

A Study of Prostitution in the Jordan Neighborhood

**Prepared by
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Conducted on behalf of the Folwell Center for Urban Initiatives
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www.cura.umn.edu/search/index.php*

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This report is written in partial fulfillment of a graduate assistantship (Summer 2005) through CURA and NPCR. This specific assistantship was through the Folwell Neighborhood Association, an organization that serves the Northside community of Minneapolis. The purpose of the position was to help launch the pilot study for the Northside Prostitution project. Dr. Lauren Martin, the head of research at FNA, supervised this position.

This report will serve as an informal summary of activities, findings, and recommendations for the future of The Prostitution Project. Because the project is still in progress, final conclusions cannot be drawn.

Description of the Project

The goal of this study is to help neighborhoods in North Minneapolis provide better prevention, outreach and community support for people involved in prostitution by conducting a needs assessment survey and understanding the social and economic conditions of prostituted people in North Minneapolis. Researchers will do this by talking to women and men who are currently on probation or parole for prostitution related offences. While prostitution is highly visible in North Minneapolis, the extent of prostitution is unknown; the needs of prostituted women and men who work and live in North Minneapolis are invisible; and the systemic, community-wide impact of prostitution and its connection to criminal activities is little understood. The results of this study will enable neighborhoods in North Minneapolis to better serve the needs of some of the most vulnerable members of our community, while also positively impacting the community as a whole by helping people out of prostitution.

Outline of Responsibilities

- IRB Application- Assist Dr. Martin in the completion and submission of IRB revisions as necessary. The final goal is IRB approval.
 - Progress made toward this goal: Because of the nature of this study, the process of applying for IRB approval has proven more involved than anticipated. The final result is approval, but it approval was granted much later than anticipated. Because of this, this project has undergone rigorous scrutiny from multiple levels, ensuring that is a sound an ethical research project.
 - Certificate of Confidentiality- In addition, Dr. Martin and I have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality (COC) to further ensure our participants protection and confidence.
- Interview Protocol- As a trained Marriage and Family Therapist and experienced research assistant, my knowledge of interviewing will help Dr. Martin establish a specific protocol for completing participant interviews.
 - This has been established. According to protocol, two interviewers will be present at interview. One to conduct the interview and one to take notes. Two interviewers will also help insure validity and reliability. The interview will not be audio-recorded, but only recorded via note taking. This protocol will also serve to show Dr. Martin interview techniques I have learned as a trained Marriage and Family Therapist by example.
 - The established protocol is a structured interview.
 - In addition a training protocol has been established for future use.

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- Collection of Data – upon approval from the IRB, data collection will begin.
 - IRB approval was received as well as the COC. At this point, we are waiting to hear from potential participants so that we can begin interviews and I can assist Dr. Martin in learning to conduct interviews.
- Database Management- there will be several databases involved in this project. My responsibilities include creation and maintenance of these databases.
 - Needs Assessment Database- A database will be designed to store participants responses to the survey.
 - This database is created.
 - Arrest data- Dr. Martin has obtained the arrest data of several citizens within Hennepin County; this data will help inform our sampling. In addition, it is through probations that we will be recruiting participants.
 - This database is established as a security-enabled database. Only Dr. Lauren and I have access to this data. We both signed an agreement with Hennepin County stipulating this.
- Survey Design- Assist Dr. Martin in the final revision of the Needs Assessment Survey for use during interviews.
 - The survey is complete. This survey has been reviewed by several community members who are knowledgeable in this area, as well as several academics professionals.
- Literature Review – This includes database searches, collection of materials, as well as reading and annotated thee materials.
 - Progress made toward this goal: Several articles (N=40) were collected over the course of the summer. In addition, a list of resources to attain was also created for Dr. Martin. Of the obtained article, approximately half have been annotated. In addition, a rubric for future annotations was created and outlined to insure uniformity of information throughout the course of the project.

Recommendations for the future of this project:

It is my intention to continue on with this project (as a volunteer) past the point of my employment through CURA. This is a reflection of my own interest, but also a reflection of one of my strongest recommendations- consistency. Because of the nature of this study, several formal and informal contacts are needed to progress in an informed manner. As such, I believe that it is important for Dr. Martin to continue on this project and keep careful record of all those who assist (in any manner) with this project. Further, I would recommend that FNA continue to forge a relationship with the University of Minnesota and/or other universities. The U of M has provided this project with a great deal of resources in the form of “man hours”, but also in the form of alternative expertise and knowledge regarding prostitution, methodology, and ethics. This has (and should continue) to prove invaluable.

