

A SHORT HISTORY OF VERA'S WORK  
ON THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

Vera Institute of Justice  
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## Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	1
Pretrial justice .....	2
Diversion from court .....	5
Efficiency in the courts .....	6
The right to counsel .....	9
Just and effective prosecution .....	10
Techniques for innovation .....	11
<i>Chronology of Vera's Work on the Judicial Process</i> .....	13
<i>Bibliography</i> .....	15

## Introduction

Our law courts labor under a dual obligation. They must do justice in each individual case, and they must work as efficiently as possible. These two objectives often conflict, putting pressure on judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers to compromise consideration of individual cases for the sake of efficiency, or vice versa. The challenge facing modern courts is to fulfill both duties at once.

Since its founding in 1961, the Vera Institute of Justice has designed innovations that allow courts to work more efficiently while paying greater attention to individual victims, witnesses, jurors, and defendants. Sometimes this has meant customizing systems of pretrial release; other projects have diverted certain individuals from the court process entirely; still others have focused directly on court administration; and a final group has tested innovative systems of providing legal advocacy and representation. In more than 30 research and demonstration projects, Vera has helped judges, prosecutors, defenders, and administrators improve the adjudication of cases from before their first hearings through their final dispositions.

## Pretrial justice

When Vera initiated the Manhattan Bail Project in October 1961, the injustice of the nation's bail system had long been recognized. Defendants who could not pay bail were spending long periods of time in jail awaiting trial on minor charges. This was both unfair to the defendants who did not have enough money for bail and expensive for the taxpayers. Some experts urged increasing pretrial parole, but judges feared that a majority of those released would never return to court to face their charges. Vera's founders devised a way that judges could quickly assess the strength of each defendant's community ties and set out to prove that when these ties were verified judges could safely release people without bail.

The Manhattan Bail Project staff interviewed defendants to learn the strength of their family roots in the city and the length of their employment. The staff verified the information with third parties and reduced these indicators to a numerical score: the higher the score, the lower the chances that the defendant would abscond. Vera staff presented criminal court judges in Manhattan with release recommendations based on these scores, and the follow-up research showed that the majority of people released showed up at their court dates. Indeed, the experimental group released on nothing more than their promise to return had twice the appearance rate of those released on bail. The project also saved more than \$1 million in the correction department's budget.

Vera's Manhattan Bail Project provoked institutional reform in federal and state courts across the country, culminating in the adoption of the federal Bail Reform Act of 1966. In New York, the same basic system of interviewing defendants, testing their community ties, making release recommendations, and monitoring the results is continued today by the Criminal Justice Agency, a private organization created by the city government and Vera in 1977.

Since then, Vera has adapted these same techniques to relieve injustice and improve efficiency in the pretrial process for courts around the world. Vera's first project for the British Home Office in 1974, offered magistrates in one of the city's criminal courts verified information on community ties on which to base release decisions. The results there were cited in the press and Parliament during the passage of the Bail Act of 1976.

Skip ahead 20 years to 1997, and Vera is helping the Ministry of Justice in [the new South Africa](#) develop its own system of pretrial services. Vera and the ministry established pilot projects in the Cape Flats, Johannesburg, and Durban, interviewing approximately 19,000 defendants over a two-year demonstration period. Here again, the results are leading to systemwide adoption of pretrial services under government auspices.

In New York, London, and South Africa, these projects proved that paying attention to each individual's community ties allows courts to release more of them without bail and produces a more efficient system. But what about those without strong local ties or with previous convictions that make courts unwilling to release them merely on a promise to return? Perhaps intensive supervision could be added as a condition of release to assure their appearance at trial and prevent further offending.

**Nonprofit Bail Bond Agencies.** From 1987 to 1994, Vera's bail bond supervision projects tested this proposition. Vera began by establishing nonprofit bail bond agencies in three different metropolitan counties. Unlike traditional bail bondsmen, Vera's bail bond agencies asked no money from the defendants. Instead, the agencies paid a defendant's bail bond if the defendant agreed to submit to the program's supervision, including an initial period in a 24-hour residence, drug testing, curfews, unannounced home visits, and job monitoring. Most important, the defendants agreed that the agency could return them to jail if they failed to comply. These bail bond agencies represented a financial gamble by Vera, because the agencies would lose the bonds if the defendants failed to appear in court when required.

