Human Security, Gendered Violence, and Women's Rights

Lives on the Line in the US-Mexican Borderlands

Victoria Bromley

Thesis

submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science
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Abstract

This dissertation explores migrant women's experiences of insecurity and gendered violence in the US-Mexican borderlands. Conventional understandings of states, borders, communities, citizenship and identities are increasingly blurred in the borderlands. By drawing on qualitative evidence from in-depth interviews with border women as they strategize to combat, though not always successfully, social, cultural, economic, reproductive, border, and migrant security concerns, women's everyday experiences of insecurity and gendered violence are made visible. This dissertation argues that national, international and global security agendas compromise women's security. This is especially evident in the borderlands where Mexican and US policies are spurred by the quest for national security, and for the US by fears of contra colonization. This dissertation challenges conventional (neo)realist theories of national security which privilege the state, sovereignty and territoriality. Authorized by state-centric masculinist economic paradigms, such theories render women and their experiences invisible in security discourses. This dissertation demonstrates that the concepts of security, violence and rights are decidedly gendered. In writing the concepts of human security and human rights women are invisible. And, in conceptualizing violence, gender as an analytical category is virtually absent. The assumption that violence and militarization are the primary means for ensuring state security is also contested since this frequently renders people insecure. Furthermore, this dissertation challenges the practice of defining the US-Mexican border as territorialized spaces at the expense of human (and women's) security and rights. This dissertation provides a theoretically interdisciplinary analysis which draws on critical, feminist, postmodernist and postcolonialist discourses.

For my parents

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Glossary

ADHS	Arizona Department of Health Services
AHCCCS	Arizona's Health Care Cost Containment System
BBC	Border Crossing Card issued to Mexicans prior to 1998
BIP	Border Industrialization Program
CDC	United States Center for Disease Control
<i>colonia</i>	Term used in Mexico and the US border region to refer to neighbourhoods within a city or town
CEDAW	Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEDDU	<i>El Centro de Estudios Demográficos y de Desarrollo Urbano</i> (Centre for the Study of Demographic and Urban Development) at <i>El Colegio de México</i>
CONASIDA	<i>Consejo Nacional de Lucha contra el SIDA</i> (The Mexican National Council for the Fight Against AIDS)
CSW	commercial sex workers, prostitutes
CTM	<i>Confederación de Trabajadores de Mexico</i> (Mexican Confederation of Workers)
CELADE/ECLAC	<i>Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe</i> (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)
DIF	<i>Desarrollo Integral de la Familia</i> (Integral Family Development Institute)
DOC	United States Department of Census
DOJ	United States Department of Justice
ECLAC/CEDPAL	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (<i>Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe</i>)
ENFES	<i>Informe de la Encuesta Nacional sobre fecundidad y salud</i> (Report on the National Survey on Fertility and Health)
EPZs	export processing zones
FDI	foreign direct investment
GIRE	<i>Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida</i> (Information Group on Reproductive Choice) correo@gire.org.mx
ICPD	The International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, (the Cairo Conference)
IDUs	intravenous drug users
IFE card	voting card issued by <i>Instituto Federal Electoral</i> (Federal Elections Institute in Mexico)
IIRIRA	Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, 1996

IMSS	<i>Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social</i> (Social Security Institute of Mexico)
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
ISI	import substitution industrialization
<i>La Migra</i>	Immigration and Naturalization Services or Border Patrol agents
LACWHN	Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network
LIC	Low intensity conflict or low intensity warfare
<i>mica</i>	Border crossing card issued to Mexicans prior to 1998
MNCs	multinational corporations
NAALC	North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAO	National Administrative Office (for the NAALC)
NARAL	The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PAN	<i>Partido Acción Nacional</i> (National Action Party)
PPFA	Planned Parenthood Federation of America
PRD	<i>Partido Revolucionario Democrática</i> (Democratic Revolutionary Party)
PRI	<i>Partido Revolucionario Institucional</i> (Institutional Revolutionary Party)
SALAM	<i>La Red Fronteriza de Salud y Ambiente</i> (Border Health and Environment Network)
SEAHEC	Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center
SSA	<i>Secretaría de Salud</i> (Secretary of Health)
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USMBHA	US-Mexico Border Health Association
USMBHC	United States-Mexico Border Health Commission
WHO	World Health Organization

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Map 1. US-Mexican Border

Source: Andreas (2000)

Map 2. Ambos Nogales Borderlands

Source: American Geographic Society of New York. 1958.

Introduction

Insecurity in the Shadow of the Line

Human development shares a common vision and a common purpose — to secure, for every human being, freedom, well-being and dignity.

Mary Robinson, High Commissioner for Human Rights, (UN 2000a).

Women's issues are rooted in the particularity of their experiences in the face of the false universality of men's experiences. Nowhere is this more evident than in issues of safety and security. Women routinely experienced the risk of sexual assault in ways that have no immediate parallels for men.

Najma Chowdhury, *Women and Politics Worldwide*, 1994: 11.

Increasingly as forms of commodities cross borders or move across where borders no longer exist, people will also move — pulled by the hope of better opportunities or pushed by violence and depravation.

Margaret Beare, "Illegal Migration: Personal Tragedies, Social Problems, or National Security Threats?", 1999: 16.

Introduction

In the US-Mexican borderlands, violence permeates most aspects of women's daily lives. The violence forms a continuum ranging from physical and structural to psychological. Decidedly gendered, such violence renders women insecure. In the borderlands, their experiences of gendered violence comprise a complex web of social, economic, political, cultural, migratory, reproductive, and border security concerns motivated by fears of contra

colonization – an invasion of migrants from the south – and bolstered by state ideology, structures and policies.

