of organizations included voice/space for activism in their services; all community-based and grassroots organizations included this service through opportunities for civic engagements and empowerment.*

Continuing with the discussion on the importance of a holistic approach in victim service organizations intervention, this finding addresses the last component of a psychosocial approach in the social engagement of victims. Victims of violent victimization often experience feelings of loss of control and loneliness;<sup>142</sup> if displaced from their usual community in addition to victimization, the feelings of loss are further compounded. While group therapy and professional counseling meet mental health needs, and teaching of practical skills facilitate agency, community building is the third component of victim needs by providing meaning to victimization experiences and providing those victimized with a voice, a community to which they can belong, and a space for activism. It is important to note that organizations with such active spaces for engagement and activism were a minority and not representative of the majority of organizations and their distribution of services. However, because the purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate the range of victim services and the potential capacities of victim service organizations for positive peace, this observation was included and analyzed for that purpose.

While victims may receive all the tools and knowledge for dealing with their own trauma and how to overcome obstacles of structural violence in their lives, the criteria for true empowerment requires all three components of agency— interpersonal, intrapersonal and behavioral (detailed in subchapter 2.4); this means that victims are truly empowered when they are able to act and speak out in effecting change in wider society, not only their own personal lives. This is accomplished by victim service organizations in several ways through pro-active efforts in building community through social events such as fundraising, holiday parties and supporting other community events. Several organizations engaged in lobbying, supporting members of the

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<sup>142</sup> Irene H Frieze, Sharon Hymer, and Martin S Greenberg, "Describing the crime victim: Psychological reactions to victimization," *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 18, no. 4 (1987).

community in defending their individual cases, and participated in advocating for policies of restorative justice.

Organizations such as “Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation” have advocacy for reconciliation and social justice as the core of their identity; in their unique positions as victims, they are able to raise their collective voice through the platform provided in their unity. As a community of victims actively involved in lobbying against the death penalty, they use their victimhood status and seek healing from their trauma through influencing criminal justice policies and shifting public spending away from corrections and into mental health and social services. Five other organizations surveyed included offenders and victims with offending histories in their programming, working in addressing both the victimization experience and accountability for offending outside of the court system. The organization “Journey of Hope: From Violence to Healing” solely works with bringing together families of the deceased and families of the offender.

Interestingly, grassroots and community centered organizations shared the practice of articulating their beliefs and positions on the criminal justice system and public policies concerning crimes, victims, and other related social issues. This may be in part due to their nature as a small organization—often utilizing a Facebook profile as a homepage rather than a generated website—facilitating unrestrained expression of support and opposition to political issues. These organizations were funded by government grants and supplemented significantly with private fundraising and grant writing for private foundation grants.

Not all organizations providing a space for activism were involved in civic engagements at the State or local government level, however. Many of these organizations fostered a platform for victims to have a voice through local community building; this was accomplished through extensive outreach into workplaces, schools and even recreational social events, by spreading awareness not only of the organization’s existence but also awareness of pro-active measures to build up the community infrastructure for dealing with victimization and prevention. In some cases, this entailed organizations incorporating their services into one-stop community centers and family centers that pool community resources for building healthy families and, by extension, a healthy community. This dual method of victim participation in shaping wider community and government policy on one hand and including local government and community in victim organizations on the other, opens a space for dialogue and true empowerment.



#### **6.4 Potential Positive Peace and Issues for Concern**

The findings discussed hereto have been analyzed with the hybrid conceptual framework to explore how victim service organizations can be important arenas for generating positive peace in communities through the services they provide to victims and in their outreach to the public. Operating under the definition of positive peace as a process of social justice in which there is not only the elimination of direct violence but the breaking down of structural and cultural violence, the first step entailed identifying the layers of latent violence and tracing the way structural and cultural violence manifest in the case study. In the next step, the first four key findings were then discussed in this framework of cultural, structural and direct violence, utilizing concepts of victimhood, empowerment and restorative justice as they applied in each case. Each finding constitutes one or more ways that victim service organizations can be conceptualized as fostering peace through challenging cultural beliefs, empowering victims to overcome structures of violence, and creating a platform for a voice in shaping society.

By illustrating the ways in which victim service organizations are structured and funded—receiving necessary government support but operating outside of the government and therefore alternative to traditional criminal justice institutions—the services they provided, the victimization type most targeted, the tendency for psychosocial approaches and the educational agendas utilized, this chapter supported the argument of victim service organizations as uniquely capable of fostering positive peace due to its engagement with and challenging of violence in all its forms. The next section will discuss the remaining findings which are issues of concern for victim service organizations as they impede the pro-active targeting of cultural, structural and direct violence and diminishes potential contribution to positive peace.

