University of Nevada, Reno

Re-Educating "Victims" and "Aggressors" of Violence:
Mapping Discourse and Practice in a
Mexican Violence Prevention Education Program

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Anthropology

by

Aimee V. LaFayette

Dr. Deborah A. Boehm/Thesis Advisor

December, 2011

N

University of Nevada, Reno

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

We recommend that the thesis
prepared under our supervision by

AIMEE V. LAFAYETTE

entitled

**Re-Educating Victims And Aggressors Of Violence: Mapping Discourse And
Practice In A Mexican Violence Prevention Education Program**

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Deborah A. Boehm, Advisor

Erin E. Stiles, Committee Member

Mary White Stewart, Graduate School Representative

Marsha H. Read, Ph. D., Associate Dean, Graduate School

December, 2011

ABSTRACT

The international human rights movement against gendered violence provides a valuable site for understanding how new categories of meaning emerge and are applied to social practices around the world. Human rights discourse is always translated into local terms and situated within local contexts of power and meaning. This ethnographic research examines how gender and violence are discussed within a violence prevention education program located in a north central Mexican city. By observing interactions between facilitators and participants, participating in the program's sessions, conducting one-on-one interviews with the program's facilitators, and analyzing the manual used by the prevention education program, I explore how gender and violence are defined in a local setting. The project considers how transnational discourse on human rights and gendered violence has been adapted to become relevant to individuals' lives. This analysis reveals how global human rights discourse does not neatly translate to local settings. Specifically, international assumptions of gendered violence do not adequately account for diverse cultural contexts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

> **The Re-Education Program**: A learning process in which men and women develop new skills and ways of behavior to relate to each other, from a place of equality within the relationships, whether between partners, with children or relatives, and their social environment.
>
> - Re-Education Program Manual (2010:16)

Sally Engle Merry (2006) writes about how the transnational circulation of people and ideas is transforming the world we live in, but grasping its full complexity is very difficult. To initiate an understanding, it is essential to focus on specific locations where transnational flows are happening. The international human rights movement against gendered violence provides a valuable site for understanding how new categories of meaning emerge and are applied to social practices around the world. These meanings are often enthusiastically appropriated by regional, national, and local social movements and are used to criticize everyday practices of violence. In order for human rights ideas to be effective, however, they need to be translated into local terms and situated within local contexts of power and meaning (Merry, 2006:1). Examining this process is crucial to understanding the way human rights are enacted in the contemporary world.

In this thesis, I examine violence prevention education in a north central Mexican city. The focus of this ethnographic study is on understanding how topics addressing gender and violence are discussed within the program. By observing interactions between facilitators and participants, personally participating in the program's sessions, conducting one-on-one interviews with the program's facilitators, and examining the manual used by the prevention education program, I explore how gender and violence are defined in a local setting. That is, I look at how transnational discourse on human rights broadly, and gendered violence specifically, has been adapted to become relevant in individuals' lives. This analysis reveals how global human rights discourse does not neatly translate to local settings. Specifically, international assumptions of gendered violence do not adequately account for diverse cultural contexts.

The human rights system is a legal system that asserts and privileges universal standards, often without considerations of local cultures, histories, or contexts. The universalizing approach of this code is structured by the practice that its mandate apply to all countries equally (Merry, 2006:130). The contradiction between the diversity of experiences around the globe and the effort to articulate equality and rights universally is a fundamental tension within human rights practice. These goals may be in conflict: applying a universalistic framework can obscure local particularities, and efforts at the local level may not be aligned with universal mandates (Merry, 2006:103).

The violence prevention education program I studied reveals the gaps between global visions of equity and specific visions in local contexts. There is a tension between the generalizing strategies of transnational theories on gendered violence and the particularistic methods of individuals working within local contexts. By focusing on a

local context, this research reveals how the human rights framework, which often attributes the existence of violence to cultural specificity, is adapted to Mexico. Within the program's curriculum—which was created primarily by scholars and practioners outside of Mexico—Mexican culture is frequently presented as the underlying cause of violence against women. This perspective permeates the program's discussions of masculinity, femininity, and violence.

This research aims to demonstrate how, by assuming that culture causes violence, human rights discourse can "culturalize" (Merry, 2006:132) the social life of program participants, casting violence as behavior shaped by culture rather than a symptom of broader structures of economics, politics, and social class. This research illustrates how focusing on culture as a barrier to social equality for women overlooks the extent to which social and cultural changes are already taking place in Mexican's lives and deemphasizes the centrality of economic and political factors in hindering social transformation. Based on the description of interactions between the program and its participants, this research underscores the ways that local cultural practices and beliefs may contradict, interact with, and/or accommodate global legal principles. Above all, the project points to the importance of considering the effects of universal human rights frameworks at the local level, and in the everyday practices of individuals and communities engaging with such discourses.

As an anthropologist, I was drawn to the topic of violence prevention education because of my background working for multiple non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within the United States and Caribbean that provide domestic violence and sexual assault services. I have done victim advocacy, peer mentoring, and violence

prevention education. Due to my involvement with these organizations, I have been exposed to the multiple and varying ways issues surrounding gendered violence are discussed. Furthermore, I have had the opportunity to partake in a number of training opportunities and guest lectures, as well as have access to curriculum and materials covering topics related to domestic violence and sexual assault. These experiences have provided me with a situated understanding of Western discourse on the topic of gendered violence.

The site of my work was a state-run domestic violence and sexual assault agency I have renamed *La Agencia de Apoyo a las Mujeres y los Hombres* (Agency for the Support of Women and Men) (AAMH). The agency had a number of employees hired to do outreach and education on issues addressing gendered violence. On my first day in the office, the director of AAMH informed me that staff hired to carry out violence prevention education were facilitating group sessions a part of a federally funded program called *Programa de Reeducacion Para Victimas y Agresores de Violencia de Pareja* (Re-Education Program for Victims and Aggressors of Partner Violence), herein referred to as the Re-Education Program. I was invited, provided I received participants' permission, to attend all of these group sessions to observe how violence prevention education was conducted in the context of this program.

The Re-Education Program is the first federally funded group therapy program in Mexico. It was developed in response to Mexico passing the *Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia* (General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence) in 2007, which appropriated funds for intervention and educational services for citizens living with violence. Chapter 2 elaborates on this legislative process

to describe how the creation of the Re-Education Program curriculum primarily draws on international perspectives of gendered violence to frame its discussions of gender and violence. This is represented in the overarching goal of the program for "women to live a life free of violence." Chapter 2 is structured to reveal how assumptions about violence made within an international human rights framework do not necessarily translate within particular cultural contexts. By linking activities, models, and theories within the Re-Education Program to their creators, primarily U.S. scholars or domestic violence and sexual assault programs, I demonstrate how there is a disconnect between the activity's original purpose and how it is presented in the program.

The program is divided into men's and women's groups, with gender-specific activities addressing violence in each session. Each group is expected to have between twelve and fifteen participants. Every group is facilitated by a team of two facilitators. In total, there are eight facilitators, four men and four women, broken into four teams: two female teams comprised of two women each and two male teams with two men each. The program consists of twenty-five sessions occurring once a week for two and half hours. A majority of these group sessions occur at the agency's main office, but a few are held in other locations. I observed men's and women's groups at a hospital, a women's group held at a rural health center, and a men's group held at a military base.

Recruitment for Re-Education Program participants occurred in a number of different ways. A majority of female participants had accessed AAMH services because they were living in a violent situation, and AAMH had recommended that they be a part of the Re-Education Program. Contrastingly, many of the male participants had been court ordered to attend the program's sessions because they had been found guilty of

domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Recruitment was not the same for the male

military participants; the Re-Education Program was offered as a course to fulfill their

obligations as an active duty soldier. The military group consisted of fifteen soldiers

ranging in ranks from "one stripe" to "three stripes." Attendance for this group was the

most consistent out of all men's groups. AAMH staff also recruited their own friends and

family to participate in the program. I was able to identify a number of staff members

whose mothers, fathers, husbands, or wives were participating in order to show support

for the program. Advertising for the groups was done throughout the city, with posters

and postcards placed at doctor's offices, health care centers, and government buildings.

My research took place over the course of six weeks. Monday through Friday,

beginning at 9:00 am, I arrived at AAMH's office and checked in with Isabel, the Re-

Education Program manager, about the schedule of group sessions and any other events

or outreach initiatives that were going on that day. Typically my day was broken into

two parts: group observations and interviews.

For group observations, I was formally introduced to the group by the lead

facilitator, and participants were asked if they felt comfortable by my presence. If all

participants confirmed consent, I would sit as part of the group. Sometimes I would

participate in group activities and discussions, while other times I only observed. As my

time at AAMH increased, the facilitators knew I was familiar with the format of each

session and therefore would ask if I would help set up or take down the materials used in

a particular session. In addition, they would ask me if I wanted to keep any of the

materials created during the sessions to add to my field notes. For example, some

activities entailed writing on large sheets of paper that were shared within the groups. I

found these materials extremely helpful as a method for recording the groups'

experiences, and which allowed me to compare how activities were conducted or

participants responded within the different groups.

In addition, I conducted one-on-one interviews with all eight facilitators, as well

as Isabel, the Re-Education Program manager, Maria, AAMH's resident doctor, and Rita,

an advocate who had worked for the agency for seven years. These interviews were

about an hour long. My questions concentrated on how AAMH staff discussed

constructions of gender and definitions of violence with Re-Education Program

participants, based on the information or formal training they received at the agency in

addition to their personal experiences. Often these questions resulted in an open dialogue

that allowed me to make connections between the personal lives of AAMH staff and how

these experiences influenced their work.

During my time in the AAMH office, I worked closely with the facilitators

associated with the Re-Education Program. The proximity of my designated space in the

office to the table where the facilitators worked enabled me to be a part of their

conversations, as well as observe how they prepared for or wrapped up a session. I was

always invited to ask questions, and it became common for certain facilitators to

approach me and ask if I had any questions about the upcoming session. When groups

were held outside AAMH's office, staff would make sure I knew where I was going prior

to embarking on a bus. Sometimes staff would even adjust their schedules to pick me up

at the office and take me to group sessions. Additionally, the facilitators were always

concerned about my well-being and safety after night groups and so they would often

drive me home to my apartment, even when it was only two blocks away.

Defining Gender

> Gender is a social and cultural construction that, from gender differences, produces various inequalities and hierarchies that give prominence to men and masculinity, while devaluing, oppressing, and discriminating against women and femininity.

> - Re-Education Program Manual (2010:15)

The concept of gender has shifted dramatically over the last 30 years within the anthropological and social sciences. Prior to the 1970s, researchers in many fields failed to pay attention to what women thought or did. In Michaela di Leonardo's words, "prefeminist anthropology was similar to many other branches of knowledge, such as literary criticism, which simply represented a largely male universe" (1991:5-6). In particular, the most notable anthropological theoretical movements of the 1920s through the 1960s ignored or naturalized sexual difference. For example, structural-functionalist work on kinship in Africa assumed male dominance in its considerations of kinship and marriage patterns, while the linguistics-inspired kinship analyses of the 1960s generally ignored sexual difference altogether (di Leonardo, 1991:5). The prefeminist lack of attention to gender was so great that Ward Goodenough, a well-respected kinship theorist, could write approvingly of a Trukese man's beating of his daughter: "A good hard jolt that was just what she deserved" (1965:12).

The early 1970s was a decade that closely linked scholarly and political ferment within the United States. The civil rights and antiwar movements had grown and given birth to theory and activism concerned with environmental issues, American foreign policy, gay, black, Latino, Asian, and Native American rights—and feminism (di

Leonardo, 1991:2). Anthropologists responded to the feminist movement by questioning

assumptions within academic and public spheres. By reconsidering anthropology in light

of feminist insights, feminist anthropologists began addressing women's and men's

differing experiences as topics on their own terms. For example, Jane Collier's key 1974

piece on political anthropology redrew that discipline's map to include women's kinship

struggles, which are concerned, after all, with the distribution of domestic power to

women, which, in turn, often reveals female influences on male public political actions

(di Leonardo, 1991:8).

Feminist anthropologists conducting ethnographic work in 1970s concentrated on

explaining women's subordination to men across cultures (Rosaldo & Lamphere, 1974).

Specifically, second wave feminists began exploring gender in relation to Marxism,

systematically linking kinship and economy. For example, Sherry Ortner's (1974)

rereading of Levi-Strauss's structural dichotomization of human thought ascribed

women's inequality to a cultural link between women as "nature" and men as "culture."

Contrastingly, Michelle Rosaldo (1974) saw women's subordination as the result of their

embeddedness in the private sphere while power resided in the public sphere. Later,

feminist anthropologists critiqued these theories of dichotomies by concluding that

although they were useful to explain Western cultures, they did not foster an

understanding of the myriad ways gender shapes social relationships in other cultures

(Sanday, 1981). Michaela di Leonardo (1991:15-16) also comments on the limitation of

feminist theories explaining subordination by pointing out that the nature/culture

dichotomy is not universal and was formed in the Enlightenment, while the private/public

sphere was developed in nineteenth-century Europe. Neither describes universal features of women's and men's lives.

Nonetheless, both feminist anthropologists and activists found challenging the distinction between the public sphere and the private sphere to be politically important during the 1970s and 1980s (Merry, 2009:9). Anthropologists contributed to this political debate on female subordination by studying how, in diverse cultural contexts, women were positioned in the private sphere, resulting in their exclusion from politics, power, and authority. Women were situated in the protected sphere of the home and family, where men governed them. This positioning of men, as having authority over the family, has been attributed to the reason states were reluctant to intervene in the family, even in cases of violence. As a result, advocates for battered women claimed "the personal was political," and began problematize the public/private divide in order to enable social and legal intervention into violence in families.

Since early work about gender, anthropologists have continued to challenge the public/private dichotomy through research about the flexibility of gender subjectivities. Research has considered male and female gender identities along a continuum, rather than within bounded dualistic categories. For example, Matthew Gutmann's (2007) study of male identities reveals a diversity of ways that men perform masculinity. He challenges assumptions that masculinity is defined only by concepts of "machismo." Instead, he describes increasing engagement of men in housework and childcare. Younger men are particularly likely to play with and care for children and to say that they are not macho since they help out at home and do not beat their wives. Theoretical work on gay/lesbian identities has also contributed in significant ways to challenging

essentialist theories of gender and recognizing the variability of gender performances (Butler, 1990; D'Emilio, 1983; Foucault, 1978).

Chapter 3 draws on anthropological theories to examine how the Re-Education Program defines and presents gender constructions. I discuss how the program's definitions of gender move between being fixed and determined to flexible and performative. At times, the Re-Education Program's curriculum presents narrow definitions of femininity that are associated with concepts such as inequality, the domestic sphere, and subordination. Established as a binary opposite, masculinity is linked with violence, the public sphere, and authority. These definitions of gender are often reinforced by participants and facilitators, who apply stereotypical expectations for men and women in Mexico to their own lives. However, there are also instances when participants and facilitators contest these narrow gender definitions and perform alternative gender roles. For instance, some female participants explored the possibility of leaving their husbands, a move that contests gendered expectations for women to maintain a traditional role as a wife and mother.

Such discourses reveal how human rights ideas on gender do not translate directly to local contexts. Gender identity is not predetermined. Therefore, my analysis of gender underscores how participants may perceive their identity in relation to changes in cultural beliefs and practices that are occurring as a result of global ideas about human rights being introduced to local communities. Moreover, I look at how experiences of violence are constituted by both class and cultural differences and similarities, as well as how these factors may affect the way in which gender identities are limited or expanded

through one's participation in the Re-Education Program. This research underscores that cultural constructs of gender are not fixed.

Defining Gendered Violence

Research on gendered violence typically links its causes to family dynamics or childhood experiences. For example, psychopathological models of gendered violence focus on individual characteristics as the cause of interpersonal violence. Some psychopathological explanations focus on the psychology of the offender, while others find that violence against women stems from the psychological problems or deficiencies of the victims. These theories view violence in men as a result of dysfunctional communication patterns evidenced by poor anger control and often complicated by stress, drug, and alcohol abuse. According to researchers, many violent men were themselves abused by their own families and abused women are understood to suffer from dependent or self-defeating personality disorders that encourage violence through passive hostility, masochism, or low self-esteem (O'Toole and Schiffman, 1997:249).

While I do consider the importance of psychological and interpersonal factors—especially because it is the primary perspective maintained by the Re-Education Program—my analysis is grounded in an anthropological perspective that contextualizes violence within the family, community, and state. By emphasizing culture and context when discussing the psychological dimensions of violence, Chapter 4 focuses on the meanings of gendered violence in various situations. My analysis of the program's activities relies on a comparative approach to show how violence is related to larger

patterns of social inequality such as class discrimination, as wells as patterns of gender inequality, family organization, and marriage arrangements. Understanding gendered violence requires looking at the intimate details of family life and at geopolitical considerations of power.

According to Merry (2009), an anthropological perspective on gendered violence has four dimensions. First, anthropologists consider social movements and political debates about violence as subject to change over time (Merry, 2009:19). Rape and violence within intimate relationships have been practices perceived as occurring across time and space. What is new is the creation of a global social movement which names these acts, links them to gender practices, and sees them as basic to gender subordination (Merry, 2009:19). The forms of violence this movement targets has changed over time. For example, second-wave western feminists focused on specific cultural practices such as female genital cutting, and recent conceptions have expanded to include more indirect forms of violence, such as the disproportionate number of women who become refugees. Second, an anthropological perspective recognizes that gender itself is not fixed, but performed for audiences in various contexts (Merry, 2009:19). Gender is defined by kinship systems, forms of marriage, as well as nationalisms that may cast women as mothers of the nation and men as its soldiers and defenders (Nagel, 1998). Third, an anthropological perspective maintains that interpersonal behavior must be understood within wider contexts of power and meaning (Merry, 2009:20). For gendered violence, it is critical to understand how violence between individuals is a dimension of violence by states, by communities, and by institutions. Finally, fourth, an anthropological perspective is comparative. Gender violence is a global phenomenon (Merry, 2009:20).

It takes place all over the world, albeit at different frequencies and in different forms, depending on local systems of meaning, kinship structures, gender inequalities, and levels of violence in the wider society.

Collectively, these four perspectives reveal how current international understandings of gendered violence, as a human rights violation, are a product of active global exchange. These perspectives illustrate how the range of actions considered to constitute gendered violence has expanded, as well as how new global alliances and mechanisms for reducing violence have been created. The presence of the Re-Education Program within Mexico is a product of this interaction between the global and the local. In emphasizing an anthropological perspective on culture and context, this research highlights the global-local connections by describing how the Re-Education Program is relevant to locals' experiences while not losing sight of the fact that the program's foundation is constructed on the international premise that gendered violence is a significant social problem that warrants state and private intervention.

Gendered Violence in Mexico

Statistics on rates of gendered violence are collected by Mexico's *Centro Nacional de Equidad de Genero y Salud Reproductiva* (National Center for Gender Equality and Reproductive Health) and published in a government document titled "*Modelo Integrado para la Prevencion y Atencion de La Violencia Familiar y Sexual* (2006) (Integrated Model for the Prevention and Treatment of Domestic and Sexual Violence). This collaborative study, done by the *Secretaria de Salud* (Secretary of

Health) and the *Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica* (National Institute of Public Health), found that 21.5% of women in Mexico had experienced violence by a current partner; 34% had been assaulted by a partner sometime in their life; and 60.4% had experienced violence sometime in their life, whether by their partners or relatives. Initially, merely 6.5% of the 21.5% currently experiencing violence directly identified themselves as victims of violence. Only after questions about the range of acts considered violent were expanded upon did the rate increase to 21.5%. Two explanations are proposed in the repot for why violence is misrecognized by these women: first, violence is naturalized within interpersonal relationships; and second, these women do not have the "tools" necessary to identify violence in its various manifestations (*Modelo Integrado*, 2006:26).

Both of these explanations speak to the importance of and necessity for violence prevention education. Consequently, my research is focused on the violence prevention education efforts of the Mexican government. Yet, an understanding of the Re-Education Program would be incomplete without a brief overview of how gender inequality in Mexico correlates with particular structural determinants. The term "structural violence" (Galtung, 1969) is the perspective applied to this analysis: violence is "built into the structures and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969:171). The effect of structural violence is that people are culturally marginalized in ways that deny them the opportunity for emotional and physical well-being, or expose them to assault or rape, or subject them to hazards that can cause sickness and death (Anglin, 1998:145).

As a developing country, structural measures of Mexican women's position have improved, with increasing numbers pursuing educational opportunities, working under

favorable conditions, and marrying by choice as grown women (Frias, 2007). However, the employment opportunities and the salaries females earn continue to fall short of males (Frias, 2007). As a result, women overall are less educated and face gender discrimination in employment. Female workers in the maquiladoras—a duty-free manufacturing plant that "re-exports" an assembled product—best represent this gender inequality. Leslie Salzinger (2000) has identified these women as often being paid below subsistence level, and at lower rates than men, perpetuating the structural violence of female poverty.

An explanation of why women in Mexico and Latin America continue to experience high rates of violence cannot be easily summarized. However, there are two prominent factors identified in this research. First, the relative level of immobility for women within Mexico's economy, as described above, is present in the women's stories told as they participate in the Re-Education Program's activities. The program curriculum educates the participants through this story telling activity by discussing how their economic immobility correlates to their restricted access to resources, resulting in the participants experiencing multiple forms of violence.

Second, the presentation of women and men's lives within the session topics connects with research describing how women fear both state-sponsored violence and threats of everyday violence from within the home and community, thereby illustrating how structural violence is intimately connected to more interpersonal forms of violence (e.g. LeVine and Correa, 1993; Logan, 1997). Due to these fears, women's physical mobility within their communities is controlled, limiting their lives to the private realm of the domestic sphere (Howell, 2004:329). This reality is explored by Cecilia Menjivar

(2011), who notes that among women of San Alejo, Guatemala, physical movement is constrained and social interactions are curtailed by their husbands in the name of protecting women's reputations and status within the local communities. For Mexico specifically, rape is arguably more common than official statistics indicate (Shrader-Cox, 1992), and fear of rape is reported in large cities and small towns. Matthew Gutmann (2007:132) also describes fear in his analysis of the differences between men's and women's perceptions of life and subsequent behaviors in Santo Domingo, a working-class neighborhood in Mexico City. He points out that whereas men out at night fear being robbed when they hear someone walking behind them, women in the same situation immediately worry about "assault, robbery . . . and rape" (Gutmann, 2007:13). Finally, Roberta Villalon (2010:23) explains how, living with daily experiences of violence, Latina women are isolated and immersed in shame over their violent situation, which impedes them from reaching out for help—be it emotional, informational, or material.