The threat of contra colonization and its challenge to national borders and territorialized spaces is rooted in the presumption of uncontrollable population growth in the South and the possibility of southern populations projecting and extending into the sovereign territories of the North.¹ The North's fear of an invasion or contra colonization is rooted in ethnocentrism and racist ideology, which reinforce fear of 'Others' and produce a sense of vulnerability to the supposed invasion of Black, Brown, and Yellow peoples from the South threatening the political, economic and cultural hegemony of white Northern states and peoples (Soguk 1996). The threatened 'invasion' of people from the South is apparently verifiable by the statistics of South-to-North migration and the population explosion in the South, statistics then cited to legitimize international and statist policies aimed at maintaining the status quo and hierarchal power relations and stemming the contra

¹ North and South, as used in this dissertation, are not descriptive categories, but social, historical and theoretical constructs. I am sensitive to the specificities within each of these constructed categories which make such categorizations problematic. Specificities both unite and divide countries based on class, ethnicity and historical experience. Edward Said contends in *Orientalism* (1979) that it is only through such definitional opposites that we can understand such terms as North and South. Implicit in such terminology are the historical power relationships between colonizer and colonized. While employing the construct South, rather than Third World, I nevertheless embrace Chandra Mohanty's (1991) contention that — through colonization — economic, political and social processes in 'Third World' (South) have been disarticulated in multiple and various ways. This process continues in the everyday lives of black, brown and yellow immigrants as well as for indigenous peoples. In terms of the population and international migration, *North* and *South* invoke a further geographic dimension to colonization. This image is advantageous in reinforcing existing unequal power relations and in securing the image of the South as a threat.

colonization of Northern spaces (Kennedy 1993; Teitelbaum and Weiner 1995; Shenstone 1998; Ehrlich 1968, 1990).

For the United States, the threat of contra colonization has motivated three national security initiatives that ensure state sovereignty and the integrity of its borders: the imposition of *(i)* coercive population controls on the South, *(ii)* restrictions on migration, and *(iii)* militarization of the southern border. Under the guise of national security, state sovereignty and the integrity of geopolitical borders, and propelled by the threat of contra colonization, the US has financially underwritten and directed the imposition of national and international population control policies in the South expressly targeting women.

The second national security initiative in reaction to the threat of contra colonization is the imposition of more restrictive immigration policies. Such policies are motivated by the current global economic and political climate of international restructuring including: declining economic growth rates, trade and debt imbalances, and political disintegration in many states. In this environment, (im)migrants are often viewed as an added burden to the already stressed US economy and a destabilizing force for social, political and cultural security (Parekh 1996; Kennedy 1993). Indeed, one of the United States' primary goals in adopting the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in January 1994 was to stem illegal migration from Mexico (Weintraub 1993). Popular support for NAFTA was achieved by linking the possibility of economic development in Mexico with the United States' national security agenda of controlling its borders, guarding its territory and keeping poor Mexicans out.

Intent on keeping people out, the US is escalating the militarization of its southern border. The increasingly rigorous and violent militarization resulted in what amounts to a domestic programme of low intensity warfare and conflict that eroded the traditional ban on the use of the military in domestic policing. Policing and militarization of domestic spaces was extended when, in the 1980s, illegal immigration was linked with drug smuggling as 'acts of terrorism'. So classified, the use of military tactics against migrants was an increasingly acceptable method to ensure national security by controlling migration and the border.

State fears of contra colonization have led to the implementation of increasingly restrictive, coercive and often inhumane policies, especially on issues of migration and population control. Such policies are perceived by the state as improving its security, but for those targeted by them security remains illusive. The classical security dilemma thus emerges. Security for some, means insecurity for others. This paradox is clearly evident in the institutionalization of migration and population control policies. While tighter border controls and more restrictive immigration policies may make the state more secure, and while population control policies may ameliorate demographic pressures pushing migrants northward and threatening the state, people are made less secure.

Such national security initiatives, together and separately, have engendered people's insecurity. Consequently, population control, restrictive migration and border militarization policies have gendered implications. For example, attempts to limit, manage and control population growth have focussed on women as both the source of the problem and the site for its solution. However, by targeting women, coercive population control strategies impair their sexual and reproductive lives, create insecurities, and constitute gendered violence as

evidenced by forced sterilization, and the lack of access to contraception and safe, legal abortion. The gendering of immigration policies and women's resulting insecurity are less obvious. Nonetheless, gendered bias is evident in the historical favouring of men under foreign labour recruitment categories and the virtual exclusion of women as agents in migration. With this, their experiences are made invisible. More recently, labour recruitment policies tend to exploit the vulnerability of disadvantaged Mexican (and Southern) women and their desire for a 'better life' by providing openings for their migration as domestic workers. Exploitation is an underlying reason for including some and excluding others in migration policies and is central to the violent, gendered and 'othering' apparatuses reinforced by states. This, coupled with state efforts to make their borders impermeable, has sanctioned abuses of power and violations of women's human rights. In the US-Mexican borderlands, state security is deemed most vulnerable and (im)migration policies are especially violent in order to fend off people seeking a 'better life' and striving to ensure their security often at great risk. Consequently, the reactions to migration both within states and across geopolitical borders and the efforts to restrict reproductive choices make people, especially women, insecure.

This insecurity is further conditioned by the economic structures that mediate the border economy that is dominated by maquiladora capitalism in Mexico, the institutionalization of NAFTA regionally, and the growth of the informal sector locally. These economic conditions, particularly the gendered aspects of programmatic and policy initiatives, rather than improving migrant women's lives and economic security, in many cases diminish it. Consequently, while many Mexican women move to the borderlands to gain security, they

are confronted with new insecurities both in migrating and survival after arriving. Though many of these women do not cross the border, their lives are mediated by the environment of militarization, violence, population control and migrant restrictions inspired by the threat of contra colonization.

