

**Community Organizing and Volunteer Motivation
in the WISE Court Observer Program**

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Survivors of domestic and sexual violence and stalking interact with courts via protective order hearings and criminal trials (among other procedures such as divorce or custody) to address the violence that is perpetrated against them and their children. In the past four decades, survivors and their WISE advocates have “fought to make legal systems more responsive to these particular crimes” (WISE 2019). In response to the ever “inadequate, inappropriate, traumatizing,” and unsupportive court procedures, WISE initiated the Court Observer Program.

Since 2016, court observers—Upper Valley community members who volunteer to bear witness to court proceedings involving survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking at the request of the survivor—have also interacted with courts to let the system know that community members are paying attention. Primarily, court observers sit on the survivor’s side of the courtroom during hearings, don their WISE “I’m Listening” buttons, and record their observations via the Court Observer Observation Report Form. The mere presence of the court observers (1) serves as a simple, yet powerful mantra of “support and solidarity for individual victims and everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence” and (2) functions to bring accountability to judges and those involved in the decisions that impact the lives of survivors and their children (WISE 2019).

Although court observers receive an email every time there is a hearing where the survivor requests their presence, court observers have flexibility; thus, attendance depends on each individual’s schedule and discretion. While the low-pressure, independent nature of the Court Observer Program is a defining strength, the very essence of the program may compromise *community organizing*. Above all else, the Court Observer Program is survivor-centered—the foremost purpose of the program is to provide support and solidarity for individual survivors and

everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence; in this way, the program continues to achieve its design. Given the well-founded limitations of the program—including no interaction between the court observers and the survivors or their advocates, and the fixed structure of the court system and its procedures—potential program improvements are organizational and inward-facing. Hence, when further seeking to improve the Court Observer Program to better support survivors during and after they appear in court, WISE may additionally benefit from seeking improvements in community organizing.

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Challenges Survivors Encounter When Interacting With the Court System

As concisely stated by WISE, legal systems and court procedures tend to be unresponsive to crimes of gender-based violence, unsupportive to survivors, and additionally inadequate, inappropriate, and traumatizing. To compound the existing literature on how court procedures contribute to the production of inequality for survivors of gender-based violence, we briefly summarize the existing literature on access to the court system.

The current court system in place aims to reduce instances of gender-based violence and achieve justice for survivors pursuing the court process. However, there are notable shortcomings in the way that this justice is applied and governed. The effects of gender-based violence pose as a legitimate and severe health-based inequality in society and is especially harmful in demographics of women who are already exposed to forms of societal inequalities, such as poverty and marginalization due to ethnicity (Humphreys 2007:122). For example, the reality that less merit is given to the experiences of impoverished, minority ethnic populations of

women in the face of their lived experiences of gender-based violence results in a limited access to statutory and voluntary sector services that is known by these communities. In turn, this results in an inherent distrust of the court system in place to protect them. (Koss 2006:218).

Judges contribute to the production of inequality via *boundary maintenance*. As the reproduction of inequality depends on elites “cooperating to limit Others’ access to valued resources,” judges can use language to perpetuate the gap between themselves—the dominant group—and the survivors—the subordinate group. Language is important in creating a safe platform for dialogue (Goodman et al. 1993:1080), especially in a court setting in which survivors often recount their experiences in front of their perpetrator (Carminati 2018:1). Such language takes an approach to establish emotional safety, restore choice and control, facilitate connections, support coping, respond to identity and context, and build strengths (Wilson, Fauci, and Goodman 2015:586).

Furthermore, judges—as elite figures in the court system—virtually embody the court system and elicit imputations of power (Schwalbe et al. 2000:424). In turn, the impression that judges possess powerful selves can reduce the confidence and energy with which survivors put forth in a hearing (Ridgeway 2014:6). As a result, judges hold the symbolic power of the court system, which consequently keeps survivors down due to boundary maintenance. Hence, without training on the nuances of language, judges unknowingly fail to establish safety and sensitivity for the survivors (Goodman et al. 1993:1080).

Challenges to Community Organizing

While the low-pressure, independent nature of the Court Observer Program is a defining strength, the very essence of the program may compromise *community organizing*. Concisely put, community organizing is the process of creating collective change through *collective action*, or action taken together by a group of people with a common objective. Effective and successful community organizing is contingent on: (1) *community capacity*, a community's ability to collectively identify, mobilize, and address social problems; (2) *social capital*, a community's collective assets, structures, and relationships that facilitate collaboration; and (3) *bridging social capital* or *collective efficacy*, community members' belief in their ability to enact change (Minkler and Wallerstein 2005:37).

On the other hand, while the strength of community organizing lies in its ability to capitalize upon relational bonds between community members, it is equally diminished by conflict, unequal participation, and unequal ability to participate or offer services. Strategy disagreements over how an identified social problem is being addressed weakens community capacity; unequal distribution of knowledge or skills used to deliver services weakens social capital; and disproportionate or low community participation weakens collective efficacy—all of which contribute to weakened community organizing (Bezboruah 2013:24).

The following literature will contextualize community organizing—more specifically, in relation to (1) identity and (2) volunteer motivation—in direct application to WISE's Court Observer Program. Having identified the three dimensions of community organizing, we further describe the problematic nature of weakened community organizing and its consequent

inequalities. Ultimately, the following theoretical explanations will equip WISE with a renewed understanding of the impact community organizing can have on its Court Observer Program.

Identity Theory

Identity theory confirms that the self is composed of multiple identities, some more *salient*, or likely to be invoked in a given setting, than others. The source of a salient identity is the *commitment* to playing a particular role, which depends on the extensiveness of an individual's social networks within that role (Hunt 2003:75). Because individuals are the most committed to identities that reflect their self-views, it follows that individuals seek social networks and interactions with social groups that verify their self-views (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:133). Above all, this reveals that the self and the community have a mutual relationship wherein self-views guide individuals' social group participation, and group activities reaffirm individuals' self-views. Therefore, effective and successful community organizing requires a preliminary understanding of the community—in this case, the court observers—at both the individual and group levels.

Identity at the Individual Level: Finding the Self through the Community

Self-verification theory assumes that self-views guide people's behaviors, including their choice of interaction partners and their information-processing activities (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:138). In application, when court observers become confident of their self-views, they work to confirm them via participation in social groups that support their self-views, like the Court Observer Program; in exchange, court observers gain feelings of control and coherence in their

own identities (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:133). As an individual, a court observer is an Upper Valley community volunteer with an interest in learning more about the Upper Valley court systems, supporting survivors, and being an agent for change (WISE 2019). Given that individuals seek social networks and interactions with social groups that verify their self-views, we can deduce that the court observer identity reflects (1) an individual's beliefs that the court system is unsupportive to survivors and (2) an individual's belief in his or her independent ability to enact change.

Community organizing that disregards the established need for self-verification results in low community capacity, low social capital, and low collective efficacy; respectively, court observers are deprived of group identification, collaboration, and confidence in their abilities to enact change (Minkler and Wallerstein 2005:37). As a result, individuals may withdraw physically—with regards to consistent attendance—and psychologically—with regards to consistent engagement with the program and their self-views (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:135). This is a foreseeable outcome because self-verification strivings also manifest themselves at the level of social identities; hence, individuals seek to stabilize their self-views *and* define themselves as members of social groups (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:138). As further expanded in the subsequent *Volunteer Motivation* literature, this suggests that volunteers are generally motivated by individual and group self-verification strivings.

Identity at the Group Level: Accomplishing Community Organizing through Social Identities

Self-verification needs contribute to social movement participation, in which people commit themselves to social movements that reflect their self-views (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:142). In this way, the Court Observer Program is a modest social movement of Upper

Valley community participants who are bound together by a common social identity. More specifically, the court observer identity is accessible to those with an interest in learning more about the Upper Valley court systems, supporting survivors, and being an agent for change; those who agree to the position's requirements and limitations; those who participate in the Court Observer Training; and those who commit to attending the Quarterly Meetings (WISE 2019). While an individual derives his or her internal *self-concept* from the external social structure, he or she is an active agent engaged in various self-serving processes (Anderson and Snow 2001:400). As long as the movement identity is consistent with the self-views of its participants and provides feelings of control and coherence, people remain; otherwise, people withdraw from social movements that frustrate their self-verification needs.

As aforementioned, community organizing is achieved through collective action; in theory, successful collective action generates a greater sense of efficacy and positive regard at both the individual and group levels (Anderson and Snow 2001:403). In action, court observers sit on the survivor's side of the courtroom during hearings, don their WISE "I'm Listening" buttons, and record their observations via the Court Observer Observation Report Form. The mere presence of the court observers (1) serves as a simple, yet powerful mantra of "support and solidarity for individual victims and everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence" and (2) functions to bring accountability to judges and those involved in the decisions that impact the lives of survivors and their children (WISE 2019). Community organizing that addresses the established need for self-verification results in high community capacity, high social capital, and high collective efficacy; respectively, court observers secure group identification, collaboration, and confidence in their abilities to enact change (Minkler and Wallerstein 2005:37). Most visible

in social movements that carry the banner of subordinate and stigmatized groups, such as the Civil Rights Movement, the LGBTQ+ movements, and the Me Too Movement, collective action can develop a sense of “empowerment and efficacy,” a “positive group identity,” and a sense of “disalienation” among active participants (Anderson and Snow 2001:403). This caliber of collective action mobilization can verify the self-concepts and self-esteem of constituents beyond the court observers, including individual survivors and everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence (Anderson and Snow 2001:403). Concisely, in seeking to identify with others, court observers are striving to be themselves.

Volunteer Motivation: Extrinsic versus Intrinsic Motivations

As aforementioned in the *identity* literature, volunteers are generally motivated by individual and group self-verification strivings. For instance, when court observers become confident of their self-views, they are motivated to confirm them via participation in social groups that support their self-views, like the Court Observer Program; in exchange, court observers expect feelings of control and coherence in their own identities (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:133).

Moreover, *volunteer motivation* can be leveraged to increase participation and strengthen community organizing in the Court Observer Program. In theory, the *Motivation to Volunteer Scale* (MVS) reflects both *intrinsic and extrinsic motivations* that can be applied to the court observers (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen 1991:282). To ensure effective and successful community organizing, collective efficacy must be strengthened by high community participation—potentially achieved by the following six motivational processes: (1) *values*, or

opportunities to explore one's values related to altruistic concerns for others; (2) *understanding*, or opportunities for new learning experiences and to exercise one's skills, knowledge and abilities; (3) *social*, or opportunities to be with one's friends or engage in an activity reviewed favorably by important others; (4) *career*, or experiences that may be obtained from participation in volunteer work; (5) *protective*, or addressing one's personal problems and reduced guilt over being more fortunate than others; (6) *enhancement*, or the ego's development and growth. Above all, if volunteering experiences fulfill these six functions, an individual's satisfaction with volunteer activities increases (Clary et al. 1998:1524). According to the six volunteer motivations, volunteers are most satisfied by the expression of values, or the concern for others and the success of the volunteer movement (Bang and Ross 2009:68).

Volunteer Motivation: Collective Effervescence

When examining general volunteer motivation, *collective effervescence theory* captures the essence of being in a crowd of people in which social emotions can be thought of as a "glue of solidarity" to mobilize a given movement (Liebst 2019:27). In other words, the phenomenon aims to describe the way in which an assembled crowd creates a heightened sense of synergy, creating potential group-based agency (Liebst 2019:27). In fact, collective effervescence may even occur when the interaction within a crowd of people have no specific focus; simply being in a crowd appears to give individuals a sense of being even if they aren't a part of a specifically defined action.

Therefore, the motivations of court observers are guided by both their individual and group identities. For example, a court observer's group identity might simply be his or her

membership as a resident of the Upper Valley community. In turn, community organizing provides a platform for the power of collective effervescence, taking this group identity into account. Collective effervescence is remains pertinent to the reality that the mere presence of the court observers (1) serves as a simple, yet powerful mantra of “support and solidarity for individual victims and everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence” and (2) functions to bring accountability to judges and those involved in the decisions that impact the lives of survivors and their children (WISE 2019).

Local Context

General volunteer motivation is also deeply impacted by the local context of those volunteers. By context, we are referring to the volunteer motivations of regular court observers, which may mean the identity of a retired individual given the scheduling of most gender-based violence related hearings. McAdam and Paulsen (1993) set forth to perform an array of reparative work relating to research centered around social activism recruitment, finding that the ultimate decision to participate in a certain social movement is contingent on four limiting conditions: (1) the very occurrence of a specific recruiting attempt for a cause or movement; (2) the successful linkage between movement and identity; (3) support of that linkage that comes from other individuals who typically work to maintain that particularly identity; and (4) the absence of strong opposition from others which other salient identities depend on (McAdam and Paulsen 1993:662).

In conclusion, volunteers are more likely to join movements if they are embedded in other social causes and if those causes are geared towards reinforcing linkages between identity

and action. Furthermore, organizational or collective ties are more effective in securing entrance into movement participation compared to individual ties. In sum, the research suggests that individuals who work in movement recruitment are too focused with volunteer's relationship with the structure of a given movement, rather than paying attention to the social psychological processes which mediate the link between that network structure and the individual's activism.

Quick and Moen (1984) explore post-retirement satisfaction using *role theory* and *continuity theory*. *Retirement* is a role transition that can either add or take away from one's identity set. Furthermore, movement participation can lead to changes in individuals' self-concept; most often, participants' new self-views represent a "natural extension of the old," in which movements must intensify their commitments or identities (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:144). Through *identity work*, an individual can make sense of their past in terms of the new self-view he or she hopes to achieve, and reaffirm a new self-view via group participation. From our interviews, we observed that two of the four regular WISE Court Observers used to have careers in the legal system. We wonder if their careers were significant to their personal self-sentiments, and whether volunteering as a Court Observer may feed a potential need for interacting with the court system.

In general, volunteers tend to seek traits such as altruism, compassion and community involvement in their work. Quick and Moen's (1984) work encourages us to look at age as a possible connecting theme that might help us better understand regular volunteers as well new volunteers who choose not to engage with the Court Observers program any further.

POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Above all else, the Court Observer Program is survivor-centered—the foremost purpose of the program is to provide support and solidarity for individual victims and everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence; in this way, the program continues to achieve its design. Given the well-founded limitations of the program—including no interaction between the court observers and the survivors or their advocates, and the fixed structure of the court system and its procedures—potential program improvements are organizational and inward-facing. Hence, when further seeking to improve the Court Observer Program to better support survivors during and after they appear in court, WISE may additionally benefit from seeking improvements in community organizing.

We conclude that heightened community organizing provides internal solutions that will help make the program more robust. Effective and successful community organizing is contingent on: (1) *community capacity*, a community's ability to collectively identify, mobilize, and address social problems; (2) *social capital*, a community's collective assets, structures, and relationships that facilitate collaboration; and (3) *bridging social capital* or *collective efficacy*, community members' belief in their ability to enact change (Minkler and Wallerstein 2005:37). Given that the program is powered by community volunteers, the role of the court observers will also become more robust. Coupled together, the Court Observer Program will have the capacity to better support survivors during and after they appear in court.

It is important to consider ways to improve community organizing from a micro-perspective, as *individual* community members are the main actors in this process. The sustainability of an organization is contingent upon the sustained participation and commitment

of volunteers. Identifying ways to increase sustained participation involves understanding the motivation to volunteer. According to *self-determination theory*, different amounts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation shape individual behavior (Valerie and Gagné 2008:12). Intrinsic motivation is grounded in personal enjoyment and interest, whereas extrinsic motivation is grounded in reward (Valerie and Gagné 2008:12; Finklestein 2009:654).

Volunteering is determined by intrinsic motivation (Finklestein 2009:655). Returning to volunteer again is determined by job satisfaction (Boezman and Ellemers 2009:908).

Additionally, both job satisfaction and retention are strongly correlated to *relatedness* needs, defined as “the need to develop and maintain secure and respectful relationships with others” (Boezman and Ellemers 2009:909). Based on the findings from these studies, solutions to increase volunteer retention should focus on feedback and relationality, as expanded in the subsequent *Field Research*.

Additionally, individuals are more likely to participate in social movements if they believe the movement will achieve its goal (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:136). The mere presence of the court observers (1) serves as a simple, yet powerful mantra of “support and solidarity for individual victims and everyone impacted by domestic and sexual violence” and (2) functions to bring accountability to judges and those involved in the decisions that impact the lives of survivors and their children (WISE 2019). Hence, WISE can use these self-verifying properties of the Court Observer Program to actively recruit participants by highlighting the compatibility of the program identity with the identities of the potential volunteers. These solutions are reinforced on the premise that sensitivity to people’s self-verification needs can reap substantial dividends in the form of more participation (Pinel and Swann Jr. 2000:143).

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

The following section contains the methods, findings, and potential solutions produced by our mixed-methods research. We approached our field research wanting to situate the literature in the context of the WISE Court Observer Program. In other words, we were interested to see if various sociological theories paralleled the actual experiences of volunteering and coming to court. Ultimately, in applying the academic literature to better understand the problems at hand, our goal was to propose effective, well-informed solutions.

In order to address the overarching question: “How can WISE improve their Court Observer Program to better support survivors during and after they appear in court?” we identified two sets of questions: (1) How can WISE make the Court Observer Program more robust? More specifically, how can WISE increase volunteer participation, engagement, and retention? and (2) What salient themes and trends emerge from the existing data?

The first question was focused on the volunteering aspect of the Court Observer Program. This portion of our research was conducted in conversation with the literature on volunteer motivation and satisfaction. It was answered through qualitative research consisting of ethnographic field observations and in-depth interviews.

The second question was focused on the data collected from the Court Observer Report Form. This half of our research was in response to the literature on the challenges survivors encounter when interacting with the court system. It was answered through descriptive statistics produced by an analysis of the dataset WISE provided.

QUALITATIVE FIELD RESEARCH

Research Objectives

The main goal of our qualitative field research is to draw conclusions and potential solutions that address how WISE can make the Court Observer Program more robust—more specifically, how can WISE increase volunteer participation, level of engagement, and retention. The following ethnographic and interview research build upon the literature reviewed in the section “Problems within Community Organizing.” More specifically, we mobilized the literature by identifying the potential reasons why fewer trained court observers are showing up for scheduled hearings; what motivates regular court observers to continue to show up; what inhibits newly trained court observers from attending hearings; and what motivates court observers to initially participate in the Court Observer Program. Additionally, we discuss possible points of intervention to improve the program as well as the training, learn about the new and active court observers and who is most likely to participate, and investigate whether the Court Observer Program coordinators understand the perspectives and experiences of the court observers. Ultimately, we translate these findings regarding volunteer motivation into suggested organizational strategies that WISE can employ to increase volunteer participation, engagement, and retention.

