

BHWell

Center for Behavioral Health & Well-Being Research

Dr. Laurie M. Graham

What is the goal of your research in culturally responsive and healing-centered practice with victim-survivors of intimate partner violence?

My research seeks to support the development and evaluation of intimate partner violence prevention and intervention strategies that truly support all those impacted by intimate partner violence—not only those with privileged identities. We have plenty of evidence that the movement to end intimate partner violence has historically ignored or even silenced the voices of many marginalized communities. This harmful legacy continues to be seen in service delivery and prevention activities that do not consider the diverse needs of minoritized and marginalized people who are often especially likely to experience such violence. My research intends to help change that.



**Laurie M. Graham,
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How do you see your research making an impact in intimate partner violence prevention?

One-size-fit-all prevention and intervention, as in everyone gets the same thing, has dominated the field of intimate partner violence prevention. However, even available evidence-based intimate partner and dating violence prevention strategies

are not incredibly effective or are not effective for all communities. Shifting to more tailored, culturally responsive, healing-centered strategies is a promising path forward to increase the effectiveness of intimate partner violence prevention strategies.

How do you see your research affecting social work practice in general?

No matter the setting in which social workers find themselves, the clients and communities they work with will be affected in some way by intimate partner violence. It is critical for all social workers to understand the dynamics of intimate partner violence among diverse communities, so they can respond in equitable, validating, and supportive ways that increase the safety of those with whom they work.

What is one thing you would like social work practitioners to take away from your research?

Intersectionality matters. We all live in a society where power, privilege, and oppression shape our life experiences and the way we interact with others. I hope social workers will understand that individuals' identities and related systems of oppression affect the ways people define, experience, and respond to intimate partner violence, including those directly experiencing intimate partner violence and helping professionals. Culturally responsive and healing-centered intimate partner violence practice requires us to look inward and examine our own biases and internal dialogue about intimate partner violence as well as educate ourselves on how to be appropriately responsive to those who experience it.

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