The results were mixed. Vera's Bronx Bail Bond Agency was never able to build sufficient routine activities for its participants to make the intensive supervision effective at a reasonable cost. Of all the participants, those in the Bronx had more severe drug problems, lower employment prospects, and fewer family members able to support them during the pretrial period. After several efforts to strengthen the program, Vera closed it in 1994. In the meantime, the other two agencies, one operating in Nassau County on Long Island, the other in Essex County, New Jersey, succeeded admirably. Through careful supervision and by returning to jail those defendants who persisted in violating conditions, these two agencies produced high rates of compliance and permitted almost no new offending. The agencies lost none of their bonds; and both were incorporated into independent nonprofits with county contracts at the conclusion of the demonstrations.

*Immigration.* Intensive supervision also proved to be an attractive alternative to detention for the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service. In 1995 the INS asked Vera to build on its experience in the criminal justice system to design and implement a supervision program for immigrants in removal proceedings in the New York City area. Vera's [Appearance Assistance Program](#), launched in February 1997, tested whether screening detainees to determine the strength of their community ties, coupled with community supervision, could provide an alternative to continued detention for asylum seekers and others facing deportation.

By the time the demonstration project ended in March 2000, it had supervised more than 500 immigrants with far greater success than even its architects had hoped. About 90 percent of its participants appeared in court on every occasion when required, compared to 71 percent in the comparison group. In 2001 congress appropriated \$3 million for the INS to develop alternatives to detention. More than three years later, the Department of Homeland Security launched similar programs in eight U.S. cities: Philadelphia, Baltimore, Miami, St. Paul, Kansas City, Denver, San Francisco, and Portland.

*Russia.* In Russia, citizens accused of minor crimes are often detained for months because investigations are often delayed or conducted inefficiently. To move people out of detention

more quickly, Vera and the Open Society Institute designed a project to shorten the period of pretrial investigation. Located in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia's third largest city, the Nizhegorod Project on Justice Assistance assigns a group of assistants to work alongside police officers, judges, and prosecutors to expedite investigations. Some of these assistants also help judges review habeas petitions filed by detainees to see if some people are being held in detention without cause and clarify the criteria law-enforcement officials use when considering detention. The project also convenes regular meetings among agencies to encourage early decisions on applications for indictment and bail.

To facilitate additional criminal justice reforms in Russia, in September 2000 Vera and the Moscow-based [Indem Fund](#) established the [Center for Justice Assistance](#) (CJA) as a subdivision of Indem. The new organization works in partnership with government and nongovernmental organizations to design and test projects that aim to improve the justice system, such as the Nizhegorod Project, which the Center now manages. Center staff also study criminal justice issues and policies. CJA is working with government researchers and officials to address problems that will arise now that the government has transferred the authority to issue pretrial detention orders from the procuracy (an agency that combines investigation, prosecution, and ombudsman-like functions) to the judiciary.

*Haiti.* Prolonged pretrial detention is also a problem in Haiti, where the government has experimented with several ambitious reform efforts with little success. In 2001, in response to a request from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Open Society Institute, Vera assembled an international delegation of experts in criminal justice technologies and reform to consult with Haitian officials. During two visits, the delegation toured courts and jails and interviewed a variety of people working in the judicial system. The delegates also reviewed assessments of reform efforts over the last six years. Based on these visits, Vera and the delegation drafted a [report to the UNDP and the Haitian government](#) on ways to reduce the pretrial detention population and improve the management of prisons.

## Diversion from court

Sometimes the best way to do justice fairly and efficiently is to keep a case out of court altogether. Several Vera projects have taken this approach, first with public inebriates, then with young offenders. Along the way, however, Vera's researchers were among the first to document the dangers of diversion programs that impose requirements on people who would have won their cases had they continued in the court system. Over four decades, these projects have provoked the most basic questions of why and when our society needs courts at all.