Methods

Ethnographic research. For court hearings and WISE meetings, we conducted ethnographic research using field observations. Field observations were recorded according to sociological conventions that separate field notes, methodological notes, personal notes, and

theoretical notes. “Field notes” include information about the scene itself, and information about verbal and nonverbal interactions; “methodological notes” include the methods used and any necessary changes or improvements that should be made to the methodological approach; “personal notes” include how we felt about or reacted to the people and behaviors observed; lastly, “theoretical notes” include emerging patterns in the field notes that develop and refine our theory (Dixon et al. 2015:272).

For the court hearings, we used nonparticipant observation, meaning we were not participants involved in what was being observed (Dixon, Singleton, and Straits 2015:262). Additionally, we employed covert observation at the court hearings, as our researcher identities were concealed to those being observed (Dixon et al. 2015:261). The court hearings took place in a public setting, where the hearings were open to everyone and did not require formal permission for attendance (Dixon et al. 2015:260). Before attending court hearings, we either attended the Court Observer Training or reviewed notes from the training. This preparation enabled us to best represent WISE practices for demeanor in court and introduced us to the role of court observers.

For the Court Observer Training and Quarterly Meeting, our ethnographies were completed using participant observation, in which we were active members of the meetings and balanced both participation and observation (Dixon et al. 2015:263). Furthermore, we employed overt observation, as we identified ourselves as Dartmouth students who were working with WISE to improve the Court Observer Program (Dixon et al. 2015:260). The WISE meetings took place in a semi-public setting in a conference room at the WISE building, where the meetings were open to the public, but one would need to be aware of the meetings or reach out to WISE directly for information about meeting times (Dixon et al. 2015:260).

We attended three court hearings on October 24, 2019; October 31, 2019; and November 4, 2019. The court hearings on October 24, 2019 and October 31, 2019 took place at the Lebanon District Court. On October 24, 2019, Liz and Morgan took field, methodological, personal, and theoretical notes as they waited for information on the delayed hearing in the lobby area (Appendix A). They largely focused their observations on the interactions between the plaintiff, WISE advocate, and courthouse staff. Though the hearing did not take place, their observation period was from 2:30 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. On October 31, 2019, Andrea sat in the back of Courtroom 2 and observed the court proceedings—noting interactions between the plaintiff, WISE advocate, judge, and courthouse staff. While recording field and personal notes, Andrea also filled out a rough draft of the reworked Court Observer Observation Report Form for the SOCY 11 group (Appendix B). The hearing began at 2:30 p.m. and was completed by 3:00 p.m. On November 4, 2019, Nadia attended the hearings at the Windsor County District Court. The hearings began at 9:00 a.m. She left during the recess at 10:00 a.m. and was informed the hearings ended shortly after. Nadia wrote field and personal notes from her seat in the front row behind the plaintiff and next to a regular court observer volunteer. Between hearings, she spoke with the three volunteers present, who each sat in separate rows.

We attended two WISE meetings: the Court Observer Training and the Court Observer Quarterly Meeting. The Court Observer Training, attended by Emily, Nadia, and Caroline, took place on October 14, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The Quarterly Meeting, attended by Andrea, took place on October 30, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Both meetings were held in a conference room at the WISE office in Lebanon. Field, methodological, theoretical, and personal notes during the two meetings (Appendix C [Emily], Appendix C [Andrea]). We

observed interactions between the court observers and training leader WISE Staff A, important content from the training, tone, and expressed interest.

Interview research. We conducted a total of five interviews with three regular Court Observer Program volunteers (referred to as Volunteers A, B, C), an individual who attended the training but not court hearings (referred to as Volunteer D), and a WISE staff member (referred to as WISE Staff A). The interviews were conducted individually in a private setting where participants could feel comfortable sharing. We used semi-structured, formal, in-depth interviewing and referred to interview guides (Appendices D, E) (Dixon et al. 2015:263). The interview guides contained open-ended questions that aimed to bridge the literature on volunteer motivation and satisfaction, and the actual experiences of WISE court observers. The interview guides were also structured thematically by topic (e.g., volunteer motivation, Court Observer Training, volunteer retention and engagement, local context), so we could follow the natural flow of conversation and gain insights that were not explicitly addressed by a specific question. Additionally, this was done with the intent of creating a relaxed environment that would be more conducive to an open, honest conversation.

All five participants were chosen through nonprobability sampling (i.e., nonrandom selection that “involves explicit human decision making”) (Dixon et al. 2015:161). More specifically, the regular volunteers were chosen through nonprobability convenience sampling (i.e., “selecting a requisite number of conveniently accessible cases”) at the hearing on November 4, 2019 (Dixon et al. 2015:164). Upon request, Volunteers A and B shared their phone numbers and agreed to participate in an interview over the phone later that day. The interview with Volunteer A began at 3:37 p.m. and was approximately 40 minutes (Appendix F).

The interview with Volunteer B began at 4:25 p.m. and was about 30 minutes (Appendix G). For both phone interviews conducted by Nadia, she used her laptop to take notes directly onto the interview guides (Appendices E, F). The interview with Volunteer C took place on November 6, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at the WISE Office; it was approximately 30 minutes. The interview with Volunteer C was conducted by Nadia and audio recorded with a laptop for later notetaking and review (Appendix H). As someone who works closely with the Court Observer Program, Wise Staff A was selected through nonprobability purposive sampling (i.e., carefully selected participants who are most relevant to the research question at hand) to gain insight from WISE's perspective (Dixon et al. 2015:164). Like the phone interviews, notes were taken with a laptop onto the interview guide by Caroline (Appendix I). Lastly, Volunteer D was selected through purposive sampling as she had a unique perspective that would offer valuable insight on the factors that led to her disengagement; additionally, as a life-long resident of the Upper Valley, she could speak to the particular local context. Morgan interviewed Volunteer D on November 15, 2019 from 3:49 P.M. to 4:27 P.M. using an interview guide (Appendix J). Morgan used her laptop to audio record and take brief field jottings. The field jottings were elaborated into field, methodological, personal, and theoretical notes (Appendix K). The recorded audio was transcribed and analyzed (Appendix L).

Findings

Ethnographic research. We found possible points of intervention to improve the program as well as the training by identifying (1) how the program training constructs court observer role-identity and (2) potential reasons why trained court observers are not attending hearings.

The first theme in our observations was the cultivation of group identity through interpersonal and organizational connection. emphasis on interpersonal relationships. For example, the entire Court Observer Training began with WISE Staff A asking us share our names and a role we play in life. Sharing roles was an effective introduction exercise that provided a general understanding of each other's backgrounds without a more explicit and sensitive discussion of social identities. It also set the tone for the program and WISE as an organization-- volunteers were valued as individual people with their own stories, experiences, and humanity, rather than an unknown stranger with similar interests and passions. Furthermore, throughout the training, we felt comfortable to ask questions, indicating the space was very intimate and a certain level of trust had already been built among the new volunteers.

In the same vein, the training emphasized how individuals were connected to WISE, and even more broadly to ending gender-based violence. During the training, WISE Staff A stressed that "WISE is volunteer-driven... the Court Observer program, WISE ambassadors, and crisis-line volunteers," which located individual volunteers within the larger organization and mission. The individual-volunteer centered language induces feelings of personal responsibility and importance. Additionally, the training included material about WISE's other programs and resources, which further contextualized the new group volunteers were now part of. In this way, the collective identity created in the relationships between court observers was further developed by defining their relationship to WISE. Furthermore, this connection to something larger than themselves functioned to magnify individual volunteer motivations and indirectly hold individuals accountable.

The second salient component of the court observer role-identity was the emphasized low responsibility and the low pressure nature of the program. For example, before presenting information about New Hampshire and Vermont courts, WISE Staff A told new volunteers that they were “not expected to know this information.” While volunteers may feel appreciate having some background knowledge without feeling pressured to be experts, the impact of this more hands-off involvement can be varied. On one hand, volunteers might be relieved given the triggering nature of sexual violence hearings and sexual violence more generally. But on the other hand, volunteers might be left wanting to feel more involved in reforming the judicial process. Additionally, after sharing the court hearing schedule, WISE Staff A said, “You don’t need to tell us which hearings you’ll be going to. You can just show up.” Altogether, these instructions emphasize the hands-off nature of the Court Observer Program. WISE does not make attendance or submitting observational report forms mandatory. However, based on volunteers who expressed a desire for a bit more structure or wanted to feel like they were doing something, we wonder whether this approach could unintentionally foster low-engagement. Although the program is meant to be an easy entry point to become involved with WISE, it is plausible that some volunteers would actually want more accountability or responsibility.

The low-involvement nature of the program could also be interpreted in the volunteer expectations. WISE Staff A explicitly instructed volunteers to “not to show emotions when you’re in the court... Keep a poker face.” Although some volunteers might feel frustrated and that they are not doing anything, concealing strong emotions involves active *emotion management* that should not be discredited. However, feelings of inefficacy or inaction are also likely bolstered by not being able to interact with survivors. WISE Staff A set a realistic

expectation that volunteers usually do not interact with survivors. However, she emphasized that silent solidarity is meaningful to survivors and to simply know being present is appreciated. Nonetheless, the combination of stationary, unexpressive, and silent sitting without explicit validation from survivors may lead to feelings of inaction, dejectedness, and pointlessness.

Transitioning away from how the training constructs the court observer role, our ethnographic field observations also identified potential reasons why trained court observers are not attending scheduled hearings. The first structural barrier is that hearings take place on Monday mornings at 9:00 a.m. Furthermore, the full hearing time varies greatly. Not only is it difficult for people with daytime jobs to attend Monday morning hearings, but it is also difficult for people who can attend to plan the rest of their day because they do not know when the hearing will be over. The next barrier, identified in a comment made by a regular volunteer during the Quarterly Meeting, is that hearings have recently become less relevant to WISE's mission of gender-based violence. The hearings were described as "hit or miss," meaning that if a new observer showed up to a hearing that was long, drawn out, and not directly related to gender-based violence, they might be discouraged from attending further hearings. From our own observations attending hearings, it was intimidating to show up at the courthouse and felt intrusive to be one of three observers in the court. The judge even asked Andrea to introduce herself to the courtroom when she joined the hearing on October 31, 2019, although we do realize that this was because she was a few minutes late. As a new court observer, this experience might create a barrier of intimidation that would inhibit future participation. On the other hand, Nadia was not intimidated because she sat with a group of regular court observers. Through our observations, we found that the regular court observers know each other well and

two of the court observers call each other weekly to make sure they will meet up at hearings. Additionally, when one of the volunteers was late to the Quarterly Meeting, the banter in the room revealed that these four court observers always attend these meetings and look forward to seeing each other at Court Observer Program events. Thus, seeking community can be an extrinsic motivation for volunteering that mitigates these barriers.

Lastly, to complement the primary objective of the content analysis research, we used ethnographic field observations to better understand how information about hearings is collected and used, and court observers' interest in the data. During the Quarterly Meeting, while one of the court observers spoke about how she regularly fills out the form and adds comments, another volunteer mentioned that she had not seen the form in years. Though she never completes the form, she later inquired about how the data from the form is being used. WISE informed court observers of the paper that the UVM students completed recently and how after editing, the paper was sent to local judges. The intention of the form seemed to be to reveal trends in how different judges interact with plaintiffs and defendants in both positive and negative ways. Though the court observers were interested in the collection of data and potential uses of the data, they were unphased by how long and boring recent hearings have been and indicated how important attending is to them, simply to fill the role as a representation of the support of the community.

Interview research. Through the interviews we conducted, we gained particularly helpful insight regarding: (1) personal motivations for volunteering, (2) varying levels of volunteer disengagement and retention, and (3) the Court Observer Training and Quarterly Meetings. The thematic findings from the aforementioned categories overlap and feedback into each other. It is

important to note that we used nonprobability sampling, meaning our findings can be used to make theoretical inferences (i.e., conclusions about the nature of people) but not statistical inferences about the Court Observer Program volunteers (Dixon et al. 2015:167).

Foremost, all three regular Court Observer Program volunteers referenced a larger commitment to end gender-based violence. Though Volunteers A and B did not specifically mention personal experiences with domestic abuse, they sympathized with the survivors they supported in court hearings by situating domestic abuse in the larger context of gender-based violence and patriarchal oppression. The power of silent support and just simply being present particularly resonated with Volunteers A and C. On the other hand, the potential to collect data that could be leveraged to effectively reform the court system appealed to Volunteer B. Their motivations behind choosing to specifically participate in the Court Observer Program stemmed from a desire to address gender-based violence from the court system, which aligned with their previous careers or personal interests. In addition to their common interests and motivations, the three regular volunteers shared that they joined the Court Observer Program wanting a meaningful way to spend their time after retiring. Moreover, Volunteers A and B felt personally invested in the program as they watched it grow from its inception as part of the initial volunteer cohort.

Similarly, Volunteer D, who stopped after attending the initial training, had an intrinsic motivation for volunteering. She referenced her own experiences with sexual violence as her primary source of motivation. Like Volunteers A and C, she found the program a “simple but meaningful way to show that [she] cared” and stood in solidarity with the survivor in court. However, unlike the three regular volunteers, Volunteer D also described an extrinsic motivation

of wanting to gain the hard skills that would allow her to better support survivors and address gender-based violence. Particularly through the Court Observer Program, Volunteer D “want[ed] to see what the process actually looked like and understand it a little bit more” to better help survivors filing for a protective order. And more generally, Volunteer D was drawn to WISE because it offered a level of expertise not found in the student-run organizations at Dartmouth.

In addition to common motivations, the three regular volunteers had similar insights regarding low levels of volunteer retention and engagement. The most salient reason was the relative passiveness of being a court observer (i.e., the sedentary nature of sitting silently during court hearings). This impression of distant, removed involvement is furthered by the lack of direct interaction with survivors. Volunteer C noted that this lack of interaction makes it difficult for court observers to feel appreciated or that they’re making a significant contribution. The rules and bureaucracy of the court system that make it slow to change only further compound the insecurities volunteers have regarding the meaningfulness or efficacy of their participation. Consequently, Volunteer C chose to become more involved with WISE as an advocate, which she found to be more fulfilling.

On the other hand, Volunteer D spoke to much more upstream barriers that limited her participation. Foremost, due to the unpredictable nature of protective order hearings (i.e., their likelihood of being moved to another day), she expressed anxiety and confusion around what time volunteers were actually supposed to arrive at the courthouse. In addition, she was anxious about other logistics, like not going where to go, what courtroom to enter, or where to sit. Although these details might seem trivial, our ethnographic observations affirm their significance considering the intimidating nature of the court system. As articulated by Volunteer D:

It's just all those anxious feelings of 'I don't know *where* to go *when* I go.' Like, what door do I go into? And when I go in the door, *then* where do I go? And all of those feelings of 'I don't know what's going to happen, I don't really know what I'm supposed to do' turn into 'I'm just not going to do it.'

This anxiety was also somewhat increased by the unstructured nature of the program itself.

Although Volunteer D acknowledged its value in “not really requir[ing] a lot of time or skill” and being “flexible and low-pressure,” she mentioned “if there had been a little bit more structure... [she] probably would have been more apt to be involved because it would've felt like there was more of an expectation.” Altogether, these barriers contributed to another, less tangible barrier: her overall feeling and impression that she would not be able to effectively support survivors in court even after attending the training.

After dropping out of the Court Observer Program, Volunteer D became a WISE Advocate. She shared how she would have liked to “more frequently talk about successes and struggles” with other WISE volunteers or staff. Although she recognized her primary role was to support survivors, she admitted that at times it was extremely exhausting and overwhelming—especially when her support was insufficient because a problem was beyond her reach (e.g., someone not having the financial means to move out and leave a domestic violence situation). Volunteer D became emotional when recalling how “there were always things where you'd hit a wall, and it was like 'I can't help you anymore'” and the resulting feelings of self-disappointment and inadequacy. Especially when faced with these larger, structural barriers, volunteers could benefit from the empathy and validation of others who have been in a similar position. Though Volunteer D was speaking about the WISE Advocate Program, there are clear parallels to the Court Observer Program.

In this way, the importance of the Quarterly Meetings is highlighted. Regardless of the level of engagement, in some way, every volunteer mentioned that the training simply cannot prepare individuals for what will happen in court. Thus, the meetings are a space for catharsis and processing of the unexpected, frustrating, and at times jarring situations volunteers witnessed in the courtroom. For the regular volunteers, the Quarterly Meetings were also an opportunity to share their observations, thoughts, and feelings in an active way that contrasted from the passive nature of sitting and filling out the form in silence. Additionally, seeing the other program volunteers allowed them to understand the larger magnitude and scope of their individual, weekly participation. Through the meetings, the volunteers also heard about the program's contributions to court system reform. In short, the Quarterly Meetings functioned to remind volunteers of their purpose and give updates on their contributions, ultimately increasing volunteer motivation and satisfaction.

Conclusion and Possible Solutions

From our interview with Volunteer A, we see that perhaps the greatest reason she is able to continuously attend court hearings is because of how passionate of an activist she was to begin with. The majority of her family is familiar and well-read in regards to gender-based violence issues, and so Volunteer A is no stranger to relevant content and is likely able to often find reinforcing beliefs and values in her own family that align with her own. While Volunteer A is aware that not many trained court observers take the next step of visiting court, she is sympathetic to the idea that everybody has their own reasons for attending trainings, and has different forms of activism and volunteer work that work best for them. On the other hand, we

learned from our interview with Volunteer B that her interest in gender-based violence branches from her long-standing love for sociology and its broader intriguing questions (e.g., how class interacts with a plaintiff's experience in the courtroom). Unlike the expected internal drive of a court observer, Volunteer B finds herself continuously returning to court hearings primarily to collect data for WISE.

We believe that an effective potential solution might involve attempting to cultivate both the passion and familiarity embodied by Volunteer A and the larger program objectives embodied by Volunteer B to the new court observers in the trainings. Ultimately, we identified that Volunteer A's love for activism feeds the motivation that keeps her continuously attending hearings every Monday morning. In turn, it is Volunteer B's belief that her work might amount to a greater, more durable solution in fighting gender-based violence that prolongs her own dedication. Therefore, possible solutions to the aforementioned research questions may reside within modifying the Court Observer Training to address both sources of internal volunteer motivation.

The interview findings regarding the Quarterly Meeting highlighted the importance of building a sense of community among the volunteers. This could be emphasized and initiated in the Court Observer Training, to hopefully increase the number of new volunteers who come to court hearings after training. In the Court Observer Training, the introductory tactic in which WISE Staff A asked potential court observers to share names and identifying roles played in our lives was a well-thought-out introductory tactic that would be a mindful starting point for future relationship-building and bonding among the court observers. In addition, education on WISE's advocacy efforts and support resources had the effect of making potential court observers feel

motivation—which could be interpreted as a driving factor for court observers to attend the hearings and quarterly meetings, and further develop the salience of their newfound court observer role. Furthermore, throughout the training, we witnessed how conducive WISE Staff A was to an open “Question and Answer” training format, which indicates that the training space has the potential to become very intimate.