The Case Study

Against this backdrop of *fear* and perceived *threat*, state policies impair women's security in the US-Mexican borderlands. As exemplified in Ambos Nogales, the twin border cities of Nogales, Sonora, and Nogales, Arizona, women's insecurity is exacerbated by migration and population controls, rooted in gendered violence, the doctrines of sovereignty and militarization, and the neoliberal economics of NAFTA. These structures and policies are resolutely gendered and result in the gendered violence dominating virtually every aspect of everyday life in Ambos Nogales. Evidenced by a rich ethnographic exploration of the multiple sites and interwoven layers of insecurity that face women in Ambos Nogales, the case study comprises intensive qualitative interviews of 30 migrant women living in this region in 1997. Their experiences — as they struggle in their personal choices about life, culture, family, marriage, reproduction, sexuality and migration — help us to understand the specificities of women's insecurity in the borderlands.

Theoretical Implications

Women's insecurity in the borderlands is bulwarked by the ontological and epistemological perspectives of state-centric, masculinist discourses of (neo)realism and neo-

liberalism. These discourses, together with patriarchy, render women and their experiences invisible at all levels. Women's experiences of insecurity and gendered violence are embedded in these dominant discourses and practices, thus reinforcing a gendered power hierarchy. This maintains male dominance in state and other social and economic institutions that structurally disadvantage women in favour of men. These historical and structural conditions defined by patriarchy maintain unequal power relations between men and women. In the same vein, the traditional separation between the public and private spheres proscribes women's security. The public sector is understood as all economic, political or social activities and responsibilities occurring outside the home. By contrast, the private sector is limited to activities and responsibilities inside the home, the space traditionally associated with women and women's work. This separation of public and private spheres, which privileges the public over the private, is dominated by masculine definitions and male experiences. Together, patriarchal structures and the public/private split have excluded women's experiences of insecurity, violence and human rights abuses from *malestream* discourses. Such exclusions help to perpetuate gendered violence. The result is the production of a gendered order at all levels — individual, local, national and international.

Masculinist national, international, and global security discourses and policies promote and exacerbate women's insecurity and violate their human rights rather than ensuring their protection. This is possible because many human security and human rights discourses fail to recognize the concepts of security and rights as gendered constructs. Consequently, the

insecurity and abuse that women experience by virtue of their sex,² is absent from the analysis. Absent too from such analysis is the state's complicity in gendered violence. Although an increasingly contested assumption in critical security and rights discourse, the state continues to be understood as the main provider of security for its citizens. Women are often excluded, however, from state security regimes which presume to protect 'citizens' from violence.

The launching of human security onto the international agenda, while hardly a perfect solution, provides space for combatting gendered violence and engendering greater security for women in their everyday lives. The concept of *human* security shifts the emphasis toward people and away from states. By contesting state-centric constructions of security as translating into women's (and human) insecurity, this dissertation contributes to the critical literature about human rights and security.

Two purposes explain the use of the discourses of (in)security rather than subordination, marginality or subalternity.³ First, they destabilize the dominant discourse of state-centric security, by placing women (and men) at the centre of traditional security discourses, especially within the field of international relations. Second, those discourses highlight the international dimensions of women's issues and the impact of international relations on

² It is not the intention of this dissertation to reinstate past misrepresentations of women as 'victims', but rather to revisit the historical and structural inhibitors which reinforce unequal power relations between men and women and to recast this analysis in terms of women's insecurity.

³ While understandings of threat and violence are implied in discourses of subordination, marginality and subalternity, it remains implicit rather than explicit.

women's everyday lives as shown by the threat that international power relations and structures of asymmetries constitute for migrant women living in the US-Mexican borderlands.

Employing the language of (in)security creates space to talk about the threat of gendered violence and persecution. The reality of women's insecurity has traditionally been silenced and excluded from human rights discourse. When gendered violence and persecution are discussed, moreover, only that which is *visibly* associated with 'being woman' is usually considered. This focus on gendered persecution of women and girls — e.g., female genital mutilation, honour killings, dowry murders and sexual slavery — highlights the most visible and sensational gendered violence, all of which seem to exist only in the South thus reinforcing the negative images that perpetuate the North/South power hierarchy. By contrast, *invisible* gendered violence is rarely seen. Feminist international relations scholars suggest that such invisible forms of violence include patriarchal control; masculinist definitions of the state; citizenship; patriarchal social constructions of womanhood; masculinist theories; gendered divisions of labour and the economy; policy and programmatic conceptualizations of reproduction and population control; and, gendered definitions of migrant.

Organization of the Thesis

The dissertation has nine chapters. The introduction, **Chapter 1**, presented the study's central questions about the manifestation and causes of gendered violence, (in)security and human rights abuses facing migrant women in Ambos Nogales.

Chapter 2 builds a theoretical framework and explores the concepts used to examine the choices and experiences of the women participants in this study. The chapter reveals the

gender gaps in the themes and theoretical paradigms that dominate international relations theories about security, borders, sovereignty, violence, and human rights and focusses on the theory and practices of gendered violence — structural, physical and psychological — and its ‘normalization’. This examination reveals security as a gendered problematic and provides a framework for analysing of women’s social, economic, migratory and reproductive insecurity.

Chapter 3 sets out the methodological framework in which oral and life histories are used as the basis of qualitative research, a method for accessing and assessing the social, migratory, reproductive and work experiences of women. Ethnocultural and narrative accounts of their experiences are critical to understanding both their insecurity and agency. The interrelationship between patriarchy and culture is examined through the concepts of *machismo* and *marianismo*, which define Mexican and Mexican-American women and womanhood and control their movements, roles, responsibilities and lives. The contradictions of Catholicism, as both a liberating and subordinating agent, are also probed. What emerges is an understanding of women’s multiple identities as women, mothers, wives, and daughters, identities that are in a continual state of renegotiation for women in the border.

Chapter 4 provides an understanding of borders and borderlands by exploring the power of theories and metaphors and shows how the ongoing forces of globalization affect the notions of nation, community, transnationalism and transnational communities. Focussing on the Arizona-Sonora region, the chapter explores the accelerating militarization of the border and demonstrates that, in this techno-military environment of hyper-surveillance and

policing, women's insecurity is exacerbated. In particular, their experiences of the border and border crossings are increasingly violent.