*5. There was a severe lack of victim service organizations, or even specialized victim services integrated into community organizations, for Native people.*

When categorizing organization types, “Native” was introduced as a category in anticipation of a significant amount of organizations operating in Native communities. This expectation was due to the documented soaring rates of victimization in tribal communities and on Reservation land. Domestic violence and sexual assault in particular are a central issue for Native communities, with female victimization rates over 3.5 times the national average and an epidemic of murdered and

missing Native women.<sup>143</sup> Despite jurisdiction issues and controlling for the possibility of victim services being integrated into a larger community services organization, the database revealed almost a complete absence of victim service organizations targeting victims of Native heritage; just two percent of victim service organizations targeted or expressed accommodation of Native people. This finding is alarming when compared to victim service organizations for Latino/Spanish Speakers, who are also at higher risk of victimization than their White or Asian counterparts. Findings showed forty-three percent of victim service organizations either targeted Latino victims specifically or included outreach and accommodation of Spanish language and Latino cultural.

An 2013 auditing report of California victims services<sup>144</sup> highlighted the dire situation of underserved and vulnerable populations, including Native people, lacking access to victim service organizations. Given the high levels of victimization (direct violence), surviving legacy of disenfranchisement and disempowerment (structural and cultural violence) against Native people, coupled with this paper's finding of victim service organizations' capacity in addressing all violence, makes this finding particularly troubling.

*6. In total, there is limited outreach efforts and questionable accessibility.*

Database findings showed that smaller organizations that were community-based, grassroots or targeted a specific ethnic or vulnerable group had the most developed outreach strategies. If there is a correlation between outreach and accessibility, this is duly troubling information. For victim service organizations to be truly effective in altering the cultural and structural violence, as well as prevent repeat victimization, both outreach and accessibility must be well established. The research presented here has not endeavored to measure the efficacy of organizations and their services, however other research has found issues of underfunding and lack of victim service

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<sup>143</sup> Ronet Bachman et al., "Violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and the criminal justice response: What is known," (2008); Amber Dean, "The CMHR and the Ongoing Crisis of Murdered or Missing Indigenous Women: Do Museums Have a Responsibility to Care?," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 37, no. 2-3 (2015); Lorraine Halinka Malcoe, Bonnie M Duran, and Juliann M Montgomery, "Socioeconomic disparities in intimate partner violence against Native American women: a cross-sectional study," *BMC medicine* 2, no. 1 (2004).

<sup>144</sup> CALIFORNIA VICTIM COMPENSATION AND GOVERNMENT CLAIMS BOARD, *Gap Analysis Report: California's Underserved Crime Victims and their Access to Victim Services and Compensation*.

organizations resulting in long waiting lists of victims attempting to access services.<sup>145</sup> If organizations are not able to accommodate to the extent that victims are waiting for weeks and months to access safe housing and critical intervention, the needs of victims in California are far from being met. The lack of outreach and accessibility may be a symptom of overwhelmed victim service organizations who already cannot cope with the amount of users; however, it does not change the fact that there is a dire lack of outreach and, therefore, no systems in place to combat cycles of violence.

*7. There is almost no explicit data on criteria for user eligibility of victim service organizations.*

Lack of data on eligibility criteria for victims to access services is alarming for two reasons; firstly, it puts into question the premise of the thesis; given the reality of the victim-offender overlap (discussed in Chapter 1) and complex healthcare insurance systems, the potential exclusion of victims who have offending records or victims who are precluded by their insurance from accessing services outside their provider's services, compromises the conceptualization of victim service organizations as a peacebuilding forum. Secondly, how would the inclusion of offenders in victim services affect victim empowerment and agency? Tackling these questions will require further development of the concepts outlined in this thesis and a grappling of restorative justice within the context of victimhood, victim empowerment and positive peace.

*8. Victim service organizations designed for victims of violent victimization other than domestic violence and sexual assault were not as robust in their services as domestic violence service organizations.*

Only forty-six percent of organizations targeted violent victimizations (e.g. violent injury, gang violence, trafficking, trauma, homicide) other than domestic violence and sexual assault. Despite the importance of addressing domestic violence, earlier conceptualized as ground zero for addressing cultural violence, there remain areas that are rife with violence on an epidemic scale,

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

with retaliatory violence and self-perpetuating cycles of violence.<sup>146</sup> A study of an urban trauma center revealed the scope of the problem in its finding that two-fifths of urban trauma patients were repeat victims, who were also more likely to be poor African-American males, without health insurance, have substance abuse and mental health problems, and live in neighborhoods where violence is pervasive.<sup>147</sup> These areas are smaller in size but more lethal and therefore should receive as much attention. The findings of this research revealed only a handful of organizations tailoring their services to victims of such violence, most notably the *Wrap Around* program at UC Davis. If victim service organizations are to be effective in combatting direct, cultural and structural violence, they should be made accessible for all types of victims across the spectrum.