In the mindset of volunteer mobilization and motivation, perhaps the welcoming ambiance (snacks, WISE Staff A’s friendliness, female-dominated space) can also be fit for structured time to converse with the other volunteers, share our nerves or excitement, and go over some potential solutions to issues that may come up frequently in court. Could this be feasibly implemented in the trainings? Is there a reason why the training is more “lecture-based” and “informative” than intimate and “bonding-focused”?

As WISE Staff A made clear that the purpose of the Court Observer program was to provide silent support to the survivors, we suggest that the training or Quarterly Meeting include a portion where court observers can feel as though they are contributing to a conversation about justice. Asking questions like “What does justice look like for you? What does being heard look like for you?” could create more meaningful discussion for court observers.

As aforementioned, court observers are called to manage their emotions in court. This emotion work can take a toll on the court observers, thus highlighting the importance of acknowledging that their seemingly passive, silent role is actually active emotional labor that gives survivors space to express their emotions. Perhaps the training can focus on explaining the stress and burden of emotion management to emphasize their contributions. WISE could also

provide additional support resources for court observers who are unprepared or need to process their own traumas before they can control their emotional responses.

Additionally, trainings may increase volunteer motivation by organizing an event where new and regular court observers can interact. New court observers can gain insight from regular court observers on their (1) experiences as a court observer over the years, (2) why they have come to value the program, and (3) how this program has impacted their lives outside of WISE. This would also allow new court observers to learn about the experiences of regular court observers and learn about their motivations.

Through our interviews, we have learned that being a court observer may feel boring, uneventful or ineffectual to new court observers, particularly the ones that have only gotten the chance to attend one or two hearings. The solution that we came up with from the interview with Volunteer C was that she mentioned that she wished there was an N/A option on the form since often something will not occur, but she doesn't want to mark no because it was not a no answer, it was just not applicable to the case at hand. We believe that this is an easy addition that would help reduce confusion in terms of certain questions.

From the interview with WISE Staff A, we devised three possible suggestions for intervention. First, we propose a social group for court observers so that they can go together to ensure that people continually go. This allows for people to check in with one another, carpool, or just have a friendly face to sit with. This should help reduce the lowkey nature of the program without being overly intrusive. In addition, people could get lunch after to talk about what they experienced that morning and even fill the sheets out then if they are more comfortable. Next, we believe that there should be more than just quarterly meetings. Even though WISE Staff A says

that quarterly is enough, it seems that progress is really slow for them because they don't have enough check-in points. It looks like the only time data is looked at is during these quarterly meetings which is not enough intervention points. Also, these meetings seem to be the times that people feel most empowered, which would increase retention. If a court observer misses one of the quarterly meetings, they may go six months without being able to voice their opinions. Lastly, WISE should work to partner with student organizations like SVPP and SAPA on the Dartmouth College campus, in order to mobilize motivated student court observers

Overall, our field research allowed us to immerse ourselves within the program to see the motivation of regular court observers, the court observer training and quarterly meeting, and to experience the hearings in person. Through this research, we were able to understand the benefits of such an amazing program, while finding points for improvement through the introduction of more formalized community and further learning and understanding of the benefits of the program.

ANALYSIS OF DATABASE

Research Objectives

The main goal of our analysis of the database research is to draw conclusions and find potential solutions that address: "How can the current court observations be consolidated to salient themes that can be used to create more specific questions on the SOCY 11 updated Court Observer Report Form?" We mobilize the supporting literature on the interactions between trauma-uninformed judges using descriptive statistics through the analysis of existing data. More specifically, we mobilize the literature by finding trends in quantitative and qualitative data

within the given database; organizing the database into holistic models of responses and response rates; and offering solutions and noting implications of the trends found. Ultimately, we translate these findings regarding the court system into suggested logistical strategies that WISE can employ to better understand court system issues.

Methods

WISE provided our group with a database consisting of court observers' reports from 2017 to 2019 with all the names involved anonymized into numbers for each judge and each court observer. The database has 527 court observations with columns listing basic information such as the date, court, judge (categorized from 1-10), the subject, outcome, who was present in support of the plaintiff (WISE advocate or attorney) and their name, how many other people were there for the plaintiff, and the same for the defendant's side. Questions asked on the Court Observer Observation Report Form considered the judge's demeanor, courtroom efficiency conducted by the judge, courtroom safety, and treatment of plaintiff and defendant by judge.

With such a large database, we wanted to configure a way to better visualize the database as a whole. In addition, response rates differed for various questions, so it was important to keep that in mind before jumping to conclusions based on the responses offered. For the field notes assignment, we created R code (Appendix M) to convert the data to better visualize trends.

The way the code was made was according to the questions asked on the Court Observation report listed in the columns of the database. We took the data set and turned the singular responses into holistic graphs and plots that are shown later. In these plots, you were able to see more clearly how each judge behaved with their data shown side by side for

comparison. In addition, since the questions were asked in a yes or no format, we were able to easily convert those responses to graphs in which we note counts of how many answered yes or no. Another step further was making a graph of the response rates for each question, especially since there were numerous blanks on the data set that were important to note when looking at the overall trends and taking into account how significant these trends could be for all court cases connected to WISE. Most of the response rates were around 50 percent with very few outliers, which shows the weakness in the trends that we found as well. Our final graph showed those that were present in support of the plaintiff—a WISE advocate, an attorney, both or none. In juxtaposition, we placed a graph indicating how many civilians were present in support of the plaintiff to be able to compare numbers and type of people who were present.

In attempting to identify trends in the database, we split it up into quantitative and qualitative data. The questions that looked at nominal variables (yes or no) were categorized into quantitative data because we converted those answers into counts (how many people said yes to this particular question). The additional comments that court observers made besides the questions asked on the report were categorized into qualitative data.

Findings

We compiled the answers to all of the dataset's descriptive questions which asked about certain features of the courtroom process. One set of questions dealt with the demeanor of the judges. One set asked the court observers about the efficiency of the proceedings. One set records the judge's treatment of the plaintiff and defendant in each case. The final set records the perceived safety in the courtroom environment. These four concepts were represented by a series

of questions about specific parts of the process. As the graphs below demonstrate, judges behave mostly consistently on many measures, but there is notable variation in some areas.

Figure 1 shows general consistency in courtroom demeanor, with a few exceptions. The court observers reported near-perfect professionalism and patience across the board. Judges almost never ask about unrelated topics, and they almost never ask whether the couple has reconciled. There is some variation on whether the judges reprimanded people in court. Judge 1 seems to do this much more consistently than any other judge. On the question of whether the judge asked about the couple's history of domestic violence, there is considerable variation. Judge 1 never asked about this, while Judge 9 always asked about this.

Nearly across the board, the data, as shown in Figure 2, display that the courtroom process meets efficiency standards. With very few exceptions, the trials took place where and when they were scheduled, and the rulings were not influenced by other hearings. However, small inconsistencies are difficult to ignore, and could have major consequences for individuals going through the process.

The judges display a lot of variations on the survey questions related to treatment of the defendant and plaintiff, as shown in Figure 3. Court observers report that Judge 1 let the plaintiff's identity affect their behavior almost half the time while the other judges consistently did not behave in this way. They also reported that unlike every other judge, Judge 7 declined to explain their ruling every single time, and declined to explain the proceedings about half the time. There are also broad inconsistencies in whether each judge explained the option to plead "No Contest." On the metric of proper treatment of plaintiffs and defendants, it seems like there is widespread inconsistency.

The court observers reported results on courtroom safety, as shown in Figure 4, are mostly consistent, with a few exceptions. In almost all cases, there was no contact between the plaintiff and the defendant, except for a small number of times. Contact between the perpetrator and survivor of domestic violence can be traumatic and devastating, or at least severely uncomfortable. In the small number of cases where there is contact between plaintiff and defendant, the court runs the risk of introducing undue discomfort. This is just another example of the broad consistency of courtroom procedures reported by the court observers, and the potential consequences of even the smallest amount of inconsistency.

Finally, we looked at the aggregate responses by survey question, across all judges that the court observers monitored. These data are displayed in Figure 5. The results from questions like “Did it take place where and when it was scheduled?” in which the yes/no answer clearly points to the better outcome, are largely uniform. However, questions that are more contingent on other circumstances, like those dealing with child custody, are less consistent. For the questions with more consistent answers, there is still a strikingly high gap between an ideal set of procedures and reality. For example, the above graph shows that only about 90 percent of hearings took place where and when they were scheduled. Tackling the other ten percent on this feature of the process, and the other small inconsistencies, is hugely important for ensuring equal outcomes. We discuss the implications of these findings in more detail in the next section.

For this portion, we looked at the comments the court observers had put at the end of the hearing. A pattern we saw often starting with Court Observer 8 is that they did not know if there was a conviction or felt like the court hearing was not delivered well enough. For the most part, the court observers said that they were unsure of the conviction until Court Observer 269 said “I

don't feel the discussion of the criminal case and repercussions was well delivered or accessible to the parties.” We looked even further and saw similar patterns happening with Court Observer 347: the persistent pattern observed is that either both or one of the parties are not understanding what is happening. We thought these court observers had similar issues and grouped it together as one concern: understanding the conviction and how well delivered the conviction. There were a couple of outlier cases that did have these comments, but it was because one of the parties needed clarity due to their medical condition and in that case, clarity was accommodated. It is good to make sure that the conviction is well delivered, so that both the court observer and the survivor understand the court hearing and what is sentenced.

Additionally, there were concerns outlined by the court observers that might be useful when consoling the survivors. They noted important information about the plaintiffs and the defendants. In addition, they are worth looking at and taking note to see if WISE could help with any of the concerns the court observers noted. In another instance, there was an issue where the plaintiff was visibly scared, and the court observer felt like these feelings were overlooked.

Another trend we saw was that often both parties were not present. We decided to include this at the end because we know WISE is aware of this situation, but we feel like there could be more done to help change this perpetual pattern. For example, did the survivor not show up because they had work or some other need to attend to? If not, there are ways to help encourage the survivor to show up to court meeting and help them feel comfortable enough to come to the court hearing.

Potential Solutions

The overall trends and patterns which were analyzed from the provided data sets offered many implications for the future of the WISE Court Observer Program and the possible changes in policy which could be incredibly beneficial to the entire court process. Even the smallest discrepancies deserve to be addressed in these findings in order to create a system which is inherently as fair and equal as possible, while also considering the many limitations at play when offering solutions to the observed variations.

The dataset provided the information that less than 50 cases out of the 573 in question had both a WISE advocate and an attorney present at one time, which means much of the responsibility of explaining the legal processes at hand may realistically fall on the shoulders of the WISE advocates who are present in situations where the judges are not patient in explaining the court proceedings to the plaintiffs. In an ideal world, the access to more pro bono lawyers would be a potential solution to this problem, as socioeconomic status could very feasibly be acting as a barrier to access of legal representation for the individuals involved in these cases. This solution is not realistic in the sense that it could invoke actionable change, however, especially by the hands of the WISE advocates. Though there may not be immediate tangible change that the WISE advocated can implement in order to mitigate this issue, this is an observation to keep in mind for the advocates when interacting with the victims for whom they are working with, as many times they are the only resources available to explain these legal proceedings to these individuals in the case that there is any confusion surrounding the matter.

Along similar lines, the data provided demonstrates that there is a very clear distinction between various judges' treatments of both the plaintiffs and defendants throughout a number of

interactions, including apparent variation in their treatment of the plaintiff and defendant based on the identities of the individuals. This has very negative implications for the legislative processes surrounding these cases, as it offers the possibility that stereotypes and perceptions of the individual can influence and even decide the overall decisions made in these hearings, having tremendous effects on the lives of those involved. Something to note about these observations, however, is that the idea of whether or not a judge was “fair” in his treatment of the individual is a very subjective measure and will undoubtedly vary on a person-to-person basis depending on perceptions and past experiences among other factors. The fact that it is so unclear what different biases are at play when evaluating courtroom demeanor makes it difficult to find tangible change in terms of the judges’ behaviors yet can be addressed through a restructuring of the Courtroom Observer Report Form to remove questions involving subjective answers. The suggestion that the questionnaires involve more concrete (yes or no) observations rather than answers left up to the interpretation of the different Observers provides less grounds for biases’ effects on judge evaluation and will better narrow down the exact problems which need to be addressed on a judge-to-judge basis. Alongside this, the restructuring of the questionnaires to a simpler form could also combat the issue of low response rates on certain questions by the Courtroom Observers, as decreasing this margin of low response rates will be very beneficial to WISE in receiving accurate data to move forward with.

One of the most overall glaring issues presented in the dataset was that there is a clear margin between judges when it comes to clearly explaining court proceedings and court rulings to both the plaintiff and the defendant. For example, Judge 7 was recorded as adamantly refusing to explain his court rulings, and also declined to explain the court proceedings in nearly half of

the cases which he was hearing. As discussed previously, this becomes particularly problematic when there is no attorney available to either the plaintiff or defendant in cases where there is confusion surrounding the matter, as misunderstandings in courtroom proceedings can possibly have very negative implications in the outcomes of these cases.

Overall, there is notable consistency in the behavior of judges towards both the plaintiff and defendant in the recorded court hearings, yet the cases where treatment and efficiency vary from the norm absolutely cannot be ignored and addressed. Implementing any of the policy changes suggested throughout this evaluation can have gigantic significance in decreasing these minor outliers, as creating more uniform and consistent outcomes in court hearings can make a monumental difference in the lives of these victims who WISE advocates for.

A potential use for our quantitative findings would be to help make the Court Observers themselves more informed about the broad behavioral trends in these court cases. Briefing the volunteers on what happens in court from a data-driven perspective could make them more prepared for the task at hand. Our qualitative findings stress the importance that the volunteers maintain a “poker face” while sitting in court. Carrying realistic expectations into the courtroom will minimize emotional reactions induced by surprise, disgust, or anger, making it easier for court observers to manage their emotional reactions. This makes the experience smoother for everyone involved, lessening the emotional burden put on court observers.

Conclusion

Ultimately, both the qualitative and quantitative research that we conducted introduced actionable steps that WISE can take to further reform the program. To begin with, volunteers desire support, recognition, and to feel like they have done something through their volunteering. We believe that to help survivors achieve this goal, WISE should introduce more of a community of volunteers. By volunteers getting to know one another, they would be able to check whether the others would be attending, coordinate carpooling together, and could even plan to get coffee or lunch after the hearings. While this would continue to allow the program to maintain its grassroots nature and would not increase the burden placed on volunteers, it would allow a check in for volunteers and would help support them in their role. A regular court observer could be put in charge of this added element of the program which would empower them to feel more involved, while also allowing for some structure to the program. In addition, a sense of community would allow volunteers to have someone to decompress with after attending a hearing which can be triggering.

Our second suggestion is to have regular court observers attend the trainings. This would allow new volunteers to understand what the experience of being a court observer would look like. While we found that the court observer training was a true highlight of the program, we felt that an understanding of the actual experience at the hearing was missing and that this could lead to intimidation of what the actual experience would look like. Even simple knowledge of where to park or sit would be beneficial for new court observers. In addition, within the court observer training there could be more information about emotion work and how putting the burden of emotional labor on the court observer could protect the survivor from unnecessary harm. This

would allow for a stronger understanding of the reasoning to maintain a “poker face” and would empower the volunteer.

Lastly, the quantitative information could be utilized to keep court observers aware of the broad trends to look out for within the courtroom. This would allow court observers to be more aware of the overarching problems they should be looking out for which could help ensure that court observers are on the same track when answering questions. With an improvement to the data collection sheets that reduces confusion, the data will be usable to introduce broad trends during quarterly meetings.

The qualitative and quantitative research work hand in hand to improve the court observer program as a whole. Overall, the mission and work of the program are incredible and small tweaks to the program could help systematize the program and strengthen the volunteer experience. It has been a privilege to conduct research with WISE, especially considering the importance of its mission and everything we were able to learn through this experience.

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FIGURES

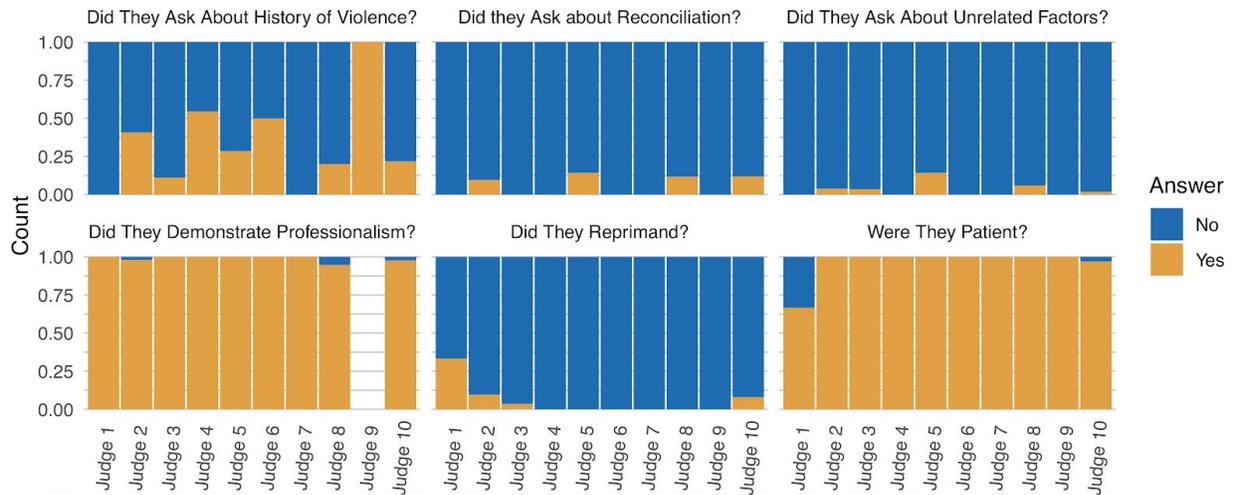


Figure 1: Courtroom demeanor, as recorded by Court Observers, broken down by each judge (x-axis) and faceted by specific question