Chapter 5 revisits the concept of human security as defined by the UNDP (UN 1994b). Focussing on social security issues such as health, poverty, overcrowded living conditions, inadequate shelter, unequal access to utilities, inadequate water distribution and waste disposal, and the degraded environment in Ambos Nogales, the chapter provides an intimate, experiential picture of border women's lives as they struggle with these everyday problems.

Chapter 6 expands on the understanding of *social* security to include *economic* security. Indeed the global economy, operates in tandem with patriarchal structures to marginalize women and render them insecure. Under NAFTA, and even before that, '*maquiladora* capitalism' in Mexico has been the predominant economic structure shaping the formal and informal economies in the border region, both north and south of the line. This economic model is a gendered dynamic. NAFTA is also gendered and, therefore, informs and mediates the lives, work and (in)security of women in the border variously. An examination of women's work in the formal and informal sectors reveals the extent of their economic insecurity in Ambos Nogales. Finally, the institution of marriage as a mechanism for ensuring women's economic security is critically explored.

Chapter 7 explores issues of migration within Mexico and to the US and criticizes the economic model of migration and the masculinist definitions of migrant. The current history of Mexican migration to and across the border is explored. The understanding of the border as an artificial divide is expanded upon through an examination of cross-border culture and communities and women's experiences of transnational migration. In revisiting the concep-

tions of contra colonization and the effects this has had on American attempts to make the border impermeable and secure, the resulting insecurity to migrants becomes manifest. The final section provides experiential evidence of women's insecurity in the migratory process and demonstrates that gendered violence is both an impetus for and a consequence of women's migration. This vision of the border is layered with narratives of women's daily struggles and strategies for survival.

Chapter 8 explores the sexual politics of reproduction and family planning policies at the individual and national levels. The chapter probes the complex issues of sexuality, domestic violence, and access to and use of contraception, sterilization and abortion and exposes attempts to control women's bodies, identities and movements. It also illustrates how pro-natalist and, later, anti-natalist population policies have exacerbated women's insecurity in Mexico.

Chapter 9 (Conclusions) revisits the research questions and evidence and presents the conclusions. It demonstrates how national, international and global security agendas compromise women's security. Considering the links between population and migration control, it contests the practice of defining the US-Mexican border as territorialized spaces at the expense of human (and women's) rights. Defined by territorialized spaces, sovereign states understood in masculinist terms reinforce patriarchal control and render women insecure. Accordingly, border women are exposed to multiple sites of insecurity, and any insecurity in one aspect of their lives' often overflows into others. The specificities of women's experiences of cultural, social, economic, reproductive, migratory and border (in)security comprise an interwoven web of security concerns. Yet, their testimonies of

everyday struggles, strategies for survival, and quests for security demonstrate small, distinct acts of agency.

Theorizing Gendered Violence, Security and Human Rights

[Human security means] first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life — whether in homes, in jobs or in communities.

Human Development Report, (UNDP), (UN 1994b: 23).

If the subject of security is the subject of security, it is necessary to ask, first and foremost, how the modern subject is being reconstituted and then to ask what security could possibly mean in relation to it. It is in this context that it is possible to envisage a critical discourse about security, a discourse that engages with contemporary transformations of political life, with emerging accounts of who we might become, and the conditions under which we might become other than we are now without destroying others, ourselves, or the planet on which we live.

R. B. J. Walker, “The Subject of Security”, 1997: 78

Gender-based violence knows not colour and nationality. It devastates lives and fractures communities, impeding development in every nation. In every country, the well-being, promise and gifts of millions of women and girls are destroyed by violence. To understand the causes of this destructive violence and how to eradicate it, we must view gender-based violence not only in terms of individuals, but in terms of relationships, within the context of families, communities and institutions. To work together to end it we must understand that it can be stopped.

Noeleen Heyzer, UNIFEM, 2000: 10.

Introduction

Traditionally defined by and for states, the concept of security is increasingly contested. In the 1990s, no longer paralysed by the dominance of (neo)realism, international relations scholars began to challenge conventional theories by critically rethinking, redefining and reconceptualizing security.⁴ Questions are advanced about how security is defined and from what perspective, how it can be ensured, and with whom in mind. Consequently, security remains a central concept in the field of international relations.

In an environment where states are no longer the primary actors, they are confronted by changing global relations and seemingly accelerated international migration and excessive population growth, the threat of contra colonization is real. For states, this perceived threat is exacerbated since conventional mechanisms for securing borders, territories and sovereignty are ineffective protective measures against such danger.

Attempts to ensure state security paradoxically render people increasingly insecure. In the globalized political economy, simplistic state-centric understandings of security, power and violence cannot explain the complexities of the world in which we live nor ensure our survival. By wielding power and exercising force the state exposes people to new levels of insecurity. Consequently, the very people to whom the state is presumably accountable are made vulnerable. For women, moreover, security is further mediated by experiences of gendered violence. Gendered violence in all its forms is invisible to state-centric and

⁴ See Baldwin 1997; Booth 1999, 1998, 1996, 1995, 1991; Huysmans 1998; Dalby 2000, 1998, 1997, 1995, 1994, 1992; Krause and Williams 1997; Lammers 1999; Tickner 1997, 1996, 1995, 1992; Walker 1997.

androcentric international relations discourses. Even when security takes people into consideration, therefore, women and their experiences are often ignored.

Challenged by the unique context of the US-Mexican border, where North meets South, security is an especially contentious concept and thus, to contribute to the emerging field of critical security studies, this dissertation asks two critical security questions: how and why do women experience insecurity in Ambos Nogales? These questions are motivated by both the invisibility of gendered violence in the international relations literature and the absence of a clear conceptual framework for understanding women's insecurity as intertwined with experiences of gendered violence. My theoretical perspective is founded on the works of feminist, critical, postmodern and postcolonial scholars⁵ who have long struggled to discover and redress the obstacles to women's inclusion at all levels — local, national and international.