In 1967 Vera launched the Manhattan Bowery Project to get alcoholics out of court and into treatment. At the time, jail cells in New York were clogged with people charged with public drunkenness, many of whom were arrested repeatedly. The project diverted these people to a 48-bed detoxification center, one of the first of its kind in the country. Every day, two-person teams, consisting of a recovering alcoholic and a police officer, patrolled Manhattan's Bowery in search of visibly intoxicated individuals. When they found them, the teams tried to persuade them to accept a ride to the Bowery Project's facilities to dry out and receive medical care. Over the three years that Vera ran the demonstration, the arrest of derelict alcoholics in the Bowery fell by 80 percent, freeing up court time and jail space. The project spun off from Vera as the Manhattan Bowery Corporation, renamed Project Renewal in 1994. Today, Project Renewal continues to provide services to more than 20,000 alcoholic and homeless individuals each year.

Vera followed the Bowery Project with the Court Employment Project, the nation's first formal pretrial diversion program for juvenile offenders. Just as juvenile courts had aimed to divert young offenders from the criminal justice system, Vera now tried to divert them from court altogether, hoping to spare them the stigma of juvenile delinquency and the lengthy court process that delayed the delivery of services. The project served as an alternative to prosecution, providing its teenage participants with counseling, job training, and employment. Like the Bowery Corporation, the Court Employment Project spun off from Vera as an independent organization and quickly became a model for jurisdictions across the country.

Diversion, ironically, can produce its own injustice. In the late 1970s, when Vera researchers evaluated the Court Employment Project, they concluded that most of the cases diverted from prosecution would have been dismissed by prosecutors had the program not existed. The research presented a double challenge: not only was the project not really saving court time, it was using a false threat of prosecution to enroll its teenage participants. The research, and the subsequent loss of city funds, nearly destroyed this once thriving service program. Over the next 10 years, the project's leaders, Vera staff, and city officials struggled to reposition the Court Employment Project as an alternative sentencing program for convicted young offenders who would otherwise be incarcerated. No longer a court diversion program at all, today the Court Employment Project is succeeding in this new mission as a division of the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services, Inc. (CASES).



But what about the teenagers who need counseling and other services even if prosecutors do not judge their first offenses suitable for prosecution? The evolution of the Neighborhood Youth Diversion Project, a second Vera project begun as an alternative to prosecution for youth, shows how government services can continue to focus on these children despite the disenchantment with pretrial diversion. Launched in 1970, this program targeted juvenile offenders from the East Tremont neighborhood in the Bronx who, like the Court Employment Project's original participants, faced charges in Family Court. Instead of focusing on employment, this community-based program promoted family togetherness through individual and family counseling, and it used mediation outside of court as a way to resolve the conflicts that had led to the original prosecutions. In the late 1970s, when the flaws in youth diversion programs became apparent, this program chose the opposite course from the Court Employment Project, retaining its focus on preventive services and shifting its base from the criminal justice to the child welfare system. In 1979, it became Neighborhood Youth and Family Services, an independent organization that today still works to keep Bronx families together and young people out of court.

One of the Institute's most recent projects, Esperanza/Hope, is looking at how probation officers and judges make placement decisions for juvenile offenders. The program aims to create more structured and rational processes for deciding whether or not to place a youth in state custody. The changes will give decision-makers more comprehensive and objective information about these youngsters and their families.

### Efficiency in the courts

Court backlogs and inefficiencies have always compromised the promise of justice. How can courts reduce these delays while still taking the time necessary in each case? Vera first took up this challenge in 1967, helping court administrators keep their arraignment courts open 24 hours so that cases would not accumulate overnight. The all-night courts continued for decades, but Vera planners were never convinced that they were efficient or necessary. The next year, Vera initiated the Calendar Control Project in the Bronx criminal court, an experiment aimed at making better use of limited court time by scheduling cases more tightly and reducing unnecessary court appearances for civilian witnesses, defendants, and police officers.