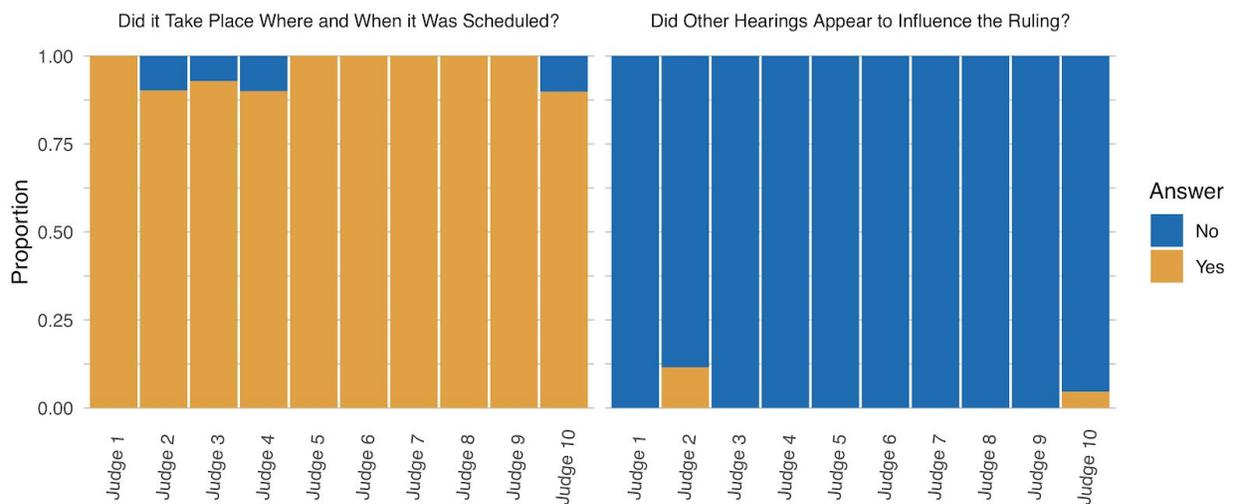


Figure 2: Courtroom efficiency, as measured by Court Observer responses, broken down by judge (x-axis) and faceted by specific question

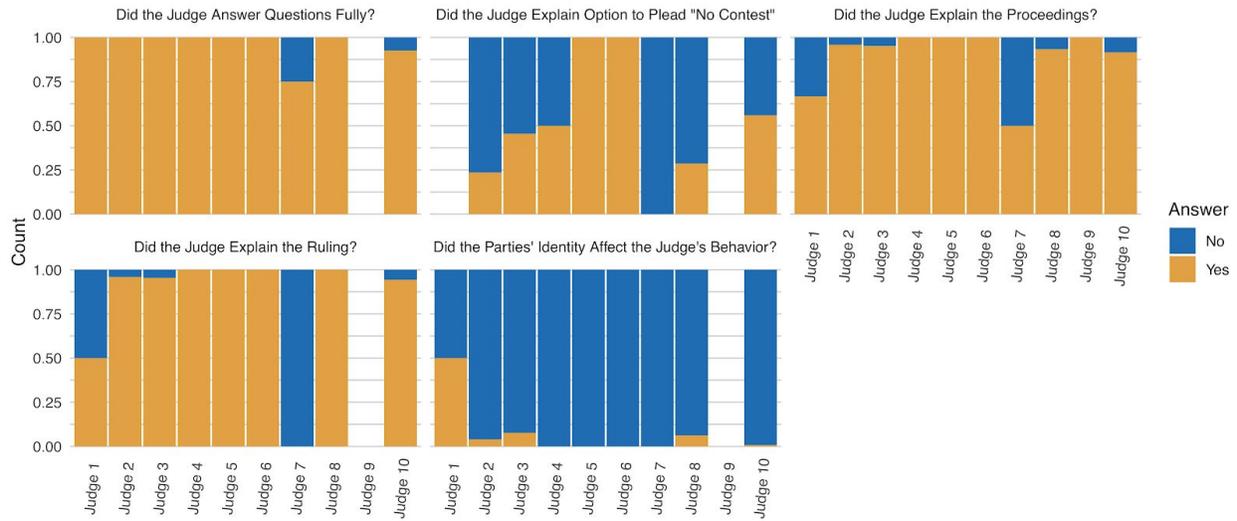


Figure 3: Treatment of the plaintiff and defendant, as reported by the Court Observers, broken down by individual judge (x-axis) and faceted by specific question

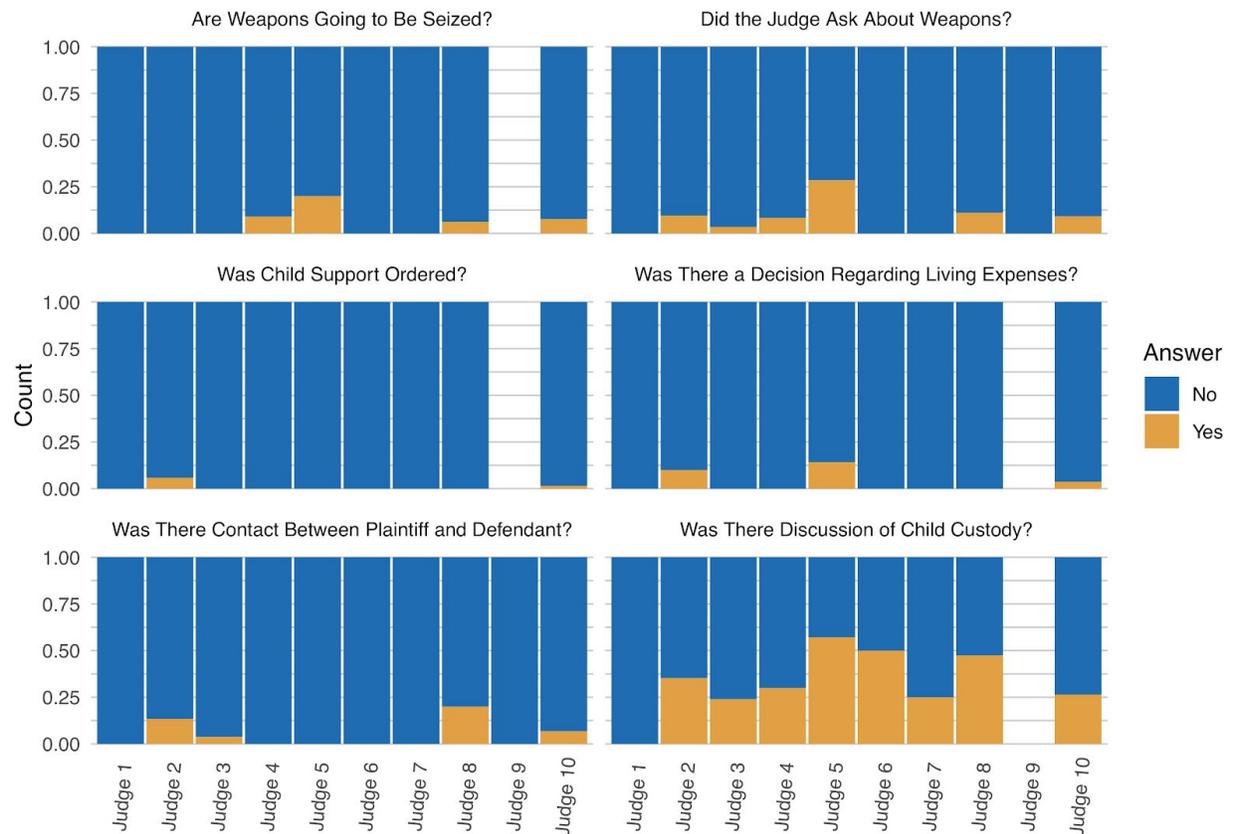


Figure 4: Courtroom safety, as reported by the Court Observers, broken down by individual judge and faceted by specific question

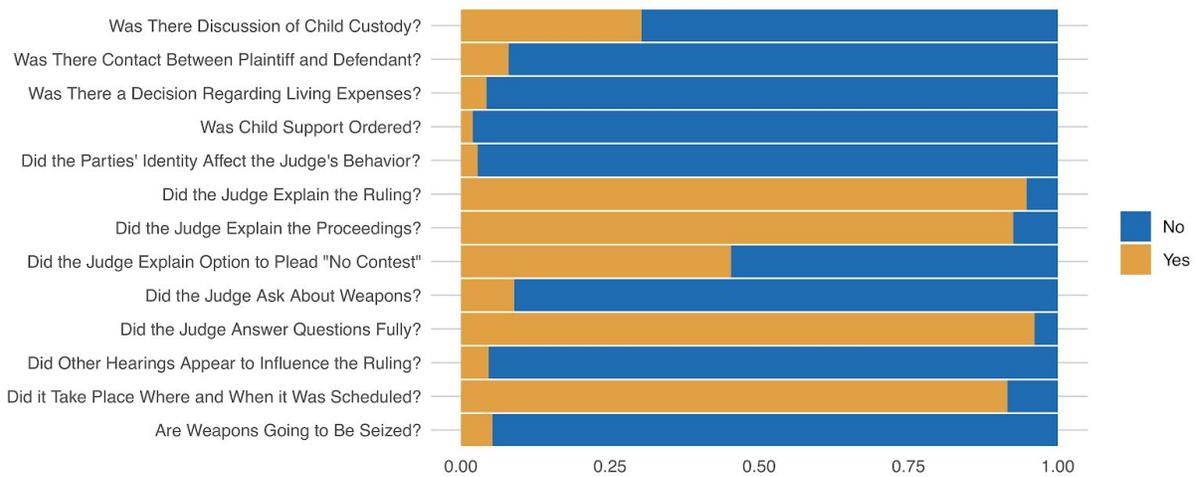


Figure 6: Responses to all questions. Proportion is shown on the x-axis.

Figure 5: Responses to all questions. Proportion is shown on the x-axis.

death threats, threw her against wall, slight concussion but didn't go to hospital
 drugs - usually on marijuana
 abuse toward child Carter - slap
 def pushes her and child's foreheads
 has told the baby he would kill him, hurt him
 has access to guns
 drives dangerously when angry

Figure 6: Court Observer comments on some of the comments the plaintiff said.

Judge spoke slowly and clearly and asked Plaintiff more than once if she understood.

 PI says def is no longer in house, def told her she was diagnosed with schizophrenia
 PI believes def is still dangerous
 PI proceeds with case
 Mental or Physical Disability, Plain Def had threatened to kill her

Figure 7: Court Observer Comments on the Judge accommodating the parties needs.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Field Observations from Hearing on October 24, 2019 [Morgan]

Field Notes

- Protective Order Hearing, Lebanon Court House
- Signs before even entering
 - Must remove hats
 - Be dressed in proper attire in accordance with “the dignity of the court”
- Walked through metal detectors
- Bags were searched
- Calling the judge “your Honor”
- Uniform of security guard (first person you interact with upon entering), judges & less explicit uniform communicated by the dress code
- Didn’t know where WISE was/where to go
- Security guard referred us to the Court Clerk
- First person we talked to at the Court Clerk desk referred us to someone else
- The court case was postponed because the defendant/perpetrator didn’t show up
- Didn’t ask for more details/don’t completely understand, but heard he couldn’t arrive because he is incarcerated and was served the other day
- Because he is incarcerated, he needs to ask for transportation to the courthouse
- The plaintiff/survivor was visibly upset/disappointed because she wasn’t expecting this delay
- Furthermore, it wasn’t an immediate notification of postponement
- The survivor had to wait for a long time while court clerks explained the situation and consulted higher ups/called police system to find out more information about defendant’s incarceration
- Temporary order was issued in the meantime
- Rescheduled for 2p.m., 10/31
- “We have no idea what’s going on at the police station unless you tell us” (court clerk)
 - Effectively removed blame from the court system/herself by using bureaucracy as an excuse
 - Court clerk sounded like she was blaming the survivor for the postponement (which would tie into my inference that she didn’t think the survivor had the right to be upset)
 - The court clerk was making it sound like the survivor should’ve known that the defendant’s incarceration would have posed a challenge, that the survivor should have communicated this information with the court, that the survivor should have talked to the police to make the necessary transportation arrangements
- WISE advocate pushed back asking how they were supposed to know this information
- Court clerk said it’s just an obvious part of the process
 - Contributes to image of court system as a seemingly unchanging, formal institution—not even worth expressing anger to the court clerk

- The survivor didn't push back/communicate frustration when talking to the clerk (at least through direct verbal communication back was facing me so couldn't see facial expression/other non-verbal cues)
- After talking to the court clerk, the survivor whispered and vented her anger/frustration with the system to the WISE advocate
 - "This shouldn't be my responsibility"
 - Sounded so exhausted and frustrated
 - Exasperated by a system that's so obviously not survivor-centered and doesn't acknowledge/understand the other taxing challenges/responsibilities that the survivor already has to battle
 - Compounded violence

Ideas and Questions (MN, TN, PN)

- MN: Sat on a bench next to the court clerk desk/counter while waiting to receive more specific direction from WISE Advocate, Bailey as she was privately discussing with the survivor
- MN: Was able to silently sit and observe the interaction between WISE advocate, survivor, and court clerk from the bench
- TN: Constructed formality of the court system (symbolic meanings)
- TN: How uniforms function to connect an individual to a larger (more powerful) group/system
- TN: Themes of respectability, dignity, decorum, formality, procedure
- TN: Part of the ritual of preparing for court that informs how the court/legal system is constructed in the social imagination
- TN: Bureaucratic nature of court system
- TN: Snow & Anderson reading about waiting/time—survivor's time was disrespected without second thought/remorse
 - Especially if working, difficult to ask for time off work to come to court during business hours
 - Let alone the emotional labor/energy that goes into preparing to see your perpetrator, preparing yourself for the request to be denied by the judge, preparing your statement, etc.

Appendix B. Field Observations from Hearing on October 31, 2019

MD: Lebanon District Court, 2:30-3p.m., Courtroom 2, Andrea and Katie walked in three minutes late, were prompted to introduced themselves by judge, stated they are Dartmouth students, and sat in the back row

PN: felt very intrusive to enter the small room and be two of three people in the audience, heightened awareness of my role and lack of knowledge of being in a courtroom

FN: defendant wasn't present, plaintiff sat in the front with WISE advocate Bailey Ray

- Judge asked the plaintiff to describe her experiences
- Plaintiff explained threats and her fear of permanent damage, mentioning multiple police reports and violent interactions
- Plaintiff has a child with the defendant
- Judge mentioned a criminal trial that the defendant is already taking part in
- Judge quickly moved to grant plaintiff a restraining order was kind andr for a year

PN: plaintiff seemed calm and spoke informatively, the judge seemed to ask only what was required for questions, child custody was not discussed

- The entire hearing felt very quick and fair

TN: I wonder how new court observers attend hearings like this with the limited guidance of the training, would have been much more uncomfortable if I'd gone without Katie, and was already not comfortable though we were in it together

Appendix C. Field Observations from WISE Court Observer Training [Emily]

WISE leads the Upper Valley to end gender-based violence through survivor-centered advocacy, prevention, education, and mobilization for social change¹ (WISE 2019). The non-profit organization provides advocacy, crisis services, and community education to individuals affected by domestic and sexual violence and stalking in the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont.

Since 2016, the Court Observer program—wherein community volunteers accompany survivors to civil and criminal cases relating to gender-based violence, including protective order hearings—has contributed to WISE’s aforementioned mission. The court observers have one purpose: to act as a supportive *presence* at hearings primarily by exercising silence and stillness. In other words, while court observers are given ample information on how New Hampshire and Vermont courts function, as well as how the grievances noted on the “Court Observer Observation Report Form” are addressed, their primary role is to express silent support and solidarity with the survivor by being present in the courtroom. Volunteers have the option to report their observations on what transpires during the case via the “Court Observer Observation Report Form,” which includes judicial and staff demeanor, efficiency and organization of proceedings, safety, and the treatment of the plaintiff and defendant.

All court observers are mandated by WISE to complete a two-and-a-half hour training on the following: protective orders and the court system distinctions in New Hampshire and Vermont, behavioral and procedural expectations at court, logistics for Monday mornings at Windsor County Court, what to do after a hearing, and additional WISE Support resources.

I. Field Note: *WISE of the Upper Valley on Monday, October 14, 2019 from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM*

On October 14, 2019 at 9:28 AM, WISE of the Upper Valley is fairly quiet—five women who I assume to be somewhere between the ages of 23 and 75 are settled in the meeting room with the Assistant Director, WISE Staff A. The meeting room is cozily lit by the natural sunlight from two very large windows on the furthest wall from the entrance. The table was prepared with a “Court Observer Packet,” a contract, and an “I’m listening” button; in addition, there were granola bars and tangerines for potential court observers to enjoy. I sat in between two court observers, who both took handwritten notes from time to time.

PN: Because we (Nadia, Caroline, and I) arrived about thirty-minutes late to the training, I felt embarrassed and extremely apologetic towards WISE Staff A and the potential court observers. Yet, WISE Staff A laughed and reassured us that the group was still on introductions, which allowed me to feel more relaxed and welcomed.

FN: There were five potential court observers from the Upper Valley present at the training. All potential observers were white women, in the age-identifying range of college students to senior citizens.

¹ WISE. 2019. “Who We Are.” Retrieved September 10, 2019 (<https://wiseuv.org/who-we-are/>).

PN: Based on my observations, I deemed that each court observer appeared to be the ages of: 17, 20, 26, 60-70, and 75.

MN: Initially, I had the mindset that I was conducting a standard ethnography and sat in one of the chairs along the wall. After about five minutes, I realized that I would not be conducting a standard ethnography—rather, I would be taking observational notes during the training, while being an active participant in the training. Hence, I moved to the table in order to appear to be engaged and involved as a potential court observer. Especially because my aloofness was noticeable among the group of eight (5 potential court observers, Nadia and Caroline, WISE Staff A), I changed my position and decided to conduct as many observations as I could while being an active participant (by introducing myself, asking questions, and more). As a result, my ethnography was methodologically compromised due to my interactions with the environment and people I was observing.

FN: Though I was not present for the introductions for the other potential court observers, WISE Staff A asked me, Nadia, and Caroline to share our names, class-years at Dartmouth, and an identifying role we play in our lives.

TN: According to Hunt, social identities are derived from a person's identification with social categories, like racial, ethnic, and social class, rather than with roles. The environment WISE Staff A fostered (by her introduction suggestions) was one that placed a salient focus on role identities, rather than social identities. For example, I shared that another role I assume, other than student, is as an Undergraduate Advisor on campus. In the brief introductory time allotted, potential court observers were able to share their self-commitments: "For *identity theory*, the source of salience is commitment: the extensiveness and intensiveness of a person's social networks predicated on playing a particular role" (Hunt 2003:75).

FN: WISE Staff A proposed that the Court Observer program continuously wants feedback regarding the following question: "How can we make this work as powerful as it can be?"

TN: WISE Staff A's statement reinforces the essence of our general research question: How can WISE improve their Court Observer program to better support survivors during and after they appear in court? Furthermore, this ethnography confirms greater insights (via the interactions observed from the training between the potential court observers, and between them and WISE Staff A) on how we can help make the program more robust.

FN: WISE Staff A, the Assistant Director of the Lebanon, NH-based WISE of the Upper Valley leads the training. She begins the training with the first PowerPoint, which is about WISE as an organization.