To support this argument, this chapter examines: (i) the theoretical implications of gendered and other apparatuses for women's exclusion from state-defined practices and marginalization in social and economic relations, (ii) violence as a gendered construct and its use to control women, (iii) theories, concepts and practices of security (iv) the state's complicity in sanctioning and perpetuating gendered violence, (v) human security discourses

⁵ See Foucault 1972; Chowdhury, *et al.*, 1994; Woroniuk 1999; Peterson 1992; Grant 1992; Heise 1994; Elshtain 1987, 1992, 1999; Enloe 1989, 1993, 2000; Fraser and Nicholson 1990; Parpart 1995; Muehlenhard and Kimes 1999; Sylvester 1994a 1994b; Biersteker 1999; Biersteker and Weber 1996; Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996; Hester, Kelly and Radford 1996; Shapiro 1997a, 1997b; Williams and Krause 1997; Reardon 1993; Elson, Muthien 2000; Hill Collins 1998; Bessant and Cook 1999; Tickner 1995, 1996, 1997; Walker 1997; Maharaj 1995; O'Tuathail and Dalby 1998; Connell, Radford, Friedberg and Harne 2000; Murphy 1996; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, 1997.

through a critical feminist lens and expose the limitations of state-centric and andorcentric discourses for making people secure, (vi) the international human rights framework and universal conventions, and (vii) the implications of excluding women's specific experiences human rights abuse, persecution and gendered violence from the international agenda.

Through Feminist Lenses

Feminist understandings of international relations in general and of security in particular emerged as a legitimate critique in the late 1980s. Nevertheless, feminism(s) remains marginal to the mainstream discipline. Even with feminist interventions into international relations and security discourses, these disciplines continue to be essentially masculinist discourses, dominated by Western/White/male scholarship, policy and practice. Feminist international relations scholars⁶ are providing concrete conceptual, theoretical, epistemological and ontological inroads for contesting and rethinking this *malestream* discipline. Moreover, feminist scholarship in the areas of anthropology, sociology, geography,

⁶See Cohn 1987; Dalby 1994; Elshtain 1987, 1992, 1999; Enloe 1989, 1993, 2000; Grant 1992; Grant and Newland 1991; Murphy 1996; Peterson 1992, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Peterson and Runyan 1993; Pettman 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Reardon 1993; Sylvester 1994b; Tickner 1992, 1995, 1996, 1997; Walker 1992; Whitworth 1994; Woroniuk 1999; Zalewski and Enloe 1995.

demography, ethnography, law, and postcolonial studies⁷ supports and augments feminist IR thought.

Feminism is a complicated, contested term. There is a myriad of feminisms. Notwithstanding the differences among feminisms, let us consider some generalities concerning feminist thought. The strength of feminisms, in their attempt to enhance our understanding of social events, relations and phenomenon, comes not from their method, but rather in their 'feminist' epistemological perspectives. Feminisms embrace the valuing of women's diverse experiences and take women's interests seriously in effecting social and political change. Therefore, the contribution of feminisms to traditional epistemologies is the conceptualization of new systems of knowing. These ways of knowing, which examine women's contributions to society across space and time, make androcentric and sexist power and knowledge systems visible. However, this is a generalization about feminism and does not pertain to all feminisms uniformly. Not all feminisms, for example, consider the historical context of their analyses of women's position in society. Rather, some feminisms, including empiricist feminism, utilize ahistorical and reductionist methods. Other feminisms, including various standpoints and some Marxist feminisms, utilize essentialist understandings of women and womanhood, even to the extent that biology has been used to

⁷ See Bannerji 1999; Benería 1992, 1995; Benería and Roldan 1987; Butler and Scott 1992; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Cook 1993a, 1993b, 1991; Connell 1987; Elson 1995; Elson and Pearson 1991; Fernández -Kelly 1996a, 1996b, 1983a, 1983b; Franco 1989; Gabriel 1999; Harding 1987; Hartman 1995, 1997; Hartsock 1983; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997, 1994a, 1994b; Lister 1997; Maharaj 1995; Mies 1986; Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, Von Werlhof 1988; Mohanty 1991a, 1991b; Parpart 1995; Pateman 1988; Sassen 1995; Szasz 1998, 1996, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c; Szasz and Figueroa 1997; Waring 1988, 1994; Young, Wolkowitz and McCullagh 1991; Yuval-Davis 1991.

determine and define the category 'woman'. These essentialisms are then wielded in an attempt to universalize theories about women. Still other feminisms — for example critical, postmodern, postcolonial, 'Third World' feminisms and feminisms conceived by, and concerned with, women of colour — employ critical understandings of society which advocate and acknowledge both the commonalities and the differences among and between women across class, race, ethnicity and culture. Moreover, these critical feminisms advocate systems of knowledge both *for* and *about* women in an attempt to understand the roles and locations of women in society. This process demands a subjective, yet critical, analysis of unequal power relations as well as an emancipatory prospectus. It is within this latter group of feminisms that my theoretical and epistemological positions are located.

The *silence* around gendered violence — patriarchal control, masculine definitions of state and citizenship, patriarchal social constructions of womanhood, masculinist theoretical, policy and programmatic conceptualizations of reproduction and population control, gendered definitions of migrant, gendered division of labour and the economy — affect women's (in)security. A complex set of interrelationships exists among gender, local and international politics, and everyday life. These require theorizing if we are to understand women's experiences of insecurity. The premise of my dissertation is that security is a gendered, not a neutral, discourse. This is to say that in examining security, issues of gender and women's struggles are almost always silenced. Through an analysis of historically and socially constructed concepts of power, patriarchy and violence, the gendered nature of local, international and everyday politics will become clear.