Experiments like this one produced marginal improvements, but the first real breakthrough came 10 years later when Vera's research on felony cases revealed previously hidden patterns in the cases that ended in dismissal. If these cases could be weeded out at the start, court efficiency could leap forward. *Felony Arrests: Their Prosecution and Disposition in New York City's Courts* was the first systematic look at the circumstances surrounding serious cases presented to urban courts, exploring the reasons why these cases so often ended in dismissal. A common explanation among practitioners was that prosecutors dropped most of these cases to relieve congestion, not because the cases lacked merit. Vera's researchers found, however, that serious cases with strong evidence and victims

willing to testify usually ended in conviction and sentences of imprisonment. The dismissals, it turned out, were concentrated elsewhere. Of the civilian victims of crimes that led to felony arrests, about half had a previous relationship with the defendant—and it was in these cases that prosecutors were so often asking for, or consenting to, dismissals.

This research helped identify ways to dispose weak cases earlier in order to speed up and reinforce the prosecution of strong cases. The Early Case Assessment Bureaus created with Vera's help by district attorneys in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, have been widely replicated elsewhere, for example, as have techniques to improve case preparation which Vera developed with the New York Police Department and the Bronx District Attorney. Equally important, the research focused new attention on the victims of felony crimes and their complex relationships with these defendants, leading to improvements in victim services and more sophisticated alternative dispute resolution programs.

Despite these and other improvements, the backlog and delays in courts persisted. In the mid-1980s, city budget officials concluded that prosecutors had the power to reduce delays, but needed greater incentives to do so. As a result, they initiated the Speedy Disposition Program, a two-year experiment that gave district attorneys budget increases if the number of long-term detainees in city jails was reduced through faster disposition of cases. Vera set up the data systems to track backlog in courts and assisted prosecutors and judges as they tried new ways of completing cases more quickly. Unfortunately, the hope that prosecutors motivated by bigger budgets could reduce delays proved empty. Vera's researchers found that the experiment was not successful in decreasing the population of defendants detained or speeding their dispositions, in part because of the persistence of poor scheduling.

Efficiencies in court administration are only as valuable as the quality of justice that courts deliver, so Vera has also worked on innovations that help judges use their time well. This has been a particularly high priority in cases of domestic violence, where judges have long needed both better information about the people before them, and better methods of preventing future violence. Vera has worked with the courts in New York to meet both of these needs.

New York courts, like others around the world, can issue orders of protection that prohibit dangerous men or women from approaching their domestic partners on penalty of arrest. In an effort to make such orders easier to obtain, the legislature permitted virtually any court in the state to issue one, but courts had no systematic way to know whether such an order was in force against people appearing before them. In order to allow judges to respond more appropriately when confronted with people involved in domestic violence, Vera worked in the mid-1990s with the Office of Court Administration and the New York State Police to create a computerized, statewide Domestic Violence Registry. The software was designed to provide police officers and judges in every state court with access to the history of any court-issued orders of protection and related arrests. As a result of the success of that system, in

1997 the U.S. Department of Justice asked Vera to help other states build similar systems that could eventually be linked in a national network.

More recently, Vera has begun to work with the Department of Justice to develop more effective ways for judges to make use of services available in communities to reduce domestic violence. Specifically, Vera is helping courts, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations in three cities build their own experiments in this area through the Office on Violence Against Women's [judicial oversight demonstrations](#). In these three experiments, judges are challenged to take a more active role in the face of domestic violence, monitoring domestic relationships more closely and responding to violations of court orders more quickly and effectively. These experiments include more intensive pretrial supervision, mandatory attendance for aggressors at batterers' intervention programs, mandatory substance abuse treatment for batterers, and more aggressive use of jail sentences and alternatives like community service.