“A Study of Prostitution in the Jordan Neighborhood”
NPCR Supported Project for the Summer 2005
Follow-up Report to NPCR
October 19, 2006

Lauren Martin, Ph.D.
Project Supervisor

During the summer of 2005 Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization provided a graduate student research assistant for the pilot research project “A Study of Prostitution in the Jordan Neighborhood”, conducted by Lauren Martin at Folwell Neighborhood Association. The study planned to interview women involved in prostitution in the Jordan neighborhood to pilot our methods and survey for the Northside Study which would broaden the scope to all of the North Minneapolis. As detailed in the report submitted by Liddy Hope, the research assistant for the project, the project took longer than expected because of the important project review conducted by Subject’s Protection Department’s Institutional Review Board and the seeking and receipt of a Federal Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health. Below, I outline what happened with the project after the NPCR term was over and the crucial long-term benefits of NPCR support for this project.

When the application was submitted, the project supervisor was prepared to write and submit an application to the IRB. The NPCR review committee, the IRB, and the project supervisor felt that a thorough IRB review was necessary because the project was planning to interview people involved in prostitution, a vulnerable population and a sensitive topic. However, the process took much longer than anticipated as did the addition of a Federal Certificate of Confidentiality. So we determined that the graduate student research assistant would help facilitate the IRB and CoC process, conduct a literature review on the topic of prostitution, help develop a survey and other tasks as necessary until IRB approval was attained.

We received IRB approval and a Federal CoC for the pilot study in September, when the NPCR appointment was over. The research assistant agreed to stay with the project as a volunteer. Her skill and support proved to be useful during the fall of 2005. The research assistant and project supervisor implemented the approved protocol and only were able to conduct 4 interviews. We had hoped for 30. As it turned out, our recruitment methods and interview protocol did not work. But we had learned a great deal about how to do an IRB application. But more importantly this pilot study allowed the project supervisor to discover what did NOT work, which is an important step towards figuring out what might work.

The experience from the Pilot Study supported by NPCR allowed the project supervisor to develop a highly effective full study. First, we expanded our recruitment methods from relying only on referrals from service providers and probation officers to also including posters on the streets, particularly bus shelters. Second, we switched from being based on appointments to drop-in hours. Thus we no longer had to keep a list of people’s names and we no longer needed a Certificate of Confidentiality which shortened our project preparation time. Third, we knew how to do an IRB application and we knew

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how long it would take. Fourth, we determined that it would be more convenient for project participants to fill in a written survey than to conduct an hour long structured interview. Fifth, we added the option of a short, informal interview.

The results of these changes were staggering. In the Pilot we were only able to conduct 4 interviews over the course of two and half months. So far in the full study, we have conducted 33 interviews and 100 surveys in only a month and half. We will conduct another 40 surveys through connections with service providers in the next couple of weeks. Obviously our lessons learned in the Pilot Study supported by NPCR have paid off. I believe that without NPCR support we would not have a successful project now.

The results of the full study will allow the Prostitution Project to do a number of very important things for the Northside. First, we have made quality contact with people in prostitution. They had a good experience with the research project and many want to be involved in other, solution-based programs that will come from the research. Second with 140+ surveys we will be able to generate statistically valid information about the realities of prostitution in North Minneapolis. Third, we expect to share our results widely with anyone who wants them. The results will be used to help us raise money for the Prostitution Project which will develop prevention and support for people in prostitution in North Minneapolis. And results will be provided to any organization that requests them to be used for their fundraising and program development. Fourth, the results will be used to build a public awareness campaign for North Minneapolis so that residents and others understand the realities of prostitution. Our goal is that through greater understanding we can forge relationships between people in prostitution and their communities that will help reduce the negative impact of prostitution on the people in prostitution and their communities. Fifth, the research will be used to help us build a drop-in space for women in prostitution. The research results are essentially input from the stakeholders in the drop-in space that will allow us to create supports and bring in services that will actually be useful.

I would like to thank and acknowledge the support of NPCR for this project. Lessons learned from the Pilot Study supported by NPCR have allowed us to create a very successful full study and generate important findings that I believe will lead to real change for the people of North Minneapolis.

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