FN: The following information was presented via the WISE PowerPoint:

- 2015: WISE signed MOU with Dartmouth, became an on-campus advocate
- 2018: Rural Grant recipient for Windsor County
- 2019: STOP/FETI Grant recipient to work on a more trauma-informed law enforcement
 - Forensic interviewing
- WISE serves both Vermont and New Hampshire

- WISE is connected with state and national networks (the Vermont Network, the New Hampshire Coalition)
- WISE is volunteer-driven (Court Observer program, WISE Ambassadors, crisis-line volunteers, etc.)
- WISE's additional resources include, yoga and writing groups
- Advocacy and education in the community starting with children (pre-K to 12)

PN/TN: Given the most recent grant that will allow WISE to effectively promote a more “trauma-informed” law enforcement via tactics like forensic interviewing, I wonder what WISE’s ideal trauma-informed court looks like. How is WISE planning to use the grant to create actionable items that will allow law enforcement to be trauma-informed? What might these actionable items look like? Since WISE is already concerned about the lack of trauma-informed stakeholders during court processes, I believe our macro research on the need for trauma-informed judges is pertinent.

FN: The following information was provided by WISE Staff A while she reviewed each slide during the training:

- Court judges are interested in feedback from the court observers
- Some court observers identify as attorneys
 - Especially on the New Hampshire side (given the judges)
- WISE serves both Vermont and New Hampshire
 - Advantageous due to greater outreach
 - Cumbersome due to “two times the laws”
- Previously, court observers have directly and indirectly participated in lobbying, as the court observers network reaches the legislature, in which they can speak to the Court Manager about how a certain law (for instance) is not working
 - Court Observers request for things to look out for to the Court Manager

PN/TN: For the quantitative data analysis team that is looking for patterns in the observer forms from the past, I wonder if the aforementioned information about how court observers have previously reached the Court Manager and implemented procedural changes (that are survivor-centered) can assist with our overall conclusions. To reiterate, WISE Staff A was vague about how WISE has contacted the Court Manager in the past (Who contacts who? Are these concerns discussed in a one-on-one meeting?), but also shared ways the Court Observer program had implemented change in the past.

FN: WISE Staff A shared a story about the gun culture in New Hampshire, in which a judge did not confiscate the guns of the perpetrator during the hearing (though they were used as a tactic of manipulation), but instead suggested that his brother withhold the guns. Shortly afterwards, the perpetrator forced the survivor into a remote area, and killed himself with his guns in front of her. This caused another layer of trauma on the survivor’s end that the court was not prepared to deal with, or take responsibility for.

TN: This exhibits the strong gun culture in New Hampshire, and I wonder how courts currently (or plan to) reconcile this cultural norm with the physical and mental wellbeing of the survivors.

I determine that the behavior of judges (in New Hampshire in particular) is determined by their cultural and political background, which can be fatal for both the survivor and the perpetrator. According to Kay et al., the *status quo bias* finds the existence of a general tendency to prefer the current status quo to any alternative. According to *system justification theory*, “Little can be done to change a reality...people are more motivated to justify their system to view it in the best light possible” (Kay et al. 2009:421).

PN: I appreciated that WISE Staff A took the time to educate the potential court observers on WISE’s advocacy and support resources outside of the Court Observer program. In this way, I felt as though the Court Observer program was better contextualized for potential court observers to understand how extensive WISE’s work truly is. Personally, I felt very accomplished and proud to be a part of this training due to my newfound affiliation with such a meaningful organization. Above all, I felt a sense of pride and motivation, which I could see as a driving factor for court observers to attend the hearings and quarterly meetings, and further develop the salience of their newfound court observer role.

FN: In addition to educating the potential court observers on WISE’s current developments and its advocacy resources, WISE Staff A briefly touches on WISE’s philosophy—that is, how the organization thinks about gender-based violence, and the survivor-centered perspectives that contribute to WISE’s mission:

- Defining “gender-based violence” as
 - *Sexual violence*: one person takes away a person’s power and control over their own body
 - *Domestic violence*: pattern of behaviors to control a partner in addition to a threat of violence
 - *Stalking*: putting a reasonable person in fear
- Context is essential: the court must be aware that the survivor is in the unsettling position to defend herself (or himself)
 - WISE’s initial mission was to work with women, but that has shifted to include men, and the gender non-binary, and transgender community
 - We must be cognizant of “presenting” versus “feeling” rules and the gender binary
- WISE Staff A said, “We live in a society that supports gender-based violence.”
- The WISE Philosophy states: “Violence is a tool of power that maintains the oppression that women experience.”
 - “Violence is created by the gender construct.”
 - Men and violence, the “threat” concept
- “Collective action and community organizing across communities and identity groups is necessary to end gender-based violence.”
- Social change advocacy approach: “How do we change the world?”
- Restorative Justice Project to help survivors meet a “circle of peace” (support before, during, and after the hearing)
 - WISE works with friends and family to support the survivor as best as possible before, during, and after the court hearing
- Survivor’s rights, in which “survivors are the experts of their own lives.”

TN: This portion of the training reflects on how gender and gender-based violence may be *accomplished* by individuals (perpetrators via violence) and institutions (non-survivor-centered courts). According to Kane, the interactionist approach to gender is as an accomplishment: “In the accomplishment of difference [including gender], accountability is the driving motivator; the specifics of the normative order provide the content, with social interaction the medium” (Kane 2006:152).

TN: According to the *theory of reflected appraisals*, “The reflected appraisals process does not operate all the time or under all conditions...the self is not simply a passive sponge that soaks up information from the environment; rather, it is an active agent engaged in various self-serving processes” (Anderson and Snow 2001:400). Thus, in terms of WISE’s goal to focus on survivor’s rights and restoring survivors’ agency in the court hearing process, it is essential to emphasize human agency, which “highlights social actors’ capacities to interpret and construct lines of action rather than respond directly to the stimuli they encounter” (Anderson and Snow 2001:404).

FN: After the first PowerPoint, WISE Staff A immediately moved on to another PowerPoint that provided information on the distinctive judicial processes in New Hampshire and Vermont:

- In civil cases, the case is between two individuals.
 - Protective orders
 - Divorce hearings
 - May or may not have attorneys
 - Divorce hearings
 - Custody and finances (sometimes violence does not come up at all)
 - One party sues another for violating their civil rights
- In criminal cases, the state is charging a crime against the individual.
 - Felonies
 - Misdemeanors
 - Forensic interviewing to figure out a pattern of behavior, because “police aren’t interested”
 - Criminal cases are rare (end up being pled on)
 - However, there will be a felony-level case in November 2019.
 - Victims are considered “witnesses.”
- Reasons for attribution: the police/prosecutor do not have enough evidence to move a case forward
- The judge has to approve in order for the protective order to be in effect
- Vermont: SIU, Windsor County, WCSC and DSC Superior Court in Woodstock
 - Specific stalking orders
 - Emergency: good until final hearing (about 1 week)
 - Final: good for 1 year (file a motion with the court afterwards)
 - Civil Court
 - Relief from abuse order, sexual assault order, stalking order (non-intimates)
- New Hampshire: SART, Lebanon Family Court

- Stalking orders only permitted if the survivor has an intimate relationship with the perpetrator
 - Emergency: after court hours, good until the next business day
 - Temp: apply *ex parte*, good until the final hearing (about 1 month)
 - Final: granted order for 1 year
- Civil Court
 - Domestic violence petition, stalking order
- Courts constantly need proof

FN: During this PowerPoint, potential court observers (particularly, the two observers on either side of me) taking notes in their personal notebooks.

FN: While WISE Staff A emphasized how different the New Hampshire and Vermont court processes and experiences were, she also prefaced this claim with: “But you are not expected to know this information.”

TN: WISE Staff A’s comment regarding the information court observers are not required to know emphasizes how detached court observers may feel from the actual process. While volunteers may feel grateful that they were given a space to speak about the logistics of the process, they were not pressured to be experts on the materials.

FN: According to WISE Staff A, “WISE is volunteer-driven...the Court Observer program, WISE ambassadors, crisis-line volunteers...”

PN/TN: By hearing this in addition to the eye-opening work that WISE does, I (as a potential court observer) did feel accountable for participating and committing to my role as a court observer, given that I was told that without volunteers, the programs have no traction. I believe that WISE Staff A is very qualified to train the court observers, especially because I felt as though she subtly included language that was volunteer-focused, which induced a personal feeling of responsibility and importance for me.

PN: Throughout the training (especially by the mid-point at 10:22 AM), I felt comfortable enough to ask questions. By mirroring the other volunteers and witnessing how conducive WISE Staff A was to an open “Question and Answer” training format, I did feel as though the space was very intimate, or could become very intimate.

FN: During the break in the midpoint of the meeting, the potential court observers did not converse with one another. Rather, one court observer (the elderly woman sitting on the far corner of the table from where I was sitting) asked WISE Staff A follow-up questions, which the other potential court observers present in the room during the break listened in on. More specifically, the elderly woman asked about “mental health court” to which WISE Staff A responded: “There is a mental health court in New Hampshire that specifically deals with violence as a trauma-based reaction, or those who act violently out of self-protection or protection of their children...accompanied by therapists.”

FN: After WISE Staff A shared the New Hampshire court hearing schedule (on Google Calendar), she said: “You don’t need to tell us which hearings you’ll be going to. You can just show up.” She also made it clear that court observers did not have to fill out the observation form—the main priority of the court observers is to be present at the hearing as a signal of support for the survivors.

TN: These instructions emphasize the hands-off nature of WISE in regards to the expectations of the court observers. They do not prioritize tracking attendance of the court observers, and view reported observations as optional. Through interviews, we may be able to better understand the amount of effort court observers would like to put in to their roles. Is this approach reason for potentially low retention rates? Would court observers like to be given more accountability and responsibility in their roles?

FN: According to WISE Staff A, the “plaintiffs and perpetrators watch a movie” and get information about the court process to come before the hearing (in separate rooms).

FN: Finally, WISE Staff A goes over the expectations for the court observers, with emphasis on their behavioral conduct:

- Court Observers do not have confidentiality in terms of working in the judicial context.
- Observe outside the courtroom
 - There are a group of regular observers who attend hearings regularly
- Wear your “I’m listening” buttons so you can identify one another and sit together if desired
- Dress “reasonably” and “respectfully”
- You are “not participating, not advocating...”
- Do not interact with the survivor, do not expect acknowledgement
- The victim will know you are present

FN: Though the WISE website solely uses “survivor” language, WISE Staff A would often interchange “survivor” for “victim.”

FN: WISE Staff A provided a truthful reality of how court observers would be treated by the court and by the survivors. According to the survivors, it is meaningful to have observers present.

TN: Perhaps the minimal interactions with the survivor and the actual court process can be discouraging to the potential court observers who would like to receive first-hand appreciation from the program, as well as feel as though they are contributing to social change (in terms of bettering the experiences of survivors).

FN: WISE Staff A explicitly said, “Try not to show emotions when you’re in the court...keep a poker face...some judges are very strict and may ask you to leave if you show excessive emotion...”

TN: *Emotion management* must be employed to “sustain a system of inequality...one that generates destabilizing feelings of anger, resentment, sympathy...” (Schwalbe et al. 2000:434). By employing emotion management, court observers may also be managing their own emotions to serve the interests of the judges. While this expectation can take a toll on the court observers, the established (and unchangeable) code of judicial processes must also be taken into account.

Appendix C. Field Observations from WISE Court Observer Quarterly Meeting [Andrea]

MD: October 30th, 9-10:30am at WISE conference room

MD: Present at meeting: *WISE Staff*: WISE Staff A, Abby; *Court Observers*: Volunteer B, Margerie, Nat (Nathalie), Nate, *SOCY 65*: Andrea

FN: Problems with attendance of new court observers:

- Monday @ 8am is tough (Nat)
- Hearings can be very passive and boring, relating more to power and control (Margerie)
- Outlier cases might discourage attendance
 - Nate's response: "There's just more to learn"
- Lots of no shows for hearings

FN: Margerie and Darsie check in with each other to make sure the other is going, so they attend together

PN: Motivation for attendance by going together

FN: Police are telling people to get restraining orders

- Low effectiveness as it's just a piece of paper
 - Huge distance to police sometimes
 - Not pushing protective orders
 - No purpose

FN: Felony level sexual assault case Nov 12-19

- North Haverhill, NH
- New young female prosecutor

PN: They were very excited about supporting this bigger case

FN: Hearing on Monday 10/18:

- Judge Harris
- Didn't ask about weapons
- Violent and loud man in court
- 14 minute recording of fight
- Someone sat with her at the table and took notes
- Protective order was granted

FN: Recent hearing:

- Judge Mann
- Roommate dispute between two med students
- MANY comments about their excessive privilege
- High power attorneys
- Long process, drawn out

FN: Recent hearing:

- Windsor police stalking case
- Atypical case "Not a lot of what we think we're going to see" -Nat

FN: WISE advocates present in court

- Court observers respond back about actions of advocates

FN: Resources available 24/7 if things up come, so encourage survivors not to hesitate to reach out

- New judge (PN: Judge Mann?) has made a big difference in offering support

FN: Form

- Nat asked how the form is influencing court proceedings
- Abby wanted group to go through the form to talk through how questions are being interpreted
- Focus on identifying trends about judges
 - Prose vs. lawyer present in court makes a big difference in how judges act
- Form questions based on burgundy book (best practices around protective orders)
 - Wanted to better understand processes in the beginning and now developed into RFA process watching
 - Collects potentially helpful data?
- Marjorie makes extensive comments on form

PN: Nat & most court observers do not bother with the form

- Discrepancies if people answer questions differently

FN: UVM student paper (edited as NH/VT were conflated)

- Sent in to Grearson
- Hoping to influence judges

PN: GOAL: make system accessible to everyone so everyone is safer

FN: There is a court improvement project taking place currently

FN: After hours:

- Limited access to protective orders when courts have closed
- Court clerks have to approve papers
 - Just not available and low wages so little interest in more people becoming court clerks
- No 24 hour law enforcement available
- Perpetrator is law enforcement
- Law enforcement reads affidavits and investigates
- Electronic access is new, but sometimes no internet / service

PN: Big accessibility issue!!

FN: VT:

- Huge process for volunteers
 - Where to meet (hospital or police station)
 - Is it open?
 - Does clerk come out or need to call
 - Call but forms take such a long time
 - Logistical difficulties with kids, etc.
 - Isn't face to face so important?
 - Perception of support
 - Calling does allow for not leaving household

NH:

- Emergency order in NH (one page in police department)
- Need to go to court the next day for a temporary order

PN: Very different systems in VT & NH, WISE needs to navigate both

FN: Court & WISE communication has been low

- VT wanted to standardize support across the state (equal access concern) and other crisis centers do not have the capacity to have similar programs or send people to help
- WISE juggles two states with different policies
- NH docket is not posted
 - Transition of judges cut connection between WISE and judges
 - Could student intervene here and gather information about dockets under guise of a project?
 - Could explore Barry and Chelsea systems as well for info

PN: Look into student intervention idea

PN: Differences in court settings:

- VT: can sit in the back and just be there during all hearings
- NH: case by case so more intrusive
 - Can be supportive or uncomfortable

Appendix D. Interview Guide for Regular Court Observer Program Volunteers [Andrea]

Introduction: I am part of a group Sociology group in a class called Social Psychology for Inequality at Dartmouth College. For our final project, we are really excited and feel honored to work on a project for WISE of the Upper Valley regarding how the Court Observer Program can be generally improved in the future. If possible, it would be great if I could record you so that I can focus on you instead of taking notes. But if not, taking notes will also be a great help to our project. You are the expert here. I am the learner. I will ask a few general questions, but you can talk about anything you feel is important, even if I don't ask about it. And, if you don't like my questions, you don't have to answer them. One more thing -- if you want to answer off the record, I can turn the recorder off and turn it on again later. Are you ready to get started?

1. Could you please tell me a little bit about yourself?
 - a. How old are you? Where did you grow up?
 - b. What is something that characterizes you as a person?
2. How did you find out about WISE?
3. When were you trained as a court observer?
 - a. Can you please describe your training?
 - b. What did you think of your training?
 - c. What were its strengths and weaknesses considering that you are a regular visitor?
 - d. What is something important you'd like in future programs?
 - e. How often do you attend hearings?
 - f. How does attending these hearings fit into your week? Your values?
4. What motivates you to attend hearings? What keeps you coming back?
 - a. How do you think this motivation might be shared with other/future court observers?
 - b. How do you feel about the work that you're able to do?
 - c. Is there anything you would like to change—if you could—about attending court hearings?
5. Could you please walk be through what attending a hearing is like for you?
6. How often do you fill out the court observers form after attending hearings?
7. Have you been involved with WISE in any other ways?
 - a. Would you like to be?
 - b. Any ideas?

Appendix E. Interview Guide for WISE Staff

Introduction: I am part of a group Sociology group in a class called Social Psychology for Inequality at Dartmouth College. For our final project, we are really excited and feel honored to work on a project for WISE of the Upper Valley regarding how the Court Observer Program can be generally improved in the future. You are the expert here. I am the learner. I will ask a few general questions, but you can talk about anything you feel is important, even if I don't ask about it. And, if you don't like my questions, you don't have to answer them.

Goal of interview: To understand the process of supporting court observers and managing the program and to look for points where the opinions of managers don't align with views of the court observers.

1. Could you tell me about yourself and how you got involved with WISE?
2. Could you describe what your role at WISE is and what it entails?
3. What motivates you to stay involved with WISE?
4. What are your views on the Court Observer Program?
5. How would you improve the Court Observer Program?
6. Often court observers feel like they can do more than just observe, how would you motivate them to see the value of their work?
 - a. What else could they be doing?
7. How many people are trained each year?
8. How many people on average show up at hearings?
9. How would you improve the feedback forms?
10. How would you improve the quarterly meetings?
11. How would you improve the training?

Appendix F. Volunteer A Interview Notes

- General Background
 - Volunteer A is a grandmother of seven granddaughters ages 11-25 years old, she is retired and raised her children in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Volunteer A moved to the Upper Valley around 2004 and has been a racial justice activist since 2015.
 - Volunteer A first became a court observer with WISE because her daughter is very active in the gender-based violence movement. Her daughter is also currently a WISE volunteer advocate.
- On Court Observer Trainings
 - Volunteer A believes that she was in the very first or second training class, and signed up because it aligned with her interests from her previous career as a litigation paralegal in Cleveland for two decades. She feels that WISE did a good job in her training, and recalls that it included a discussion of the court procedures and processes.
- On Being a Court Observer
 - Volunteer A believes that the main objective of the Court Observer Program is to show support for the plaintiff/survivor as a passive, quiet presence. She also believes that court observers provide an important presence for the judge because they act as a representative of the general public and may remind a judge to be a little more conscious in their decisions. Volunteer A believes that very little can come up on her Monday mornings that can take priority over her observing at court.
 - Volunteer A loves observing the court process, and is passionate about learning about legal injustices. She finds the different ways each judge handles various parties and attorneys particularly fascinating. One of her most salient observations has been the stark contrast she sees between individuals who can afford an attorney and those who cannot. Volunteer A mentions that because these hearings are civil procedures and not criminal procedures, those who cannot afford attorneys are not granted the option of being appointed one. Volunteer A believes that it is amazing to find judges—for example, Superior Judge Elizabeth Mann—who are able to focus on the true issues at hand in relation to gender-based violence. Volunteer A believes that judges are not always patient enough to be caring in their insights.
- On New/Potential Court Observers
 - Volunteer A is unsure exactly why court observers who receive training continuously fail to attend hearings, but understands that everybody attends the initial training for different reasons. She feels that a lot of people who come into the courtroom do not have the tools to understand what exactly is happening. She wonders if this lack of engagement might be because being a court observer is generally passive experience, and may not align with a trainee's vision of active involvement. While all cases handled on Monday mornings involve restraining orders, not all cases are related to gender-based violence—perhaps this deters the interest of new court observers. Volunteer A also understands that it can be frustrating attending court hearings because there are so many things you wish

you could change, yet individuals are typically told to adopt a ‘that’s just the way the court is’ mentality. Because Volunteer A used to work in the legal system, she guesses that she might be more accepting of standard court processes than others.