From this epistemological and ontological perspective, people are understood as able to explain, describe and account for the world in which they live through their experience and that these understandings have implications. In this sense, ideas and understandings inform and mediate our constructions. Words and concepts, therefore, are produced by and within particular historical and cultural contexts and understandings. Accordingly, words and categories are not immutable, neutral or universal. Their meanings depend on who defines them and therefore are embedded in the social and political power structures which order society and social relations. This is a process by which words and categories can be anatomized to reveal the social relations of power entrenched therein. In this dissertation, I will draw on my ontological and epistemological perspective, together with my theoretical and methodological approaches, to expose the silence about women's security, women's rights and gendered violence.

Perhaps equally important for this dissertation is an understanding of women's situated knowledge as a critical contribution to everyday political struggles. Women's alternative and subjective forms of knowledge (defined by diversity) provide options and opportunities for understanding and contesting established power relations. Notions of universals can thus be revealed as particular positions of power embedded in specific understandings of the world. Contesting conventional gendered knowledge, women challenge the notion that knowledge is a tangential continuum, suggesting instead that knowledge is accumulated through *ad hoc* trajectories. Through feminist discourse, knowledge is constituted, reconstituted, transformed and produced anew. Women's situated knowledge contributes to the transformation of gendered social relations through the production of reflexive, alternative

and subjective knowledges. In this sense, women's situated knowledge can be valued over conventional theories of knowledge (understood as power). Foucault (1972: 81) contends "that it is not theory but life that matters, not knowledge but reality" that influences our everyday lives. Therefore, the spaces in which women live their lives necessarily interact with prevailing norms, values, ideologies, epistemologies and ontologies to construct meanings and produce new understandings. Women, as critical and imaginative interpreters of their everyday lives, create spaces for understanding their everyday experiences and expose the diversity of those experiences as constituting power/knowledge systems which redress gendered violence. Accordingly, women are well positioned to participate in what Foucault refers to as an 'insurrection of subjugated knowledges'.⁸

Gendered Apparatus

Gender refers to the socially and historically constructed roles and expectations attached to the daily and working lives of both women and men. Gender analysis theorizes that men and women's roles in society are not biologically determined, but rather learned through the social expectations which are attached to them. Since gender is a construct, expectations and behaviours can vary across time and space. Gender is a flexible analytic category which can be used to deconstruct the unequal power relations embedded in what Foucault (1972) terms

⁸ Given women's subordinate status, their knowledge must also be understood as subjugated. For Foucault, subjugated knowledges refer to the multiple historical experiences that have been systemically excluded, subdued and made invisible by functionalist theories. Such theories, entrenched in androcentrisms, have traditionally held positions of power in terms of their knowledge bases and have thereby subjugated Other knowledges. It is only through the (re)valuing of alternative knowledges that these absences are revealed (Foucault 1972: 78-108).

the *apparatus*. For Foucault, the apparatus encompasses the nature of all aspects of social relations, institutions and ideologies. Ideologies in this sense refer to the belief systems defining our understandings of human nature and social life. Metaphorically, Foucault links ideology with his understanding of the Gulag, which he contends can be used broadly to refer to any place regarded as a prison (Foucault 1972: 134-145). In this way, processes of socialization, in which ideologies are encoded, create mechanisms which define one's thoughts and behaviours. Mechanisms of subordination, which exist across time and space in various formations, can be used to manipulate the mind as well as social, cultural, and power structures. The apparatus is an instrument which reinforces existing power relations and ensures that those who challenge or threaten the power structures remain at the margins. Expanding Foucault's conceptualization of the apparatus, I use the notion of the *gendered apparatus* to explore those mechanisms — especially patriarchy — that render women marginal and subaltern.

Patriarchy refers to the historical and structural conditions which have maintained and reinforced the unequal power relations between men and women. Although patriarchy exists in all societies, it is not a homogenous process which produces homogenous inequalities for women. Patriarchy functions to socially construct notions of masculinity and femininity, wherein 'masculine' characteristics — powerful, rational, independent, aggressive, destructive and objective — are valued, and 'feminine' characteristics — powerless, emotional, dependent, passive, nurturing and subjective — are devalued. The gendered power relations embedded in the apparatus attempt to 'naturalize' socially constructed differences between men and women and when successful they reinforce the gendered apparatus which subordi-

nates women. Patriarchal relations combine with other social and historical structures — racial, ethnic, religious and cultural — to produce different struggles and sites of oppression for women across time and space. Moreover, gendered dichotomies parallel those dominant in international relations — domestic/foreign, inside/outside, inclusion/exclusion, citizen/Other, friend/enemy — where the first characteristic in the pairing is valued and the second, loathed. The drawing of boundaries and the mapping of various dichotomies of inclusion and exclusion provide a powerful theoretical framework for understanding social relations (Newman and Anssi; 1998).

The naturalization and normalization of gender inequality are part and parcel of a *gendered order* maintained by specific social structures. In this sense, social structures constraining freedom operate through complex interrelations of powers and through all social relations (Connell 1987: 92). The notion of social structure is analogous to the Foucauldian use of discursive forms or discursive structures which explain the processes by which culture sets limits and exert pressures on peoples' thoughts and actions. However, social and discursive relations are historically scripted and, therefore, not fixed. Gendered order(s) emerges from the social and discursive structures which shape gendered experiences across time and space. However, these structures are vulnerable to subversive activities and practices which can redress social and historical inequalities and transform social realities. Postmodern feminist subversives, therefore, continue in the struggle to deconstruct gendered power structure through their analyses of social institutions including state, citizenship, economy, church, family, and the division of labour.