Finally, Vera's work on improving court efficiency has always included attention to the way that ordinary citizens are treated in court when they appear as jurors, witnesses, or observers. In 1995 Vera created the Citizens Jury Project in partnership with the New York Office of Court Administration: a citizen-to-citizen ombudservice to resolve complaints of jurors and provide systematic data to the court managers on the views of jurors. The project staffed information booths in the juror assembly rooms of five courthouses in Manhattan and Brooklyn, operated a telephone and Internet complaint line, and organized focus groups of veteran jurors and judges to consider specific complaints that arose repeatedly. After proving its value to judges, administrators, and jurors alike, the Citizens Jury Project moved to a new permanent home, the Fund for Modern Courts, in the spring of 2000.

Like jurors, the civilians who come to court as witnesses, friends, and supporters also deserve respectful treatment. To help the administrative judges of the New York City Family Court improve the experience of these court users, Vera conducted the first-ever systematic survey of them in 1999. Vera's interviews with more than 600 family court users found that most had something positive to say about the court, particularly about court officers, but often complained about long waiting times and inaccurate, misleading, or absent signs. A large proportion of litigants also reported that they had appeared in court without legal representation. The results of the survey were immediately used by a new administrative judge to improve conditions in the court as city officials began preparing improvements to the legal representation available.

The right to counsel

Most people arrested in the United States cannot afford to hire a lawyer, but justice requires that they be represented. Governments meet their obligation to provide lawyers in these cases in different ways, sometimes creating public defender offices with salaried staff, other times relying on the appointment of private practitioners to represent individual defendants, and occasionally contracting with law firms or nonprofit organizations to represent set numbers of defendants annually. The result is a haphazard system of indigent defense that frequently fails both defendants and the courts.

The Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem (NDS), initiated by Vera in 1990, experimented with the structure of indigent defense services, trying to balance a more effective defense based in the community, where staff members could spend more time on investigations, with demands that public defense be cost-effective. NDS based its offices in Harlem, far from the courthouse, and made community involvement the core of its approach to defense. To balance the increased cost of this location, NDS employed a team-approach that united lawyers, community investigators, and caseworkers as equal partners in the process. Team members shared information, and if a client's lawyer was unavailable when work was required, other members of the team responded.

NDS proved that a solid and intensive representation based in the community could reduce the sentences that its clients received and therefore be cost-effective. Vera's research showed that people represented by NDS lawyers received jail and prison sentences substantially shorter than those represented by traditional indigent defenders. The project became a model for other defender organizations across the country. Independent of Vera since 1995, NDS continues to provide quality service to more than 3,000 individuals in northern Manhattan each year.

The Neighborhood Defender Service not only showed how a particular organization of defense services could achieve better results in court, its collaboration with police, jail, and budget officials proved that defenders could take a leadership role in improving the justice system. To help encourage and prepare more defenders across the country to play this bigger role, Vera launched the National Defender Leadership Project (NDLP) in 1998. In its first two years, the project provided training seminars and produced publications aimed at helping defender managers take up leadership roles in the system. It sparked a national dialogue among defender managers about ways to forge the system-wide alliances that enhance the quality of indigent defense services and justice overall. Lessons from the seminars are now available through a [web-based tutorial](#).

In the summer of 2002, Vera began assisting the Defender Services Division of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the administrative arm of the federal judiciary, in its effort to help the nation's 94 federal judicial districts better meet the challenges of providing panel attorney representation. (Part of most assigned counsel systems, panel attorneys are private attorneys paid by the government to represent people who do not have the resources to pay for lawyers.) The final report, *Improving Public Defense Systems: Good*

Practices for Federal Panel Attorney Programs, addresses the administration and structure of the panel; panel size; selection, review, and training of participating attorneys; the appointment process; and compensation.

Just and effective prosecution

No single role in the court system is more established and powerful than that of the prosecutor. As a result, most Vera projects have depended on close collaboration with prosecutors to achieve improvements in the courts.