These authors' work point in the same direction: toward the complexity and embeddedness of gender oppression. As Villalon explains, "gender violence per se, always tends to be more than that; gender violence tends to be an expression of dominance in its intersection with sexual, racial, ethnic, and class oppression, as well as the construction of nationhood and citizenship" (2010:8). The multiple forms of violence discussed in the Re-Education Program expose the deep, broad, and indirect consequences of living in a society in which the population is economically stratified and entrenched in "ideologies of nationhood that have been inescapably gendered and have precipitated . . . iconic forms of womanhood, which in metaphorizing women as symbolic

bearers of national identity, have rendered the materiality of women's lives and bodies all the more vulnerable to forms of violence and violence exclusion" (Banerjee et al., 2004:126). By sharing stories of Mexican men and women participating in the Re-Education Program, it becomes apparent how the program maintains two perspectives explaining why violence is a part of participants' lives. It perceives the male participants as having pathological issues producing violent tendencies whereas women are encouraged to identify multiple systems of oppression and exclusion. These individual's lives are very complex and my study reveals the intersection of micro and macro forces that produces violence in participants' lives. It is for this reason that my discussions combine analyses of the Manual used by program facilitators with ethnographic research among both facilitators and participants. It is my goal to examine "violence" and "gender" as they are presented in the program and reflect on the relevance of these topics, as defined by international discourse, in a local setting and within participants' lives.

The Question of Culture

Debates about universalism and cultural relativism as they relate to gendered violence have a long history in anthropology. Some anthropologists have argued that what outside observers construe as obvious assaults on dignity may in fact be long standing cultural institutions highly valued by society (see discussion in Farmer, 2003:47). Paul Farmer takes issue with this perspective by asking, "Is every culture a law unto itself and answerable to nothing other than itself" (2003:47). Farmer and human rights activists believe the answer is "no" because there is no need to abandon the notion

of universal human rights in the face of cultural relativism (Stewart, 2002:185).

"'Culture' does not explain suffering; it may at worst furnish an alibi" (Farmer, 2003:49).

By taking this stance, human rights activists have redefined various cultural traditional

practices such as widow immolation, prenatal sex selection and female infanticide, child

marriage, arranged or forced marriage, polygamy, seclusion and veiling, and food taboos

for women as harmful acts of violence and a breach of women's human rights (Merry,

2006:27). Yet, in the United States, domestic violence, rape in wartime, and stalking are

not labeled as harmful cultural practices nor are forms of violence against women's

bodies such as cosmetic surgery and dieting.

As Mary White Stewart describes: "Cultural relativism demands context.

Mindless relativism is as dangerous as any other ideology requiring adherence to a party

line" (2002:185). Therefore, in heeding to these comments, this research views culture as

an open and flexible system. This perspective changes the debate about human rights and

their localization by offering a more accurate framework for human rights activism. This

conception of culture does not eliminate tensions between rights concepts and cultural

beliefs. Nor does it resolve the gap between general principles and the complexities of

local contexts. Instead, this concept of culture focuses attention on the capacity of local

social arrangements to promote human rights ideals and the importance of framing

universalistic reforms in local cultural terms (Merry, 2009:28).

I seek to show how the way culture is conceptualized within the Re-Education

determines how social change is imagined. For example, in the men's sessions,

participants discuss how male "*machista*" culture—what people often associate with

alcoholism, infidelity, gambling, the abandonment of children, and bullying behavior

(Gutmann, 2007:15)—is directly responsible for male violence towards women. In contrast, the women's groups recognize different types of violence, for example sexual, emotional, or physical, as well as how men use these forms of violence to assert power and control. Among men, the barrier to change is theorized as cultural tradition; among women, the barrier is not being able to recognize how violence exists in one's life. The first model sees culture as fixed; the second assumes that violence will become more recognizable (and less tolerable) as populations become more educated.

Global Cultural Processes

Understanding the global-local interface of human rights ideas requires attention to transnational cultural flows and their relationship to local cultural spaces. This analysis begins with the recognition that these flows are occurring in radically different forms than they did in the past. Appadurai (1990:27-28) points out that interactions in the past were slowed by limited technologies of transportation and communication. The present is different because it is placeless but still has flow (Appadurai, 1996:29), whereas the past was placed and localistic (Appadurai, 1990:28). These differences are embodied in the creation of the Re-Education Program, which came about as a result of the speed of communications and the sweep of global entities such as the United Nations forcing national governments to recognize universal democratic human rights within their own jurisdictions (Appadurai, 2001:43). Furthermore, the global processes that produce an international human rights framework—on which the Re-Education Program is modeled—are complex, overlapping, and disjunctive (Appadurai, 1990:6). This research

explores these global processes by examining how the Re-Education Program's vertical collaboration with powerful urban, regional, and national agencies also concerned with women's issues and violence are determined by contingencies such as leadership, flexibility, and the availability of materials (Appadurai, 2001:44).

I borrow from Merry (2006) to distinguish three forms of global cultural flows affiliated with the Re-Education Program that take place across and within global and local spaces. Because these processes are fundamental to the global production and local appropriation of human rights, they inform my observations of how facilitators obtain knowledge about gender and violence, in addition to the sessions and activities they are responsible for conducting.

The first is "transnational consensus building" (Merry, 2006:19). This describes the global production of documents and resolutions that define human rights and social justice: major treaty conventions, policy documents that come out of global conferences, and resolutions and declarations of the UN General Assembly and its commissions such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Commission (Merry, 2006:19). Mexico participated in a number of these conventions. In particular, it was Mexico's ratification of the 1994 Inter-American Convention of the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women in Belem do Para, Brazil that required the Mexican Congress to enact the General Law on Women's Access to Live a Life Free of Violence in 2007 (Manual, 2010:16), which initiated the program that is the focus of my research.

The second form of cultural flows is "transnational program transplants" (Merry, 2006:19). In this type of flow, social service programs and legal innovations created in

one society are transplanted into another (Merry, 2006:19). Chapter 2 outlines how the

Re-Education Program was adopted and implemented in Mexico. Again, this program

was created as a requirement of the General Law on Women's Access to Live a Life Free

of Violence. This law, in turn, grew out of the requirement for ratifying the 1994

Convention of Belem do Para (Manual, 2010:16).

The third cultural flow that Merry (2006:20) identifies is the "localization of

transnational knowledge" by national and local actors who participate in transnational

events and bring home what they learn. Chapters 3 and 4 present the topics of "gender"

and "violence" respectively, in order to demonstrate how these terms have been adopted

and used in a local Mexican context, both by the facilitators of the groups as well as by

community members.

Structural Hierarchy

In highlighting the way in which all three of these processes converge within

AAMH, Chapter 2 characterizes how information pertinent to the Re-Education Program

flows from the global to the local, but not the other direction. I do not foresee any

changes to this pattern because the program is characterized by a hierarchical structure.

As Merry (2006:20) points out, cultural flows are channeled by global inequalities of

resources and power. Those with more resources can participate more often in

conferences and events where information is exchanged. This observation is directly

applicable to the Re-Education Program, where, for social, political, and economic

reasons, those who have access to resources have more authority. The global exchange

of information and resources is first received by individuals representing powerful institutions and government entities including the Mexican Congress, the *Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica* (National Institute of Public Health), representatives from the Pan American Health Organization, as well as scholars from foreign countries such as the United States. The discourses established internationally and at the federal level within Mexico trickle down to those with less power and influence: AAMH management staff, Re-Education Program facilitators, and lastly, participants.

Paul Farmer makes the comment that many "in vogue" concepts such as "cost-effectiveness, sustainability, and replicability are likely to pervert programs unless social justice remains central to public health and medicine" (2003:18). In the conclusion of this thesis, I draw a direct connection between these "in vogue terms" and the top-down structure that created and continues to inform the Re-Education Program. Will the practice of efficiency, implied in the practices of cost-effectiveness, sustainability, and replicability, be favored over the ideology of equity, which is inherent to the original purpose of the program, "to equally and unequivocally provide services to men and women who are victims of violence?" By posing this question, I am asking whether the hierarchal structure informing the Re-Education Program's goals will stifle adaptation of the program to the local community, resulting in its services only being provided to a small percentage of individuals.

Finally, throughout the chapters, I show how the focus of the Re-Education Program is characterized by a desire to define rights, mandate punishment of violators, and present itself as carrying out international treaties (Farmer, 2003:19). These dimensions of the Re-Education Program are contrasted by the personal stories of

participants in order to explore the strengths and limitations of conventional approaches to human rights. This comparative analysis stems from criticism that the international human rights movement is overly idealistic and is, at times, divorced from the complex realities of everyday life (Farmer, 2003:221). As Farmer has pointed out, "even those within the legal community acknowledge it is difficult to correlate a steep rise in the publication of human rights doctrines with a statistically significant drop in the number of human rights abuses" (2003:221). I highlight this disconnect between the assumption within the human rights discourse that society can attain equality and the fact that this goal is difficult to attain.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I explore how human rights violations that manifest as multiple and varying forms of gendered violence are not arbitrary accidents. Acts of gendered violence are, rather, symptoms of deeper pathologies of power (Farmer, 2003), and are linked intimately to the social conditions that so often determine who will suffer abuse and who will be shielded from harm (Farmer, 2003:7). Specifically, I introduce the concept of structural violence in Chapter 4 in order to tie it to the Re-Education Program's discussions of interpersonal and social violence. This comparison, in return, reveals how broad social inequality is the central challenge to combating gendered violence in Mexico and around the globe. In the concluding chapter, I reconsider some of the tensions with within global-local efforts to address gendered violence.

CHAPTER 2

THE RE-EDUCATION PROGRAM:
A LOCAL APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDERED VIOLENCE

> **Human Rights:** Privileges related to the individual, deriving precisely from the human condition. They are inalienable and indefensible. This means that they cannot be sold, rented, or traded in any way, and will not change or disappear with the passage of time. Every human being, by mere fact of being, has certain rights considered fundamental to life, health, integrity, and education, among others.
>
> - Re-Education Program Manual (2010:16)

> *Ignacio: How are you going to take responsibility to ensure the rights of women?*
>
> *Participant 1: I am going to begin helping with the kids.*
>
> *Participant 2: Sometimes there are problems because she leaves so much. We need to communicate better.*
>
> *Participant 3: Support her more financially because I spend my money how I please.*
>
> - Ignacio, a Re-Education Program facilitator, ending a discussion with male participants about women's rights

This chapter explores how global treaties and discourse are translated into local action by focusing on two questions. The first question asks: how are ideas about human rights approaches to violence against women adopted in local social settings? The second question is more specific: how does human rights approaches move across the gap between cosmopolitan or international awareness of human rights and local, sociocultural

understandings of gender, family, and justice? These questions are informed by the work of Merry (2006:29), whose own research has taken on the challenge of studying placeless phenomena in a place to find small interstices in global processes in which critical decisions are made, to track the information flows that constitute global discourses, and to mark the points at which competing discourses intersect in the myriad links between global and local conceptions and institutions. This chapter incorporates Merry's theoretical perspective to tell the story of how the Re-Education Program came into existence. I begin at the global level by discussing the general process by which transnational ideas on gendered violence are created and transferred to local settings. Then, in narrowing my focus specifically to Mexico, I describe how the Re-Education Program came into existence. Throughout this description, I emphasize the role of political leaders as well as NGO activists. The next section of the chapter is dedicated to analysis of the Re-Education Program. My examination of the Re-Education Program begins broadly by looking at the goals and structure of the program, followed by presentation of the facilitators of the program. I then identify a number of themes that exist within the session topics. To conclude, I discuss the sources of specific activities within the sessions. The information presented in this chapter highlights ethnography and its ability to look closely at a particular social space, to listen to the language, to pay attention to the social linkages and information exchanges, to notice power relationships, and to pay attention to the cultural constructions of social life at play in everyday interactions (Merry, 2006:29).

Gendered Violence from the Global to the Local

Within the international community, gendered violence is consistently characterized as a relatively straightforward human rights violation (Merry, 2006:1; Hawkins and Humes, 2002:238). Likened to torture, it is not only about explicit acts of bodily violence and violation, but also about "the reversals and interruptions of the expected and predictable – striking terror in the ontological security of one's life world" (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004:23). The campaign against violence towards women has taken on new importance as human rights have simultaneously become the major global approach to social justice (Richters, 1994). The conception of this movement began in 1979 in New York with the United Nations General Assembly adopting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Though this particular convention did not mention violence against women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women monitoring the convention developed an initial recommendation against violence in 1989, and in 1992 formulated a broader recommendation that defined gendered-based violence as a form of discrimination. The 1992 statement placed violence against women squarely within the rubric of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and made clear that states were obliged to eliminate violence perpetrated by public authorities as well as by private persons (Merry, 2006:22).

Gendered violence gained more attention in 1993 at the UN Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, where a worldwide petition campaign gathered over 300,000 signatures from 123 countries, putting the issue of violence against women at the center

of the conference. The concluding document, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, formally recognized the human rights of women as "an inalienable integral and indivisible part of human rights" (Connors, 1996:27). Finally, the 1995 Platform of Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing included a section on gender-based violence that defined violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life" (sec. D, 113). Additionally, the conference declared the right of protection from violence for women and girl children as a universal human right, thereby asserting an expansion of human rights (Merry, 2006:24).

These conferences and the subsequent treaties and resolutions have resulted in human rights concepts gaining increasing international credibility and support. Further support has come from activists who participate in these global settings. As representatives of many countries, they adopt the language in which human rights and gendered violence is talked about and then translate it for grassroots people back in their home country (Hawkins and Humes, 2002:241).

Nonetheless, the idea that everyday violence against women is a human rights violation has not been easy to establish, nor has it moved readily from transnational settings to local ones (Merry, 2006:3). There have been fissures between the global settings where human rights become codified in documents and the local communities where the 'subjects' of these human rights live and work. These gaps are due to the international community making the same assumptions as feminist literature in the 1980s

(Mohanty, 1984). Both characterize women as a singular group based on a shared oppression—portraying them as the archetypal victim, freezing them into "objects-who-defend-themselves," while men are "subjects-who-perpetrate-violence" (Mohanty, 1984:58). If human rights are to have an impact, they need to become part of the consciousness of ordinary people around the world. Research on law and everyday social life shows that law's power to shape society depends not on punishment alone, but on becoming embedded in everyday social practices and shaping the rules people value (Merry, 1990; Sarat and Kearns, 1993; Ewick and Silbey, 1998). Thus, violence should be theorized and interpreted within specific societies in order for it to be better understood and to effectively organize change (Mohanty, 1984:58). The distance between the global conferences where ideas about violence are formulated and the specific situations in which they are deployed reveals that often very little is known about how individuals in various social and cultural contexts come to see themselves in terms of human rights.

This transition from global to local is also difficult in the other direction, where ideas and approaches also do not move easily from local to global settings. Sometimes this obstruction is caused by transnational actors, or national elites, who are uninterested in local social practices or are too busy to understand them in their complicated contexts (Hawkins and Humes, 2002:241; Merry, 2006:3). Discussions in transnational settings rarely deal with local situations in context. This fact reveals an inevitable tension between general principles and particular situations. Frequently, transnational reformers must adhere to a set of standards that apply across cultures if they are to gain legitimacy. Moreover, they have neither the time, resources, nor a desire to tailor standards to the

particularities of each individual country, ethnic group, or regional situation (Merry, 2006:3). The outcome of this tendency is that national and local actors often feel frustrated at the lack of attention given to their individual situations.

This division between transnational elites and local actors is based less on culture and tradition than on tensions between a transnational community that envisions a "unified modernity" (Merry, 2006:3) and local actors for whom particular histories and contexts are important. To bridge this division, intermediaries such as non-profit organizations, governments, and social movement activists become more involved by playing a critical role in interpreting the cultural world of transnational modernity for local subjects. These individuals and entities are responsible for appropriating, translating, and remaking transnational discourses into the local vernacular (Hawkins and Humes, 2002:241). At the same time, they take local experiences and frame them in national and international human rights language. These activists participate in two cultural spheres concurrently, translating between them with a kind of double consciousness (Merry, 2006:3).

Despite the efforts of intermediaries, the appropriation of transnational human rights ideas in local spaces comes at a price. The philosophy framing human rights ideas promotes individual autonomy, equality, choice, and secularism even when these ideas differ from prevailing cultural norms and practices. Similarly, human rights ideas displace alternative visions of social justice that may be less individualistic and more focused on communities and responsibilities (Merry, 2006:49). The possible outcome of these efforts to implement a general human rights framework is that these ideas, when

practiced, might contribute to the imposition of values and loss of autonomy in local communities.

Mexico's Re-Education Program

The process by which ideas on gendered violence is reflected in the Re-Education Program's formation. To illustrate this interconnection between the discourse describing how gendered violence translates from the global scene to the local community and the Re-Education Program, I provide background on the program and how it came to be. In doing so, two themes become evident. First, the creation of the Re-Education Program represents a case study for how transnational ideas about gendered violence as a human rights violation come to be practiced in a local setting. The second theme found in this section is that the final version of the Re-Education Program includes themes, activities, and discussions that have been "indigenized" (Merry, 2006:39). This term was first used by Merry to describe how ideas travel from transnational sources to small communities. It refers to shifts in meaning, particularly to the new way ideas are framed and presented in terms of existing cultural norms, values, and practices.

Walking the Talk: Mexico Addresses Gendered Violence

The UN human rights system deals with violence against women in three ways: 1) Setting policy; 2) Investigating complaints; and 3) Regulating compliance with treaties (Merry, 2006:48). Regulation of treaty compliance takes place through hearings on country reports. Conventions are ratified by individual states and are monitored by

special committees, called treaty bodies. Each convention has a committee that monitors compliance through a system of periodic reporting. Although these committees lack sanctioning power of state law, they bring international pressure to bear on recalcitrant states. Ideally, when a state ratifies a convention, its terms are incorporated into the state's domestic legal system (Merry, 2006:49).

Mexico had representatives at the 1994 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women ("Convention of Belem do Para"). To implement rights into practice after the convention, Mexico began crafting legislation to prevent, punish, and eradicate violence against women (Manual, 2010:11). The culmination of these efforts resulted specialized laws, which in turn, created centers and public policies. The most well-known law, General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence, was passed with the primary objective of establishing coordination between the federal government and the states to combat violence. It provides a general framework of guidelines for state systems to accurately define the criteria for applying the Law to specific cases involving gendered violence. Furthermore, the Law identifies six types of violence: psychological, physical, economic, sexual, violence against personal property (*violencia patrimonial*), and violence against women's dignity, integrity, or freedom (Art. 6). In addition, femicide, defined as action or failure to act constituting an extreme form of violence against women that can lead to murder or other violent death, appears in the law as a type of violence (Art. 21).

The Manual for the Re-Education Program, titled *Manual para Responsables de Programa* (Manual of Program Responsibilities), outlines how the creation of these laws

resulted in the formation of the Re-Education Program. Due to the fact that this manual

was the sole resource all staff at AAMH used to implement the Re-Education Program,

its introduction of how the Re-Education Program came about is an essential perspective

that situates the program within both the global and the local. What follows is the Re-

Education Program history, as outlined in the Manual.

The Re-Education Program acknowledges that integrating new laws on gendered

violence into Mexico's society has posed challenges. For example, there are

complications associated with the fact that acts of abuse can occur in the context of a

loving relationship (Manual, 2010:11). This issue is a common factor that is frequently

addressed by those working with individuals experiencing violence, no matter the setting.

However, other issues specifically pertain to Mexico and its local contexts. For instance,

the program includes a discussion on how, because the family is seen as a private space,

state intervention is difficult and often hindered (Manual, 2010:11). Also, the

introduction of the program describes how, in Mexicans' image of their society, the idea

persists that the family, and therefore the couple, should stay together. Any form of

separation or rupture is seen as a failure (Manual, 2010:11). Nonetheless, the perspective

taken by the Mexican federal government is that these obstacles are not insurmountable

because no women should have to live a life of violence (Manual, 2010:11).

Consequently, the Mexican Congress moved forward to comply with the General

Law and with the help of the National Institute of Public Health, developed a proposal for

a rehab program for victims and perpetrators of violence. In the formation of the

proposal, various steps were enacted beginning in 2008. First, a thorough review of the

literature on intimate partner violence was done. Second, institutions and civil society

organizations that provide assistance to victims and perpetrators were identified. Third, a rigorous study of intervention models used worldwide was conducted and the successes of these models were reported (Manual, 2010:12). In the end, these steps culminated in a document that, as posited in the Manual itself, reflects the international and Mexican experience of gendered violence (Manual, 2010:12). This document has provided the basis for designing a specific model of re-education.

In October 2008 in Cuernavaca, a preliminary version of the Re-Education Program was discussed and analyzed by experts from various countries. Those who attended included: Alberto Concha (Pan American Health Organization), Martha Garcia (USA), Oswaldo Montoya (Nicaragua), Rosie Hidalgo (Cuba – USA), Fernando Mederos (Cuba – USA), and Deborah Billings (USA) (Manual, 2010:12).

The final program was presented in a meeting held in Mexico City on December 4, 2008. The objectives of the program built on each other. The first goal was to work with people involved in relationships that experience intimate partner violence. By identifying and working with these people, the second goal of the program was to re-educate men and women to identify and use resources that would then allow them to no longer live a life inhibited by violence (Manual, 2010:12).

Once officially approved by the Ministry of Health, Attorney General's Office, and the Ministry of Public Health, a pilot program was initiated. This pilot program ran from May to October 2009. Four states were selected to run the pilot program because they all have laws addressing gendered violence, as well as specialized laws on local social assistance. The laws within each state are similar enough that it was possible to design a program where participants would have a similar experience, thus offering a

useful and reliable comparative framework for the Re-Education Program (Manual, 2010:12).