## 6.5 Summary

This chapter establishes the argument of victim service organizations as an important social arena for peacebuilding by demonstrating the capacity of victim service organizations to address all forms of violence—direct, cultural and structural. This argument is presented by first defining forms of violence in the case study as violent victimization, structures of racism, sexism, classism, and harmful cultural beliefs perpetuated through media and family norms. Next, victim service organizations are posited as capable of directly challenging all violence types; to demonstrate how they accomplish this, the first four findings of the database are discussed in terms of *victimhood*, *empowerment*, and *restorative justice*. Due to the nature of their existence and the purpose they serve, victim service organizations are uniquely positioned on both battlegrounds—criminal justice and social justice— building a strong case for their potential for positive peace. The concluding section discusses the last set of findings which bring issues of concern to the forefront, highlighting factors that may inhibit the potential for victim service organizations to be truly effective in helping cultivate positive peace. The next chapter supplements this discussion by emphasizing the implications of the impeding factors and recommendations for overcoming them in order to strengthen victim service organizations as an effective peacebuilding forum.

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<sup>146</sup> Terry F Buss and Rashid Abdu, "Repeat victims of violence in an urban trauma center," *Violence and victims* 10, no. 3 (1995); Abigail A Fagan, "The short-and long-term effects of adolescent violent victimization experienced within the family and community," *Violence and Victims* 18, no. 4 (2003).

<sup>147</sup> Buss and Abdu, "Repeat victims of violence in an urban trauma center," 183.

## 7 CONCLUSION

With the establishment of peace studies as an academic field of study, a window of exciting opportunities was presented with innovative approaches through interdisciplinary study of peace and conflict, from interpersonal to international and in between. Central concepts developed within peace studies have also engaged much critical feedback and, in recent years, peace studies have arguably been solely preoccupied to a study of conflict and international peacebuilding efforts within the accepted liberal democratic peace framework.<sup>148</sup> In line with the strong multidisciplinary ethic in the Centre for Peace Studies at the Arctic University of Tromsø, this thesis has ventured back into exploring the concept of positive peace and the layers of violence in the context of victimization in the state of California.

### 7.1 Contributions

This thesis contributes in two areas: practical and theoretical. The findings of the database on California victim service organizations contributes to understanding the current community approaches to victimization, their potential and their shortcomings. Analysis of these findings through a lens of critical concepts from peace and victimology contributes to peace studies by theorizing positive peace within the social organizations of victim services. By creating a hybrid framework using concepts from victimology and restorative justice, positive peace is further developed as a process that can take place in the existing social structure, given the results of the findings demonstrating factors that support and inhibit this potential. Furthermore, it has shown the relevance of victim service organizations not only in helping individual victims recover, but in the prevention of future violence by disrupting cycles of victimization.

### 7.2 Summary

This thesis set out to explore the potential of victim service organizations to address all layers of violence, latent and overt, as an important social arena for peacebuilding at the community level. Victim service organizations were chosen as the data of study because they hold a unique place in

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<sup>148</sup> Johansen, "Peace Research Needs to Re-Orient."

society, dealing with all forms of violence This exploration entailed adopting a mixed methods approach, utilizing descriptive statistics and content analysis, to survey all victim service organizations in California. Data on the victim service organization types, their history, funding, range of services, target users, eligibility criteria, outreach and accessibility was collected into a database in an effort to observe patterns and generate key findings. These findings were then contextualized in existing research on victimization and victim service organizations.

Occupying a unique space for study at the nexus of peace studies and victimology, this thesis developed a hybrid conceptual framework of *positive peace, victimhood, cultural violence, structural violence, direct violence, restorative justice* and *empowerment* for analysis of the key findings. First, concepts of *direct violence, structural violence* and *cultural violence* were applied to the current case study, in which violent victimization constituted direct violence, systems of racism, sexism and classism – structural violence, and fear and hate-based beliefs imbedded in our culture – cultural violence. Analysis of the first four key findings demonstrated the capacity of victim service organizations in challenging all forms of violence by facilitating empowerment of victims.