Vera's most recent work with prosecutors measures the effect of state victim rights laws on district attorneys' offices. Beginning in 1999, Vera researchers surveyed prosecutors around the country, then conducted in-depth interviews with prosecutors in Wisconsin and North Carolina, two states that recently passed strong victims' rights laws. The researchers also compared case files in these states before and after the new legislation took effect to see if the laws influenced conviction rates, sentences, and the time it took to complete a case. Most prosecutors in the study said that the laws had imposed significant costs on their offices, requiring them to hire new staff and spend more money, especially to notify victims of their rights. But while notification was expensive, other costs stemming from the legislation were kept down because from 50 to 90 percent of victims in the Wisconsin and North Carolina counties that Vera studied declined to exercise their rights. A large majority of the prosecutors also felt that the laws had affected court outcomes but only in a small number of cases. However, Vera's analysis of case files did not reveal any significant changes in case outcomes or delays.

Outside the United States, when the role of the prosecutor has been in great flux, Vera has helped several national governments balance the prosecutor's dual commitments to justice and crime control. In England, the national government asked Vera's assistance in the creation of the Crown Prosecution Service in 1986. Until that time, prosecutions had been conducted under the authority of the police, but expansions in police powers led the government to create the country's first independent, public prosecutors. Vera's London office organized two demonstration projects in collaboration with the Crown Prosecution Service: first to develop its role in making bail recommendations, and second to develop its authority to halt prosecutions, even where the evidence of guilt was strong, when the prosecutors decided that a criminal conviction was not in the public interest.

In younger democracies, ineffective prosecution is a special problem, not only because criminals go unpunished but because public trust in a fragile system is hurt. Ineffective prosecution can lead to increased incidents of vigilantism or calls for a return to authoritarian government. The Institute's work in South Africa, through the [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#), has included two projects to help the nascent government improve public prosecutions. In March 1999, the Bureau launched the Prosecution Task Force on Car Hijacking in dozens of courts around Johannesburg to tackle the scourge of car hijacking

occurring throughout the region. The goals of the task force were speedier resolution of cases in court, more effective investigations and prosecutions, and greater involvement and support of victims. It surpassed expectations, increasing the conviction rate from less than 10 percent to 50 percent. The task force is now a permanent part of the South African government.

In June 2000, the Bureau launched the Thuthuzela Care Centre for victims of rape. The project is designed to demonstrate that a team approach to the investigation of rape cases—bringing together police, prosecutors, community members, and health care and social workers—can improve the treatment of victims, streamline investigations, and perhaps also boost conviction rates. Based in a local hospital in the townships outside Cape Town and in more rural Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape, the centers respond as soon as a woman reports a rape at a local police station. An emergency vehicle provided exclusively for rape victims picks her up at the station and takes her to the center, where she receives a thorough medical examination and can shower and change clothes. A police investigator assigned and trained to handle rape cases, comes to the center to take her statement and begins to coordinate with a "dedicated" prosecutor on the investigation of the case. Finally, the center arranges for the woman to receive treatment for HIV and follow-up counseling, and to be taken home.

Initial studies reflect that the caring and dignified treatment that the centers provide is significantly decreasing the "secondary victimization" of rape survivors by the justice system, and helping to strengthen the presentation and prosecution of rape cases in court. Because of these promising results, the South African government is planning to replicate the Thuthuzela Centres nationally, and the Thuthuzela Centre became a model for a similar initiative by the government of Chile in 2003.

The leadership of the national prosecution agency was crucial to both of these projects, and the public success of the projects should help establish confidence in the ability of the young government to deal appropriately with serious crime.

### Techniques for innovation

To advance innovation in the administration of justice that is both just and conserving of valuable fiscal and personnel resources, Vera employs the same five techniques we use in all our programs: we focus on specific problems, create new options, convey new information, build incentives for government partners to use the options and information, and offer objective research and analysis of each project's outcomes. Over four decades, these techniques have proved effective in diverse projects involving the court process.

The Manhattan Bail Project offered judges the option of releasing defendants into the community based on verified community ties as an alternative to sending defendants into the already overcrowded detention system. The final Vera evaluation of the project proved that the individuals released due to verified information were even more likely to appear in court

than individuals released on bail. The analysis added yet another incentive for using the innovation: a cost-savings of over \$1 million for the Department of Corrections.