The design and implementation of the pilot program posed several challenges, including: developing objectives; defining thematic content; choosing methodologies for addressing the various proposals; identifying the ideal duration for each stage of the program; designing evaluation mechanisms; and finally, finding staff, who, in addition to being professional, were sensitive to gender inequalities and committed to combating violence (Manual, 2010:13). The final outcome of this pilot program was the production of the Manual and the implementation of the Re-Education in state-run domestic violence and sexual assault agencies. The manual is intended for use by professionals responsible for conducting groups of men and women who experience violent relationships (Manual, 2010:13).

Although the program's creation follows a typical path from a global to local setting, the particular type of program, while common in the United States, is not widespread globally. There are some international programs that incorporate a therapy model into their services for gendered violence, but not as the Re-Education Program conducts its groups. For example, the Fiji Women's Crisis Center offers counseling to individual women who are battered, but not in groups (Merry, 2006:154). Another noteworthy program is in China, where women's support groups have been implemented to meet once a week for six weeks under the supervision of a social worker. Although this program is a very positive initiative put forth by the ShangXi Province Women, Marriage, and Family Counseling Center, it can only help a small fraction of people in the country because there are very few social workers available to do it (Merry,

2006:154). Finally, in India, some NGOs in Delhi such as Sakshi and Jagori offer counseling, but support groups are rare. This is because women typically turn to their families for help (Poonacha and Pandey, 1999; 132-33). Moreover, the program in Mexico is unique in that it incorporates both women and men. Violence control programs for batterers were developed in the United States in the early 1980s, but have not spread globally to the same extent as other initiatives (Merry, 2006:155).

Indigenizing Violence Prevention Education

In the following sections, I present various aspects of the Re-Education Program to demonstrate how this program has become "indigenized" (Merry, 2006) to Mexico's sociocultural settings. In many respects, the Re-Education Program is similar to violence prevention initiatives in the United States. It is group therapy co-facilitated by staff at various locations in order to provide outreach to multiple communities within a capital city in North Central Mexico. However, I also observed numerous ways in which the program is unlike programs in the United States, which I discuss below. This is the first and only federally funded group therapy program in Mexico. As prevention programs increase in non-Western countries, cultural "translations" of these programs will provide opportunities to analyze the ways violence prevention education is adapted to local settings.

Goals and Structure of the Re-Education Program

The overarching goal of the Re-Education Program is to "re-educate" its participants on how to live a life free of violence. In other words, the program strives to have its participants complete the sessions with a new way of thinking that is complementary to the human rights framework. This overarching objective is translated into different goals for men and women.   For the women participating in the program, six goals are listed in the Manual. These goals aim to transform female participants from victims of violence to individuals who are fully respected by their partner. Specifically, the goals include (Manual, 2010:39).

> 1. Provide information to women to exercise the fundamental right to life without violence.
> 2. Identify the impact of violence on women and their social environment, family, and personal relationships.
> 3. Provide basic tools to identify and disrupt the dynamics of family violence, for example, abuse or control actions, situations of subservience and dependence.
> 4. Develop skills of self-care and protection; develop skills to empower women to shift to a stage of awareness, self-determination, and autonomy.
> 5. For battered women to know and access public institutions and private care.
> 6. Develop skills to break the isolation associated with violence and utilize the resources from the family and community.

In comparison, the men's goals emphasize curtailing aggressive and violent behavior while educating male participants to see their wives as individuals with rights that deserve to be respected. The seven goals for male participants entail (Manual, 2010:99):

> 1. Identify the macho culture that encourages violence against women in personal, community, and institutional settings.
> 2. Identify violence against a partner.
> 3. Identify violence against children.
> 4. Develop skills to negotiate with women without violent conflicts.
> 5. Develop skills and capabilities to prevent and/or replicate the violence.
> 6. Take responsibility for the exercising violence against a partner and children.
> 7. Develop self-care skills.

Theory is integrated into the Re-Education Program's manual as a way to achieve these gender specific goals. For example, the program theorizes about violence and its impact on men and women's lives throughout group sessions. In the men's group, the types of violence are introduced in the second session through an activity in which participants identify various types of violence in different media, including television, songs, magazines, and popular phrases. Contrastingly, women are introduced to the types of violence in the eighth session, when the impact of these types of violence are analyzed in personal situations, familial circumstances, and socially.

There are also similarities in the teaching methods utilized in both men's and women's groups to help participants develop a wide array of skills to combat violence and live healthier lives. For instance, each session includes times when women and men have to reflect individually or work in groups, both small and large. The Re-Education Program works to establish the gender-specific goals as tenets that all participants follow outside the sessions by providing opportunities for positive relationships to be created between the participants. For example, facilitators highlighted birthdays and holidays by celebrating with food brought and shared by the participants.

As the participants went through the sessions, I witnessed how the Re-Education Program's gender-specific goals were blended into and a part of each session. Although the structure and goals of each session, and the overall program, were specifically outlined in the Manual, the goals were reiterated by facilitators in their own personal ways. I observed how they would talk to the group participants in a manner that would make these goals applicable to their personal realities. "*Poco a poco*" (little by little) was

said over and over. It was my impression that this phrase was a way to make "a life free of violence" seem less daunting and actually possible. It provided a path, through a series of small steps, to attaining this goal.

The structure of the Re-Education Program requires all male and female participants to attend every group session. This entails attending twenty-five sessions, once a week, for 2.5 hours. Facilitators frequently emphasized and reiterated the importance of attendance while also encouraging participants to bring family members or friends to become a part of the group sessions. Another rule regarding attendance was that women were not permitted to bring their children. Occasionally, a woman would attend a session with her child, and although staff seemed irritated and distracted by the child's presence, they never said anything directly to the mother. These situations where fairly common, but not frequent enough in any particular group for facilitators to reiterate the program's rules.

The program leaders focused on recruiting new participants and increasing attendance among those already in the program by constantly reminding the eight facilitators of the participation goals of the Re-Education Program: fifteen women's groups and fifteen men's groups with twelve to fifteen participants in each group. In one particular case, a chart was presented in a staff retreat listing the current number of groups and participants and the amount of groups that still needed to be formed. Strategies were discussed in this retreat, as well as in weekly staff meetings, on how to recruit and retain new participants. These strategies were primarily aimed at the men's groups, because during my time with the organization, there were only four men's groups, two of which had only four participants. In comparison, there were ten women's

groups with one hundred and twenty six participants. These contrasting numbers in women's groups and men's groups translated into staff concerns that more men's groups needed to be created quickly because until additional men's groups were created, the Re-Education Program could not report being 'on track' with participation goals.

The pressure for participant recruitment and retention was also a part of facilitators' conversations when they expressed being worried if women or men did not show up to the weekly sessions. In one particular case, staff leaders called Celina and Antonia into a meeting to explain why no one had shown up to a session. There were a number of reasons why any one of the women may not have come—it was spring break and they went on vacation with their families; it was the eighth session and maybe there was a level of burnout; the session was at 5:00 pm, a time that may have conflicted with family affairs; there was a stomach bug going through the community and the participants or family members could have been sick. After the meeting I found out that Celina was initially blamed for not contacting the participants to confirm their attendance. In reality, no one was to blame for the absence of all participants, it was just coincidental.

The Re-Education Program's structure, emphasizing consistent participation, is based on Western battery programs characterized as secular, empirical, and parochial. Researchers working with Latina immigrants in the United States have criticized this structure as not serving the people who need it most. For example, Villalon (2010) talks about how counseling for battered women—delivered in a western format—is viewed by Latina immigrants. According to Villalon, a majority of undocumented battered immigrants find counseling to be a foreign, threatening, and demanding practice

(2010:77). She says that although some middle- and upper-class U.S. citizens and foreigners from certain countries may consider counseling a useful tool to overcome stressful situations, working-class and poor citizens and foreigners tend not to trust or count on this tool. And for those immigrants who do agree to try counseling, they soon find it very demanding. Often, even for an immigrant to use free services, she must attend an average of ten sessions. And, in order to attend at least ten sessions, the immigrant must be able to manage her work and personal schedule around the appointments, which is very difficult due to the unstable nature of the jobs held by most undocumented immigrants. Furthermore, appointments tend to be during regular business hours which impedes on the women's efforts to take care of their children and themselves, particularly when they are also living with their abusers (Villalon, 2010:77).

During my observations of the Re-Education Program, I wondered about the challenges outlined by Villalon and saw them play out directly. The majority of female group participants have very little education and live in poverty similar to the immigrant women Villalon describes. Therefore, it is difficult for them to afford to attend these sessions that are held in the middle of the day in locations far from where they live. I wondered where their children were while they attended these sessions, and whether their husbands knew about their participation.

It is too soon to tell whether the Re-Education Program's participation requirement will "weed out the neediest" (Villalon, 2010:78)—those who encounter serious difficulties when they attempt to understand or cope with these normative orders. Research has demonstrated that women who are socially, culturally, or economically privileged are more likely to be able to marshal all the resources needed to satisfy the

requirements (Villalon, 2010, Crenshaw, 1995). Consequently, the structure of the Re-Education Program raises questions as to whether or not it is serving all community members. It is possible that the Re-Education Program has not been able to escape the historically selective nature of the violence against women movement that has been condemned for choosing victims worthy of helped, in addition to the inequalities of Mexican society, which continues to privilege the heterosexual, middle-class female.

The Re-Education Program's Facilitators

The Re-Education Program runs on a grant cycle. The organization has eight employees on contract to work as facilitators of the program for nine months—March to November. Of these eight, four are female and four are male. All are broken into four teams comprised of two facilitators each, typically same-sex teams. I only observed two or three instances where facilitators worked with an individual of the opposite sex or outside their team. This was during community outreach initiatives where two individuals would go to various locations around the city and talk to the community about the Re-Education Program. In these instances, one male facilitator and one female facilitator would attend.

Of the eight facilitators, seven are psychologists. The eighth, Antonia, has additional training and is listed as a psychotherapist. A professional degree of psychology in Mexico is granted after four to five years of university training. This degree is labeled *License in Psychology* or simply *Psychologist Degree*. The skills learned by psychologists were important to facilitating the group setting of the program:

to create a positive environment, to regulate interactions among participants, to recognize resistance, and to model an attitude that is conducive to communicating with respect, empathy, and understanding. Indeed, these skills were utilized time and again in the sessions. For example, I observed facilitators remain calm in times of heightened emotion, re-focus the group when discussions got off topic, and successfully encourage individuals to participate when they previously were not.

However, because psychologists, rather than specialists on the topics of gender and violence, led the groups, the facilitators often struggled with the content of the program. Namely, they struggled to go beyond the simple connections between violence and gender to a more in-depth discussion of the topic. For example, in two different sessions with a men's group, Cesar and Ignacio struggled to lead a discussion on the different types of violence. In each of these sessions, the same format was followed where a piece of paper was handed out listing different types of violence—physical, psychological, sexual, and economic—as well as definitions for each type. After reading the flyer aloud, Cesar and Ignacio asked the male participants to give examples of the different types of violence. The men would reference the examples listed on the sheet— for instance, for physical violence the sheet describes cases of physical violence by omission: depriving someone food, beverages, or medicines, or preventing them from leaving the home (Manual, 2010:167). The men would contribute by saying "not letting a woman leave the house alone." By only rephrasing these examples, the participants were able to remain detached from the acts of violence. Furthermore, due to the fact that the Cesar and Ignacio also struggled to move beyond these examples, the men did not have to think about how these types of violence may actually occur in their personal

lives. Finally, the men missed an important opportunity to identify and discuss the motivations of their violent actions, which derive from a desire to assert power and maintain control over their partner. In sum, the facilitators and participants closely followed the text provided in the handouts, resulting in long sessions that did not address the actual experiences of violence that participants experienced or perpetuated.

Due to the fact that the Re-Education Program is new to Mexico and does not have training opportunities, educational initiatives, or resources through other nearby programs, it is understandable why the facilitators struggled with the content. Research has shown that social workers working with victims of domestic violence in the United States experience a loss of confidence. This lack of confidence is attributed to the fact that working with these populations requires specialized knowledge and skills. For example, counselors in one study reported that working with domestic violence clients was very challenging. Especially in the initial phase of developing skills, they felt ineffectual, inadequate, powerless, and at times stressed and anxious (Iliffe and Steed, 2000:399). In the case of the facilitators, they are being asked to apply a very large amount of information about violence—knowledge that they are not necessarily familiar with—to their practice. No wonder they find the task difficult.

After the two consecutive men's sessions discussing the types of violence, Cesar initiated a conversation with me about how repetitive and difficult it was to talk about the types of violence and subsequent examples with the men. I suggested that maybe he should replace the types of violence handout with the *Power and Control Wheel* (also called the Duluth Model) because, although it lists the same types of violence as in the "types of violence" handout, it also links violence to power and control. Cesar said that

he was not familiar with the Power and Control Wheel. I was surprised by this statement because I knew the Power and Control Wheel was featured in the Manual. Once we returned to the office and I showed him the Power and Control Wheel, as well as where it was mentioned in the Manual. He agreed with me that maybe this model would better support a conversation on the types of violence. He said he was not familiar with the model because it is only referenced in the female group sessions, which were not his responsibility.

Cesar's comments point to the gendered character of the Re-Education Program, both in terms of the facilitators' gender and the materials associated with each group. In the case of materials, the Manual is divided into two sections—part I includes the sessions for victims (women) and part II includes the sessions for aggressors (men). This is also the case for the supplementary resources. Cesar and other facilitators were using the materials for the groups they taught—victims or aggressors. The materials offered in the Manual were not perceived as available for everyone to use to enhance the group's experience.

This gendered interpretation of the Manual and program may be influenced by two important factors. To begin, as it was described before, working with domestic violence victims and aggressors requires specialized knowledge and skills. Due to the fact that the Re-Education Program is in its early stages—both as a program and to Mexico—the facilitators may believe they must strictly follow the information provided by the Manual in order to feel that they are conducting their groups successfully. In other words, the facilitators have not had enough time working with issues of violence to be comfortable with all the information available for them to use with the groups, so they

stay within the gender specific sections. Secondly, this greenness to the information may

be coupled with a pressure placed on facilitators by lead staff to have them follow the

activities laid out in the Manual without deviation. The motivation behind this is

understandable. The program must prove its ability to help participants live a life free of

violence in order to continue existing. The only way success can be attributed to the

program is if the sessions, and its associated activities, were known to be directly

responsible for the change in participants' lives.

Despite the difficulty facilitators sometimes had with the material of the Re-

Education Program, they exhibited intense commitment to the program. These

individuals worked long hours and commuted long distances, sometimes only seeing their

families on weekends in order to work in the position as a facilitator. I believe the Re-

Education Program hired psychologists because they represent the highest qualified

professionals appropriate for the position in Mexico, even if they are not trained on the

theories and therapeutic strategies related to gendered violence. Perhaps, as the program

grows and is established within other communities, there will be more opportunities for

facilitators to be exposed to how the activities they are tasked with are connected to a

global movement to prevent gendered violence.

Themes within the Sessions

Two prominent themes are expressed throughout the Re-Education Program. The

first theme pertains to the women's groups. This theme recognizes a marriage of two

topics: gendered violence with physical health and well-being. Specifically, even though

the overarching theme of the groups is gendered violence, many of the sessions include

dialogues on physical health and best practices for maintaining it. The second theme is

the gendered assumptions associated with violence. Explicitly, throughout the men's and

women's sessions, it is assumed that men are perpetrators and women are victims, a

theme I discuss further in Chapter 4. The existence or potential for women to be

perpetrators is never mentioned. In addition, violence between homosexual partners is

not discussed.

The incorporation of health care issues into the Re-Education Program is unique

because it is a reversal of the traditional setting where women are educated on gendered

violence issues in a health care setting. Namely, health care is being talked about in a

setting dedicated to violence instead of the more recognized model where violence is

discussed in health care settings. The incorporation of health care is, at least in part, the

program's response to statistics on the lack of preventative health care practiced by

Mexican men and women. Research on the health care attitudes of Mexican society

shows that they are very poor; both Mexicans and Mexican immigrants are less likely to

see a physician, be hospitalized within a year, or use preventative health services

(Morales et al., 2002:488). This fact, coupled with other factors such as values,

education, religion, and age, alludes to women having limited access to health care

services (Puentes-Markides, 1992:619).

In total, there are four sessions where health care practices were included:

sessions three and four both titled, "Autonomy and its relation to decision-making;"

session seven, "Autonomy and its relation to making decisions about my body:

Confiscating the sexuality of women's bodies;" and session nine, "Violence against

women as a social problem: Experiences of violence in the family of origin and current family."

In the sessions when health care is discussed, the topics primarily address preventative care—going to the doctor and/or dentist and getting an annual pap—or the need to be more attentive to one's health by practicing good habits such as resting when tired and eating well. These conversations are initiated when many of the female participants are prompted to admit to self-sacrificing practices of putting their family members' health and/or interests before their own. Once a theme of self-sacrificing practices is established, facilitators re-frame these practices to show the women how they are hurting more than helping their family. This idea is reinforced through an exchange between participants and facilitators, as the entire group draws a connection between their symptoms of depression, weight gain, or loss of economic opportunities with their focus on serving the family when they themselves are not well. Curiously, even in the face of women having struggles with drug or alcohol addiction, these topics are not explored as a health issue that compounds the problems associated with familial problems.

To conclude the various sessions emphasizing health care, the facilitators summarize these habits as a form of violence. The rational for categorizing these health care issues as violence draws on the attempt of the Re-Education program to emphasize one of its primary goals for women: to develop skills for self-care and protection. The logic is that if these women can initiate decisions and changes in their life in order to take care of their health, then maybe it will be easier for them to tackle more difficult decisions addressing more serious elements of violence affecting their lives.

The second theme expressed in the Re-Education Program relates to gendered assumptions about violence, which I discuss further in Chapter 4. For both men's and women's groups, men are always identified as perpetrators and women as victims. This singular direction of violence is noteworthy because there were several instances when both participants and facilitators commented on how men might be victims of violence and women might be perpetrators. For example, both male and female participants talked about experiences where of violence by their mother or grandmother. In each of these cases, the facilitator did not further discuss such violence. Nonetheless, facilitators are sensitive to how the directions of violence could be more nuanced than the direction emphasized by the Re-Education – males violent to females. As Jorge told me in an interview:

> "And the perpetrators more or less are us [men]. Actually, there is not a general rule, but yes, men are actually who perpetrate violence. And of course the victims more or less are women. Not in general, but yes this difference is very noticeable precisely because of how we are educated."

This explanation generalizing men as aggressors and women as victims of violence relies on an early body of feminist work focused on increasing public awareness and eventual political action on the pervasiveness of men's interpersonal violence against women. Today, many feminists and activists have abandoned this perspective and see gendered violence as more nuanced. Specifically, scholars and activists have moved away from essentialism and victimization, broadening their attention to examine not only women but also men in situations of violence (Santos, 2005:97). Still, it is reasonable that the Re-Education Program would take the perspective of seeing violence through a set of binaries. The program's creators and supporters aim to have the program be

positively received within the local communities, and it is likely that a simplified

message of aggressor/man and victim/woman underscores this effort.

Activities within the Group Sessions

Many of the activities presented in the both the men's and women's Re-Education

program sessions originate in the United States. Some of these activities are presented

without alteration from the original context that they were developed in. For example,

the second session for women is entirely dedicated to analyzing public discourse,

symbols, representations, and social stereotypes that carry a violent and/or sexist

message. The activities associated with this session originate from the scholarly work of

Jean Kilbourne (1979, 1987, 2000, and 2010), the individual primarily responsible for

initiating the connection between media images and public health problems such as

violence, drug and alcohol addictions, and eating disorders. I observed this session

several times; the Manual's instructions closely follow the exercises created by Kilbourne

to reveal how violence against women permeates Mexican culture by first showing

depictions of women and men in magazines, comics, songs, and children's books, and

then asking the female participants to identify how they are violent, sexist, or fulfill

societal stereotypes.

In addition, many of the models the Re-Education Program uses to talk about

violence are taken without alteration from sources in the United States. Most notably, the

"Cycle of Violence" created by Lenore E. Walker (1979) and the "Power and Control

Wheel," created as part of the Duluth Model (1980), are two examples from the United States that are used in women's sessions to talk about violence.

For the men's group, the program follows a pattern where one week is a thematic session and the other week is a technical session. Both of these sessions follow the Duluth Model (1980), with group meetings designed to help men change their beliefs and values about gender relations. The thematic sessions fulfill this portion of the curriculum by explicitly attempting to change men's values and encourage them to see their partners as equals and to make decisions by negotiation. The technical session addresses the other portion of the Duluth Model by having each individual male share an experience when they were violent. After this story is shared, the facilitators analyze the situation by emphasizing that the problem was not the man's anger, but their violence. In order to combat these problems, men are taught to recognize the bodily signs of anger, identified in the Re-Education Program as *senales de riesgo* (risk signals), and to pursue strategies to "cool down" through the practice of *el retiro* (withdrawl).

Even though a majority of the activities are identifiable as originating in the United States, the sources of a few activities are more ambiguous. I perceive these activities as addressing culturally specific issues, and therefore, they were likely created for the Re-Education Program to be relevant to its participants. One activity, whose source is not credited in the Manual and therefore may have been produced specifically for the Re-Education Program, entails groups of women being given large sheets of paper to draw and decorate a life-sized woman. Each group is instructed to create a woman depicting one of three stages of life—childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Once this is accomplished, the women are then asked to list—as they relate to the body—the

various health issues known to affect women (or themselves) at these three stages. After

this is done, a discussion ensues connecting "eating, sleeping, exercise, sexual health,

gender, and your relations with others, to the creation of your 'self'" (Manual, 2010:48).

The purpose of this exercise is to show how cultural messages about what it means to be

a woman in Mexico may be partially responsible for facilitating some of these diseases.

Specifically, women are asked to respond to the following messages: a) your priority is to

nurture and care for others; b) you do not have time for yourself and you do not deserve

to be taken care of (Manual, 2010:48). These messages address gender expectations that

participants understand, gendered meanings that the facilitators link to the perpetuation of

violence.