In analyzing social institutions, Connell (1987) contends that all societies are bound by a triad of power, labour and cathexis. For Connell, the concept of cathexis recognizes that sexuality is socially constructed and, therefore, expresses specific configurations of power and shapes the ideological notions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. Connell suggests that to explore women's experiences of oppression and gender relations at a particular spatial juncture, the culturally specific social structures which govern power, labour and cathexis must be identified. His gendered definitions of power, labour and cathexis provide a flexible framework for integrating social, cultural and historical specificities to explain women's particular lived experiences. Furthermore, the framework provides a gendered understanding of the power structures of authority, control and coercion. It provides mechanisms for exploring the formulations of related structures which constitute a 'gendered division of power'. From this perspective, labour is understood as the gendered organization of housework and childcare, the division between unpaid and paid work, the segregation of labour markets, the creation of men's jobs and women's jobs, discrimination in training and promotion, unequal wages, and unequal exchange. Together, this understanding operates to gender the relations of production, consumption and exchange in society. Consequently, this framework has the ability to challenge the 'naturalness' and hegemony of heterosexuality and creates the social space for agency and change. Analytically differentiating between the structures of labour, power and cathexis, we can see how structures operate through us as practices, and how we become the targets of power and instruments of agency.

Critical to the power/labour/cathexis triad is the separation of the public and private sectors of influence. The public sector is understood as all economic, political or social

activities and responsibilities occurring outside the home. The private sector is limited to activities and responsibilities within the home. In this way, patriarchal relations condition ‘social constructions’ of both men and women. However, clear distinctions between public and private domains, like all borders and boundaries, become blurred and even false when the interrelationship between public and private spheres is considered. Neither the public nor the private spheres exist in a vacuum, but rather constantly impact and interact with each. Nonetheless, artificially imposed distinctions between public and private spaces ideologically structure men and women’s identities and power according to particular work-related characteristics, specific forms of sexuality, access to (and exclusion from) authority, and decision-making capacity. The end result is the production of a gendered order at all levels — individual, local, national and international. However, since discursive structures are always changing, they vary in their effects on the formations of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’. This creates space for feminist and other social agencies to transform unequal power hierarchies (Connell 1987; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Muthien 2000).

‘Other’ Apparatus and ‘Othered’ Order

Gender is only one component of the *apparatus*. Hierarchies of race, ethnicity, culture, colour, ability, age and sexual orientation are all elements of a complex matrix of social structures which order social relations and society. Like gendered hierarchies, ‘other’ social hierarchies continually operate to define the terms of inclusion and exclusion. Governed by social and historical structures that reinforce existing power relations, Eurocentrism is the most important element of the ‘other’ apparatus. Coined by Samir Amin (1989), Euro-

centrism refers to the ways the world is understood from the perspective of European or Western society. It creates an imagined view of the world from a constructed position of power. However, Eurocentrism cannot be separated from the history of imperialist penetration, colonization and implantation, which structures and 'naturalizes' the unequal relations between Europe/West/North and the non-Western/Southern 'Other'. In constructing the Southern Other as weak, inferior and subordinate, it imagines the West as powerful, superior and dominant. The result is the reinforcement of unequal colonial and postcolonial power relations.

Inequality is an important factor in maintaining Western economic superiority and ensuring access to Southern markets, resources and workers. Accordingly, the social construction of South, as inferior, is extended to its citizens. This construction renders Third World peoples mere objects of study, who can be subsumed under stagnant categorizations and relative definitions. As forms of knowledge are institutionalized, where West is best and South is Other, dominant power relations are reinforced and Others are excluded. Accordingly, Eurocentrism is a form of racism, which can be employed to subjugate the colonized 'Other' within the international political economy and society (Abdo 1996; Amin 1989; Anthias 1995; Dubois 1991; Said 1979; Shapiro 1997a).

Significantly, racism is based on the social constructions of non-White 'Others' as inferior. However, racism transcends the geographic distinctions of North and South embodied in Eurocentrism. Racism is the apparatus, a social power relation, which mediates individuals' everyday and life experiences. As an ideology, institution and social practice, racism orders social experiences, privileges and consequences. Eurocentrism has resulted

in the construction of racialized bodies where skin colour is often the signifier of unequal power relations. When Eurocentrism and racism are combined with gendered asymmetries and sexism, the effects of unequal power relations are multiplied at every level.

Gendered States and Gendered Citizenship

Peterson (1992) reminds us that patriarchy preceded state formation, and that masculinist domination was institutionalized with the emergence of states and the formation of the state system. In the ongoing processes of state formation, the exploitation of women as a specific *sex/gender class* was reinforced by the coercive power of the state. Paradoxically, state and nationalist representations of women are often based on traditional notions of sex/gender roles. Accordingly, women are imagined as mothers of the nation and men are *conceived* as soldiers in defence of the nation. This fusion of sexist and nationalist discourses defines women as ‘reproducers’ and men as ‘producers’ by invoking gendered ideologies which reinforce traditional gender roles. Consequently, the public/private dichotomy which devalues and excludes women and women’s experience is reinforced, while the power of the masculinist state is reified (Enloe 1989, 1993, 2000; Grant and Newland 1991; Lister 1997; Parker and Russo, *et al.* 1992; Radhakrishnan 1992; Sylvester 1994b).

The political power of the state is further strengthened through notions of political sovereignty and citizenship. (Neo)realist/statist theories stipulate that citizenship, which defines the processes of inclusion and exclusion, is determined and regulated by states. As T. H. Marshall contends, “[c]itizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties

with which the status is endowed” (Marshall 1950: 28-29, cited in Lister 1997: 14). This definition implies relationships between the state and individuals as well as between individual citizens. The key elements of citizenship are membership in a community, the rights and obligations that flow from that membership, and equality and the opportunity to participate in that community to which one belongs. *Community* is an increasingly contested term with multilayered understandings based on commonalities of geography, culture, race, ethnicity, gender and language, etc. Community can also be assumed at the local, national, global levels.