- Concluding Thoughts/Miscellaneous
 - Volunteer A knows that her seven granddaughters are growing up in this world, and hopes that people will be increasingly ready to focus on what is going on behind closed doors. She is proud to be able to say that her granddaughters are independent, are not cowed on or controlled by anybody else, and all have voices which strive to be heard.
 - Volunteer A has witnessed an emerging anger in men that she keeps seeing more and more in a wide variety of contexts. For example, on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m., Volunteer A and her friend often hold ‘Black Lives Matter’ signs on the busy street by Hartford Town Mall. She recalls that on the most recent Wednesday, an especially angry man approached and harassed the pair so aggressively that the interaction almost felt physical. Although Volunteer A has never felt any similar sense of fear in a courtroom, she knows that this anger and fear is universal, and believes it is important for her to be able to find a way to come to peace with these challenging and upsetting concepts.

Appendix G. Volunteer B Interview Notes

- General Background
 - Volunteer B is a retired administrator of the Dartmouth College English Department. She lives in Lebanon, and was instrumental in the inception of the WISE Court Observer Program. Volunteer B discovered WISE through the Upper Valley's master Listserv, and was drawn to it because she thought it would be the most interesting compared to other organizations. As of now, she has been a WISE Court Observer for around 3-4 years. On a typical Monday, Volunteer B arrives at the courthouse before 9:00 a.m., and is usually out by 11:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. Volunteer B is also a volunteer at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) where she pushes around the wheelchairs of patients.
- On Court Observer Trainings
 - Volunteer B recalls that her court observer training involved the sociological and psychological aspects of what might occur during court hearings. After her training, Volunteer B recalls that she was not sure what to expect, but thought that perhaps the cases might entail similar narratives in which an innocent female victim is unfairly harmed time after time. However, when Volunteer B began to attend court hearings, she quickly discovered that cases are actually quite varied, and feels that her training did not sufficiently prepare her for this realization. For example, the first case she observed involved two brothers who had severely beaten each other up. Over time, Volunteer B remembers wanting instructions regarding whether or not she should disregard cases that do not involve gender-based violence.
 - Volunteer B feels that WISE holds on tightly to the narrative that the women in cases are always telling the truth. While Volunteer B does not intend to be cynical or callous, she knows that it is in our human nature to lie and exaggerate—and women are no less human than men are. Having said this, over her years of work, Volunteer B has observed that choosing to lean towards a woman's side of the story tends to be WISE's default setting. Volunteer B hopes that in the future, WISE will consider including a discussion of this topic in court observer trainings or general meetings.
- On Being a Court Observer
 - Volunteer B believes that while Court Observing is a noble act of support for plaintiffs, it's predominant purpose is data collection via note-taking in hopes of helping fuel a greater change. Her hope is that if WISE is able to gather enough data, they might be able to use the information in a more formal discussion with people in power. Volunteer B mainly uses the court observer paper form provided by WISE to record information. Although she believes that the form is not comprehensive, she knows that it is under continuous work. Volunteer B believes that one of the current form's greatest weaknesses is that it fosters a low sense of inter-reader reliability and consistency.
 - Volunteer B graduated university with a Sociology degree, and so she is fascinated by what she is able to witness in the courtroom. She is particularly interested in broader sociological questions which involve generational and class

aspects. For example, she has noticed that hardly anybody in these courtrooms wear suits. Volunteer B guesses that this is most likely due to the fact that those with money find ways to settle their matters away from the courtroom and outside of the public eye.

- Volunteer B recalls that one week prior, she observed a case in which the plaintiff played an audio tape recording of a fight between her and her boyfriend. The tape exhibited the woman's boyfriend violently ripping away a bathroom door while their baby could be heard wailing in the background. This image continuously comes to the fore of Volunteer B's mind because it serves as a reminder that, despite her empathy for gender-based violence victims, she has never truly been a part of their world before. Combined with her time spent volunteering at the DHMC, Volunteer B is frequently reminded of how grateful she is for her own life experiences and her own husband.
- Volunteer B strays away from observing hearings in Vermont because the courts there are less clear about which cases will be heard on which days. Additionally, Volunteer B mentions that in Vermont individuals must pass through gun detectors, and her artificial hip often triggers the alarm. However, after several visits, she has become familiar with the court employees and the security guards. Volunteer B finds it difficult to hear the judge because it sounds like the judges frequently mumble, making it challenging to hear the names of the various plaintiffs and defendants. For Volunteer B, the only reliable source where she can find these names are on a paper posted outside of the courthouse prior to the hearings.
- Volunteer B finds that one of her greatest frustrations is when a judge fails to properly and thoroughly explain procedures to plaintiffs and defendants who may not properly understand what is happening. She believes that the differences in how well judges are able to communicate with the parties involved presents a large disservice. Volunteer B has also noted a big difference in how different judges handle firearm possession. For example, she has witnessed a case in which a potentially violent defendant possessed a gun, and the judge instructed the gun to be given to the defendant's parents throughout the duration of their sentence for safekeeping.
- On New/Potential Court Observers
 - Volunteer B has noticed that very few trained court observers show up to court hearings. She rarely sees any new faces, and is unsure of what the exact problem might be. In the past, she has seen court observers who visit once, and have never returned since. Volunteer B assumes that this might be a result of the individual finding the experiencing boring or unengaging.

Appendix H. Volunteer C Interview Notes

- General Background
 - Started as a court observer as she was approaching retirement and looking for something to do. Was aware of WISE for a long time and had been a donor. Had an admiration for the group, but no real contact. Saw a notice on their website for court observers. Always enjoyed the legal side of things and so thought the court observer role was really neat. Went to the training which had the goal of familiarizing with the various court procedures. Has been involved with the program for three years. Led to other involvements with WISE. Believed that she should get more involved. She now is also a WISE advocate and did the longer training to be able to do that. This was close to when she started as a court observer. She wanted to do more.
 - Main role in WISE is as an office volunteer. Highlighted crisis hotline but was not something that she felt comfortable doing. So instead, she was offered to work in the office. Loves the people that work at WISE and loves her role. Answers the phone and other duties around the office.
- On Court Observer Trainings
 - Training was pretty basic. Felt that it was intimidating at first since she had never spent much time in a courtroom. Also intimidating because the things you are hearing are very serious things about the people involved. Observing and recording about the demeanor of the judges seemed intimidating. Believes that the people that conducted the training did a really good job after she has now been in the courtroom. Hard to understand until you experience.
 - What would she add? There is nothing I would add to the initial training. Important that there is follow-up after. Likes that usually after a training, there is a quarterly meeting. Hard to ask questions at the beginning.
- On Being a Court Observer
 - Hearings are mostly in White River Junction. You can see the schedule online. Advocates help throughout the process.
 - Keeps going back because she believes in it. To hear their stories and so they are not alone. Believes being an advocate is more fulfilling than observers. Survivors need support so she sees this as still very important. Even just a presence can make people feel better.
 - Feedback forms. Has added a lot in the past year. Added questions primarily about the judges and looking to know how they are doing. Nate is the volunteer at WISE who takes the reports and adds them to the spreadsheet. Allows for WISE to find patterns. Has room on the form for comments as well. Gives court observers hope that they can see possibility for change.
- On New/Potential Court Observers
 - Quarterly Meetings. Catch up to discuss what court observers have seen. Discuss what is new in the courts on how they handle hearings. Talk about how different judges handle things. There is follow up so it's not just the training. Really important because it is difficult to know what to expect until in courtroom so need to debrief after. None of the hearings are the same so every time you go to court

you see something new. Enough differences that she suggests people to go more than once.

- Difficult part is getting people to stay. Difficult for people to appreciate the benefit of what they are doing. Usually the advocates in court room try to point out that court observers are there. Some survivors don't know which can be difficult. Scary for survivors to be in a courtroom and to be alone and if you don't know what to expect. court observers can make you feel less alone and that they are taking you seriously even when others do not. Difficult for observers to remember that because there is no interaction. Observers have no contact. That is why Volunteer C decided to get more involved.

Appendix I. WISE Staff A Interview Notes

- General Background
 - WISE Staff A lived in the Upper Valley for 20 years. Worked for many other nonprofits. Two years ago, WISE Staff A was looking for a change in career and had always loved the idea of working for WISE. Saw a role at WISE that appealed to WISE Staff A and so she applied.
 - Her role is being program operations coordinator. Her primary role is to make sure the crisis line is staffed 24/7. This means having employees staffing during the day and volunteers who staff overnight. She is involved with the full process of recruiting and training the volunteers. Then, she also works with the volunteers from the court observers and ambassadors' program. Writing grant reports and working with the data.
 - WISE Staff A loves working at WISE. She notes that the most important thing that motivates her to continue working at WISE is the people. She loves working with the supporters, advocates, volunteers, and survivors. Also, every day is unique.
- On Court Observer Trainings
 - Believes the program is a great opportunity for lots of reasons. Thinks that the program is a simple volunteer opportunity in terms of commitment. Watching provides a way to let the survivor know there is someone there for them and let the perpetrator know people are watching. Judicial system knows community is paying attention. The program is very flexible which doesn't work for everyone. If you can come, show up. Doesn't work for people who need structure. Grass roots program to allow for community support. Hopefully it can grow. Great way for people to learn about Wise does. Ends up being an outreach program where people then ultimately become more involved with WISE.
 - Doesn't know specifically what she would do to change the trainings, but she would like to have regular court observers come to the training to help explain the effect that they can have.
 - No thoughts on Court Observer trainings. She says the one thing she would work to do is have people commit to a certain week and then she could greet them, but she worries if they miss that meeting they will feel that they have failed the program and not want to continue.
- On New/Potential Court Observers
 - New court observers can then work on getting training for other volunteer opportunities. Court observers wonder whether they can call the courts in Lebanon to find out what cases are coming up since there are not online public listings.
 - She didn't say that there was an exact amount of people that came to each court hearing and really highlighted the lowkey nature of the work. She stressed that she didn't want people to feel like they had messed up if they are unable to make it to court on any given day.
- Concluding Thoughts/Miscellaneous

- Quarterly meetings help touch base with the observers. Hard for volunteers to understand that being there for people is enough and all that they can do with the training that they have. This is a problem the volunteers have in general; they want to fix things including the crisis lines volunteers. They want to solve the problems for the survivors, but that is not beneficial. It is more important to support with a listening ear. Being there for someone when no one else is there is HUGE. How the courts are designed, perpetrators sit very close to the survivors. Survivors can be really scared to have a perpetrator so close especially after not seeing them for a while. Proving the survivor's significance and that what she/he says really does matter. Repeating that all the time is important.
- WISE Staff A noted that this was because the court observers visiting from our class were late and that that was a very bad look and she was upset with it. She noted that court observers need to be early and follow the rules of court. I apologized profusely for our group.
- The Court Observer form is something that WISE Staff A are continually working on. They are delving into this at quarterly meetings. They built the initial form off of the Burgundy Book's suggestions for family court. Thinks that the sheet could be more applicable to WISE and the Court Observer Program. They are working to understand the interpretations of open ended questions and to ensure that the interpretations are the same.
- WISE Staff A believes the quarterly meetings are good. They are working to improve them by having a specific goal for each meeting and to discuss specific things. They have guest speakers sometimes and are working to consistently have an agenda. WISE Staff A believes a quarterly meeting it is definitely enough.

Appendix J. Interview Guide for Volunteer D [Morgan]

Hi! My name is Morgan, and I am interviewing you for my sociology class with Prof. Rogers, where we are working with WISE to improve their Court Observer Program. First of all, thank you so much for agreeing to participate in the interview. Before we start, would it be okay if parts of your interview are included in the final research report given to WISE? Would you like to be anonymous and referred to with a pseudonym? Also, would it be okay for me to audio record the interview? Lastly, please feel free to skip any questions you don't feel like answering.

Volunteer Motivation

To begin, I'd like to start with a more general conversation about how you got involved with WISE and how this might have been influenced by your personal background/experiences.

1. How did you first hear about WISE?
2. Why did you choose to volunteer with WISE?
3. How did you first hear about the Court Observer Program?
4. Why did you choose the Court Observer Program specifically?
5. What were your expectations/hopes from the volunteering experience?

Court Observer Program Training

1. When was the training session you attended?
2. How did you decide to attend the training?
 - a. What motivated you to more tangibly engage/participate?
3. What were your general thoughts about the training?
 - a. Pros?
 - b. Cons?
4. How did the training affect your expectations/views of the program itself?
 - a. Can you tell me more about that?
5. How did the training affect your impression of WISE more generally?

Volunteer Retention & Engagement

I know you had previously mentioned that you attended the training but didn't actually go to court hearings. I was wanting to hear more about that because it's something WISE noted as a pretty common pattern they would like to better understand.

1. What were the barriers to further participating in the Court Observer Program and attending the court hearings?
 - a. Is there anything else?
 - b. What are some barriers that might be discouraging other volunteers?
2. Is there anything WISE could do to encourage volunteers to attend the hearings after the training?
3. Did you volunteer with a different organization instead? What influenced that decision?
4. Are there any barriers that might be preventing people from volunteering with WISE in general?
 - a. Can you tell me more about that?
 - b. What could WISE do to address/resolve those barriers?

Local Context

1. Do you think any of those barriers are more generally related/tied to the context of the Upper Valley?
2. How long have you been living in the Upper Valley?
3. How would you describe the specific community context?
 - a. Is there anything else unique to the Upper Valley that a non-resident wouldn't know?
4. Is there anything specific to the Upper Valley community that might influence volunteering/community organizing?
5. How could WISE incorporate those specific characteristics in its revision of the Court Observer Program?

Final Wrap-up

Thank you so much for all of your really insightful responses! Before we wrap-up and conclude this interview, I was wondering...

1. Do you have any other thoughts on how WISE could improve the Court Observer Program?
2. Is there anything else you would like to add that I didn't explicitly ask about?

Appendix K. Volunteer D Interview Notes [Morgan]

Field Notes

- Interview took place November 15, 2019 from 3:49 P.M. to 4:27 P.M.
- Interview was held in her office before she left to go back home.
- Although the office is shared with other co-workers, it was just us two in the room.
- The fluorescent ceiling lights are off. There is only dim, warm, yellow light from a lamp in a corner of the room that is directly behind me.
- Both the interviewee and environment feel calm and relaxed.
- Interviewee asked to be referred to in the report given to WISE with a pseudonym because she frequently collaborates with WISE in her current job.

Volunteer Motivation:

- First was involved with MAV
- Through MAV was introduced to WISE
- Got involved with WISE through Ambassadors Program, then Court Observer Program, and ended with the Advocate Program (most demanding and most rigorous training)
- Was motivated because of personal background/experiences and because she wanted to be better informed/equipped
- Being an Advocate was more satisfying than her involvement in the Court Observer Program

Court Observer Program Training:

- Doesn't remember very much from the training
- Felt it gave a brief overview, but still did not adequately prepare volunteers

Barriers to Attending Court Hearings:

- Intimidated/confused because inadequate training. Felt anxious because she didn't know what to wear, what room to go into, where to sit, etc.
- Felt like she wouldn't be able to fulfill her role in supporting survivors
- Suggested a more direct introduction/training that would take volunteers to the courthouse and very literally/specifically walk them through
- Fear of disappointment
- Still gets emails about the Court Observer Program and feels guilty every time she reads one
- Suggested WISE sending an email to inactive court volunteers "just being honest and acknowledging" that they haven't been coming out to the hearings
- Agreed that accountability would be nice, but also agreed with Stacey's opinion that a strength of the program is its low responsibility/low barriers to entry

Upper Valley Local Context:

- Divided into Dartmouth and non-Dartmouth
- Associated/subsequent socioeconomic disparities
- Noticed the disparity between volunteers and who they were serving, rather than among the volunteers themselves
- A more rigorous training that made her feel more prepared to actually support survivors is what made being a WISE Advocate more rewarding
- But still felt insecurities/doubts of what she was actually able to do for survivors

- Felt especially helpless and inadequate when met with systemic/structural problems that were beyond her scope
- Also felt being an Advocate was emotionally exhausting/draining
- Wished there was more of “a space to connect with other Advocates” to process, vent, empathize with challenges associated with the job, etc.
- Would want WISE Staff present at meetings because more authority, knowledge, and experience to answer their questions
- The lack of meetings is why she never thought of WISE as a place for community
- The most prevalent source of division in the WISE office was age
- Felt like she was definitely the youngest
- Again, referenced feelings of inadequacy and inexperience that were also evoked by her young age
- Sometimes source of tension because older volunteers were not as progressive and would say problematic things during meetings
 - But were handled well when immediately talked through by WISE to prevent tension from intensifying and becoming divisive

Ideas and Questions (MN, PN, TN)

- MN: We sat at a small table directly across from each other. I used my laptop and Sonocent (audio notetaking software) to record the interview and take very minimal notes to later identify what question was being answered during a particular time in the audio. I angled my laptop to my right, so there wasn't a barrier directly between me and the interviewee.
- PN: Interviewee was an acquaintance when we were both Dartmouth undergraduate students. We met through a WGSS class, where we were always discussion partners. We got much closer by working together. After she graduated, she started a job as my supervisor. Our work environment is very relaxed, so we have a friendly rather than hierarchical, formal relationship.
- PN: Because I know the interviewee quite well, it felt more like a conversation than an interview. I definitely did not feel as filtered or formal (perhaps professional) as I might have in a more conventional interviewer role with a stranger.
- PN: Due to our relationship, I used more casual, colloquial language and tone (e.g., “kinda,” “that’s crazy”). I also think my reflective listening responses were less filtered and thus more disjointed/ramble-y than I would've liked.
- PN: On the other hand, it probably made the interviewee feel more comfortable and thus more inclined to speak honestly.
- MN: Next time, I should be more mindful of keeping my follow-up responses briefer.
- MN: The questions I thought of spontaneously were a bit too guided (i.e., not open-ended, reflected my personal bias/thoughts).
- TN: Interviewee spoke about having a strong intrinsic motivation for volunteering. This is also evident in her previous and continued involvement with sexual violence prevention and response work. She also mentioned extrinsic motivation, like wanting to be equipped with the hard skills that would allow her to make more tangible/actionable contributions against sexual violence.

