



STOP ABUSIVE AND VIOLENT ENVIRONMENTS

P.O. Box 1221
Rockville, MD 20849
Telephone: 301-801-0608
www.saveservices.org

January 14, 2014

RE: Research Misconduct Committed by Jacquelyn C. Campbell, PhD and Co-Authors

Susan Garfinkel, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Investigative Oversight
DHHS Office of Research Integrity
1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 750
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Dr. Garfinkel:

Stop Abusive and Violent Environments (SAVE) is a 501(c)3 victim advocacy organization working for evidence-based solutions to partner violence. We support all victims of partner violence, regardless of age, race, sex, or gender identity. We advance our mission through policy research, legislative advocacy, media campaigns, and other strategies.

The purpose of this letter is to inform the DHHS Office of Research Integrity about two incidents of research misconduct committed by Jacquelyn C. Campbell, PhD, RN of Johns Hopkins University and her co-authors.

The misconduct consists of the fabrication of key statements and then representing the statements as the findings from a government survey. A review of survey to which Dr. Campbell and colleagues attribute their statements does not support their claims in any manner.

The fabricated statements of Dr. Campbell and colleagues were published in the *NIJ Journal* and the *American Journal of Public Health*. Even after *USA Today* and two other media outlets published editorials demonstrating their claims to be false, the authors took no discernable action to rectify the error.

This Complaint is being addressed to the federal Office for Research Integrity because the authors of the two articles in question are based at multiple institutions located across the country. According to guidelines of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, research co-authors must agree to be “accountable for *all aspects of the work* in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity *of any part of the work* are appropriately investigated and resolved” (emphasis added).¹

¹ International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals: Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors. http://www.icmje.org/roles_a.html

The research activities in question were supported under grant number RO1 DA/AA 11156, jointly funded by the NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute on Alcohol and Alcoholism, National Institute of Mental Health, and National Institute on Aging.

This Complaint provides Background information, details the two incidents of research misconduct, provides a Regulatory Analysis, and concludes with a discussion about the Harmful Effects of Research Fabrication.

Background

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a multi-faceted problem that has been the focus of extensive scientific attention. Much of this research has been synthesized and analyzed in a series of 17 scholarly articles sponsored by the Partner Abuse State of Knowledge (PASK) project.²

Recently, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control conducted the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS). The NISVS reported the following victimization rates of Physical Violence in the previous 12 months:³

- Male Victimization: 6.5%
- Female Victimization: 6.3%

The finding of nearly identical rates of male and female victimization has been confirmed in hundreds of other scholarly investigations.⁴

Another key finding is that partner abuse is often mutual. Surveys have found that in approximately half of all cases, the aggression is reciprocal, i.e., the partners are both aggressors and victims.⁵ Mutual violence can escalate, resulting in injury and possible death, more often to the female partner. Female-initiated IPV is the most important single predictor of subsequent female injury, according to a meta-analysis by Dr. Sandra Stith.⁶

² Partner Abuse State of Knowledge. <http://domesticviolenceresearch.org/>

³ Centers for Disease Control. National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, Tables 4.7 and 4.8. http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf

⁴ Fiebert M. References Examining Assaults by Women on Their Spouses or Male Partners: An Annotated Bibliography. California State University, Long Beach. 2009. <http://www.csulb.edu/~mfiebert/assault.htm>

⁵ Straus MA. Dominance and symmetry in partner violence by male and female university students in 32 nations. *Children and Youth Services Review*, Vol. 30, 2008, pp. 252–275.

⁶ Stith S, Smith DB, Penn CE, et al. Intimate partner physical abuse perpetration and victimization risk factors: A meta-analytic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior* Vol. 10, 2004. pp. 65-98.

Misconduct Incident #1: NIJ Journal

Fabricated statement:

Intimate partner violence is the “leading cause of death for African-American women aged 15-45.”

Scientific fact:

Intimate partner violence is the *eighth* leading cause of death among Black women aged 15-45.⁷

Where the fabricated statement appears:

Campbell JC et al. Assessing risk factors for intimate partner homicide. *NIJ Journal* 2003. Page 18.⁸

Names and affiliations of authors:

Jacquelyn Campbell, PhD, RN: Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing
Daniel Webster, ScD, MPH: Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
Jane Koziol-McLain, PhD, RN: Auckland University of Technology School of Nursing
Carolyn Block, PhD: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
Doris Campbell, PhD, RN: University of South Florida College of Medicine
Mary Ann Curry, PhD, RN: Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing
Faye Gary, PhD, RN: University of Florida School of Nursing
Judith McFarlane, PhD, RN: Texas Women’s University School of Nursing
Carolyn Sachs, MD, MPH: University of California Los Angeles School of Medicine
Phyllis Sharps, PhD, RN: Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing
Yvonne Ulrich, PhD, RN: University of Washington School of Nursing
Susan A. Wilt, DrPH: New York City Department of Health

Comment:

Dr. Campbell’s 2003 statement was taken and repeated verbatim by Attorney General Eric Holder at a Domestic Violence Awareness Month event in 2009. His statement was then published on the Department of Justice website.⁹