The core services of victim service organizations consisted of attending to the immediate needs of victims as a result of the harm they experienced—direct violence; these services included crisis intervention, provision of essential needs, and mental health services. By utilizing a psychosocial approach, many organizations included programming and outreach that educated victims and the public on cultural violence through workshops challenging existing beliefs and norms, and provided the tools and resources for overcoming structural violence. Victim service organizations also affected long lasting change by creating a space for true empowerment through providing a platform for voice in lobbying and effecting change in communities and institutions (such as pushing for more funding for services, voting to shift state budget flow from incarceration to social support, tackling criminal justice and public health policies, etc.) Through educational agendas, outreach efforts, and the targeting of domestic violence and victims at risk of repeat victimization, victim service organizations directly addressed cultural violence and contributed in disrupting cycles of violence. These functions provided a strong case for understanding victim service organizations as more than charity aid for victims; rather, the analysis of the findings demonstrated how victim service organizations are fertile grounds for cultivating positive peace through education and resources for empowerment.

Some findings also presented issues for concern, such as the lack of outreach efforts and accessibility, lack of organizations targeting especially vulnerable populations and areas, and the lack of data on user eligibility. However, these concerns were largely oriented towards the efficacy of existing victim service organizations and their current range of influence. Measuring the efficacy of victim service organizations, although related, is a different goal from the ambitions of this thesis. Rather than seeking out whether victim service organizations adequately meet the needs of victims, this thesis examined how they are structured, how they are operationalized and how they strive to meet those needs. The resulting key findings demonstrate that there is a potential for victim service organizations to be powerful arenas for fostering positive peace through treatment of direct, cultural and structural violence.

### **7.3 Implications**

This thesis has many implications for future research as well as policy. Previously, disbursement from the Crime Victims Fund has been capped due to anticipations of fluctuations in incoming funds (collected from offender fees). Given the fact that the Crime Victims Fund has now reached unprecedented level in funds of \$12 billion USD, it is an appropriate time to consider the funding structures (the competitive way in which organizations receive funding now) and the distribution of funds through assistance grants (funding awarded to victim service organization for direct services and programming) versus compensation grants (direct financial compensation to victims).

The database revealed a timeline in which the majority of organizations were created before the passing of VOCA, and just eleven percent were established in the last two decades; this finding in combination with victim surveys and the State review detailing a significant lack in services, builds a strong argument for more allocation of funding and establishment of competent and accessible victim service organizations. The key findings of this thesis contribute valuable information on what aspects of victim service organizations should be strengthened and developed as well as the gaps that currently exist. With a more informed understanding of the potential of victim service organizations, funding can be allocated in an optimal way, and organizations can be tailored to meet the needs of victims while also bolstering their capacities to service the larger goals in disrupting cycles of violence and building stronger, healthier communities that can be home to positive peace.

Through the surveying of victim service organizations, this thesis has shown the many ways in which they foster positive peace in providing educational programming, outreach, utilizing a psychosocial support approach, building community through victimhood, intervening for youth and children and targeting violence at home first and foremost. In this way, victim service organizations are doing more than just tending to the wounds of direct victimization, but they are disrupting patterns of violence and bringing awareness to accepted, latent forms of violence in our cultural beliefs, attitudes and in the way our institutions operate.

The field of victimology has experienced a history of evolution, from a positivist approach that focus on the causes of victimization and resilience, to the role of victims in criminal justice proceedings. Current victimology literature today proposes a shift away from the advocacy of victim's rights (versus offenders' rights) and a dichotomist formulation of justice, and towards a system of restorative principles.<sup>149</sup> By theorizing victim service organizations as more than just social offices serving the mental and practical needs of victims impacted crime, but rather as social arenas for treating the symptoms of direct victimization first *and* proceeding to challenge structures and cultures of violence at the core of harm in society, aligns this thesis with a progressive vision of victimology and victim services. Future research within victimology should further develop these ideas by inquiring *how does empowerment affect restorative justice? can victim services incorporate more restorative principles while still meeting the needs of victims?*

The concepts employed in this thesis are not new and have been theorized at length in their respective fields; however, combining the concepts into one framework contributes a new perspective in the way they can be utilized in future research and analysis. Similarly, implications for peace research include the incentive to branch out of traditional arenas for observation to consider how positive peace can be theorized and applied across other fields. The concept of positive peace will remain elusive unless it is developed and applied in such a manner. Future research can further develop the conceptualization of positive peace in domestic society as theorized here by asking *do current social organizations foster capacity for positive peace? how can they be supported?* and exploring the available avenues in existing structures of criminal justice and social justice for fostering positive peace. Without critical, multidisciplinary, and innovative approaches, positive peace, as a concept, will remain dormant; as a reality—unattainable.

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<sup>149</sup> Ezzat Fattah, "Victimology: Past, present and future," *Criminologie* 33, no. 1 (2000).



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