- TN: Echoed sentiments of a regular volunteer, who also said that being an Advocate is more rewarding than being a court observer
- TN: The insufficiency of the trainings was mentioned by other regular volunteers. They said their actual experience at the hearing was not what they had expected after the training. They acknowledged that the training was as thorough and informative as WISE could have made it, but the nature of the court system is what makes actual experience the best teacher.
- TN: A possible solution could be to mobilize the regular court observers as a direct point of contact/“welcoming group” for newer volunteers so new volunteers aren’t diving into the actual experience head first. This could help new volunteers feel reassured by having an established contact to ask questions and receive immediate guidance. It is also less intimidating to enter a space as a group.
- TN: Her frustration with problems rooted in larger systemic inequalities is similar to a volunteer who commented that a lack of engagement could be the result of people feeling disheartened by a court system that is clearly broken but slow/resistant to change.
- TN: Her desire for a meeting space with other Advocates would support the insights from interviews with regular volunteers that speak to the importance of the Quarterly Meetings.
- TN: If people seek community in volunteer experiences, this motivation could be met by more frequent meetings.
- TN: The Quarterly Meetings could be a better place to start for newer volunteers, where they could feel more connected to a community before attending a hearing and could hear more about the actual experience to have a better understanding of what to expect.
- TN: I wonder if Dartmouth campus/student groups leave community organizations as a space for non-Dartmouth, Upper Valley residents. Consequently, I wonder if seeking community would be an even more salient motivation for volunteering in this specific local context.
- TN: I wonder if this discourages younger volunteers from coming back/becoming more involved with WISE.
- TN: I wonder how age shapes others’ perceptions of the work WISE is doing more generally and of the Court Observer Program more specifically where age is even more salient.

Appendix L. Volunteer D Interview Transcription

Interviewer: So first just to kinda like start with like the more generic kind of stuff, um, how did you first hear about WISE and what, um, I guess, what motivated you to start volunteering with WISE in the first place?

Volunteer D: Yeah, how did I first hear about WISE? Um, I was in MAV, so I'm guessing I probably would have heard about WISE through MAV. Um, and then I, um, I like really, I thought that WISE was just like an awesome organization. I loved WISE. So I think my junior, senior year, um, I got involved with WISE, um, as like, I think they called it the ambassador or something like that. I was just volunteering, um, went through like their most basic training. Um, and then I, uh, really wanted to do advocacy. So I went through their advocacy training, um, and was an advocate for awhile. And I had heard about the court observer program and I was just like so in love with all of the work that WISE was doing, that I wanted to be involved in literally any way possible. So after I did the first few trainings, like then, I think I then went through the court observer training.

Interviewer: Mmm. Okay. And was there anything like specifically about the court observer program that like kind of drew you in or was interesting to you?

Volunteer D: Yeah, I think that, um, doing, doing advocacy, you see, um, sort of like the front end with a lot of that, like you see, um, like we do help people apply for like protective orders, um, and things like that. And, but I had never seen like the actual, like court process. Um, and so I think my interest was like A. Um, wanting to support survivors, um, and B., Uh, like wanting to see what that process actually looked like and understand it a little bit more.

Interviewer: Okay. Um, what were your first thoughts like coming into WISE just in general as an organization? And like what were your kind of like expectations or wants out of the volunteering experience?

Volunteer D: Interesting question. Um, I, I think that when I got involved with WISE, I was at a time where I like didn't know a ton about, um, sexual violence prevention or response work. Um, and so my initial impressions, um, I remember just feeling like really, really impressed with WISE. Um, like they, um, they felt like, especially coming from, uh, you know, kind of an environment where I don't think people are always super supportive of the work, um, or of like progressive ideals in general. It was, I loved going to WISE for training cause it felt like getting to sit amongst like brilliant, you know, mostly women, um, who shared similar values. Um, so I think, uh, I was just like really happy to finally have that space, I think. Um, and then in terms of what I wanted, I think that I was like, like I said, I was just in a place where I just really didn't know a lot. Um, and was just kind of looking for like whatever kind of information I could get from them.

Interviewer: I don't know if I, I'm hearing this correctly, but you first were part of MAV and then that's how you were kind of introduced to WISE. Yeah. Um, was there anything like, I guess different between like MAV and WISE that like kind of encouraged you to, um, I guess like seek out WISE in addition to MAV?

Volunteer D: Yeah, I think that it was, um, I think seeking out WISE mostly happened because I wanted to do as much as I possibly could. Um, uh, and I think I, I think that I was looking for more like of that expertise. Like MAVs just didn't have, um, cause they're students and not professionals. Um, and so the biggest difference for me with WISE was like getting to actually work with professionals who like do this work every day, um, and, and actually like have those advocacy skills and have that like greater understanding of, um, power based violence.

Interviewer: So would you kind of like describe, um, like your motivation as a combination of like intrinsic beliefs that kind of like draw you to the greater purpose and then also accommodation, kind of like more extremes and things like the kind of like hard skills that allow you to carry out that work in purpose? Yeah, for

sure. Okay. Um, so I guess now transitioning to the kind of like core of court observer program and the training, I know that it was a while back. Um, do you know about like when you did the training? Like about what year?

Volunteer D: It would've been 2017. Okay. I think probably would have been like the winter of 2017.

Interviewer: Okay. Um, so I, I'm not gonna ask like super detailed or like specific questions about it, but, um, if you just like, have any general impressions that come to mind, like pros, cons. Um,

Volunteer D: Yeah, I've been like racking my brain since, I don't know, like I can remember the other two trainings, but I have like literally no recollection of this training. And I don't know why. The only thing I remember is they have those, like I'm listening buttons and I remember being like, I love that. I want one. And that's literally all.

Interviewer: Okay. That's totally cool. Um, when you were like kind of, um, I guess like first hearing about the court observer program, like what aspect of it spoke out to you? Cause I know like different volunteers tend to like speak to different parts of the program; some find like the greatest, I guess like purpose in participating in just like the kind of silent solidarity and support and just physically being there in the courtroom, whereas other people are more interested in like collecting the data and like feedback to the court system. So I'm kind of like interested in what appealed to you?

Volunteer D: I think more um, just being a support person, I think, um, it just felt like a very, like a really, really simple way, um, to show people that I cared essentially.

Interviewer: And do you think that is kind of how the program should stay in terms of that? Like kind of like low barrier? Um, like more easy entrance into WISE cause I know that they are like different approaches that we're thinking of in terms of like which way the program should be kinda like re envisioned. Um, and then some people in WISE or like more like I guess considering adding more structure and stuff, whereas other people were like, no, we do that and it's going to like take away from like this like unique aspect of like the level of involvement that this program requires? So I was wondering what you thought about like who the program is kind of like catered for?

Volunteer D: Yeah. I, I think that it felt to me, um, or like, I guess that I, I can see both sides of that because I think that it was like nice to have something that was like, it didn't really require a lot of time or skill in anyway. And it really just to me when I, like when I joined, it felt like just like being there for someone, um, and like be in like that solidarity. Um, but I can also see how it might, like if there had been a little bit more structure, um, I probably would have been more apt to like be involved in it cause it would've felt like there was more of an expectation. Yeah. Um, um, and I guess maybe with a little bit more structure would there could have been a little bit more guidance, which might have been helpful. Um, yeah, but I know that it can also be tricky because court is that like weird time and people are working or in class or whatever.

Interviewer: Yeah, definitely. Cause I think one big thing WISE trying to figure out is like there are a lot of people who will come to the trainings, then they still maybe just like four or five people who are coming to the court hearings. And that group is like entirely just like retired folks who are able to have that more like flexibility with time and scheduling. Um, so WISE isn't sure like should we try to increase that like feeling of like responsibility and like certification. Um, so I wondering if you could speak a little bit more to like what might've encouraged you to like, come to the hearings and like more specifically like what types of structure, like what types of guidance would have been helpful?

Volunteer D: I think the main thing for me is I found it kind of confusing like... from what I understood and, maybe this is not correct, but it sort of seemed like the timings of when like things were going to going to happen was not like most clear. And so it was like you show up at this time, but it might not happen until this time. Um, and so I always felt a little confused about like, well, when am I supposed to be there? And like, how does that work? And so I actually think probably I can imagine that when I started, um, I probably had some of that like anxiety around, like I don't, I don't really know where to go. Like, um, I don't know what to do when I get there. I'm like, I don't know what time these things start and how that timing all works. Um, so I think probably at the start of it, it was just like a confusion for me. Um, and so getting a little bit more clarity around like when are these trials happening? Um, what time am I supposed to arrive? Like, what time can I go in? Um, like what is expected of me and in terms of logistics stuff like that. Um, and then I, I also like vaguely remember that it was sort of like, I know that there are some, cause I know that we sometimes look at emails of like, "Oh, this trial was happening." Um, but then there are others where it's kind of like it happens weekly. Um, and so again, just like a little bit more communication around like, okay, this is the day and time. Um, and just like, I think more details on the logistics I think would've been helpful and would have made me more apt to be like, "okay, like Tuesday at nine, like, I don't have class then, I'll like, run over."

Interviewer: Hmm, okay. Um, and in terms of like the confusion of like, "I don't know what to do when I get to the court," because I went to hearings. And I also definitely felt that because there was like a really intimidating like metal detector and stuff. And I originally went just straight after class I was wearing like leggings and hat and like first sign was just like, "no hats allowed". And I was like, "man, I'm like, I have no idea what's going on," so I definitely relate to that. Do you think there are like some aspects of that that could be addressed through like a more like clear training or do you think a good possible solution would be more along the lines of like creating groups to go in to kind of ease that a little bit?

Volunteer D: I like love both of those ideas. Like when we do advocacy training, like we go to the hospital and you like walk through the emergency department. Um, and so something like that, like if they have the ability to like go to the court with you and show you like, "okay, this is the room that you would go in and this is how you enter." And things like that. Like that could have been helpful. Um, but then also I think like what you're saying, if I had known like, "okay, there's going to be a group of people waiting, you know, at this place at this time" I would have been so much more apt to go cause it just would have felt more for me.

Interviewer: Yeah, definitely. Um, so I think one thing that just like immediately came to mind was kind of like mobilizing that like regular group of court volunteers kind of act as that like welcoming committee to kind of be there for the newer members? Um, cause I know normally like the WISE advocates, they're like really busy like meeting, um, and doing like counsel with the survivor. Cause I know that one concern that was like on the WISE side of things is that if people fail to go after having this kind of form of accountability, then that would deter them from coming back again cause they would have felt like be disappointed WISE maybe? Um, so I was wondering if that was something that you also maybe agreed with or felt?

Volunteer D: Yeah I think probably, I sort of remember, I still get the court order emails and it still makes me feel guilty. And I think, I think that like after I'd been a court observer for like a few months and hadn't really gone to any, um, then I had that feeling of like, well, I can't go now because I've already dropped the ball and it would just make me feel guilty and it'd be awkward and blah, blah, blah. Um, so yeah. So I think in that sense, um, like making, yeah, I think that if it was an environment where it was like, Hey, there are going to be people waiting, you're welcome to join. Like whenever you can. Nothing wrong with not joining, if you can't, um, like it would have made it felt more comfortable and like would have reduced those feelings of guilt I think.

Interviewer: Mhmm so when you like after the training then like was there that like feeling of like being expected to come every week or did it feel like a little bit more like chill?

Volunteer D: Yeah, I think it felt more flexible. Um, but I think that I joined because it felt flexible. Um, and yeah, because, yeah, I guess I, yeah, I think it felt like, um, low pressure. Like you don't have to come every single time like come when it works for your schedule. Um, but still like knowing like that I'd had never gone and still I've never gone. Um, I think still creates like those feelings of guilt anyway.

Interviewer: Definitely. I definitely feel that, um, you think that there's anything WISE could do to maybe like help resolve those feelings? Like, cause I'm, there are like definitely like a big group of people who are very much like a similar position where they like had gone to the trainings and then like weren't able to because like life is busy and crazy. And then that like guilt is kind of like a, like an internal barrier. Um, do you think there's something WISE can do to maybe address that?

Volunteer D: I feel like just being open about it. Um, and just being like, acknowledging, I think that even if WISE were to sort of like reinvent the program, um, being like, "you know, if you've done this training forever ago and, you know, maybe you haven't gone to as many as you've like, like, no, it's totally okay. Like you're always welcome to join." So I think just being transparent about, you know, like even if you, you know, life happened and you haven't had the time, um, to commit up until now. Like you still can whenever you're available, it's totally fine.

Interviewer: Mhmm ok. And I was wondering if there were any like, other barriers that like prevented you from like really participating in like going to the hearings and stuff? Um, I know you mentioned like the weird timing of it and stuff...are there are any other barriers that come to mind?

Volunteer D: Mm. I think, I think it was just the weird timing and not really knowing what I was doing. And I think probably just like those like anxious feelings of like, I don't know where to go when I go. Like, what door do I go into? And then when I go in the door, then where do I go? And this was just like all of those feelings of like, I don't know what's going to happen. I don't really know what I'm supposed to do, so I'm just gonna not do it.

Interviewer: Hmm. Okay. Um, and I was wondering if after like an involvement with WISE, if you like, chose to volunteer with like a different organization or like, um, where that like, I guess like, um, initial motivation, like how that was expressed instead, maybe?

Volunteer D: Um, I, um, let's see. I stayed involved with WISE for awhile as an advocate. Um, and then I moved out of the service area and so I started doing advocacy for the agency that like, yeah, my family service area. Um, but I think, um, like the main thing for me in terms of like switching my energies perhaps, is just like more of an interest in prevention than response or advocacy.

Interviewer: Okay. Um, and can you speak a little bit more about your experience with like the WISE advocate role? Um, in terms of like, if you felt that that was maybe like more or less fulfilling than a court observer role in terms of like the, I guess, interaction with survivors maybe? Cause I know that that's something that's been mentioned before.

Volunteer D: Yeah. I, yeah, I definitely felt like it was more fulfilling in the sense that I felt like I was like doing more. Um, uh, I like contributing more and being more helpful. Um, at the same time I found being an advocate extremely stressful. Um, primarily because I always felt like the way that they set up their training, it's like you got a certain amount of training and it's kind of like you get thrown into it a little bit and you always have a backup person, so it's not like you're totally on your own. Um, but I did often feel like I'm, I'm not like your problem is so important that like I'm not the person who should be dealing with it. Like I don't have the skills to be giving you the help that you really need and deserve. Um, and then felt a little bit like

there were always, when I was an advocate, there were always, things where like, you'd hit a wall and it was like, I can't help you anymore. And like thinking about, um, like conversations I'd have, uh, with people who were like in domestic violence situations and like knew they needed to leave, um, but just didn't have the money to do so, like didn't have, and especially in the Upper Valley, there's no affordable housing. Um, and so I think that it felt more fulfilling in the sense that I was doing more, but it also felt so overwhelming, um, that even if I hadn't moved out in the service area, I probably would have stopped doing it.

Interviewer: Hmm so about how long were you an advocate for then?

Volunteer D: Um, from it was like from, uh, fall of 2017, um, until I graduated.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. Okay. Um, and then also I was wondering if there were any, um, I guess like specific aspects of how the advocate program is structured, that kind of like, I guess lent itself to those feelings of like satisfaction or fulfillment? Um, whether it's like more accountability, feedback, or like stuff like that maybe?

Volunteer D: Um, can you say that again?

Interviewer: Um, I guess like the way that the program is structured that maybe might have lent itself to like create more feelings of like satisfaction maybe or like fulfillment or like a sense of like doing something?

Volunteer D: One thing that, I don't know if WISE dunno, like legally could do anything about this, but um, there was always like, it's like you talk to someone and then like you never talked to them again. Um, and so like, you know, if I like if I had taken a caller, um, and then WISE has worked with them and then they'd like left a DV situation and we're doing well or something like that would would've been like really awesome to know. Um, and to like to have a more understanding of like, what is happening with this person after me. I don't know if WISE can really do that. Um, and then maybe just like creating more space. Um, we did have, I remember having meetings with other advocates, but maybe like more frequently or like some other way to connect with other advocates more frequently to talk about like your successes and your struggles. I think that could have been really helpful.

Interviewer: About how frequently do you think like you would have liked to have those meetings?

Volunteer D: Hmm. Like maybe, um, a few times a month, biweekly or even some kind of like weekly, well, I guess you're not on call, you're only on call. So maybe like once or twice a month. Um, or maybe even some kind of space outside of that of like maybe it's not meetings, maybe it's like connecting with someone over the phone or something like that. Um, or even having the opportunity to get to talk through calls, um, with, uh, like some, uh, WISE staff person, um, like after the fact could have been helpful.

Interviewer: Yeah. Do you think like the, if the pathway was to have like follow up with WISE staff, would you have wanted that to be maybe like more engaged? Like with the day of call, like afterwards, after like your shift or something that's more of like a biweekly check-in?

Volunteer D: Um, I think, I think it would've been really helpful if like, um, you know, if I'm on call on like a Friday or a Monday, um, that like in that following day, that Tuesday, um, or like if you're on a weekend shift to have a check in that Monday. Um, and I know...I want to say they might have done that or something similar to that. Um, but I think it felt more to me of like, you know, did this get handled, is there anything else we need to do? Okay. That's it. Um, and I would have wanted more of like, like, let's talk through like what I struggled with like what I could've said in this hard situation or things like that. So I think like, pretty, um, pretty immediately so that it still feels like fresh.

Interviewer: Mmm. Okay. And do you think, um, like having that space with other advocates, would that be more to address like the hard skills aspect of it? Like, what do you guys do in this situation? Or would it be more for that kind of space for like emotional processing? Because like you mentioned, it was very exhausting.

Volunteer D: Um, I think both. I think, um, having that space for emotional processing is always really helpful. Um, and I think that I just so often felt like lost in like, I don't really know if what I did was helpful. So some of that stuff.

Interviewer: Yeah. Would you think that like, um, in terms of having a meeting with other advocates, would you like a WISE staff to be there as well or do you think that would kind of prevent people from sharing as openly?

Volunteer D: Um, no, I think that would have been really helpful. I think, um, I think in terms of, uh, like a trust thing, view of like, um, you know, WISE staff are the professionals, they really know their stuff and I think I would have trusted them, um, more than I would have trusted other like non-staff advocates.

Interviewer: Okay. Um, in terms of the wanting to meet with other advocates, is there a part of, it's also wanting to just like connect with like other, like-minded people and have that sense of community. Do you think that's an important part as well?

Volunteer D: Mhmm and getting to kind of like a camaraderie of like getting to share similar experiences and talk through them? Yeah.

Interviewer: Um, so I guess kind of transitioning into the next subject of like the idea of community and like what specific aspects of the upper Valley might inform how community feels or like looks a little bit different. Um, so I was wondering, cause you've been living in the upper Valley right since...

Volunteer D: Forever? Pretty much. Well I, yes, no, I grew up like just outside of Upper Valley but went to high school in the Upper Valley, so pretty much.