During my observations of the Re-Education Program's activities and subsequent

conversations with facilitators, I became aware of a disconnect between these activities,

as they are presented in the Manual, and how they are a part of global movement to

educate diverse populations on gendered violence. The facilitators only have experience

with these activities in the context Manual and their responsibility to follow the Manual's

instructions. They are unaware of many of the activities' origins and that these activities

were not created specifically for the Re-Education Program. This perspective speaks to

the privileged ways that knowledge and action flow throughout the world—in a top-down

style, where those on the bottom, such as facilitators, have little control over the materials

at the center of the program. It is chosen for them.

The flow of knowledge and action through a hierarchy is evident in the fact that

there are no alternative resources available to facilitators. The Manual is the *only*

resource available to staff. There are no other books, materials, activities, or films about

gendered violence. This lack of resources prevents facilitators from having the

opportunity to compare or contrast how other materials may address a particular topic.

Furthermore, during my time spent daily in these offices, I was struck by how the

organization functioned with very little. The facilitators worked from their own laptops,

sometimes sharing with other facilitators, in a small room with an 8x10 foot table.

Sometimes there were no chairs to sit at because there were so few. In a position of

leadership, the Director was sensitive to this lack of resources and continually asked me

to refer her to organizations or donors that might be of help. I found this task to be

difficult because of the fact that none of the staff members spoke English. Also, my

exchanges with the Director shed light on how few resources there are in Spanish. I was

able to compile a small list of resources, but interestingly, this list primarily included

tools for translating potential resources, such as Google translate, and websites that

translated relatively easily into Spanish. I had to omit many resources I would have liked

to include were omitted because they would have been "lost in translation."

Conclusion

The Re-Education Program represents the transformation of international

discourse on gendered violence to a local setting. The program's facilitators played a

critical role in this translation. As intermediaries between transnational and local arenas,

these individuals had to navigate uncharted territories. As the facilitators spent more time

with both the groups and the material, I observed an emerging double consciousness

(Merry, 2006); combining human rights conceptions with local ways of thinking.

Specifically, they were beginning to move between two consciences, translating local problems into human rights terms and human rights concepts into approaches to local problems.

Still, because the Re-Education Program was created by "experts" outside of Mexico, certain aspects did not translate seamlessly to be applicable to participants' lives. For example, recruitment and retention of male participants was difficult because of the need to understand the local communities. Similarly, the structure of the program derived from a Western understanding of therapy that participants had not previously experienced, and therefore participants had trouble negotiating sessions with other life responsibilities. Only a continued presence in the community will allow staff of the Re-Education Program to know what participants need to successfully attend sessions, including weekend sessions, child-care support, and specific groups for seniors, teens, mothers, and volunteers. In sum, the realization of human rights initiatives, presented in programs such as the Re-Education Program, will depend on the flexibility of the human rights model to take local historical and social processes into account in order to be accessible and applicable to the lives of all community members.

CHAPTER 3

MEN ARE IN CHARGE, WOMEN ARE WIVES AND MOTHERS: GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS

> *Hilda: Why do women get sick with [these] ailments?*
>
> *Participant 1: Women give and give to do all the work within their job and house. Then they are last.*
>
> *Participant 2: Women don't eat well because the good food goes to the men.*
>
> *Participant 3: Because everything is for others, not for myself.*
>
> *Participant 4: There is a lack of money, so I cannot have medical care.*
>
> - Hilda, a Re-Education Program facilitator, talking with female participants about how their performance of femininity negatively affects their health

> *Cesar: What do we do as an adult to demonstrate that we are "manly"?*
>
> *Participant 1: Go out with other women.*
>
> *Participant 2: Have the last word.*
>
> *Participant 3: I cannot cry or express emotions.*
>
> *Participant 4: Win power struggles.*
>
> *Participant 5: Assume responsibilities within the family.*
>
> - Cesar, a Re-Education Program facilitator, talking with male participants about how they have performed gender at various stages in their lives, from childhood through adulthood

The focus of this chapter is on how gender is talked about in the Re-Education

Program. Gender is an important component of my observations of the program due to

the fact that its construction is linked to the human rights assumption that a primary cause

of violence is "culture" and perceived cultural ideas about the roles of men and women. As this chapter will demonstrate, narrow cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity are presented in the Re-Education Program as being primarily responsible for the violence "victims" experience and "aggressors" perpetuate. In presenting the program's definitions of gender, this chapter will also discuss how these gendered characteristics are reinforced and resisted by participants.

In order to tease apart this complex and diverse concept, I analyze gender through ethnographic methods, including interviews and observation. I asked a series of questions about gender in one-on-one interviews with facilitators. Since these individuals were, in essence, teachers, how they thought about gendered social roles and expectations was crucial to how they taught the Re-Education Program material. Therefore, my questions focused on the responsibilities of mothers and fathers, expectations for sons and daughters, and what behaviors were considered appropriate and inappropriate for men and women. I also observed how gender was discussed in men's and women's sessions. Both of these methods provided rich data, enabling me to identify both the broad generalizations people associate with gender and the nuanced perspectives of facilitators and participants.

Gender is a primary characteristic by which intimate relationships are structured, labor is divided, social value is assigned, and privilege is granted. In Mexico, dualistic gender systems endure, with demarcated boundaries between what is considered masculine and what is considered feminine—temperamentally, physically, sexually, and behaviorally (O'Toole and Schiffman, 1997:xi). Yet, as we take these features of gender into account, creating unitary versions of men's and women's gender identities are never

absolute. As men and women throughout Mexican society reflect on their multiple

gender identities, it is clear that no stable set of determining and essential gender qualities

adequately captures Mexico as a whole (Gutmann, 2007:9).

In being sensitive to the breadth of gender variation, I observed how gender is

simultaneously an embedded aspect of individual personalities and structural

arrangements, in addition to being contested social terrain. I witnessed gender relations

as a complicated mix of congeniality and conflict, imbued with asymmetrical

distributions of power. Furthermore, I recognized gender relations as the product of

social and cultural dynamics, historical forces, political structures, and individual

experience.

Both facilitators and participants relied on stereotypes to talk about gender. I

understand gendered stereotypes to be naturalized norms and expectations for people.

Specifically, when facilitators and participants spoke of stereotypes, they invoked a

reductive tendency to "interpret their behavior, personality, and so on in terms of a set of

common-sense attributions which were applied to whole groups" (Holmes and

Meyerhoff, 2003:8). In other words, facilitators and individuals used stereotyping to

reduce and simplify lives as they adhered to a social and symbolic order. This practice

involved a strategy of "splitting," whereby the normal and acceptable were separated

from the abnormal and unacceptable, resulting in the exclusion of the latter (Talbot,

2003:471).

Why did the Re-Education Program's facilitators and participants adopt

stereotypical depictions of gendered lives even though their actual lives are different from

these portrayals? Janet Holland et al. (1998) explain that language reflects social context

and expectations more than it reflects behavior. Therefore, language is an important element in the construction of normative gender; individuals use forms of speech to present themselves as conforming to ideas of masculinity or femininity, even as the way they behave is less straightforward.

By exploring the link between stereotypes and gender appropriate behavior, this chapter seeks to identify the forces that encourage conformity as well as resistance to stereotyped ideas of Mexican masculinity and femininity. The first section of the chapter considers what prompts the use of gender stereotyping in the Re-Education Program. The second section addresses the facilitators' role in the Re-Education Program by answering the question: How do these individuals influence the way group participants talk about gender? The remaining two sections focus on gendered depictions of women and men. "*Se Queda en la Casa*" presents prevalent cultural stereotypes of women in Mexico and how participants resist or conform to these stereotypical portrayals. "*El Hombre Machista*" looks at the cultural stereotypes of men in Mexico that participants follow or reject.

Stereotyping Gender

What are the factors within the context of the Re-Education Program that encourage a use of stereotypes by both facilitators and participants? Through my observations, I identify three factors at play. In presenting these factors, I see them as interacting individually and together to produce this marked reliance on stereotypes. First, participants, and women in particular, are compelled by cultural expectations to

project a positive image of themselves.   My observations show how this practice is

rewarded in the form of social capital, which is often used as a means of survival, and to

maintain familial and social support. The second factor is described by Gramsci's (1929-

135) concept of "contradictory consciousness"—the conflict that arises between ideas

inherited from the past and those that develop over the course of new efforts to transform

the world. By relating my observations of gender stereotyping to Gutmann's experience

with macho stereotypes in Mexico City (2007), I demonstrate how contradictory

consciousness depends on gender stereotypes in order to stimulate new ways of thinking

and doing—a process outlined by Anthony Giddens as "the reflective project of the self"

(1991). Finally, a third factor is the Manual for the Re-Education Program. As examples

of session activities and subsequent group participation show, the Manual, which

concretizes stereotypes through its structure and messages, is closely followed by

facilitators.

A Good Reputation and a Positive Image

> *"My neighbors are critical of the way I am."*
> - Female participant sharing her neighbor's opinion of her attending Re-Education Program Sessions

Based on ethnographic research showing how group contexts place pressure on

participants to adhere to certain social expectations (Holland et al., 1998; Marston, 2004),

I believe the group setting in which the Re-Education Program is conducted facilitates a

reliance on stereotypes. Cecilia Menjivar (2011) confirms the motivation for this social

practice particularly for women. In her discussions with women she met in San Alejo,

they explained how it was important to construct a positive image about themselves as mothers, wives, and daughters, because, to be perceived as dutiful, virtuous, and devoted commanded both respect and admiration from the community (Menjivar, 2011:79). In other words, a positive image of oneself translated into moral and social capital. Krista Van Vleet also comments on this phenomena: "In contrast to men's capital, the value of which is established in the marketplace, women's symbolic capital must be evaluated in relation to community norms for their behavior . . . These norms require regular monitoring, and because it is women [historically] who must compete in relation to these norms, it is they who have the greatest interest in monitoring" (2003:505).

These values are displayed in the women's sessions where many participants come with friends. Women acknowledge their friends' presence as a way to confirm their respectable position within their social groups. For example, one pair of friends introduced themselves to the rest of the group as friends supporting each other. One woman explained that she was present because she was a victim of violence from her husband. She had accessed AAMH services, where an advocate suggested that she be a part of the Re-Education Program. In her own words, "I was scared about what other people would think about being a part of this group," and so she brought her friend. In contrast, the woman's friend did not identify herself as being a victim of direct violence, but explained that she felt discriminated against as a woman in her community. By agreeing to participate in the group together, the two women were protecting themselves from rumors potentially started by other community members or family about what they were doing for several hours during the day. Also, the woman described distress of what her husband would do or how the community would react if she decided to initiate a

separation. The presence of her friend assisted in giving her courage to explore the

potential ramifications of such actions, while at the same time protecting her from the

possible backlash that might occur from her family or the community. In summary, these

two women served as witnesses to each other's actions and whereabouts. They were

safeguarding their reputations outside the group, while also bolstering a positive image of

themselves to other group members.

Contradictory Consciousness and Constructing the Self

Gender stereotypes are used by participants because they are going through a

process of challenging the very notions of gender depicted in the stereotypes. Gutmann

(2007) borrows Antonio Gramsci's (1929-35) formulation of "contradictory

consciousness" to explain this process of how identities are challenged. Namely,

participants go through a "reflective process of the self" (Giddens, 1991), where they first

become conscious of their contradictory consciousness and thus alter their perception of

their (gendered) identity to incorporate new characteristics.

Gutmann's (2007) use of the conception of the contradictory consciousness

clarifies why stereotypical depictions of men and women—also described as "inherited

givens of the past" (Gutmann, 2007:14)—may be used by Mexicans, particularly those

participating in the Re-Education Program. In the context of Gutmann's (2007:15) work,

as well as this research, contradictory consciousness describes those who simultaneously

hold uncritically to ideas and practices inherited from the past while they also develop

new ways of thinking and doing based on the practical transformations of the real world

in which they are constantly engaged. The process inherent to the contradictory consciousness to form new identities is apparent in Gutmann's ethnographic examples of stereotypical cultural practices that are generally identified as inherited, unchanging, and still existing in Mexico. For instance, the practice by some men to regularly eat before and better than women (Gutmann, 2007:23). According to Gutmann, this example and other gendered practices are not resistant to change. There is a change occurring in society where the ground is shifting under the feet of many Mexican men because women are taking part in large-scale socioeconomic transformations. In the case of the custom where men eat before and better than women, women are resisting this practice due to their ability to also be providers in the home, giving them more power in house hold decisions. Moreover, men are positively responding to these changes by altering their supposed "macho" behaviors. Thus, by acknowledging these transformations, gender identities in Mexico are recognized as more subtle, diverse, and malleable than generally assumed.

In one particular session with men, I observed participants become conscious of their contradictory consciousness as they attempted to incorporate the political rights of women into their relationships. The group facilitators handed out a sheet of paper listing Mexico's legislative initiatives granting women specific rights. Some of the rights listed on the paper included: the right to gender equality; the right to education; the right to health; sexual and reproductive rights; the right to a life free of violence; the right to work; the right to development; the right to political participation; the right to a healthy environment; and finally, the right to information. The discussion this handout is meant to stimulate seems straightforward, organized around the questions, "Do you know that

women have these rights?" The men took this conversation seriously once they realized how these rights have a very personal and complicated impact on their lives. As one man pointed out, he had been married to his wife for twenty-six years and most of these laws were granted to his wife fifteen years into their marriage. As a result of the considerable amount of time existing in their marriage before these rights became ratified, he admitted that both his wife and he have not easily adapted or accessed these rights because "*machismo*" has dominated their relationship; "it was not the way things were done." However, he acknowledged that things were different for his children. Referring to the right to work, he emphatically described how his daughters expected to work and his sons relied on their wives' income. Through the process of sharing this perspective, he realized that he appreciated the opportunities these laws afforded women. In this epiphany, he then shared how he was proud of the jobs his daughters held. He confessed that he had not actively supported their education, but in the end, they needed these jobs for independence and economic stability. He concluded by explaining that although his wife would not pursue work outside the home, and he would feel uncomfortable if she did, he felt the law was important for his children and their future.

This man's awareness of his contradictory consciousness was not an easy state for him to be in. He acknowledged to the group how, as much as things could be different for other people, he was going to adhere to the traditional definition of masculinity. He asserted his adherence to this definition by invoking very conventional, hegemonic stereotypes to describe the type of man he was—the provider—and the type of women his wife was—the homemaker. Paradoxically, by establishing this strong foundation of his masculinity, he was able to "safely" consider new gender roles. He did this by

differentiating himself from his children, describing how it was fine for them to not maintain the same traditional lifestyle. They were a part of a different world that held different expectations for what it meant to be a man and a woman.

I understand this contradictory consciousness to be the "reflective project of the self" (Giddens, 1991). This process is introduced by Anthony Giddens (1991:54), who asserts that people live in a complex, mobile, rapidly changing society, and their sense of identity depends on being able to order the various fragments of their life-experience into a coherent, ongoing, autobiographical narrative. In this particular case, the male participant is a part of the re-education group because he wants to change how he thinks about men and women. According to Giddens (1991:54), the easiest and most successful way for him to accomplish this task is to incorporate stereotypical representations of the world into this new understanding precisely because they are not accurate reproductions of the complexity of the lived experience. Compared to actual life, stereotypes are simpler, more condensed, and far more orderly. The self-reflective process within the group setting is a private and personal experience ordered by public generalized, and in this case, stereotypical conventions, and as such, it provides the participant with a template he uses to order and reflect on his own experience.

Ironically, even as this participant relied on stereotypical depictions of gender, he saw himself as a conventional macho Mexican at the end of the group discussion. In his statements accepting a more egalitarian role for women in Mexico, he proved that he is more complex and transformative than the macho stereotype affords. However, based on the fact that this man had to reassert his macho characteristics as provider, decision maker, and tough man in order to earn enough social capital from the other group

members to make the potentially provocative comments he did make, it is likely that

group members will continue to depend on gender stereotypes as they go through the

reflective process induced by the re-education group.

Gender in the Re-Education Program Manual

> **Victim's Re-Education Program**: Women who have experienced
> violence in a heterosexual relationship voluntarily participate in the
> program and commit to follow the established rules.
>
> - Re-Education Program Manual (2010:13)

> **Aggressor's Re-Education Program**: The person inflicting any kind of
> violence against women. An aggressor participates voluntarily or at the
> recommendation of any person or institution, but there are others who are
> referred by court order or criminal conviction.
>
> - Re-Education Program Manual (2010:13)

In Chapter 2, I explained how the Manual is the sole resource for facilitators of

the Re-Education Program. I also identify a prominent theme within the sessions:

facilitators only discuss violence through gender binaries defining men as aggressor and

women as victims.   The Manual, a primary resource for the facilitators, informs this

discussion between facilitators and participants by imparting the human rights

assumption that violence is caused by culture. Consequently, gendered identities are

presented as "cultural" and through narrow and fixed definitions that perpetuate a

reliance on stereotypes.

To introduce the topic of violence, the Re-Education Program clearly includes

gender stereotypes. Specifically, Chapter 2 of the Manual presents some basic concepts.

One concept presented is "victim." Another is "aggressor." For each of these terms, a

gender is directly assigned. The definition of victim is "a woman of any age who is subjected to any type of violence" (Manual, 2010:16). The definition of aggressor is less direct, but implies men: "the person who inflicts any kind of violence against women" (Manual, 2010:16).

By establishing the definitive roles gender plays in violence, the group sessions depended on gender identities that cast women as victims and men as aggressors. This tendency was pronounced in the men's group, where a narrow interpretation of masculinity, identifying all men as violent, limited the ways in which men not affiliated with this form of masculinity—because they were not violent—could participate in the sessions, or more importantly help their fellow male group members.

One session that exemplified this practice is held biweekly. The session is dedicated to analyzing a violent situation by identifying "moments of fatal risk—that is, the physical signs of intense anger—and discuss ways to stop the practice of violence against your partner" (Manual, 2010:102). I observed one of these sessions when a man volunteered to analyze his moment of violence. He had become intensely angry and violent at his wife for cutting his son's hair without his permission. He explained that he was angry because "it was so fucking short." He continued that his wife had disregarded his "authority" and did not show "respect for my wishes."

This man's words unmistakably identify him as an aggressor. However, what about the other men in the group who are not violent? How are they to participate in this session? The technical sessions like the one described above address violence characterized as "patriarchal terrorism" (Johnson, 1995), which describes acts of violence that are embedded in a larger context of control tactics (Johnson, 1995:311-12). This

type of violence is different from "common couple violence" (Johnson, 1995) because, according to Johnson, common couple violence does not have elements of power and control. Rather, Johnson defines common couple violence as "an intermittent response to the occasional conflicts of everyday life, motivated by a need to control a specific situation, but not a more general need to be in charge of the relationship" (1995:305). Due to the technical session's identification of only one type of violence, the men who are not aggressors are not incorporated into the session. Their presence in these sessions is ignored because they do not fall into the stereotypical category of male aggressor whose acts of violence are embedded in a larger context of control tactics. I think these participants feel left out too, and therefore attempt to adapt themselves to be like the program's stereotyped male aggressor by dramatizing an argument they had with their wife and/or girlfriend. For example, one man, a retired teacher who thought the Re-Education Program was a positive presence in the community and therefore participated in the sessions to show his support, shared a story in a technical session about how he didn't help his wife make the bed that morning, resulting in her being upset. These stereotypes of gender interactions were left un-examined because the Re-Education Program did not differentiate between these two types of stories, where the aggressor's clearly contained elements of power and control and the others were simply matters of disagreement.

This practice of narrowly interpreting gender also plays out frequently in the women's groups when participants are asked to share their experiences being victims of violence. In one session, a large piece of paper is taped to the wall. The sheet of paper depicts a timeline through colored blocks representing five-year increments of a women's

life—beginning at age one and continuing through adulthood (50+). The group

participants are asked to write down experiences of violence that occurred at various

stages of their lives on small sheets of paper. Once women complete this portion of the

activity, they are asked, one at a time, to go to the timeline and tape the violent

experience in the corresponding colored block when it happened during their life. The

women who experienced violence taped each individual occurrence to the paper while

explaining what happened in great detail and emphasizing their victimhood. For

example, one woman described the controlling behaviors of her husband, "I feel that I

don't have the right to enjoy life because my husband controls me." In contrast, other

women, who were not victims of direct violence, were instructed to think of ways or

actions associated with being a woman that could be interpreted as acts of violence.

These women made statements such as "*ponerme zapatos altos*" [wear high heels].

The purpose of this activity is to show how violence begins at a very young age,

resulting in it becoming naturalized, a part of life, for many victims. However, due to an

emphasis by both the facilitators and the participants on all women being identified as

victims with minimal defenses, whether they experienced violence or not, this point is not

clear. Similar to the men's group, women who are not victims of violence have to

portray some experience in their life as "violent" in order to be able to identify with the

prevailing image of a woman as a victim put forth within the curriculum.

Group Facilitators: Maintaining and Contesting Gender Stereotypes

As I previously noted, facilitators of the Re-Education Program work with participants of the same gender. The logic for this arrangement is twofold. First, it recognizes the participants' expectations to be a part of a group comprised of people with similar experiences so that sharing one's stories is done in a safe and sympathetic setting. Second, this arrangement allows the facilitator to promote group cohesion because he or she is able to communicate in a gendered manner that the group identifies with. Taken together, these two factors produce a group dynamic in which facilitators rely on normative assumptions of how gender is performed within Mexican society when they interact with participants. The facilitators appeal to the social context of an all-women's or all-men's group while presenting the Re-Education Program's ideas of masculinity, femininity, and violence. For example, I observed how Cesar always referred to the participants as *compadres* (close friends) when giving instruction on a new activity within the session. Ignacio also only asked the male participants if they had *algun comentario* (any comments), rather than questions, perhaps drawing on the stereotype that men do not feel comfortable revealing a lack of knowledge on a topic (Cameron, 1992). In contrast, women were more dynamic in their exchanges with each other— always asking questions, making comments, and offering advice. There was at least one instance in each session where a woman would cry. When this occurred, either the facilitator or a group member would get Kleenex and a cup of water for the woman while another patted her back, held her hand, or embraced her until she could continue with her

story. These conversational styles, as acted out by all the women, seem to reinforce the notion of women as patient, nurturing and emotional.