The claim was subsequently disputed in a 2011 *USA Today* editorial by Dr. Christina Hoff-Sommers.¹⁰ The claim also was shown to be false in a column by University of Michigan economics professor Mark Perry.¹¹ To our knowledge, Dr. Campbell and

⁷ Perry M. It’s been more than 4 years, and Eric Holder has failed to correct his misinformation on the DOJ website. December 5, 2013. <http://www.aei-ideas.org/2013/12/its-been-more-than-4-years-and-eric-holder-has-failed-to-correct-his-misinformation-on-the-doj-website/>

⁸ <https://www.ncjrs.gov/app/abstractdb/AbstractDBDetails.aspx?id=196547>

⁹ Attorney General Eric Holder Speaks at Domestic Violence Awareness Month Event. October 19, 2009. <http://www.justice.gov/ag/speeches/2009/ag-speech-091019.html>

¹⁰ Hoff Sommers C. Domestic violence myths help no one. February 4, 2011.

http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/2011-02-03-sommers04_st_N.htm

¹¹ <http://www.aei-ideas.org/2013/12/its-been-more-than-4-years-and-eric-holder-has-failed-to-correct-his-misinformation-on-the-doj-website/>

colleagues took no action to correct the erroneous statements, despite the extensive publicity arising from the *USA Today* editorial.

More recently, the *Washington Post's* Fact Checker Glenn Kessler analyzed the claim. Kessler concluded in his December 18, 2013 article that the statement was false.¹² Kessler wrote that he was inclined to award his "Four Pinocchio" rating to this statement, except for the fact the claim had been made before the Fact Checker column had been established. Again, Dr. Campbell and colleagues apparently took no action to correct the faulty statements.

Misconduct Incident #2: American Journal of Public Health

Fabricated statement:

"Femicide, the homicide of women, is the leading cause of death in the United States among young African American women aged 15 to 45 years."

Scientific fact:

Among African American women, the leading causes of death are *Unintentional Injuries* (mostly falls and motor vehicle accidents) (women 15-34 years) and *Cancer* (women 34-44 years).¹³

Where the fabricated statement appears:

Campbell JC et al. Risk factors for femicide in abusive relationships: Results from a multisite case control study. *American Journal of Public Health* Vol. 93, No. 7. 2003. Page 1089.¹⁴

Names and affiliations of authors:

Jacquelyn Campbell, PhD, RN: Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing
Daniel Webster, ScD, MPH: Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
Jane Koziol-McLain, PhD, RN: Auckland University of Technology School of Nursing
Carolyn Block, PhD: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
Doris Campbell, PhD, RN: University of South Florida College of Medicine
Mary Ann Curry, PhD, RN: Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing
Faye Gary, PhD, RN: University of Florida School of Nursing
Nancy Glass, PhD, MPH, RN: Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing
Judith McFarlane, PhD, RN: Texas Women's University School of Nursing
Carolyn Sachs, MD, MPH: University of California Los Angeles School of Medicine
Phyllis Sharps, PhD, RN: Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing
Yvonne Ulrich, PhD, RN: University of Washington School of Nursing

¹² Kessler G. Holder's 2009 Claim that Intimate Partner Homicide is the Leading Cause of Death for African-American Women. *Washington Post*. December 18, 2013. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2013/12/18/holders-2009-claim-that-intimate-partner-homicide-is-the-leading-cause-of-death-for-african-american-women/>

¹³ http://www.cdc.gov/women/lcod/2010/WomenBlack_2010.pdf

¹⁴ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447915/>

Susan A. Wilt, DrPH: New York City Department of Health
Jennifer Manganello, PhD, MPH: Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
Xiao Xu, PhD, RN: Covance, Inc., Washington, DC
Janet Schollenberger, MHS: Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health
Victoria Frye, MPH: St. Luke's Medical Center, New York City
Kathryn Laughon, MPH: Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

Comment:

This claim was also highlighted in Glenn Kessler's December 18, 2013 Fact Checker column and evaluated to be false.¹⁵

Regulatory Analysis

Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. Per 42 CFR 93.103, fabrication consists of making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

In this case, Dr. Campbell and colleagues made up two key statements, presented them as the results of a 1998 Bureau of Justice Statistics survey,¹⁶ and reported them in two journal articles. In their *American Journal of Public Health* report, the fabricated claim appears in the first sentence of the article and sets the tone for the remainder of the discussion.

Per 42 CFR 93.104, a finding of research misconduct rests on three criteria:

1. *A significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community.*

The Faculty Handbook of the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing states:¹⁷

“It is essential that publications in all of their many forms be based upon rigorous validation of the findings, and unbiased presentation of those findings based upon the data obtained and the existing knowledge in the field.”

Dr. Campbell's statements cannot be viewed as “based upon rigorous validation” or “unbiased presentation.”