Interviewer: Okay. So just again, to start like more general. Um, I was wondering like how you would describe like what it's like to be a member of the Upper Valley. Um, and I guess like, how would you describe your community to someone who's maybe like a nonresident, um, who wouldn't know?

Volunteer D: Yeah, that's an awesome question. The Upper Valley to me is interesting in the sense that it feels like sort of, there are two upper valleys. It's like there's the Dartmouth upper Valley and there's the rest of the upper Valley which I'm sure you've heard before. Um, and it does, the upper Valley to me has always felt like Dartmouth is sort of like the bubble at the center, and then everything sort of revolves around Dartmouth. Um, and then there's also this like weird sort of like dynamic of like Hanover and, um, folks associated with Dartmouth being much more wealthy than everyone else in the upper Valley. Um, and so I think it's, it's sort of like, uh, like the way that elitism plays out there it's interesting. Um, and then, you know, sort of like, you know, like the fancy Dartmouth people and then like the poor, like, you know, rural other people. Um, yeah. So that's kind of always been my perception of the upper Valley.

Interviewer: Mmm. Yeah, that's super, super helpful. Did you notice any of those dynamics maybe like playing out in WISE or your experiences in WISE maybe?

Volunteer D: Yeah. let's see, I think that, often...I can see there being a sentiment, uh, that like volunteers tend to be more affiliated with Hanover or Dartmouth. Um, and then the people that you're serving being more of like the rest of the upper Valley. Um, I don't think that that's like a hard distinction now. I think there are

definitely, um, you know, there is definitely a mix, um, in, in terms of the volunteer group. Yeah. I think that I don't know.

Interviewer: Hm. Yeah. Do you think that that maybe like shaped the interactions among volunteers?

Volunteer D: Um. Hmm. I honestly like don't remember. I guess I never really felt like there was like that much interaction among members. Um, and that like anytime that I was in a WISE space, it was like, you know, like you're here for the training, you are here for this. And it was, so I guess I just don't really remember a ton of interaction other than, you know, like what was, um, like required in the training.

Interviewer: Hmm. So even like in the training spaces, like did you maybe feel like a particular tension or like was, is there like a feeling of like animosity maybe or like how would you describe that kind of tension, how it feels, um, in an actual setting?

Volunteer D: I don't know if I remember it playing out in that way. The only thing I can think of is there being tension, um, based on, uh, like your understanding of the issue. Um, so, uh, like vaguely remember a little bit of tension, um, between like people who like really understood, um, uh, like understood the dynamics around the power-based violence and depression in general versus those who really had no understanding of those things. So I think I feel that was more the tension and I can see some overlap there with like, you know, folks who are affiliated with Dartmouth and have higher education, understanding those things where they're folks in Upper Valley, they're probably like maybe having less understanding of those things. Um, so coming into a space where you're like expecting everyone to be like-minded and feeling like, "uh you said something kind of problematic, like what is happening"

Interviewer: How did you all like deal with that like when those moments of tension happened?

Volunteer D: I remember it being, uh, like, um, like I remember having conversations around, um, like being mindful of sort of the intent versus impact. Um, and, and so I think handling those tensions was probably more facilitated by like the staff person running it. Um, but I don't know that I remember anything super specific.

Interviewer: Mmm. Yeah. Um, and I was wondering, um, like you kind of touched upon this earlier in terms of like, um, I guess like the differences between like Dartmouth, like the non-Dartmouth folks. Do you think that kind of plays into how community organizing is structured? Like, do you think almost that like there's a separation between like Dartmouth campus student groups versus like off campus group? Then if off campus you groups almost want to be a space for like non Dartmouth folks?

Volunteer D: Yeah. This is also an interesting question in the sense that like I know that WISE actively tries to separate itself from Dartmouth. Um, and so there's even that tension. Um, yes I think, I think there they have always felt very distinct to me that there's like community organizing that happens in the Dartmouth sphere and then there's community organizing that happens in the upper Valley and they occasionally overlap but not that often. Um, and I think, I think sometimes that gets perpetuated by WISE itself. Maybe don't tell anyone about that?

Interviewer: Definitely. Definitely. Yeah. So do you think that like maybe like a possible, like really salient motivator for volunteers is like wanting that sense of community, like the upper Valley community rather than like Dartmouth upper Valley community?

Volunteer D: Um, I don't know. I don't know that I ever thought about WISE as a space for community. Um, so actually I can see more Dartmouth affiliated folks feeling similarly. Like not really seeing it as a space for

community, whereas upper Valley folks seeing it as a space for community. So maybe there's some like distinction there?

Interviewer: Yeah. Cause I know that one thing that I've been interested in kind of like parsing out maybe or like digging through a little bit more, is like, it kind of feels like some people are going like wanting a sense of community, whereas other are motivated by like, like personal experiences and stuff. Um, and I think it at least in like reviewing the interview so far, like it shows in how they see the court program itself. Um, and so thinking about like how to create different solutions for like those different types of motivation has been something that we're thinking through.

Volunteer D: That's super interesting.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Volunteer D: Yeah. I never, I just really never thought of WISE as like a space for community. And for me, it was like, I just want to learn more and I just want to help. Um, that is super interesting, I think about their um, I think WAVE or something like that and that being more of a space for community? Um, which I think probably why I've been not that interested in it.

Interviewer: Is WAVE separate from WISE or is it a program within WISE?

Volunteer D: It's like, I don't remember what it stands for but it's some acronym. They're like a, I don't know if they still exist anymore, but they were a group, um, that was like. I think it was a WISE group? Um, I know we always met at WISE and uh, it was like, they were like trying to like create change by like causing like some kind of disruption in the upper Valley. So they do, um, like when I was very briefly involved, they did that thing like years ago. I don't know if you were here and remember this, but they put like pink flyers all around campus and that like talked about sexual violence. And then there was like another one where they put balloons all around the upper Valley and when you popped the balloon there was like a long message inside like with more information about sexual violence. So I saw that more as like, um, they were like more of an awareness group. Um, and did kind of more like awareness events or passive programming.

Interviewer: Mm. Okay. That's super interesting. This has been so helpful. Like seriously. So, so helpful. Thank you. Um, I was wondering just to kind of like wrap things up. Like did you have any other things that you maybe like thought would be like helpful that I didn't like specifically address or ask?

Volunteer D: Um, I don't think so.

Interviewer: Okay. Again, thank you so much. It was like so helpful because I feel like you truly like embody like all the different like um, types of like volunteers that I'd come into. This program is like all in one in terms of like upper Valley resident, like Dartmouth and like non Dartmouth. You have like both of those identities and it's just like super, super helpful.

Volunteer D: Awesome.

Interviewer: Actually, I'm sorry, one last question just came to mind! Um, so one thing that I've been thinking a little bit more about, um, has been the fact like the regular group of volunteers. It's like all like made up of like retired like older folks and I was wondering how that kind of shaped your interaction with the court program?

Volunteer D: Yes! I was actually on talk about this. I should've brought this up. Um, one thing that I always felt, when I was, not necessarily the court program, but volunteering for WISE in general, I was like always the youngest person in the room and it made me feel like, um, and it always made me feel insufficient in some way of like, these are people with so much more life experience than me and like their ability to like help out WISE or help out, um, survivors is going to be like so much greater than my ability to do so. Um, and so I think in terms of creating community too, that might be why WISE never really felt like a space for me to have community because everyone was so much older than me. Um, yeah, I think that was my always my most notable tension, um, was just feeling like how I am by far the youngest person in this room.

Interviewer: What's the typical like age demographic of WISE volunteers? Cause I wasn't sure if it was just like the court observer program that's like more retired folks or if it's the majority of the office in general?

Volunteer D: I felt like the majority of volunteers were like older. Um, and you occasionally get Dartmouth students and like, you know some Geisel students, grad students. Um, but I, I think it was like, it was either like folks who, from what I remember, it was either folks who are like D0 and above, um, and have like extra time to dedicate the volunteering or students and that sort of like young professional...Like there was no, I don't really remember many young professionals who volunteered.

Interviewer: Hmm. Um, and there was never any like, explicit, like external kind of like conflict or tension between those two groups. It was more just like that, like internal feeling?

Volunteer D: Yeah. Yeah. Just always feeling like, like a baby and like, I don't know anything comparatively. Yeah, definitely all internal.

Interviewer: Okay. All right. I think that's everything again. Thank you so, so much. This has been so helpful. I felt this was like the last kind of like interview that really tied in all the themes that we were kind of like thinking about. So thank you so much again!

Appendix M. Code for cleaning and analyzing the WISE dataset (in two columns)

```

## WISE data stuff
##
## Gray Christie
## Socy 65
## Judge 7",
## Judge 8", "Judge 9",
## Judge 10"))
demeanor_judge <- na.omit(demeanor_judge)

library(tidyverse)
library(gridExtra)

wise <- read_csv("WISE csv.csv")

## plot responses to demeanor related questions

# get a dataset of just the answers to the demeanor
questions, and name them more manageable things
demeanor <- wise %>%
  select(Date, Court, Judge, Subject, Outcome,
    `Did They Ask About History of Violence?` =
`Judicial/Staff Demeanor [Did the judge ask if there
was a history of domestic violence?]`,
    `Were They Patient?` = `Judicial/Staff
Demeanor [Was the judge patient with the
plaintiff?]`,
    `Did They Reprimand?` = `Judicial/Staff
Demeanor [Did the judge reprimand or show visible
signs of disapproval?]`,
    `Did they Ask about Reconciliation?` =
`Judicial/Staff Demeanor [Did the judge ask
questions about reconciliation?]`,
    `Did They Ask About Unrelated Factors?` =
`Judicial/Staff Demeanor [Did the judge discuss
factors not related to the case?]`,
    `Did They Demonstrate Professionalism?` =
`Judicial/Staff Demeanor [Were the side judges and
court house staff professional?]`)

# gather the data so we can plot the results by judge
and by question

demeanor_judge <- demeanor %>%
  select(-Date, -Court, -Subject, -Outcome) %>%
  gather(key = question, value = answer, -Judge)

# clean up to remove NAs and make sure the y-axis
of the graph maps onto the data
demeanor_judge$Judge <-
factor(demeanor_judge$Judge, levels = c("Judge 1",
"Judge 2", "Judge 3",
"Judge 4",
"Judge 5", "Judge 6",
"Judge 7",
"Judge 8", "Judge 9",
"Judge 10"))

color <- scale_fill_manual(values = c("#216cb2",
"#dfa143"))
theme <- theme(line = element_blank(), rect =
element_blank(),
  panel.grid.major.y = element_line(color =
"grey80"),
  panel.grid.minor.y = element_line(color =
"grey80"))

ggplot(demeanor_judge, aes(x = Judge, fill = answer,
na.rm = TRUE)) +
  geom_bar(width = .95, position = "fill") +
  facet_wrap(~question) +
  labs(title = "Courtroom Demeanor by Judge", x =
"",
  y = "Count", fill = "Answer") +
  color + theme +
  theme(axis.text.x = element_text(angle = 85, vjust =
.6))

## plot responses to efficiency questions using the
same procedure

efficiency <- wise %>%
  select(Date, Court, Judge, Subject, Outcome,
    `Did Other Hearings Appear to Influence the
Ruling?` = `Efficiency & Organization of
Proceedings [Did the other hearings before or after
this hearing appear to influence the ruling of the
judge?]`,
    `Did it Take Place Where and When it Was
Scheduled?` = `Efficiency & Organization of
Proceedings [Did the hearing take place where and
when it was scheduled?]`)

efficiency_judge <- efficiency %>%
  select(-Date, -Court, -Subject, -Outcome) %>%
  gather(key = question, value = answer, -Judge)

efficiency_judge$Judge <-
factor(efficiency_judge$Judge, levels = c("Judge 1",
"Judge 2", "Judge 3",
"Judge 4",
"Judge 5", "Judge 6",
"Judge 7",
"Judge 8", "Judge 9",
"Judge 10"))

```

```

"Judge 5", "Judge 6",
"Judge 7",
"Judge 8", "Judge 9",
"Judge 10"))
efficiency_judge_omit <- na.omit(efficiency_judge)

ggplot(efficiency_judge_omit, aes(x = Judge, fill =
answer, na.rm = TRUE)) +
  geom_bar(width = .95, position = "fill") +
  facet_wrap(~question) +
  labs(title = "Courtroom Efficiency by Judge", x =
"",
  y = "Proportion", fill = "Answer") +
  color + theme +
  theme(axis.text.x = element_text(angle = 85, vjust =
.6))

```

```
## plot answers to safety questions using the same
procedure
```

```

safety <- wise %>%
  select(Date, Court, Judge, Subject, Outcome,
  `Did the Judge Ask About Weapons?` = `Safety
[Did the judge ask about weapons?]`,
  `Are Weapons Going to Be Seized?` = `Safety
[Are weapons going to be seized?]`,
  `Was There Contact Between Plaintiff and
Defendant?` = `Safety [Did the plaintiff and the
defendant have any contact while in the court
room?]`,
  `Was There Discussion of Child Custody?` =
`Safety [Was there discussion of child custody?]`,
  `Was Child Support Ordered?` = `Safety [Was
child support ordered?]`,
  `Was There a Decision Regarding Living
Expenses?` = `Safety [Was there a decision made
regarding economic/living expenses?]`)

```

```

safety_judge <- safety %>%
  select(-Date, -Court, -Subject, -Outcome) %>%
  gather(key = question, value = answer, -Judge)

```

```

safety_judge$Judge <- factor(safety_judge$Judge,
levels = c("Judge 1", "Judge 2", "Judge 3",
"Judge 4",
"Judge 5", "Judge 6",
"Judge 7",
"Judge 8", "Judge 9",
"Judge 10"))

```

```
safety_judge_omit <- na.omit(safety_judge)
```

```

ggplot(safety_judge_omit, aes(x = Judge, fill =
answer, na.rm = TRUE)) +
  geom_bar(width = .95, position = "fill") +
  facet_wrap(~question, nrow = 3, ncol = 2) +
  labs(title = "Courtroom Safety by Judge", x = "",
  y = "Count", fill = "Answer") +
  color + theme +
  theme(axis.text.x = element_text(angle = 85, vjust =
.6))

```

```
## plot answers to Treatment and Education
questions using the same procedure
```

```

treatment <- wise %>%
  select(Date, Court, Judge, Subject, Outcome,
  `Did the Judge Explain the Proceedings?` =
`Treatment & Education of Plaintiff/Defendant [Did
the judge explain the proceedings to both parties?]`,
  `Did the Judge Explain the Ruling?` =
`Treatment & Education of Plaintiff/Defendant [Did
the judge explain the ruling to both parties?]`,
  `Did the Judge Explain Option to Plead "No
Contest" = `Treatment & Education of
Plaintiff/Defendant [If there was another case
pending (criminal), did the judge explain the option
to plead "No Contest", or accept with no findings?]`,
  `Did the Judge Answer Questions Fully?` =
`Treatment & Education of Plaintiff/Defendant [Did
the judge answer questions fully?]`,
  `Did the Parties' Identity Affect the Judge's
Behavior?` = `Treatment & Education of
Plaintiff/Defendant [Was there anything about the
parties' perceived or stated identity that appeared to
have an effect on the judge's ruling and/or
behavior?]`
)

```

```

treatment_judge <- treatment %>%
  select(-Date, -Court, -Subject, -Outcome) %>%
  gather(key = question, value = answer, -Judge)

```

```

treatment_judge$Judge <-
factor(treatment_judge$Judge, levels = c("Judge 1",
"Judge 2", "Judge 3",
"Judge 4",
"Judge 5", "Judge 6",
"Judge 7",
"Judge 8", "Judge 9",
"Judge 10"))

```

```

                                "Judge 10"))
treatment_judge_omit <- na.omit(treatment_judge)

ggplot(treatment_judge_omit, aes(x = Judge, fill =
answer, na.rm = TRUE)) +
  geom_bar(width = .95, position = "fill") +
  facet_wrap(~question) +
  labs(title = "Treatment of Plaintiff and Defendant by
Judge", x = "",
       y = "Count", fill = "Answer") +
  color + theme +
  theme(axis.text.x = element_text(angle = 85, vjust =
.6))

```

```

# plot the prevalence of missing responses across
questions

```

```

efficiency_responses <- efficiency[, 6:7]
treatment_responses <- treatment[, 6:10]
safety_responses <- safety[, 6:11]

```

```

responses_all <- cbind(efficiency_responses,
safety_responses, treatment_responses)

```

```

# make a data frame counting the number of NAs for
each question
na_counts <- data.frame(matrix(NA, nrow = 13, ncol
= 3))
na_counts[,1] <- colnames(responses_all)
colnames(na_counts) <- c("question", "NA_count",
"response_rate")

```

```

for (i in 1:ncol(responses_all)) {
  na_counts[,2] <- sum(is.na(responses_all[,i]))
}

```

```

na_counts$response_rate <- 100 *
na_counts$NA_count/527

```

```

ggplot(na_counts, aes(x = question, y =
response_rate)) +
  geom_point() +
  coord_flip() +
  labs(y = "Response Rate (%)", x = "",
       title = "Court Observer Response Rate by
Question") +
  theme(line = element_blank(), rect =
element_blank(),

```

```

panel.grid.major = element_line(color =
"grey80"),
panel.grid.minor = element_line(color =
"grey80"))

```

```

# now I want to look at the proportion of responses
by question for the whole dataset

```

```

responses_gather <- responses_all %>%
gather(key = question, value = answer)

```

```

responses_gather <- na.omit(responses_gather)

```

```

ggplot(responses_gather, aes(x = question, fill =
answer)) +
  geom_bar(width = .95, position = "fill") +
  labs(title = "Responses by Question", y =
"Proportion", x = "",
       fill = "") +
  coord_flip() +
  color + theme

```

```

## look at whether advocates are present and other
people are present

```

```

support <- wise %>%
  select(`Who is present for P?`, `How many others
were present in court on plaintiff's side?`)

```

```

support_1 <- support %>%
  select(`Who is present for P?`) %>%
  na.omit()

```

```

first <- ggplot(support_1, aes(x = `Who is present for
P?`, fill = `Who is present for P?`)) +
  geom_bar(width = .95, na.rm = TRUE) +
  scale_fill_manual(values = c("#ffc600", "#ff5575",
"#005086", "#277647", "#762756")) +
  theme +
  theme(axis.text.x = element_blank()) +
  labs(x = "", title = "Who is Present on the Plaintiff's
Side?", fill = "", y = "Count")

```

```

second <- ggplot(support, aes(x = `How many others
were present in court on plaintiff's side?`) +

```

```
geom_histogram(binwidth = 1, color = "grey42", fill  
= "grey80") +  
  labs(x = "Number of Attendees", y = "Frequency",  
title = "How Many Civilians Were Present on the  
Plaintiff's Side?") +  
  theme  
  grid.arrange(first, second, nrow = 1)
```