In addition to the gendered communication strategies facilitators use to promote group cohesion, they also adapt their personal lives to have more in common with certain social expectations and the "presented lives" of the group participants. These tendencies are particularly strong in the women's groups, where one's identity as a wife and mother are the most prominent characteristics of all participants. I was aware of this information because it was reintroduced in varying circumstances throughout different sessions. For example, almost all the women initially introduce themselves to the group by describing how they are married and had children. This information is reconfirmed in session five, where all the women are asked to bring in pictures of their families. All of the pictures are of their wedding and children. Interestingly, if a woman does not have pictures to share, she draws pictures of stick figures representing family members—husband and children. I did not observe a single instance where a woman drew her profession, house, or other aspects of her life. There were only four women out of all the different groups who were not married or had no children. In contrast, Antonia is the only female facilitator who is married with children. Rubi is single, while Celina and Hilda are engaged to be married. These differences were not discussed by the facilitators as they related to participants by talking about their ability to maintain a respectable monogamous relationship and desire to have children in the future. When the facilitators described their relationships with their boyfriends, they stressed how they did not engage in pre-marital sex and they still lived with their parents—stereotypical ideas of how a young woman should behave in order to remain reputable in Mexican society.

Following Butler's (1990:177) research on gender performance, this method for maintaining group cohesion—by adhering to normative assumptions of gender—was especially evident when it was not followed. In particular, I observed two separate occasions where there was a break in the group's cohesion as a result of individuals not conforming to gendered expectations. The first instance involved my presence in the groups. At the beginning of every session I introduced myself to the groups. The men's and women's groups have different formats for acknowledging my presence. The men only do a brief introduction of each other's names. Contrastingly, in the women's groups, the facilitators incorporate new group members into the introductions following a format where participants say who they are, what they do, and what they like, such as particular food and hobbies. I would also present myself as a graduate student who was doing research in Mexico, and that I liked spending time with my family, boyfriend, and dog. Inevitably, there would be a question from a group member about how long I have been with my boyfriend (five years) and were we going to get married (maybe). The responses I received from my answers were a variation of confusion and disbelief, as well as more questions: How could I be in a relationship with a man for so long and not have plans for marriage? How could I be so old (30 years old) and not already be married? What did my parents think? I sensed how these participants considered me very different from the women they normally interacted with. Instead, I fulfilled their stereotype of an American woman—independent, non-religious, and career-oriented. Nonetheless, these differences did not prevent my trust from being won over. We were all able to share in each other's confidences.

Another incident occurred during the first session of a group. All of the women were asked to introduce themselves the same way I introduced myself to each group. There was a woman who looked to be in her early twenties who introduced herself as a psychology student who wanted to learn more about violence, gender, and community members who were victims of violence. I was surprised by her introduction because she was the first female participant of the Re-Education Program who I could readily identify as a "volunteer" in addition to not being married or having children. The woman who followed this "volunteer participant" introduced herself—single mother of one son; a victim of violence by her now separated husband; wanting to raise her son with more egalitarian views of women and men so he did not become like his father. After this description, she then spoke directly to the "volunteer participant" describing how she did not feel comfortable with her presence because she was not married, not a mother, and had not experienced violence. Without having any of these characteristics, how could she possibly contribute to this group when the rest of the women all shared these characteristics? Both of these women seemed to be the same age, with the same educational levels, and same socio-economic background. The volunteer participant said that although she was correct that she was not married, not a mother, and had no experience with violence, her life as *"a woman, sister, aunt, and cousin"* gave her many experiences that may be insightful to the group. In order to re-establish control over the group, Antonia interjected to confirm the presence of the volunteer participant and then moved on to establishing the group's ground rules, in order to institute a protocol for how the group's participation would be run from that point forward.

Yet, despite the fact that a breach in normative gender expectations may come at a cost to the maintenance of group cohesion, there were instances when facilitators resisted and reinterpreted socially prescribed identities. In particular, Antonia is one facilitator who used her presence as a leader of several women's groups as an opportunity to challenge the notion of the subordinate position associated with Mexican femininity. She incorporated a small pep talk into each session she led. First she would begin by recapping the most typical stereotyped injustices associated with a "traditional" Mexican woman: lack of educational opportunities, lack of control over one's sexuality, and working tirelessly in the house. The women would respond to these examples by nodding their heads when they heard something that resonated with their personal lives and occasionally interjecting with their own example of a similar experience. Antonia interspersed these examples with a reassurance of "little by little freedom and equality" would come about. This perspective seemed to coincide with Western human rights ideals promoting both individual autonomy, equality, choice, and secularism (Merry, 2006:6), and the establishment of gender roles perceived as 'gender neutral'—no difference between men and women.   By assuming this point of view, I observed Antonia resisting local visions of social order characterized as upholding traditional family structures and gender roles.

Se Quedan en la Casa: **Representations of Women**

> "Typically, women stay at home [*se queda en la casa*] because they feel they need to work there—washing, ironing, caring for children, etc."
>
> - Hilda, a Re-Education Program facilitator, talking about gendered expectations of Mexican women during a one-on-one interview

Representations of women in Mexico frequently draw on the Mexican Mother and the Virgin of Guadalupe (Gutmann, 2007:106). These depictions emphasize motherhood, submissiveness, being a wife, and virginity. Furthermore, the woman is perceived as caretaker of the house. These responsibilities include cooking, cleaning, and washing.

Here, I aim to show how, throughout discussions, activities, and personal experiences of the participants, the Re-Education Program solely refers to this representation of women as mothers and wives. This image facilitates a sympathetic understanding of all women as victims of violence. In addition, it heightens awareness of the inequality women experience within the family and society. Yet, aside from all of the motivations the Re-Education Program may have to depict women a certain way, I observed a majority of sessions in which the experiences of the female participants' closely adhered to image of the unitary Mexican woman.

However, simply because there was overlap between participants' lives and the Re-Education Program's idea of femininity does not mean that there were not instances where this image was subverted or resisted. Through observations, there are points in the participants' stories and actions where this image begins to fray and the experiences of the participant do not align with stereotypical gendered expectations. Still, in identifying these instances, I also saw how facilitators modified the participants' lives in a manner that realigned the experiences with elements of an essentialized "Mexican mother."

The narrative of women as wives and mothers is prominent when women introduce themselves within the sessions. The women always describe their marriage and

how many children they have. Again, they do not reference their profession, where they went to school, or where they were originally from. When they talk about what they like to do, the activities mentioned are in the realm of domesticity, such as cooking and eating. One popular answer is to prepare and eat *gorditas*, a corn cake stuffed with either cheese, meat, or other fillings, or *chile rellenos*, literally meaning stuffed chile, usually with cheese. This emphasis on being a wife and mother seem to be the gendered characteristic these women most identify with.

There were occurrences in the group when women would become very upset during introductions because they had to present themselves as separated or divorced from their husband. For instance, one participant was interrupted by Celina, a facilitator, because she had started crying during her introductions describing how she was single. Celina explained to her that she should be "proud" that she was single because it represented how she made important decisions in her life. The participant did not seem entirely reassured by this statement because she did not stop crying. However, she did manage to explain how this was her second time trying to participate in the Re-Education Program. The first time she had to quit (no reason was given), but she was happy to be able to be a part of a group again.

Celina's interruption to reassure the participant did not solely stem from an acknowledgement of the hurt and pain caused by the emotional draining process of separating one's life from that of their partner. Celina was also trying to ease the participant's feelings of shame involved in having to admit that she had somehow failed her culture's expectations of what it meant to be a successful woman—a wife and

mother. Though, in doing so, Celina was subverting the traditional representation of women put forth by the Re-Education Program.

In another activity, female participants discuss society's stereotypical depictions of the unitary Mexican woman. The women participate in this activity by discussing how their lives may or may not reflect these representations. First, women break into groups and list as many unique *refranes* (Mexican proverbs) as they can. Then they are supposed to share each group's list with the other participants. Some of the *refranes* frequently mentioned include: *que hombre tenga corona aunque la mujer no coma* (the man will drink beer even as women go hungry); *mujer al volante peligro constante* (a woman at the wheel means constant danger); and *la mujeres son como las pelotas de ping pong* (women are like ping pong balls). In all of these sayings, women are depicted as being second to men, incapable of certain activities (like driving), and sexual objects that are passed back and forth among males.

Although I understand these phrases may have been overemphasized, there is a connection between them and women's everyday lives. Either the r*efranes* specifically or the messages they conveyed were frequently mentioned in interviews and sessions, by both facilitators and participants. I observed how the facilitators would incorporate the messages affiliated with the *refranes* into observations they would make about their culture and what is considered appropriate for a man or woman. For example, Mateo integrated one of these sayings into his discussion about what behaviors were considered inappropriate for women in Mexico. He said:

> For example, women don't know how to drive. Yes, they are unable to
> drive a vehicle. There are even sayings explaining why women lack the
> capability to do such things. For example, "a woman at the wheel is

constant danger." Yes this saying is a classic about women and how [men] feel about them with vehicles. [This perception] benefits men because we do not have limits in our capability to drive or conduct ourselves.

Cesar also picked up on this cultural perception of women being incapable of driving, touching on it in a conversation about jobs men could have but women could not:

There are other activities and work that are exclusively for men that women do not do. We drive buses and taxies, and for example, construction workers are typically men. There are no female construction workers.

During session five, female participants are asked to answer a series of questions about their family and childhood. This is the first activity in the program that allows women to talk at length about their past. As the women answer the questions the facilitators take from the Manual, their responses transform into narratives. After observing several groups go through this activity, it became apparent that there are obvious themes running through the narratives. The women's stories align with fundamental elements of how a traditional Mexican woman is portrayed, as described above.

One theme that is articulated by many of the women in this particular activity is the idea that women are to be submissive. As one participant said, "I received messages to be helpful and servant-like. A woman cannot relax." One other woman repeated this theme in her statement, "Before [the Re-Education Program], I was always submissive [to my husband]." Another theme emphasizes the home as the place where women belong. For example, many women's experiences are described by one woman's account, "I only did household chores and was never to be visible," as well as another

woman's explanation of the gendered messages she received growing up: "a woman is considered only to have kids and be in the house."

Other themes that are touched on by the participants address their interactions with the opposite sex. It is evident that a majority of the participants feel there was a difference between how they were raised in comparison to their brothers. One participant explained, "there were differences between my brother and me in how we were treated by our family." Another woman supported this notion as she described how her "macho father thought that women were less important because he wanted men to work with him and to include in the men's activities." Though, this preference for brothers is not attributed only to fathers, mothers also carried out this tradition of male preference: as one woman told the group "my mother favored my brothers."

This tendency of male favoritism is identified as existing in the women's nuclear family as well. One young participant admitted shyly that her "children are equal to their father," placing herself in a subordinate position to everyone else in the family. This difference between how the female participants were raised in comparison to their brothers manifested in lack of educational opportunities. It seemed that this lack of opportunity is something these women regret. An older participant bitterly stated that there was "no money for school." Similarly, another woman summarized how "women don't study, don't work—they are mothers." Sometimes women are allowed to go to school, but only for a short time. One young woman told the group that she "was not allowed to study any more" because she had to help support the family.

Finally, there are several themes that address feminine sexuality. First, I observed that there is a definitive lack of sex education and information experienced by women

over the age of twenty-five. Many women described how they "did not receive information about their sexuality." The participants identified their mother as the potential source of information about the body and sex, but most of the women explained that their "mom did not talk about sex either." For those under the age of twenty-five, there seemed to be some knowledge based on what was learned in school. For example, one college student described to the elder women in her group how she "received information about sex in school."

Regardless of the age of the participant, all of the women acknowledge how they received message from many sources—family members, church, and friends—about how they needed to protect their virginity. One woman said that her grandmother told her to be "careful to take care of her virginity because that was the value of a woman." A participant expanded on this point to explain how her virginity was "protected." Specifically, she could not "be around boys unless to take care of her brother." Similarly, one women "was not allowed to go out [with friends]," while another said, "my brothers left for activities away from the house while the women did household activities."

In addition, a number of women admitted that they did not want to get married, but were forced into the situation. A particularly shy participant whispered when it was her turn to tell her story, "I did not want to marry, but I had to against my will." It was as though this was the first time she had said these thoughts aloud. And in a supportive gesture, the next participant telling her story leaned over and giving the woman a hug, said, "I got married and my wings were cut." Finally, I sensed a level of bewilderment by the women because there was no explanation for why their lives and sexuality are being controlled.   Sometimes, efforts to control their behaviors were seen as "only

unexplained prohibitions." Only one participant was more direct in her opinion that

"religion's influence does not give information about women or their value."

Negotiating Identity

Research on feminist movements in Mexico and Latin American countries reveals

how much they differ from the feminist movement in the United States. In the United

States, the feminist movement was initially motivated by the belief that women are

oppressed or disadvantaged in comparison with men and that their oppression is in some

way illegitimate or unjustified. In contrast, the feminist movement in Mexico and Latin

America had a different perspective. Mexican women were often motivated to join the

feminist movement explicitly as wives and mothers. Women's goals for organizing did

not including changing patriarchal ideology or abandoning their femininity, but rather to

produce a transformation of the traditional feminine conscience and its political role

(Feijo, 1989:77). Lynn Stephen's (1995) ethnographic research on the CO-MADRES

explores these particular characteristics of Latin American women's movements by

considering why women of El Salvador initiated protests against the atrocities of the

militarized government. Under the banner of 'motherhood'—as defined by Catholic

discourse—these women took to the streets to demand an answer of the 'whereabouts' of

their fathers, husbands, and sons (Stephen, 1995:813). Stephen (1995:823) identifies this

'collective action' as being driven by the women's "female consciousness" (Kaplan,

1982). Specifically, women, who have internalized their designated roles as domestic

providers and caretakers, are unable to carry out their duties, and therefore are moved to

take action in order to fulfill their social roles as females. In the case of the CO-MADRES, the task of defending life was moved out of the private sphere of the household and into the autonomous space of public and political discussion.

The Re-Education Program was created out of an ideological framework that aligns women's rights with the goals of the U.S.'s feminist movement—both men and women are perceived as equal in capabilities and with equal rights. However, the Re-Education Program also emphasizes a singular version of femininity that closely coordinates with gender traits emphasized in Latin American feminist movements—being a wife and mother. Which of these two factors configuring the Re-Education Program, and their representative political movements, are more influential on the facilitators and participants? More explicitly, will these individuals initiate changes within their lives to emphasize a gendered identity that aligns with the goals of the U.S.'s feminist movement? Or will they express another feminist perspective and re-assert respect for their roles as mothers and wives?

Academic work on gender stereotyping and subsequent identities has shown that the answer to these questions is more nuanced than may be initially perceived, particularly when definitions of gendered violence are considered. In analyzing gendered violence, it can never be understood solely in terms of its physicality—force, assault, or infliction of pain. It also includes assaults on the personhood, dignity, sense of worth of the victim. The social and cultural dimensions of gendered violence are what gives violence its power and meanings (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004:2). Gender-based violence is embedded in cultural understandings of gender and sexuality as well as in institutions of marriage, community, and state legal regulations of marriage, divorce,

inheritance, and child custody (Merry, 2006:25). Most societies draw a boundary between acceptable forms of violence against women and unacceptable forms. The location of this boundary is a cultural construct that depends on relationships, contexts, and situations. For example, some cultures accept particular forms of violence as appropriate discipline for certain types of behavior. People who cross this boundary and use excessive violence may face penalties from within their communities. Diminishing violence against women requires cultural transformation, in that the boundary separating discipline from abuse needs to be redrawn.

A consequence of the Re-Education program being new to Mexico and its affiliate communities is that the precedent determining where this "boundary" is located remains vague. Based on the human rights principles imparted throughout the Re-Education Program, the boundary between what is defined as gender-based violence (or not) is framed by a zero tolerance approach, articulated in the program's goals for women to live a life free of violence. However, through my one-on-one interviews with facilitators, it became clear that how this goal is interpreted varies greatly, which in turn means that where the boundary is drawn also varies greatly.

To better understand how facilitators thought about gender, I asked a series of questions in one-on-one interviews about gendered expectations they experienced and/or observed in their surrounding communities. Specifically, I asked open-ended questions about the responsibilities of parents and how they were different, the expectations of sons and daughters, and what habits or behaviors were deemed appropriate for men and women. In asking these questions I encouraged the facilitators to describe the

experiences of individuals who accessed services at AAMH, as well as their personal experiences within their family.

Interestingly, all of the facilitators used similar, if not the same, examples to define how men and women behave or were expected to behave. For example, a clear emphasis was placed on domestic responsibilities for women and financial responsibilities for men. Facilitators diverged in their opinions on whether these gender-specific behaviors were considered negative or positive. In particular, for the question, "Are there different expectations for sons and daughters?" facilitators were divided. Antonia's response represented one opinion held by several facilitators: "For sons, they are to be successful, and women are to have children and care for the home." In contrast, Celina's response represented another opinion: "No, both have the same skills and can develop their skills in the field they prefer." These responses reveal that although there is some agreement on how gender is performed, there is differences in opinion on whether these performances are acted out by personal choice—Celina's opinion—or societal constraints—Antonia's belief.

Due to this lack of consensus, it is clear that even within the Re-Education Program, cultural constructs about gender are not definite. Consequently, it is not possible to predict how women will incorporate their performance of gender into definitions of violence. The lives of the participants—shared through stories, discussions, and activities presented in the previous sections—overlapped significantly with the images of a unitary Mexican woman. Still, this identity was not absolute, and these characteristics do not predict how participants are going to reconcile violence in their lives. It is too early to know how the Re-Education Program's messages are going

to translate into action. Specifically, it is not clear how the participants (or the facilitators) will embrace the Re-Education Program's message to live a life free of violence.

El Hombre Machista: Representations of Men

> "Men are able to drink and it is not frowned upon. They can drink or come home late . . . it is not questioned."
>
> - Rubi, a Re-Education Program facilitator, talking about acceptable behaviors of men and women in Mexico during a one-on-one interview

In addition to a reliance upon a unitary image of women in Mexico, the Re-Education Program also depends on a general image of men in Mexico to frame activities and discussions about masculinity and aggressive behavior. Specifically, "*machista*" functions as a one-word encapsulation of characteristics common in Mexican men. These characteristics are primarily negative, emphasizing the "tough guy" persona stereotyped as wife beating, alcoholism, infidelity, gambling, the abandonment of children, and bullying behavior in general (Gutmann, 2007:15). By invoking these characteristics, the Re-Education Program presents the *machista* identity as "an already accomplished fact" (Hall, 1990:222). In this sense, participants' masculinity is represented as a homogenous category frozen in time. In summary, this perspective enables the Re-Education Program to overlook diverse or possibly "positive" interpretations of an individual's *machista* masculinity.
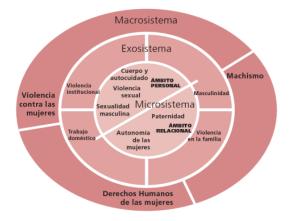
The Re-Education Program first introduces the concept "*machista*" in an activity initiated in the second session of the men's groups. This material is read aloud by participants and then followed by a discussion. The following is a description in the Manual:

> Macho ideas and practices are expressions that men use to demonstrate to women and other men that they are very virile, very strong, and very manly. Usually, these ideas do not correspond with reality, but men use them to make others feel like lesser persons who will experience violence if they do not do or say what the macho man wants (Manual, 2010:195).

Throughout the activities outlined in the Manual, participants are asked to make the connection between *machista* culture and violence against women. In making this connection, the Re-Education Program interprets the motives for violence differently from Western discourse on violence. Instead of viewing violence as a form of coercive behavior used in an effort to exert power and control over an individual (The Duluth Model, 2011), the curriculum of the program identifies *machista* culture as a set of behaviors used to exert power and control over an individual. For example, one session describes *machista* culture as an expression of ideas and practices acted out because "men decide to apply it [*machista* practices and ideas] to make their partner or other men feel fear and scared, and they decide to use it to threaten them" (Manual, 2010:195). In other words, *machista* culture is identified as being directly responsible for a Mexican male's coercive behavior.

As subtle as this transfer of responsibility is, it has discernible implications. Essentially, the Re-Education Program is making *machista* culture accountable for the existence of violence against women. This fact is best exemplified by the Ecosystem Model (Manual, 2010:101) presented below:

Sesiones temáticas organizadas de acuerdo al modelo ecológico

This model is included in the Manual in order to lay out how all topics are addressed in men's groups. First, the model identifies *machismo* (form of masculinity), *derechos humanos de las mujeres* (women's human rights)*, and *violencia contra mujeres* (violence against women) as macro issues addressed in the first sessions. Then it continues with institutional issues, or "*ecosistema*," down to the issues that affect the actual life of men in their relationships with their partners and children.

Furthermore, the Re-Education Program identifies men as the bearers of the *machista* culture. According to the Manual text, *machista* ideas and practices have two dimensions in the learning process—assimilation and repetition. Men learn these ideas and practices from their father or their brothers in the family, friends in childhood or adolescence, and peers and teachers at school (Manual, 2010:195). The program does not mention or give opportunity for men to describe how women in their lives may have emphasized macho ideas or practices. As the program explains, *"*men must take responsibility for their own feelings of fear and individual insecurity, without asking the woman or anyone else to change" (Manual, 2010:196).

The Re-Education Program's emphasis on *machista* culture being the primary cause of violence against women also has implications on the participants' perceptions of gender. One effect in particular is the fact that an alternative to the *machista* culture is not presented. This point was evident when two activities were initiated in session five of the men's groups. In the first activity, male participants are supposed to write on pieces of paper taped to the wall what they did as a child, adolescent, and adult to demonstrate that they were a "man." In childhood, men identified activities such as no crying, playing baseball, not playing with girls, and sitting next to men in the church. In adolescence, the men shared the following: having a girlfriend, smoking, drinking, hanging out with friends, making money, and faking virility. Finally, the subsequent characteristics were identified with being an adult man: not letting anyone stop you, going out with other women, finding it difficult to cry or express emotions, and engaging in power struggles. In an ensuing discussion, the men identified fighting, competition, and not ever having women as friends, only a girlfriend, wife, or sexual object, as characteristics observed in all three stages of their life.