Vera designed the Appearance Assistance Program with a very specific population in mind. Rather than place all New York City-area immigrants in removal proceedings, it recommended release and intensive supervision for those with local family members or friends willing to sponsor them. Like the Manhattan Bail Project, the program offered the new option of allowing individuals to be supervised within the community rather than sending them to already overflowing detention centers. The new option came with an added incentive. As the final research on the project, released in August 2000, concluded, about 90 percent of supervised noncitizens appeared in court compared to 70 percent of nonparticipants.

The Neighborhood Defender Service offered a new option both to defendants in Harlem and to defense lawyers by allowing them greater access to one another. The team process employed by NDS facilitated this access. Defendants and their families would seek out help earlier if a defender was close by, and likewise defenders could more easily seek out defendants and witnesses when necessary. Analysis of the program found that NDS clients received sentences that averaged 100 fewer days than those who received other types of representation. Again, the savings added another incentive for attempting the innovation.

Crime seems endemic in post-apartheid South Africa, often eroding public trust in the judicial process. One of the goals of the Prosecution Task Force on Car Hijacking was to restore the community's faith in the justice system by offering individuals more information on how to prevent and resist being a victim of car hijacking. Project staff passed on information they gleaned on hijacking prevention by bringing together stakeholders from different areas of government and the community. Through this process, the project did indeed build trust in the justice system among members of the community and help reduce car hijackings. Moreover, the project sped up prosecutions and increased the conviction rate from 10 to 50 percent, supplying more than enough incentive for government to make the task force a permanent part of its operations.

For more than 40 years Vera has worked with government leaders to improve the ability of the courts to administer justice to individuals. Through its research, technical assistance, and demonstration projects, the Institute has expanded the possibilities of reforming courts with respect for both efficiency and a just process.

## Chronology of Vera's Work on the Judicial Process

- 1967      Manhattan Bowery Corporation [*renamed Project Renewal in 1994*]  
Experimental 24-Hour Arraignment Court
- 1968      Manhattan Court Employment Project [*spun off in 1970; folded into the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services/CASES in 1989*]
- 1970      Neighborhood Youth Diversion Program [*spun off as Neighborhood Youth and Family Services in 1979*]
- 1972      Felony Disposition Study [*completed in 1978*]
- 1973      Legal Action Center [*continuing*]
- 1974      London Bail Project  
Early Case Assessment Bureaus
- 1978      Family Court Disposition Study [*completed in 1981*]
- 1981      Felony Case Preparation Project
- 1984      Evaluation of the Speedy Disposition Program
- 1987      Bail Bond Supervision, Nassau County Project [*transferred to Education and Assistance Corporation/EEC in 1992*]
- 1990      Bail Bond Supervision, Essex County Project [*transferred to Volunteers of America in 1993*]  
Neighborhood Defender Service [*spun off in 1993*]
- 1991      Bail Bond Supervision, Bronx Project [*closed in 1994*]
- 1993      Computerization of the Midtown Community Court
- 1995      The Citizens Jury Project [*OmbudService incorporated into the Fund for Modern Courts in 2000*]  
Computerized Statewide Domestic Violence Registry



Chronology of Vera's Work on the Judicial Process (continued)

- 1997      Appearance Assistance Program [*closed in 2000*]  
            Pretrial Services Demonstration in South Africa [*incorporated into South African Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Development in 2000*]  
            National Defender Leadership Project [*closed in 2001*]
- 1999      Prosecution Task Force on Car Hijacking in South Africa [*incorporated into South African Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Development in 2001*]  
            Family Court User's survey  
            Enhancing Judicial Oversight in Domestic Violence Cases [*continuing*]  
            Legislative Analysis of Victims' Rights Legislation and its Effects on Prosecutors, Judges, Courts, and Victims
- 2000      Thuthuzela Rape Crisis Center in South Africa [*continuing*]  
            Pretrial Detention Project in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia [*completed 2003*]  
            Center for Justice Assistance in Moscow [*spun off 2003*]  
            Haiti Delegation on Pretrial Detention [*completed 2002*]

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