

# Establishing Expertise as an Ethical Expert Witness –

## *Experts and Lawyers Collaborating to Help Victims*

### FACULTY PROFILES



**Sarah M. Buel, JD**, is a Clinical Professor at The University of Texas School of Law where she serves as Founder and Co-Director of the Domestic Violence Clinic. Professor Buel has thirty years experience lecturing nationwide and publishing on domestic violence issues; she currently teaches two courses, *Domestic Violence and the Law* and *Criminal Law*. She is a co-founder and co-investigator of The University of Texas Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and as a former assistant district attorney directed two domestic violence prosecution units. She is a Director Emeritus of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence.



**Noël Bridget Busch-Armendariz, PhD, LMSW, MPA**, is an Associate Professor at The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work and Director of the Institute on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault. Dr. Busch-Armendariz teaches graduate level social work classes; her areas of specialization are domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking, and international social work. She trains nationwide on issues of interpersonal violence and has published many articles on the topic. She serves on the editorial board and column editor as expert on domestic violence for the *AFFILIA: The Journal of Women and Social Work*. Dr. Busch-Armendariz has served as an expert witness in dozens of criminal, civil, and immigration cases involving domestic violence and sexual assault in Texas and around the country.

**Joan Myers Carter** has worked at SafePlace, the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survival Center in Austin, Texas, for more than 16 years. Currently, Ms. Carter is the Senior Legal Advocate based at the Travis County Attorney's Office and provides crisis counseling and advocacy for crime victims facing protective order hearings and criminal case testimony. She has extensive experience training and supervising courtroom volunteer advocates. She has provided community education to diverse groups including law enforcement, Grand Jury members, and county and district judges and prosecutors. Her experience as an Expert Witness includes providing testimony in both civil and criminal court both as a fact and expert witness in numerous jurisdictions. Ms. Carter has testified in Senate subcommittee meetings on stalking laws, bankruptcy laws affecting battered women, and prejudice against women in the legal system. She has also counseled victims of Hurricane Katrina upon their arrival to Austin.

**Jodi Chestnut, LMSW**, Director of Therapeutic and Children's Services at the Center Against Family Violence. She has been with the Center for 9 years and has served in several capacities such as a Child Advocate, Children's Program Coordinator, and Shelter Director. She holds both Bachelor and Master degrees in Social Work from New Mexico State University. She is currently pursuing her licensure in Clinical Social Work. Jodi has two sons Bailyn, 7, and Connor, 5.

**Melissa Hamilton, JD, PhD**, is an Assistant Professor at the University of Toledo College of Law. Her research interests focus upon using interdisciplinary approaches to studying domestic violence and sexual assault. Prior to entering law school, Hamilton served as a police officer and a corrections officer. Hamilton received her J.D., with honors, from The University of Texas School of Law. Following law school, she served as a judicial clerk to Judge Sam Johnson on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Hamilton then was corporate counsel with an international software and services company. She earned a Ph.D in sociology, with a specialization in criminology/criminal justice, from The University of Texas at Austin, and began teaching in higher education. Her published dissertation is titled “Judicial Discourses involving Domestic Violence and Expert Testimony.”



**Toby Myers, EdD, LCSW, LPC, CGP**, is own throughout Texas as a leader in the Texas Battered Women’s Movement, has founded, worked in, and been active in organizations to end violence against women for 30 years. Quasi-retired, she maintains a limited private counseling practice, trains, and consults. She has assisted in domestic violence cases with both prosecution and defense, in related family, criminal, immigration, personal injury, employment matters in courts, before licensing boards, and with other official hearings.

**Dana Nelson, JD**, serves as an Assistant District Attorney in Travis County, Texas, and is assigned to County Court-at-Law #4, where she prosecutes felony family violence cases. She has prosecuted family violence cases since 1999. Previously, she prosecuted misdemeanor family violence cases as an Assistant County Attorney and concluded her service there as Chief of County Court-at-Law #4 in 2002. Ms. Nelson served a two-year term as Co-Chair of the Austin/Travis County Family Violence Task Force. She trains prosecutors extensively throughout Texas. Before becoming a prosecutor in 1997, she worked at Legal Aid of Central Texas practicing housing law.

**Toby Strout** has been the Executive Director of Middle Way House, Inc. since 1987. She has her PhD in Education from Indiana University where she concentrated on program design and evaluation, and the diffusion of innovation, writing specifically on leadership training for women. Her Masters is in Instructional Systems Technology. She graduated from Queens College of the City University of New York with a BA in English and a Certificate in Secondary Education. Ms. Strout taught in the New York City public schools, managed a major US Department of Education, Bureau of Education for the Handicapped-funded project, and served as program director for the Film Production Department at Indiana University. As Director of Middle Way House, she has overseen the management of federal, state, and private foundation grants totaling millions of dollars. Throughout her tenure, the agency’s audits and contract management reviews have been issued without a single finding. Outcomes from grant-supported activities, as well as those funded from other sources, have won Middle Way House considerable recognition, including a place on a short list of six national model programs maintained by the US Department of Justice. Notable awards include the KEY Award for Local Nonprofit of the Year from the Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues, the PROJECT 2000 Award from the Indiana Association for Community and Economic Development, Organization of the Year from the Indiana Women’s Commission, and the Sycamore Award for Innovation (Large). Ms. Strout has served as an expert witness in civil and criminal court at the district level and in federal court.



**Deborah D. Tucker, MPA**, is the Executive Director of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence. Ms. Tucker came up working in the movement, starting as a volunteer at the first rape crisis center in Texas, directing the first battered women's shelter, leading the Texas Council on Family Violence, founding the National Domestic Violence Hotline and collaborating with Sarah Buel in Tucker, Buel and Associates. She was the founding Chair of the National Network to End Domestic Violence which wrote and passed the Violence Against Women Act and has coordinated several trainings on issues involved in Expert Witness testimony.

**Brian W. Wice, JD**, is recognized as one of the top criminal defense attorneys in Texas specializing in appellate and post-conviction matters, having handled over 300 appeals including 13 death penalty appeals, before 18 different state and federal appellate courts. A 1976 magna cum laude graduate of the University of Houston and a 1979 graduate of the University of Houston Law Center where he served on the Houston Law Review, Brian has been a frequent lecturer at continuing legal education seminars throughout Texas for the past 15 years. Mr. Wice is a legal analyst for KPRC TV and a frequent commentator for COURT-TV. He also served as a law clerk to Judge Sam Houston Clinton of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and was co-counsel on appeal in the Fourth Circuit's reversal of the Rev. Jim Bakker's 45-year prison term in 1991.