This activity is uncomplicated because the men are able to easily participate by providing stereotypical examples of negative characteristics associated with being macho. However, the next activity, which asks the men to say a series of phrases identifying when they are not a 'man' versus when they are a 'man,' is more difficult because the facilitators do not provide the men with any positive stereotypes to draw from. In the first part of the activity, men are supposed to say a sentence explaining "how he is not a man" because of a behavior that would be identified as *machista*. For example, one man shared his phrase "I am not a man when I buy women [for sex]" But when the facilitator

asked the man to reverse the phrase by describing a more admirable version of masculinity, the phrasing was awkward and difficult. Initially, the man stated, "I am a man when I do not buy women." Then he restated, "Possibly, I am a man when I do not cheat on my wife."

In each of the statements describing equitable treatment of a partner, elements of masculine authority still exist. Specifically, the male participant remains in a position of power because he can choose whether or not he will be faithful to his wife or not buy sex. This activity lets the participants maintain this 'macho' position. However, if the activity had asked the participants to frame their statements in terms of human rights, then a different sentence may have been constructed. For example, "I am a man because I respect the fidelity my wife and I share in our marriage." However, by only emphasizing aspects of *machista* culture associated with violence, the activities rarely provided alternative versions of masculinity for men to enact in their lives.

Another consequence of *machista* culture being perceived as the primary cause of violence against women involves the Re-Education Program identifying males as the perpetuators of this culture and subsequently of violence. In taking this perspective, the Re-Education Program ignores the contributions of its participants when they explain how mothers, sisters, lovers and other women have influenced men as they construct their own sense of masculinity. In particular, many of the female participants shared how their mothers strictly enforced gendered expectations that emphasized both women as second to men. For example, one woman described how her mother believed that "women are [supposed] to suffer because they are to cater to men." This statement illustrates how men's and women's assumptions of gender expectations do not operate separately, but

rather converge to perpetuate an acceptance of violence within the family as well as in society.

It is understandable that the Re-Education Program wants men to recognize their actions and take sole responsibility for them. But what about women? There are no activities or sessions when women discuss how they, too, might be responsible for perpetuating *machista* culture. Instead, women learn the tools to identify and dismantle basic dynamics of intimate partner violence (Manual, 2010:39).

In sum, it is evident that the Re-Education Program has established a unitary definition of masculinity in order to inform its theory of violence and as well as its depiction of Mexican femininity. In addition, by comparing how masculinity and femininity are constructed within the program, it becomes clear that they are presented as opposites—aggressor/victim, tough/soft, and responsible/excused. A consequence of ascribing clearly delineated gender characteristics is that the Re-Education Program cannot complicate an explanation of why violence exists in people's lives. For example, it would be counter-intuitive and perhaps confusing to view women also as perpetuators of *machista* culture and therefore violence. However, in taking this perspective, the Re-Education Program may be overlooking how identities are shifting and transforming in small, less obvert ways to combat violence, or how violence may be naturalized and experienced by both men and women.

Negotiating Identity

Comparing male participants and female participants showed that participants are a part of these groups for different reasons. For the majority of cases, the women are there because they want to be. They attend the sessions in order to confirm that their experiences of violence are not justified. They want to learn how to articulate to their partners, family, and friends that they do not have to live with violence any longer. Men do not attend the sessions for these same reasons. For many of the men, they did choose to be a part of the program. Some are required to attend by the court because they were charged with battery. Others participate because the Re-Education Program is offered as an 'educational class' (among others that could be chosen from) for military personnel. There were only few men who were a part of the groups because they found the topic interesting and enlightening.

Because many of the men do not seek out this information, they are more resistant to the goals of the Re-Education Program, resulting in the maintenance of *machista* characteristics. In particular, the family is the place where *machista* characteristics prevail, because as "the most conservative of social institutions, it is the last refuge of male authority" (Gutmann, 2007:256).

This conclusion resonated with me after I experienced dinner with family of Cesar, one of the program's facilitators. In this case, both Cesar and I arrived late to his grandmother's house for dinner. The entire family was present, but had already finished eating. In my introductions, I noted how all the women—three generations—were sitting in the kitchen while all the men were outside in the street. Once we were seated at the

table, some of Cesar's cousins and uncles came in to meet me. While we were talking, his sister served us several courses. When we finished eating a few family members left to go to a soccer game in a nearby city. We said our goodbyes and were left alone with a number of aunts and cousins, as well as Cesar's mother and grandmother, who were talking in the kitchen. Still sitting at the table, I asked Cesar, whom I consider a friend, whether he felt comfortable with the fact that his sister served him food while he teaches equality and sharing of household responsibilities within his men's groups. He readily acknowledged the hypocrisy between the topics he teaches in his professional work and how he lives his life. He also explained that if he tried to serve his own food, neither his mother nor grandmother would let him. And to demonstrate how this fact was true, he took our remaining dishes to the sink and tried to wash them. He was shooed out of the kitchen immediately.

Nonetheless, as Cesar's personal situation demonstrates, men living in Mexico do not apply a *machista* way of thinking to all aspects of their lives. Furthermore, as the stories throughout this chapter had expressed, they do not uniformly oppose women's transformative presence within Mexico's society. As a couple, parent, and child, they too have dreams and aspirations that depend on changing gender identities.

Conclusion

According to Merry (2009), the emergence of gender violence as a social problem was influenced by theoretical developments in the analysis of gender. The concept of gender was developed as a way of describing identities that were socially constructed.

By locating gender in the social world, human rights activists have developed an appreciation for the varying ways gender is defined in different contexts (Merry, 2009:180). This chapter considers this perspective while identifying how the Re-Education Program defines and discusses differences between men and women in the context of Mexican society.

Throughout the sessions, participants presented ideas describing masculinity and femininity that are based on stereotypical, unitary descriptions. Specifically, men were repeatedly described through their *machista* tendencies. In contrast, women were identified regularly by their roles as wives and mothers. The rational for using these gender specific descriptions are numerous. In some contexts, these descriptions derive from the Re-Education Program's messages on gender. A desire for group cohesion—on the part of the facilitators and the participants—also significantly contributes to a reliance on stereotypical portrayals of men's and women's lives. And, for as many times as stereotypes were used to maintain a positive social standing, there were also many cases when they were used as a form of resistance and/or were open to reinterpretation. For instance, I observed male and female participants emphasizing certain traits that were strongly affiliated with the Re-Education Program's depiction of masculinity and femininity in order to confidently take on new gendered characteristics—a process I refer to as the reflective project of the self.

Finally, the human rights assumption that gender expectations can be transformed to emphasize equality was not easily translated into practice. For example, men resisted alternative gender roles because suggested change could result in a loss of gender authority. Women resisted discussing more radical gender roles because producing

transformations would challenge how others view them, as well as the institutions that most closely govern their lives, including marriage, education, and work. There is potential for the Re-Education Program to influence women to adopt international discourse on human rights and violence and to apply these ideals in their everyday lives. However, because the structure of the Re-Education Program stresses gender roles emphasizing human rights principles as "right" and Mexican gender expectations as "wrong," the small ways that men and women assert their right to equality in their daily lives may go unrecognized.

CHAPTER 4

MEN ARE AGGRESSORS AND WOMEN ARE VICTIMS: GENDERED VIOLENCE

> *Ignacio: Did you know that the omission of violence is also seen as an act of violence?*
>
> *Soldier: How so?*
>
> *Ignacio: Think of the way that power and control is asserted by those with three stripes on those with only one stripe.*
>
> *Soldier: Such as when I am made to do something by a three stripes because he doesn't want to do that responsibility? I am scared so I do it.*
>
> *Ignacio: Have you done something similar to your wife?*
> *Soldier: Yes.*
>
> *Ignacio: See, you can make someone feel as though you hit them without ever hitting them.*
>
> - Ignacio, a Re-Education Program facilitator, talking with a group Mexican soldiers about various types of violence

The goal of this chapter does not aim to catalog the different manifestations of direct violence experienced by participants in the Re-Education Program. Rather, I aim to go beyond these individual acts and crimes to discuss the ways in which the program dissects the multiple systems of oppression and exclusion that generalize suffering for women, children, and even men. This is accomplished by examining two aspects of violence. The first aspect is the multifaceted character of violence and its expression in the lives of participants that contributes to its normalization. I use the word "normalization" to describe that which is "legitimized ideologically such that domination,

dependency, and inequality are not only tolerated but accepted" (Ray and Qayum, 2009:4). The second aims to understand the gender-specific ways violence results in deep power inequalities.

Throughout my examination of violence within the Re-Education Program, I rely on Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois' opinion that "focusing exclusively on the physical aspects of violence misses the point and transforms the project into a clinical, literary or artistic exercise, which runs the risk of degenerating into a theatre of violence" (2004:1). Violence needs to be contextualized within the larger project of witnessing, critiquing, and writing against violence, injustice, and suffering (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004:1). Therefore, I see violence as occurring on a continuum (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgouis, 2004). In this model, violence exists through transformations and exchanges that include structural, symbolic, everyday, and intimate dimensions.

In the context of my analysis, structural violence refers to how the political economic organization of society affects and even creates vulnerable categories of people (Farmer, 2003). "Everyday" violence is a borrowed from Scheper-Hughes (1992) to call attention to the social production of indifference in the face of institutionalized brutalities. This concept is extended in order to also consider the effects of violence in interpersonal interactions and routine daily life. Although intimate violence is micro in scale, seemingly only visible between two individuals interacting in the heat of the moment, it is habitually the consequences of macro forces such as power structures and historical contexts that create these violent moments (Bourgois, 2002). Finally, Pierre Bourdieu's (2001) concept of "symbolic violence" is useful in framing diverse forms of

violence as social domination. Through symbolic violence, inequalities are made to appear commonsensical and they reproduce themselves unconsciously as naturalized classifications shared within classes and social groups of any given society (Bourdieu, 2001:339).

Furthermore, this chapter highlights the marked differences in how violence is discussed within the men's and women's groups. I include an analysis on "individual focused explanations" (Menjivar, 2011) because one theory is prominent within the men's groups. Specifically, the social learning theory (Bandura, 1978) is discussed as the primary theoretical framework informing why men are perpetrators of violence. Contrastingly, the women's groups are focused on establishing the links between violence at the interpersonal level with that which originates in broad structures. I make these connections by identifying different types of violence experienced by the female participants: physical, psychological, and social expressions.

Within my presentation of how violence is discussed in the Re-Education Program, I consider several factors. First, the political economy of violence does not affect everyone in the same manner; violence weighs differently for those in different social positions. This was evident in all the groups, as the participants' contributions alluded to diverse experiences that not everyone could relate to, although participants were always sympathetic. Second, violence is not always an event or a tangible outcome that can be observed, reported, or measured. In light of this reflection, I often felt my observations of female group discussions on violence were limited because the women (individually) could not identify the multiple expressions of violence that were actually a part of their lives. I highlight these instances because they speak to the normalization of

violence with the women's lives. Third, in expanding on the second consideration, not all societies recognize the same acts as violent, either in their origins or in their effects. The unpredictable nature of the conversations on violence within and between the groups served as a constant reminder of this consideration. In the final section of this chapter, I present an overview of the topics on violence included in the Re-Education Program by analyzing how they are presented within the men's and women's groups. By noting the differences and similarities in how these topics are addressed in the different groups, it is apparent that violence is conceived within the Re-Education Program as being an experience that is entirely dependent upon gender.

Social Learning Theory: The Re-Education Program's Theoretical Frame

The Re-Education Program asserts that violence is a learned behavior rather than psychopathology. This perspective derives from the conceptual framework of Social Learning Theory. Developed by the psychologist Albert Bandura (1978), this theory explains how children's acquisition of many complex behaviors is due to their exposure of competent models that display appropriate behavior in solving problems and coping with their world. In as much as positive behaviors can be acquired through positive role models, conversely, negative behaviors can also be learned through the modeling of negative behaviors.

Many batterer treatment programs in the United States rely on the Social Learning theoretical framework to work with batterers. These programs' objectives entail identifying the chain of events that lead each offender to violence—while also focusing

on thoughts and beliefs. In these analyses of violence, two dominant assumptions are apparent: violence is conceived as being motivated by the willful intent to cause harm; and it is assumed to be socially "deviant" from mainstream human activity (Jackman, 2002:388). The Re-Education Program follows this prescription by focusing on the social and cultural determinants of behavior rather than the pathology of the individual. As presented in the previous chapter, *machista* behavior is identified as a learned behavior attributed to violence. In addition to this unitary vision of masculinity, the program presents a theory of power and control strategies, male privilege, violence as a learned behavior, and techniques for changing beliefs about violence and about the way men should treat women.

As I have discussed, the Re-Education Program interprets violence through a gendered lens: women are victims and men are aggressors. This perspective enables the program to emphasize the similarity in women's vulnerability to violence, as well as the way that they experience violence. Similarly, the Re-Education Program offers a uniform image of aggressive characteristics, embodied in the term *machista* to describe all violent males. Whether this gendered perspective is accurate in describing violence is largely debated in the field. Many researchers call for a discussion on violence that looks at its effects on individuals through a more nuanced prism. In this alternative view, gender is joined with the ways structures such as class, race, citizenship, or nationality construct gender positions and performances. Proponents of this intersectional view argue that defining the problem as one-dimensional tends to ignore the other positions that render men responsible and women as vulnerable, thus limiting the capacities for change. For example, as Sarah Hautzinger's (2007) ethnography of a poor Afro-Brazilian community

in Brazil outlines, violence in intimate relationships is inseparable from the violence of poverty, insufficient food, heavy-handed policing, and racism.

Interpersonal Violence: Men's Discussions of Violence

> *Ignacio (reflective question to group): How do we talk about violence against women? Why is it a social problem?*
>
> *Soldier: We think that violence is only a problem of the lower classes.*
>
> *Ignacio: We are going to take a new perspective to look at the social violence of our community.*
>
> - Ignacio, a Re-Education Program facilitator, talking with soldiers about the types of violence

Interpersonal violence is a primary focus of the Re-Education Program, particularly for the men's groups. Several of the men's thematic sessions as well as all of the technical sessions exemplify this point, where the focus of the activity is "on the physical aspects of violence, such as injuries inflicted on an unwilling victim by force" (Menjivar, 2011:8). This focus on physical, corporeal injuries no doubt comes from the ease of recording actions that can be counted, categorized, and tabulated. Indeed, in a recent piece on violence, Randall Collins (2008) notes that the way sociologists have understood and studied violence has been guided by the way data are collected, namely, by examining individuals and their actions.

As much as physical acts of interpersonal violence are emphasized, discussions most often examine the act through a gendered lens. Within this perspective, violence is described as the product of unequal power relations. According to Bourdieu and Wacquant, "the male order is so deeply grounded as to need no justification . . . leading to [a] construct [of relations] from the standpoint of the dominant, i.e. as natural"

(2004:273). And they further argue: "The case of gender domination shows better than any other that symbolic violence accomplishes itself through an act of cognition and of misrecognition that lies beyond—or beneath—the controls of consciousness and will, in the obscurities of the schemata of habitus that are at once gendered and gendering" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2004:273).

The Re-Education Program correlates interpersonal violence to unequal gendered power relations in several different capacities. Beginning broadly, gender inequalities are described as "not new" (Manual, 2010:205). Participants are informed that both gender inequalities and oppressive practices against women existed in the nineteenth century and much earlier in pre-Hispanic Mexico. However, the past is differentiated from today because much of society, including women, no longer want these inequalities and therefore should implement initiatives to stop violence against women (Manual, 2010:205). And specifically, "macho characteristics," "entitled domination," "emotions," and "class cultures" are all topics in the program's curriculum used to explore why men batter.

"Machismo"

In the second session of the men's group, the men are asked to read aloud a lecture presenting ideas and practices of *machistas*. In this lecture, *machista* ideas and practices are explained as being used by men who are very virile, strong, and manly. These ideas do not necessarily correspond with reality, but are used to make other people do or say what the macho man wants (Manual, 2010:194). In adhering to the

characteristics of being a macho, men assert that violence is natural, even a source of pride and respect. Macho men emphasize the importance of acting tough, and maintaining a tough presence. Appearing tough translates into never crying or appearing 'soft.' Otherwise, a man might be called queer (Manual, 2010:194).

In another activity, the Re-Education Program demonstrates how these macho tendencies can be imposed on an individual. Nine-year-old Juan's story is told by facilitators to exemplify this point. In summary, Juan was depressed that he was excluded from the soccer team because his teammates said he was not good. Juan cried and his teammates teased him. The facilitators emphasize to the male participants how Juan is forced to think he is not good at something even though he likes playing soccer. Also, the facilitators reveal the social message implied in the teasing—Juan was not "a real enough man to play." In this perspective, we see that Juan's crying has a dual origin: it is individualistic, but it is also because he feels as though he is a "social failure" (Manual, 2010:201).

The story of Juan is followed by another about Alejandro. Alejandro is out with friends drinking. He feels very lightheaded when one of his friends says to him, "Have another beer." Alejandro blushes and say he doesn't want any more because he doesn't feel good. All his friends laugh. Alejandro reacts by insulting his friends. They become silent wondering why their friend is so mad. The facilitators question the male participants to think about what happened to Alejandro. Two issues are highlighted: one is that Alejandro was not able to respond to the situation (he didn't want another beer); and the other issue is that he didn't know how to respond in front of other men who know how to drink "*ya saben tomar.*"

The program constantly inserts violence into this discussion on masculinity by having the men reflect on how Juan and Alejandro, as young men, begin to use violence. The participants are asked to comment on how constructions of masculinity (and violence as an option) begin at a very young age, strongly impacting how Juan and Alejandro view themselves in relation to others. In this discussion, male participants are to make the connection in their own lives between how not using violence is associated with being a failure because he could not answer his peers, wife, or other family members. Because it is presumed that a man who does not respond is less a man.

Domination and Entitlement

The Re-Education facilitators perceive male domination as one of the single largest factors contributing to the existence of interpersonal violence. In one-on-one interviews, I asked whether circumstances existed where it was acceptable for a man to hit or physically mistreat their wife. Although all the facilitators did not personally believe there was any circumstance that validated violence against one's wife, they explained that many individuals held the belief that there were justifiable circumstances for violence. For example, facilitators described when a wife does not complete housework, if a wife disobeys her husband, if a wife refuses sex, or if a wife asks about other women as reasons why men were entitled to be violent. Cesar talked about how many husbands will physically hurt their wife simply to prevent them from leaving. This power influences financial decisions, where men control family finances, making their wives completely dependent on them. Antonia extended this conversation by

highlighting more specific instances where men are known to physically punish their wives for not doing a task up to their expectations. Cooking the wrong food, not having children behave, going out with her friends, and visiting one's mother without permission. Ignacio and Celina also touched on the privilege men have to determine when their wives will have sex with them. Many men believe it is the wife's duty to obey these requests and physically fulfill their husband. From Ignacio's point of view, interpersonal violence frequently occurs when a woman refuses to perform a certain sexual act, such as anal sex.

In one session, a man described an incident when he was violent toward his wife. The man became mad when he asked his wife for money to buy a coke and she refused to give any. As the man explained, he was furious that she rebuffed him. Normally, he said, his wife asks for money to buy things and he always gives it to her. Further compounding his anger was his opinion that his wife had more autonomy with 'her' money than he did with his. He described how she makes up to 1,000 pesos a day (approximately $100), but he can't account for what she spends this money on. In response to this argument, the couple became physical. The wife tried to leave the house, but in doing so, the man threw her on the hood of the car and screamed at her "to quit it." And to emphasize his control over her and money, he forced her into the car and attempted to drive her to the store in order to have her buy him a coke. In describing how he felt when being physical towards his wife, he used the words "I had a force within me," and "I had energy and courage."

The repercussions of this argument were fairly large. It was not stated outright, but it is likely that this violent situation resulted in the man coming to the Re-Education

Program. His wife had an injured neck. She wanted to leave him, but he admitted that he will not let her. He also acknowledged that his children were emotionally traumatized by the situation. In particular, his daughter does not talk to him.

These discussions on domination show that it is closely tied to men's economic roles. From this perspective, men are the providers. Thus the natural role for a woman is to stay home and take care of the house. Elements of the story of the man hitting his wife because she refused to give him money for a coke, as well as other instances mentioned in previous chapters emphasize how male participants feel it is important for women to be at home when they come home from work, expect that they have dinner cooked, and feel frustrated and neglected if this is not the case. Participants explained this desire as a result of how their parents raised them; they saw their mothers doing this for their fathers. Consequently, they view violence as a justifiable reaction to women's provocation and resistance to their demands. A woman's failure to obey insults and humiliates the man, so he must assert his authority over her. From this perspective, male participants redefine their violent behavior as a reaction, therefore justifying it.

Emotional Justifications

The Re-Education Program draws a clear connection between emotions and interpersonal violence. Some men deny responsibility for their violence by claiming that, "It just came over me," or "I can't control my feelings, it just comes on me. I don't know why." The men's technical session teaches participants that excusing violence as a result of an emotional outburst is not acceptable by introducing an analysis of body reactions

versus emotional reactions that may be experienced prior to and during an act of violence both for the man (batterer) and woman (victim). Male participants are asked to answer questions regarding his views of himself in the act of violence, the emotional experience of the violent act, and bodily sensations they had while experiencing violence (Manual, 2010:103). By seeing these emotions and subsequent actions as more calculating than originally thought—because they are always in an effort to assert power and control— men then learn to control them.

The Re-Education Program pinpoints three strategies for emotional control. The first is the breathing technique: participants are to get in touch with their body through breathing and silence in order to clarify violent tendencies and construct alternatives. The second technique is to identify the signals associated with "fatal risk," that is to detect body sensations, thoughts, and feelings experienced as indications that violence is about to occur and stop it before the situation intensifies. Finally, the third technique is to remove oneself: this process entails removing oneself from a potentially violent situation and going to a safe place to reflect on why and how one feels, and then to re-approach one's partner to resolve the conflict without violence (Manual, 2010:104).