¹⁵ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2013/12/18/holders-2009-claim-that-intimate-partner-homicide-is-the-leading-cause-of-death-for-african-american-women/>

¹⁶ Greenfield LA et al. Violence by Intimates. Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ-167237. 1998. <http://bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/vi.pdf>

¹⁷ Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing. Rules and Guidelines for Responsible Conduct of Research. http://nursing.jhu.edu/faculty_research/research/documents/SON_RCR_Policy08242012.pdf

2. *The misconduct was committed intentionally or knowingly*

The misconduct was committed knowingly, based on the following facts:

- a. The claim that domestic violence is the leading cause of death for young African-American women is inherently illogical. In the words of the *Washington Post*'s Glenn Kessler, "Intimate-partner homicide is the leading cause of death? At the very least, intimate-partner homicide is a subset of all homicides, so one can easily see that a broader category of murder would be even higher. And then, what about diseases?"¹⁸
- b. A review of the source to which Dr. Campbell attributes her statement does not support her claims in any manner. The Bureau of Justice Statistics report she cites consists of a general presentation of the correlates and risk factors of intimate partner violence. In no place does the report compare homicides with other causes of death. A text search reveals the words "leading causes of death" and other similar phrases do not appear anywhere in the 49-page BJS report.
- c. In researching his December 18, 2013 column, Glenn Kessler contacted Dr. Campbell for comment. Kessler noted, "Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell, lead author of both studies, did not respond to a request for comment." Even after his Fact Checker column was published, there is no indication on Dr. Campbell's website that she took any action to respond to the *Washington Post* column. A researcher who is ethical and conscientious would have acted promptly to answer the allegation of dishonesty.

3. *The allegation can be proven by a preponderance of evidence standard*

The alleged misconduct does not represent a legitimate difference of opinion or an inadvertent editorial oversight. In this case, the evidence of research misconduct is unambiguous and clear-cut, and easily meets the preponderance of evidence standard.

Harmful Consequences of Research Fabrication

This Complaint has identified two instances of fabrication of research findings by Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell and colleagues. Some believe that misrepresentation in domestic violence research has become widespread.^{19,20} Clearly, fabricated statements like these

¹⁸ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2013/12/18/holders-2009-claim-that-intimate-partner-homicide-is-the-leading-cause-of-death-for-african-american-women/>

¹⁹ Gelles RJ. The politics of research: The use, abuse, and misuse of social science data – The cases of intimate partner violence. *Family Court Review*, Vol. 45, No. 1, January 2007. <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1744-1617.2007.00127.x>

²⁰ Dutton D. Transforming a flawed policy: A call to revive psychology and science in domestic violence research and practice. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*. 2006.

are likely to have deleterious effects on the credibility of future domestic violence research.

Fabricated claims can have other harmful consequences:

1. Frequently repeated generalizations about battering and abuse can have the effect of stereotyping, stigmatizing, and marginalizing certain segments of the population. It is not difficult to recall an earlier era in American history when powerful social stereotypes were applied to African-American men, serving to justify the deprivation of their fundamental civil rights. It has been argued that similar harmful stereotypes are operating in contemporary American society.²¹
2. False claims can exert a deleterious effect on the accuracy of academic presentations and public policy debates. The claim that “intimate partner homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American women aged 15-45” now appears in at least one textbook,²² and was cited as the National Network to End Domestic Violence for the purpose of influencing national gun-control policy.²³
3. Fabricated statements can give rise to ineffective policies and programs that serve to shortchange victims. In her critique of IPV research, Dr. Christina Hoff-Sommers has noted that, “Misinformation leads to misdirected policies that fail to target the true causes of violence.”²⁴

A review of Dr. Campbell’s Curriculum Vitae reveals she has published numerous articles on the topic of IPV-related homicides. It is possible that she and her co-authors have published fabricated claims in other scientific treatments. Therefore, it will be necessary to review other publications where Dr. Campbell and colleagues may have made similar erroneous claims.

We request that the Office for Research Integrity investigate these allegations of research misconduct by Dr. Campbell and colleagues, and take appropriate corrective action.

Victims of domestic violence deserve nothing less than the truth.

Sincerely,

Teri Stoddard

Program Director

²¹ Mankey M. Biggest civil rights roll-back since Jim Crow era. *Seattle Herald Net*. October 13, 2009. <http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20091013/OPINION03/710139998>

²² Jordan CE et al. *Intimate Partner Violence: A Clinical Training Guide for Mental Health Professionals*. Springer Publishing Co., 2004. Page 3.

²³ AFP. US Supreme Court in historic hearing on gun laws. March 16, 2008. http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i_vzu4XhFY0UP3jKZ0_TKNyDO62Q?hl=en

²⁴ http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/2011-02-03-sommers04_st_N.htm

cc:

Susan Garfinkel, DHHS Office of Research Integrity

NIH Extramural Research Integrity office

Mary Northridge, Editor, American Journal of Public Health

Greg Ridgeway, Acting NIJ Director

Jerilyn K. Allen, JHU School of Nursing

Janet A. Dipietro, JHU School of Public Health

Jack Cutrone, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

Cheryl Byers, University of South Florida College of Medicine

Jennifer Ruocco, Oregon Health Sciences University School of Nursing

University of Florida School of Nursing

Chandan Prasad, Texas Women's University School of Nursing

Ann Pollack, University of California Los Angeles School of Medicine

Margaret Mitchell, University of Washington School of Nursing

Emilia Sordillo, St. Luke's Medical Center, New York City