Differences in Class

Male participants tend to identify high levels of interpersonal violence with certain class cultures more so than others. In many discussions where different types of interpersonal violence are shared by participants, there is a tendency to describe a horribly violent incident. Admittedly, the individuals who told these stories do not know

the victim, aggressor, or even where and when the act took place. The only confirming

bit of information they gave is that the act took place on a *rancho*. People who live in

ranchos are stereotyped as poor and uneducated. Consequently, these locations are

perceived as a natural place for extreme forms of violence.

Participants resisted having to acknowledge that they may be more like the people

in the ranchos than they would like to admit. By delegating horrific acts of violence to

remote places inhabited by lower classes, the participants elevated themselves and their

life experiences. The participants saw their location within a major urban area as more

civilized, more educated, and therefore less violent. The facilitators would have to

constantly battle this tendency by bringing the conversation back into *"nuestra*

communidad" (our community).

Social Violence: Women's Discussions Of Violence

> I am from a small [rural] town. I have 12 brothers and sisters. We have
> animals. I didn't go to elementary school. Finally I got to go to middle
> school. I was not allowed to dance at parties in my town. I got married
> when I was 20. At times, things were ugly in my life.
>
> - Female participant telling the group about her experiences growing up

Despite the fact that interpersonal violence is the focus of a majority of the Re-

Education Programs sessions, social violence is not forgotten. In this capacity, the

program focuses on, as Arthur Kleinman puts it, "the effect of the social violence that

social orders—local, national, global—bring to bear on people" (2000:226).

Specifically, the program brings attention to veiled violence in forms of social control of

women that results in a woman's devaluation, humiliation, and having a lowered gaze.

These kinds of violence do not shock the observer because they are a part of the everyday (Menjivar, 2011:4). Moreover, the program works to associate these unnoticeable acts with more noticeable ones that inflict physical injury because both types of violence arise from the same structures. As Irina Carlota Silber (2004) notes, when women are economically vulnerable, they also become vulnerable to men's sexual violence and exploitation and are seen as culpable for their own conditions, which in turn limits their ability to seek redress for their predicament.

Expressions of social violence come in many forms. Researchers identifying less obvious types of violence point to malnourishment, lack of opportunities to secure dignified work, and unequal access to education and health care as frequent manifestations (Menjivar, 2011). In order to reveal the structures of violence that result in these expressions, the Re-Education Program has developed an approach grounded in women's experience. Specifically, the activities within the women's sessions highlight the suffering lived by the participants in order to show how these experiences are characterized by three general factors. The first factor is that these occurrences stem from deep inequalities in access to resources and are based on the women's socioeconomic position. A second factor is that a woman's suffering is often associated with a feeling of humiliation and fear, which originates in gender ideologies that constrain women's lives. And third, women's lives are characterized by an atmosphere of fear and insecurity for what their future lives hold.

The following two sections address different expressions of social violence. Two general topics—1) physical and psychological expressions and 2) social expressions—will organize an analysis of the ways in which structures affect the lives of these women

to produce different exhibitions of violence. My analysis builds on Paul Farmer's (2003, 2004) work by focusing on how the Re-Education Program both discusses the concrete expressions of social suffering and explains how multiple forms of violence coalesce on the body. This examination therefore highlights how "power, history, and gender operate through embodied subjectivity and concrete bodily activity" (Green, 1998:4); how the body connects women to local, even global realms (Sutton, 2010); and how suffering is normalized in small, routine moments (Menjivar, 2011).

Physical and Psychological Expressions

Chapter 2 highlighted the incorporation of physical health issues into the Re-Education Program as a unique aspect of the program. Certain health issues were seen as a form of violence that female participants needed to learn how to address. The program suggests that women can overcome these issues by developing skills for self-care and protection—an overarching goal of the program. The objective of this section is to draw a stronger connection between the activities on health care in the Re-Education Program and specific health issues brought up by women.

Every woman's group begins with five minutes spent doing stretching, meditative, and breathing exercises. These introductions are set to tranquil music, all participants' eyes are closed, and everyone is expected to participate. It is revealing to watch these women going through the exercises. Their faces express surprise simultaneously as they also show pain, discomfort, relaxation, and even pleasure. It is as

though they are being introduced to their bodies for the first time. They are being reminded of the connection between their mind and their body.

Primed by these introductory exercises to be more in touch with their bodies, the women freely share their physical ailments with the group. Insomnia, depression, alcoholism, lack of appetite, gastritis, drastic hormonal changes, and urinary tract infections were all mentioned in each group. The women catalog these ailments by writing them on a woman drawn out on butcher paper in the location of the pain/health problem.

Once this common experience is established, a group facilitator then asks the participants how they learned about their health. For example, Hilda specifically asked one group, "Who taught you about your health as a woman?" One woman answered that her mother was a source of information about her health. She had instructed her that girls were not allowed to exercise. Exploring this information that mothers are an important source of health information, Hilda then asked, "When your body went through puberty, did your mom talk to you?" Another woman responded that no her mom did not talk to her about it before it happened. Once it did happen, she wasn't allowed to do anything while "it [menstruation] was going on." Hilda replied by commenting on how information about the body remained a mystery.

And bringing the conversation back to the ailments women had in common, she asked, "What do we need to do to prevent or alleviate these conditions?" The women responded with very specific solutions. "For drastic hormonal changes, take hormone therapy." "For lack of appetite, eat more." As the solutions to the physical ailments were written down, Hilda asked the group, "So, why don't women take care of themselves?"

The two responses were "*tiempo y dinero!*" [time and money]. Then many of the women shared personal stories of why they did not have time to take care of themselves. Hilda pressed them on these responses, "*Por que nos no necesita nada?*" [Why don't we need anything?]. "Why do we sacrifice our time for everyone else?" This comment was not really answered fully, so Hilda rephrased the question by asking, "How does this self-sacrificing behavior tie to your self-esteem?" In helping the women think about this answer, Hilda explained her perception that poor physical health is directly the result of poor emotional health, such as low self-esteem, both of which are compounded by self-sacrificing practices. And in the minutes that were left in the session, Hilda asked all the women to share what they were going to do for themselves and their health. "Eat at the right time, go to the doctor, organize my time to sleep more, rest, and go with my parents to support" were among the responses given by the women.

The conversations in this session reveal two dimensions that reflect the embodiment of violence. The first dimension focuses on the treatments that address the physical manifestations of social suffering. By identifying the treatments necessary for these ailments, it becomes clear that treatment is not readily accessible due to unequal access to health care and medicine along gender lines. In addition, treatment is not obtained because of the naturalized view female participants have that the health of others in the family comes before a women's own. This effect places women of different social classes and ethnic backgrounds in a similarly disadvantaged position in relation to men. In this particular session, the program did not discuss a solution to the problem that these women do not have access to health care. Nonetheless, the session endeavors to highlight the struggle these women endure every day—making tough choices between

paying for consultations and medicines for themselves or spending money on food and clothing for their family.
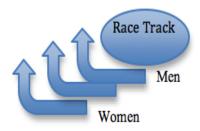
The second set of narratives focuses on the embodied manifestations of distress, such as gastritis, insomnia, and depression, conditions that may appear to be "psychological" or even "part of tradition" but that on closer examination reflect how deeply linked they are to violence (Menjivar, 2011:65). In response to this, the facilitators asked participants to look at their experiences in another light. To these women, their suffering was so present that it went misrecognized and normalized. They believed that it was natural to endure and that their ailments were theirs alone. But in sharing in the group context, these women were assured that suffering did not have to be an expected condition that went unnoticed.

Social Expressions

In this section, I again address male dominance and control, but in the perspective of women's lives. As presented earlier in this chapter, the men's groups analyze interpersonal violence as an outcome of men asserting their entitled dominance over women. Contrastingly, in the women's groups, as much as discussions on interpersonal violence are incorporated into group activities, there is an increased focus on making women aware of the origins of male dominance, how it does not always express itself as direct violence, and how it is a breach of their constitutional rights.

Cesar frequently presented a drawing in his discussions with men about why women's rights as outlined in the Mexican constitution were essential. The metaphor

depicted a racetrack. Men were on the inside lane. Historically, Cesar explained, men have had the advantage to come into and out of the turn quickly. In contrast, women have been in the outside lane. Due to past and present practices of inequality, women need a boost to be able to power through the turns with the same ease as the men in the inside track. This "boost" was ensured through their constitutional rights, so they could make it through the 'turn of life.'

This metaphor was not used in the women's groups, but similar discussions about women's rights were held among women, contrasting rights to the legitimization of gender inequalities in the home, a critical space in the lives of women a part of the Re-Education Program. Specifically, in session seven, women were asked the question, "What things are you forced to do against your will?" Responses divided into two categories: house work and sexual relations. "*Planchar*" [to iron], and "*lavar en determinados dias por la falta de agua*" [wash on certain days when there is no water] reveals the domestic obligations women are responsible for on a daily basis. In addition, many women shared a resentment toward sex: "I don't want to have sex—because of fatigue, having no desire, and having problems with him [husband] all week; "in certain positions;" "Oral sex—only to please." In reaction to these comments, they are then asked, "Why do we continue doing these things when we don't want to do them?"

"*Porque somos mujeres*" [Because we are women] was a frequent response. Group members expanded on how the "things" women are forced to do are interpreted as an obligation to marriage. Husbands are identified as the force that ensure they complete their obligations. To not clean the house, have sex, or practice other submissive behaviors such as "*dar mi dinero a el*" [giving my money to him] results in verbal and physical fighting.

From this dialogue, the participants become aware of the commonly accepted, normalized notion that men have the upper hand or the last word. Furthermore, they observe how this practice, in turn, shapes how they see themselves and their partners within the context of their marriage, as well as how they respond to male authority. The dominant notions of being a man or woman have very real consequences. They reproduce power differentials and constitute hegemonic processes "by which 'normal' and ideal definitions emerge and how the terms of morality surface and persuade" (Barrett, 1996:130). The Re-Education Program strives to show the female participants that there are alternatives to this interpretation of marriage. The reminder of women's constitutional rights is an opportunity to convey the idea that these rights could extend into the domestic sphere and be leveraged in an effort to produce a more egalitarian relationship. However, how to begin applying those rights is not discussed. Facilitators only state that "*poco a poco*" [little by little] women will find ways to resist the forced duties that they are currently expected to accomplish as a married woman.

Common Themes in Discussions of Violence for Men's and Women's Groups

Due to the design of the Re-Education Program to address multiple components of violence that built on each other throughout the sessions, it is important to discuss these topics as they are detailed in the Manual. Therefore, in the following sections, I identify several broad topics that tackle issues surrounding violence within the aggressors' and victims' programs, separately, and then I compare and contrast the different programs in order show how violence becomes associated with a certain gender at various times in the sessions.

Women's Groups

Session twelve (Manual, 2010:63-64) is dedicated to reflecting on the messages associated with economic decisions in the household. Beginning with childhood, the women are asked to reflect on their parents. "How was money handled?" "Who made important decisions about money?" "What messages did you receive about money?" And in answering these questions, the women are to think about how money is associated with relationships and power. The facilitator then brings the women to their current situation. She asks participants to get out their wallet. In doing so, she asks, How much money did you bring today? ; How much difficulty does one have getting enough money to buy things? ; What are some difficulties a couple has when dealing with money? ; and, Who makes decisions about what and when to spend money? At this point the facilitators are coached to be sensitive and possibly comfort women in the group who

might be embarrassed for not having money. Yet, this point is not supposed to be

overlooked. Instead, facilitators must locate not having money within larger issues

related to power and governance. How are these women empowered (or not) in relation

to their ability to access money? The message facilitators are supposed to articulate

suggests the Social Learning Theory—women are asked to see how they are repeating the

same patterns of money management that they grew up observing.

Sexual violence is defined and discussed in both session thirteen (Manual, 2010:

65-66) and fourteen (Manual, 2010:67-68). Beginning in thirteen, women are asked to

first contribute to a definition of sexual violence and then provide examples. Session

fourteen applies the topic of sexual violence to the participant's lives, and specifically

outlines tools to deal with future encounters of sexual violence. The presentation of this

information is more detailed than previous sessions which only informed the female

participants on issues related to their gender and violence. Specifically, the women are

asked to identify actions and things that are "*eroticas, suaves, y agradables*" [erotic,

mild, and enjoyable] to their body or a part of their relationship that they do not want to

lose. The facilitators insist that participants identify the feelings associated with these

actions or things and then use them as tools to follow a path of resilience—in order to not

repeat violent situations.

Finally, the cycle of violence is introduced throughout various sessions in an

effort to explore what causes certain violent situations, why they are perpetuated, and

how women can possibly discourage having to experience certain types of violence again

and again. Again, Social Learning Theory is prominent in these discussions, as the

activities in the program emphasize participants connecting the experiences of their

childhood to their current lives. The Re-Education Program (2010:74) touches on guilt as an emotional effect female participants may feel when trying to develop new strategies for combating the cycle of violence. Women are instructed to imagine a relationship based on respect, affection, and equality. Guilt might overwhelm women because these imagined relationships could involve them abandoning their traditional roles as wife and mother. However, the facilitators are to respond to this guilt by reminding women that they have inalienable human rights (as introduced in sessions sixteen and seventeen). These rights validate any assertion participants may express to their partners about how they want their relationships to be changed.

Men's Groups

Thematic session six (Manual, 2010:121-124) of the men's group engages participants in a number of activities in order to better equip them to be able to identify and address sexual harassment. The discussion within this session is very specific to define this type of violence as happening in public spaces. There are three primary public spaces that are identified and analyzed—public transport, work, and school. For each of these spaces, men are asked, "Who commits violence?" "What types of acts are committed?" "What did the participants do when being a witness to similar types of violence?" Then, going back to these three public spaces, men are asked, "What are their responsibilities to women?"

Session seven (Manual, 2010:125-126) is very similar to the format followed in all the technical sessions, but instead of addressing an instance of interpersonal violence

experienced with a partner, the activity asks male participants to reflect on a situation that occurred in their family of origin. The goal of this activity is for participants to learn the ways in which violence in the family of origin is related to the violence experienced in their current relationship. Facilitators lead discussion by inquiring, Who assaulted you?; How did the situation develop?; How has this situation had a lasting effect on you? Participants are asked to share their stories in groups of two. Facilitators leave the participants with a strong message—this pattern of violence will continue until either their female partner seeks outside help, or men begin to take responsibility for their actions and acknowledge the effects violence will have on their children.

The effect of men's violence against their children is further explored in session ten (Manual, 2010:135-138). To begin this session, the male participants are asked to close their eyes and think about their children. The facilitator asks them to think about what, if their children were invited to the group today, they would say about them. "They would tell everyone how you treat all the members in your family, what you do when you are nice, as well as what you do when you are angry." Keeping these thoughts in mind, the next activities develop alternative ways of interacting with one's children. "What are some other ways to deal with conflict?" " What can be done to improve one's relationships with their children?" The re-occurring notion for this session (and previous ones) is that participants have a choice in how they deal with conflicts. The healthiest path is that of nonviolence.

There are a series of sessions in which male participants learn about their body and how it is perceived socially, as well as how it relates to violence. One activity that begins to make these connections asks men to draw four columns on a piece of paper

(Manual, 2010:140). Each man fills out his own paper, answering the question in column one—"What are the characteristics of the body to men?" Column two—"What are the main roles of men's bodies in society?" Column three—"What features do women's bodies have?" And finally, column four—"What are the main functions of women's bodies in society?" Participants reflect on their answers by further answering the questions—"What is your body to you?" And, "What do you know about a woman's body (or your partner's)?" Comments from participants are compared and contrasted to the Re-Education Program's perspective that because a man's body is seen as strong *and* invulnerable, there is a social mandate for men to be devoted to the production of self-serving interests and to practice social violence. Contrastingly, the female body is considered aesthetically pleasing but weak. Therefore, women's bodies are assigned the task of presenting an ideal beauty as well as reproducing children. These ideas are seen as stereotypes that serve as the basis of gendered violence.

Building on this discussion, session twelve (Manual, 2010:141-143) asks men to reflect on situations where participants have put their body at risk in an effort to adhere to societal standards. The situations where men most frequently experience bodily risk are identified as: work, in sex, in health, and on the street. In identifying these various circumstances, the facilitator asks participants, "Why do men risk their bodies?" And, "How does one feel when they realize that they are also vulnerable to these risks?" The program interprets men's avoidance of health support as an avoidance of having to acknowledge one's vulnerability. Where does this opinion come from? To answer this question, men are asked to trace cultural traits that support risk taking behavior—playing as children, maintaining an image that is the complete opposite of women, etc. Finally,

the men are asked to share concrete ways that they are going to avoid hurting their body and alleviate the self-imposed suffering subsequently experienced.

To conclude the men's thematic sessions, participants are introduced to sexual violence and its many manifestations (Manual, 2010:143-147). Participants are broadly introduced to this topic by brainstorming on the myths and facts of men's sexuality. With these comments written on a board, men are then asked, "What are some real situations where men are concerned about their sexuality?" The point of this activity is for men to observe the diverse manifestations of sexuality relating to both real and concrete activities, as well as ideas and fantasies. Furthermore, this discussion enables facilitators to encourage men to acknowledge different manifestations of sexual orientation—heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality—various sexual practices, the various ways emotions and sex are tied together, and all the possibilities that people can express their sexuality. This discussion asks participants to keep an open mind about the possible expressions and even if they do not feel comfortable with one's behavior, to practice three rules: one, remind myself that the individual is not harming me; two, remind myself that the individual is not harming others; and three, what that individual does for pleasure should be respected with the rights of freedom and privacy.

Then, in session fourteen (Manual, 2010:148-150), men are asked to specifically address sexual violence in their relationship with their partner. The session includes an activity of role reversal so men come to understand the effect of their actions. In this activity, men are broken up into five groups: one, forcing a woman to have sex; two, living with an alcoholic husband who wants to have sex; three, a boss offering to increase your (woman) wage as a secretary in return for sexual favors; four, being seduced by a

group of men at a restaurant; and five, your husband comes home with pornographic movies he wants you to watch with him so he can get excited. After these roles are acted out, the men are asked how they think about women who have to live this reality every day. Then to conclude, men are first asked to reflect on times when they have asserted sexual violence against their partner and then second, what they could have done differently.

Victims and Aggressors Discussing Violence

Based on an analysis of the Re-Education Program's Manual, there is a pattern between the men's and women's groups and how violence is discussed. Specifically, there are four general topics that overlap for victims and aggressors: autonomy/human rights; sexual violence; violence in the family of origin; and body/health issues. However, as I presented in the beginning sections of this chapter, the manner in which these topics were introduced to the participants, depending on gender, were different. Men were guided to address these topics by more frequently analyzing the effects of their violent actions. In contrast, women were to discuss violence more broadly, by looking at the ways that society, generally, and men practice violence against women. For example, men are introduced to the topic of human rights and the rights of women by discussing how they personally had inhibited their partner or other women in their lives from accessing these rights. Women become informed of their rights by highlighting both the subtle and obvious ways violence prevents them from accessing their rights. Similarly, men discussed health by associating their specific actions to the harm of themselves and

their family, whereas women examined health issues by incorporating larger structural

factors such as access to health care, employment opportunities, and perceptions of

marriage into group's discussions.

Despite the overlap of categories for analyzing violence, the men's and women's

groups diverged considerably on how each gender should combat violence. The men's

thematic sessions, where many topics on violence were presented, did not incorporate

solutions or techniques. This seems as though this coaching was primarily done in the

technical sessions when each participant had to share a time when they were violent,

analyze why the incident happened, and then offer alternatives to being physically

violent. In contrast, the women's groups ask participants to think about what an equal

and respectful relationship would look like throughout several sessions. In these

instances, the Re-Education Program is having women become more practiced in

identifying healthy and unhealthy elements in a relationship. Then, once this is

established, the program provides several activities for participants to become better

aware of resources and support that may help them transform their lives to have healthy

relationships.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how violence is discussed in the Re-Education Program.

In this analysis, I have identified three prominent themes. First, violence identified by

the Re-Education Program is never isolated. Specifically, when the women and men

discuss one form of violence, other forms are often present. Second, it is evident that

some expressions of violence have become normalized in men's and women's lives and are assumed to simply be a part of life. Finally, the violence experienced by participants is influenced by more than just gender, including factors such as socioeconomic class.

Primarily, the Re-Education Program conceives of violence using Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1978) and through a gendered lens. The men's groups and women's groups have considerable overlap in the topics of violence, but analyze it differently. Men's groups discuss violence in its most direct manifestations: physical violence. In contrast, women are asked to identify the more subtle forms of violence expressed in physical, psychological, and social forms.

The Re-Education Program's presentation of violence navigates the divide between the global and the local by translating global approaches into local terms. This chapter identifies how definitions of violence have expanded to include specific cultural and gendered expressions. For example, the Re-Education Program recognizes that women experience more than physical acts of violence from their husbands. Subsequently, session topics also include expressions of violence such as poor health and lack of economic independence. Nonetheless, even as these definitions have adapted to the community AAMH serves, the Re-Education Program retains an underlying emphasis on individual rights to protect the body, along with autonomy, choice, and equality— ideas embedded in the legal codes of the human rights system (Merry, 2006:137). However, the ways in which participants will reconcile violence in their lives does not solely depend on the messages conveyed by a human rights framework. Structural pressures also have a significant impact on whether or not participants can apply human rights initiatives in their lives.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION: REFLECTIONS ON THE RE-EDUCATION PROGRAM

> **Empowerment:** A process through which women transition from any situation of oppression, inequality, discrimination, exploitation and exclusion, to a state of consciousness, self-determination and autonomy, which is manifested in an exercise of democratic power that emanates from the full enjoyment of their rights and freedoms.
>
> - Re-Education Program Manual (2010:16)

The goal of this research has been to demonstrate how international human rights discourse is influencing local reform projects concerned with violence against women. The principles that underpin human rights discourse are, first, that universal standards cannot be compromised by claims to culture and, second, that gender equality is the ideal approach to protecting women against violence (Merry, 2006:101). By observing the Re-Education Program, I have been able to identify how these human rights principles have been translated into culturally relevant signs and symbols and tailored to local institutions such as AAMH. Despite this translation, the basic assumptions of universal human rights —namely that of equality and autonomy—remain unchanged. This research has highlighted the ways in which ideas in local contexts contradict, interact, and/or accommodate a universal human rights framework.

Beginning in Chapter 2, I traced how the creation of human rights ideals produced in a global setting through international deliberations are being reinterpreted by national political leaders, NGO activists, state employees, and program participants in countries such as Mexico. Human rights approaches to violence against women are, in reworked and fragmentary ways, being established in local communities such as the one AAMH serves. As I have demonstrated, theories such as feminism have had an enormous impact on local women's movements and have contributed to forms of institution building. While the ideas associated with violence against women have spread globally, new forms of social services for battered women and the criminalization of offenders have spread as well. The model of the Re-Education Program is one that is also present in India, China, Fiji, and the United States (Merry, 2006:218). Although such programs are tailored to local social contexts and languages, their overall approaches and goals are similar. Women encounter public education efforts that activists produce, enabling them to rethink the violence they experience.

As this research has explored, Mexican "culture" was often portrayed in the Re-Education program as unchanging, irrational, patriarchal, and the cause of the oppression that women face in families and society. Because Mexican culture is viewed as the root of violent behavior, the solution for a life free of violence is for participants to learn new cultural practices. Such alternative "culture" is promoted as "transnational modernity," which emphasizes the value of informed choice and encourages alternative ways of doing things (Merry, 2006:101).

The Re-Education Program strives to attain "transnational modernity" by informing women of their entitlement to certain constitutional rights protecting them

from gendered discrimination and violence. In addition, the program guides female participants to redefine the abuse they suffered as a crime and a rights violation. For example, I observed one woman realize how the controlling actions of her husband are a form of physical violence because, though he did not hit her, he was attempting to assert power over her body.

Still, this research has uncovered how implementing violence prevention from above is an uneven and contradictory process. For Western scholars and the Mexican Congress, the implementation of the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence was an achievement that presented Mexico as country sensitive to and respectful of human rights ideals. However, for participants, the benefits are less clear. Seeing oneself as injured by a human rights violation requires entering a new terrain that may not bring about substantive change. As the observations of participants engaging in discussion on human rights reveals, human rights ideals are adopted in a limited and contingent way. Participants do not completely replace local perspectives on violence with international ones. Instead, as this research has demonstrated, human rights discourse is layered over other frameworks, institutional structures, and individual actions.

I have also elaborated on the ways the topic of gender is discussed by facilitators and perceived by participants in the Re-Education Program. Frequently, both facilitators and participants rely on fixed and narrow images of masculinity and femininity. Sometimes such images are used in a manner that responds to social pressures to present oneself as a reputable woman within society and protect oneself from gossip. Other times, the participants depict their life stories in stereotypical ways in order to build

social capital that is then used to initiate change—that is, to be able to, at least in part, shift one's views of gender to be more in line with the human rights framework.

As Chapter 3 discussed, the group sessions on gender reveal a theme of how women's sexuality is controlled through violence or threats of violence. The Re-Education Program links this control to the structure of the family, which delegates authority to the male. According to the curriculum, patriarchal control over women is legitimized through cultural ideas about women's sexual modesty and virtue, and such male authority results in violent retaliations for any deviance from these ideas. In the sessions, participants discuss how women condone this power distribution within the family by performing a form of femininity that does not challenge their subordinate position. The program is structured to present stories of the ways husbands control decisions within the home—from when a child's hair is cut to what groceries to buy—leaving little space for participants to talk about how they may already be contesting this gendered distribution of power.

Furthermore, I included statements from men and women about how their mothers, mothers-in-law, sisters, and female friends and neighbors also actively participate in and normalize the infliction of violence in order to show how the Re-Education Program's assumptions of who is a victim and who is an aggressor are not universal. Rather, people's actions and understandings of the world are shaped by the social violence of institutions (Kleinman, 2000) that are part of the "order of things" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2004). Therefore, perhaps the program would better recognize all participants' experiences of violence if it acknowledges how lives are diverse, embedded in a range of violent structures and cognitive frames.

In Chapter 4, I presented differences in the way violence is discussed in the men's groups and the women's groups. In the men's groups, violence is explained through an individualistic model that identifies the man as solely responsible for his actions. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1978) is the primary theoretical framework relied upon to explain why men are violent. Throughout the discussions men had about violence, the primary focus was on physical violence. Contrastingly, the women's discussions on violence underscored how violence is embedded in ideology and perceptions of behavior for women and men. The women's discussions on violence reveal how forms of violence have become normalized, routinized, and even legitimized.

The Re-Education Program curriculum does not directly discuss how structural inequalities based on class or ethnicity promotes different forms of political, symbolic, and everyday violence or how structural and symbolic violence intermingle and translate into everyday violence. However, in observing the program, I was able to identify how diverse forms of violence were expressed in the women's lives. For example, I have discussed forms that are easily recognizable as physical and even psychological violence, as well as those that are less visible. I have shown how these forms of violence coexist by emphasizing their specific material and social forms—exclusion, poverty, gender inequality, and unequal access to resources such as health care. Indeed, violence in human relations is rooted in institutionalized inequalities of status, rights, and power, not only between the sexes, but also among individuals of different ages and races (David Gill, 1986). Interpersonal instances of violence are not simply the result of individual (male) behaviors or choices, but are the product of inequalities institutionalized in larger systems and justified through a host of frameworks, such as religion, ideology, and

history (Bourgois, 2001). As Villalon (2010) and Farmer (2003) have pointed out, it is the very participants who need the program's services who are the most marginalized in society. Consequently, we can see how a more flexible human rights framework that considers the multiple intersections of violence may better serve all participants of the Re-Education Program.

Conundrums

Above all, this research underscores the importance of considering the effects of universal human rights frameworks at the local level, and in the everyday practices of individuals and communities engaging with such discourses. Rather than seeing limitations within the Re-Education Program, I maintain that analysis needs to focus on the broader structural context within which violence occurs. Therefore, in this section, I highlight some of the macro issues I perceive to be major constraints on the full achievement of the Re-Education Program's goals.

First, the translation of human rights does not necessarily result in transformation. This conundrum is clearly depicted in the title of the program, "Re-education Program." In using the word *re-education,* the creators of this program seem to assume that education will mean transformation. In other words, the assumption is that survival strategies, familial networks, and lived experiences of participants are not adequate and need to be changed. By taking part in these sessions, individuals are expected to come out changed, having a new skills set that they can then use to transform their life entirely.

However, as much as the Re-Education Program strives to give participants the tools for a new life, it cannot entirely emancipate the participants from their past

experiences, and through particular language may reinforce a simplistic approach.

Namely, even in the last sessions of the women's and men's programs, the participants

are referred to as "victims" and "aggressors." Sharon Lamb (1999:108) explains that the

term "victim" came from psychologists, researchers, therapists, feminists, victims' rights

organizations, the media, activists, and survivor groups who painted an image of the

victim as a woman who is "pure, innocent, blameless and free of problems" before the

abuse began, but is extremely traumatized and greatly suffers after the abuse takes place.

Taken in the context of the Re-Education Program, the consistent referral to "victim"

infers that, even at the end of all the sessions, the female participants are still perceived as

damaged, passive, and powerless. Similarly, male participants successfully completing

the program are seen as natural aggressors who may (again) be violent and cause harm.

Identities used in the Re-Education Program are based on dichotomies such as good/bad

and victim/aggressor. Donileen Loseke advises against these labels by maintaining that

"the complexity of lived experience has a way of resisting formulaic presentation"

(2001:108). A recognition that identities are created by discourse and are thus

interpretations people use in self-construction and self-representation (Gubrium and

Holstein, 2001), might create a space for alternative dialogue, even if it is a complex and

untidy practice.

In addition, human rights discourse framing the Re-Education Program maintains

"women as bearers of human rights." Dianne Otto (1999) critiques this initiative as

seeking to relocate women in relationship to men but not transforming institutions that

produce hierarchy in society itself. Specifically, there is a discontinuity between the

human rights framework proposed in the Re-Education Program and existing structural

inequalities that do not actually allow a "re-educated" person to construct a new life. For example, for human rights ideals to become a part of local rights consciousness and adapted to local circumstances (Merry, 2006:223), authority over the Re-Education Program, its goals and structure, needs to transfer to staff directly responsible for servicing the program to the community. It is these individuals who share the same consciousness as the participants, and therefore know how best to assist them. Moreover, women in Mexico are reluctant to vocalize their rights, particularly when it comes to pressing charges of rape or domestic violence because authorities do not take the reports seriously and victims continue to be socially stigmatized and ostracized (2010 Human Rights Report). As Merry (2006:223) points out, this is a dialogic process: to promote individual rights consciousness, institutions need to support such rights through legal sanctions, but if there is little rights consciousness, there will be less pressure on institutions to take rights seriously and implement them effectively.

Finally, local efforts may be overlooking women's diversity by limiting women's issues to an international "paradigm of equality" (Otto, 1999). In its place, Otto and other feminists such as Mohanty (1991) suggest a framework that recognizes difference and contingency in various locations but enables a shared language of equity and justice (Otto, 1999:135). By highlighting the "common differences" (Mohanty, 1991) of female participants, Western (and patriarchal) influences on the Re-Education Program may begin to be unsettled. Namely, "differences" instead of sameness could be used to effect change, building on social and political alliances in order to construct a stronger movement fighting violence against women.

Future Directions

The Re-Education Program is an opening for change. Perhaps the next step in research associated with the program would be to study the impact women and men have on their local communities as they graduate from the program, newly aware of the autonomy legally granted to women. The existence of Re-Education Program "graduates" within the community could enable a closer analysis of the "norm change process" (Merry, 2006:222), through which norms and ideas are resisted, accepted, and/or only temporarily or tentatively adopted. Such research could examine how social class, gender, race, and ethnicity influence women's and men's participation in the Re-Education Program.

It is my hope that in this thesis I have contributed to prospective research endeavors by exposing the links between macro- and micro-expressions of violence, and by considering the economic and political structures that lead to suffering and violence in Mexican's lives. I hope that my presentation of diverse forms of masculinity and femininity supports future efforts of the Re-Education Program to open up its analytic lens to include a wider range of experiences lived by the participants. Even in its newness to the community, the Re-Education Program works in an emancipatory way for those who learn how to implement aspects of the curriculum in their lives. Still, as this research has shown, human rights principles do not present a clear and consistent path to a life free of violence. Close attention to the words of women and men, to their stories, and to how they talk about violence can lead to a range of local efforts that theorize and respond to violence.

REFERENCES

Anglin, Mary K. "Feminist Perspectives on Structural Violence." *Identities* 5, no. 2 (1998): 145-51.

Appadurai, Arjun. "Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon of Politics." *Environment & Urbanization* 13, no. 2 (2001): 23-44.

———. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." *Theory, Culture & Society* 7, no. 2 (1990): 295-310.

Bandura, Albert. "Social Learning Theory of Aggression." *Journal of Communication* 28, no. 3 (1978): 12-29.

Banerjee, Sukanya, Angana Chatterji, Lubna Nazir Chaudhry, Manali Desai, Saadia Toor, and Kamala Visweswaran. "Engendering Violence: Boundaries, Histories, and the Everyday." *Cultural Dynamics* 16 (2004): 125-39.

Barrett, Frank J. "The Organizational Construction of Hegemonic Masculinity: The Case of the Us Navy." *Gender, Work, & Organization* 3, no. 3 (1996): 129-42.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "Gender and Symbolic Violence." In *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 339-47: Blackwell Publishing, 2001.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Loic Wacquant. "Symbolic Violence." In *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 272-74: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Bourgois, Philippe. "The Everyday Violence of Gang Rape." In *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 343-47: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

———. "The Power of Violence in War and Peace: Post-Cold War Lessons from El Salvador." *Ethnography* 2, no. 5 (2001): 5-34.

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2010 Human Rights Report: Mexico." *2010 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* (2011).

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

Cameron, Deborah. *Feminism & Linguistic Theory*. New York, New York: PALGRAVE, 1992.

Collier, Jane F. "Women in Politics." In *Women, Culture & Society*, edited by Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, 89-96. Standford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Collins, Randall. *Violence: A Micro Sociological Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Connors, Jane. "General Human Rights Instruments and Their Relevance to Women." In *Advancing the Human Rights of Women: Using International Human Rights Standards in Domestic Litigation*, edited by Andrew Byrnes, Jane Connors and Lum Bik, 27-39. London, United Kingdom: The Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionalty, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. ." In *After Identity: A Reader in Law and Culture*, edited by Dan Danielsen and Karen Engle. New York: Routledge, 1995.

D'Emilio, John. *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

di Leonardo, Miceala. "Gender, Culture, and Political Economy: Feminist Anthropology in Historical Perspective." In *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era*, edited by Miceala di Leonardo, 1-48. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1991.

Ewick, Patricia, and Susan Silbey. *The Common Place of Law*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Farmer, Paul. "An Anthropology of Structural Violence." *Current Anthropology* 45, no. 3 (2004): 305-25.

———. *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Fiejo, Maria del Carmen. "The Challenge of Constructing Civilian Peace: Women and Democracy in Argentina." In *The Women's Movement in Latin America: Feminism and the Transition to Democracy*, edited by Jane Jacquette. Boston: Unwin Human, 1989.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Volume One*. New York: Vintage, 1978.

Frias, Sonia M. "Measuring Structural Gender Equality in Mexico: A State Level Analysis." *Social Indicators Research* 88 (2008): 215-46.

Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167-91.

Giddens, Anthony. *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Gill, David. "Sociocultural Aspects of Domestic Violence." In *Violence in the Home: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Mary Lystad, 124-49. New York, New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1986.

Goodenough, Ward. "Rethinking "Status" And "Role" : Toward a General Model of the Cultural Organization of Social Relationships." In *The Relevance of Models for Social Anthropology*, 1-22. New York, New York: Praeger, 1965.

Gramsci, Antonio. *(1971) Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York, New York: International, 1929-35.

Green, Linda. "Lived Lives and Social Suffering: Problems and Concerns in Medical Anthropology." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1998): 3-7.

Gubrium, Jaber F., and James A. Holstein. "Introduction." In *Institutional Selves: Troubled Identities in a Postmodern World*, edited by Jaber A. Gubrium and James A. Holstein, 1-20. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Gutmann, Matthew C. *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Hall, Stuart. "Culture Identity and Diaspora." In *Identity, Community, Culture, and Difference*, edited by Johathan Rutherford, 222-37. London, United Kingdom: Lawrence and Wisehart, 1990.

Hautzinger, Sarah. *Violence in the City of Women: Police and Batterers in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Hawkins, Darren, and Melissa Humes. "Human Rights and Domestic Violence." *Political Science Quarterly* 117, no. 2 (2002).

Holland, J., C. Ramazanoglu, Sharpe S., and Thompson R. *The Male in the Head: Young People, Heterosexuality and Power*. London: The Tufnell Press, 1998.

Holmes, Janet, and Miriam Meyerhoff. "Different Voices, Different Views: An Introduction to Current Research in Language and Gender." In *The Handbook of Language and Gneder*, edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003.

Howell, Jayne. "Turning out Good Ethnography, or Talking out of Turn? : Gender, Violence, and Confidentiality in Southeastern Mexico." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 33 (2004).

Iliffe, Gillian, and Lyndall G. Steed. "Exploring the Counselor's Experience of Working with Perpetrators and Survivors of Domestic Violence." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 15, no. 4 (2000): 393-412.

Jackman, Mary R. "Violence in Social Life." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 387-415.

Johnson, Michael P. "Patriarchal Terrorism and Common Couple Violence: Two Forms of Violence against Women." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 57, no. 2 (1995): 283-94.

Kaplan, Temma. "Female Consciousness and Collective Action: The Case of Barcelona, 1910-1918." *Signs* 7 (1982): 545-60.

Kilbourne, Jean. "Official Website." http://jeankilbourne.com/.

Kleinman, Arthur. "The Violences of Everyday Life: The Multiple Forms and Dynamics of Social Violence." In *Violence and Subjectivity*, edited by Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds, 226-41. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Lamb, Sharon. "Constructing the Victim: Popular Images and Lasting Labels: New Visions of Victims." In *New Visions of Victims: Feminist Struggles with the Concept*, edited by Sharon Lamb, 108-38. New York, New York: New York University Press, 1999.

LeVine, Sarah, and Clara Sunderland Correa. *Dolor Y Alegría:Women and Social Change in Urban Mexico*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

Logan, Kathleen. "Personal Testimony: Latin American Women Telling Their Lives." *Latin American Research Review* 32, no. 1 (1997): 199-211.

Loseke, Donileen R. "Lived Realities and Formula Stories of 'Battered Women'." In *Institutional Selves: Troubled Identities in a Postmodern World*, edited by J.F. Gubrium and J.A. Holstein, 107-26. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Marston, Cicely. "Gendered Communication among Young People in Mexico: Implications for Sexual Health Interventions." *Social Science and Medicine* 59, no. 3 (2004): 445-56.

Menjivar, Cecilia. *Enduring Violence: Ladina Women's Lives in Guatemala*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2011.

Merry, Sally Engle. "Gender Violence and Legally Engendered Selves." *Identities* 2, no. 1 (1997): 49-73.

———. *Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

———. *Getting Justice and Getting Even: Legal Consciousness among Working-Class Americans*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

———. "Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice." Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

———. "Rights Talk and the Experience of Law: Implementing Women's Human Rights to Protection from Violence." *Human Rights Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2003): 343-81.

———. "Rights, Religion, and Community: Approaches to Violence against Women in the Context of Globalization." *Law and Society Review* 35, no. 1 (2001): 39-88.

———. "Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle." *American Anthropologist* 108, no. 1 (2006): 38-51.

Merry, Sally Engle, Stern, Rachel. "The Female Inheritance Movement in Hong Kong: Theorizing the Local/Global Interface." *Current Anthropology* 46, no. 3 (2005): 387-409.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *Boundary 2* 12, no. 3 (1984): 333-58.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Morales, Leo S., Marielena Lara, Raynard S. Kington, Robert O. Valdez, and Jose J. Escarce. "Socioeconomic, Cultural, and Behavioral Factors Affecting Hispanic Health Outcomes." *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 13, no. 4 (2002): 477-503.

Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 2 (1998): 242-69.

Nations, United. "Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women." United Nations Publication, 1995.

O'Toole, Laura L., and Jessicar R. Schiffman, eds. *Gender Violence: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Ortner, Sherry B. "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" In *Women, Culture & Society*, edited by Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere, 67-88. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Otto, Dianne. "A Post Beijing Reflection on the Limitations and Potential of Human Rights Discourse for Women." In *Women and International Human Rights Law*, edited by Kelly D. Askin and Dorean M. Koenig, 115-35. New York, New York: Transnational Publishers, 1999.

Poonacha, Venna, and Divya Pandey. "Responses to Domestic Violence: Government and Non-Government Action in Karnataka and Gujarat." Mumbai: Research Centre for Women's Studies: SNDT Women's University, 1999.

Programs, Domestic Abuse Intervention. "The Duluth Model." Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, http://www.theduluthmodel.org/about/index.html.

Publica, Instituto Nacional de Salud. *Programa De Reeducacion Para Victimas Y Agresore De Violencia De Pareja: Manual Para Responsables De Programa*. Cuernavaca, Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica, 2010.

Puentes-Markides, Cristina. "Women and Access to Health Care." *Social Science Medicine* 35, no. 4 (1992): 619-26.

Ray, Raka, and Seemin Qayum. *Cultures of Servitude: Modernity, Domesticity, and Class in India*. Standford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009.

Richters, A. "Women, Culture and Violence: A Development, Health and Human Rights Issue. ." Leiden, The Netherlands: Women and Autonomy Centre, 1994.

Rosaldo, Michelle Zimbalist, and Louise Lamphere, eds. *Women, Culture & Society*. Stanford, California: Stanford University PRess, 1974.

Salzinger, Leslie. *Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico's Global Factories*. London, UK: University of California Press, 2003.

Sanday, Peggy Reeves. *Female Power and Male Dominance: On the Origins of Sexual Inequality*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Santos, Cecillia MacDowell. *Women's Police Stations: Gender, Violence, and Justice in Sao Paulo, Brazil*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.

Sarat, Austin, and Thomas Kearns, eds. *Law and Everyday Life*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1993.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, and Philippe Bourgois. "Making Sense of Violence." In *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, edited by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, 1-31: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

———, eds. *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Shrader-Cox, Elizabeth. "Developing Strategies: Efforts to End Violence against Women in Mexico." In *Freedom from Justice: Women's Strategies from around the World*, edited by Margaret Schuler, 175-98. New York: U.N. Development Fund for Women, 1992.

Silber, Irina Carlota. "Mothers/Fighters/Citizens: Violence and Disillusionment in Post-War El Salvador." *Gender & History* 16, no. 3 (2004): 561-87.

Stephen, Lynn. "Women's Rights Are Human Rights: The Merging of Feminine and Feminist Interests among El Salvador's Mothers of the Disappeared (Co-Madres)." *American Ethnologist* 22, no. 4 (1995): 807-27.

Stewart, Mary White. *Ordinary Violence: Everyday Assaults against Women*. Westport: Bergin and Garvey, 2002.

Sutton, Barbara. *Bodies in Crisis: Culture, Violence, and Women's Resistance in Neoliberal Argentina*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

Talbot, Mary. "Gender Stereotypes: Reproduction and Challenge." In *The Handbook of Language and Gender*, edited by Janet Holmes and Miriam Meyerhoff, 468-86. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003.

Van Vleet, Krista. "Partial Theories: On Gossip, Envy, and Ethnography in the Andes." *Ethnography* 4, no. 4 (2003): 491-519.

Villalon, Roberta. *Violence against Latina Immigrants: Citizenship, Inequality, and Community*. New York: New York University Press, 2010.

Walker, Lenore E. *The Battered Woman*. New York, New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

Women, National Institute for. "General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence." Mexico, D.F.: National Institute for Women, 2007.