Significantly, citizenship incorporates both inclusionary and exclusionary processes. These processes operate simultaneously, at both the legal and social levels, through objective/formal and subjective/informal mechanisms. Even when citizenship is legally conferred, racism, sexism, classism and violence are important informal/subjective mechanisms which define exclusion and undermine meaningful citizenship. While equality is formally and legally established, actual equality remains illusory. When equality is male-defined, it renders women invisible, and when equality is defined in terms of ‘whiteness’, it renders people of colour subordinate. Further, if equality is based on Western cultural constructs, perceived ethnicities override notions of unity and belonging, thereby reinforcing exclusionary social hierarchies. Moreover, mechanisms of exclusion establish hierarchies of citizenship which reinforce social cleavages between citizens and non-citizens and often sanction violence against the latter.

For the most part, citizenship is defined in terms of fraternity. While fraternity is held to be merely a metaphor for the universal bonds of humanity, it is exclusionary since fraternity

means the brotherhood of *men* (Pateman 1988; Lister 1997, 1995). However, by representing modern civil society as universal/fraternal, women's exclusion is obscured. Politics, as part of the public sphere, is shaped by male understandings, characteristics and experiences. As such, politics has emerged as a masculine discourse which excludes women both theoretically and practically. Constructed within patriarchal assumptions, male defined and dominated social and political institutions marginalize women. The exclusionary barriers of patriarchy, fraternity and male privilege are embedded in so-called universalisms which exclude women. Language has proven to be an important social and political instrument of power and exclusion. Patriarchal language which conceals maleness and masculine assumptions as neutral must be contested to ensure women's representation and effective, full participation (Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Icduygu 1996; Lister 1995, 1997; Pateman 1988; Peterson 1992; Yuval-Davis 1991). These socially constructed boundaries for exclusion are exacerbated in an increasingly globalized and polarized political economy where migrants are considered as threats.

Gendered Economy

Likewise, women and men do not share equally in the economic costs and benefits in a highly gendered economy. This inequality is embedded in the *gendering* and *othering apparatus* which orders local and international political economies. In the US-Mexican borderlands, where *Maquiladoras*⁹ dominate, gendering and othering apparatus mediate all economic relations. The most important element, however, in limiting women's participation

⁹ The impact of *maquiladoras* on the working lives and economic security of women in Ambos Nogales is explored in Chapter 6.

in and enjoyment of economic rewards is the sexual or gendered division of labour, which, for women of colour, is exacerbated by racial divisions. Feminist scholars¹⁰ examine women's economic marginalization at all levels — household, local and global.

The gender division of labour is based on patriarchal relations which reinforce historical circumstances and cultural practices which separate the public and private spheres of influence. This dichotomy has institutionalized the gender division of labour. In the private sphere, women's productive (householding, cleaning, cooking, and caretaking) and reproductive (biological reproduction and nurturing of children) work, for the most part, has remained unpaid within the household. Defined as women's work, understood as feminine 'talents', and exacerbated by its unpaid status, women's productive and reproductive work is undervalued in terms of its social and economic contributions. Moreover, women participate in the production and separation of public and private spheres and the social construction of women's work, by teaching their girl children how to take care of the house, and by preventing their boy children from participating in domestic activities. In fact, women constitute and reconstitute gendered distinctions and inequalities in virtually all actions and activities (Tickner 1998). It is through these actions and socialization practices, in which women are full participants, that patriarchal relations are reproduced and the unequal power

¹⁰ See Angeles Poza 1996; Benería 1992, 1995; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Elson 1991, 1995; Feldman 1992; Fernández-Kelly 1996a, 1996b, 1983a, 1983b; Fernández-Kelly and Sassen 1995; Gabriel 1999; Garcia 1997; Goldblatt, *et al.* 1997; Hartsock 1983; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997, 1994a, 1994b; Kopinak 1993b; Mackintosh 1991; Marchand 1994; Mies 1986; Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, Von Werlhof 1988; Mohanty 1991a, 1991b; Parpart 1995; Pateman 1988; Pettman 1996a, 1996b; Quick 1999; Roldán 1999; Romero 1997; Saraceno 1992; Szasz and Figueroa 1997; Tapia 1995; Tickner 1991; Waring 1988, 1994; Whitworth 1994; Wilson 1990; Young, Wolkowitz and McCullagh 1991; Zapata 1996.

relations are reinforced within both the public and private spheres. To this end, men's paid work privileges masculine authority within the home, reinforcing the culture of *machismo*. It is evident that women's work has traditionally been undervalued and even unrecognized for its social and economic contributions. Traditionally, responsibility for the household (within the private sphere) has fallen on women. Accordingly, domestic activities which include child rearing, cooking, cleaning and sewing have been defined as women's work. Consequently, women (and men) tend to define a woman in terms of 'her' domestic duties.

Knowledge about women's economic status and their sharing in the household's economic resources is blurred by conventional economic development theories which hold that, within households, men and women in the family have fundamentally shared interests. Such theories assume that men are the benevolent distributors of family wealth and that wealth will be distributed equally among all its members without coercion, manipulation, force or violence. The notion that power relations are absent within families has been disproved by empirical household analysis and evidence from women's lived experiences.¹¹ Women's real lives are constituted through complex processes and interrelationships of domination and subordination predicated on race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, class, age, ability, and sexual orientation. These multiple and intertwining processes interact dialectically with gender relations to reflect diverse axes of power which govern society.

Many women are also part of a *captive labour force*. This term refers to workers who are not free to 'choose' their livelihood. More importantly, it conveys notions of institutionalized

¹¹ See Benería and Roldán 1987; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Garcia and de Oliveira 1995; Harris 1991; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997, 1994a, 1994b; Mohanty 1991a, 1991b; Romero 1997; Tapia 1995; Waring 1988, 1994.

unequal power relations which operate to disadvantage women and people of colour. These inequalities reflect the power structures which order society by privileging 'whiteness' and 'maleness'. Gender, race and class are united in capitalism as sites of oppression and exclusion. Consequently, patriarchal relations and structures of class domination combine to form a racially constructed gender division of labour. This division reproduces the gendered public/private and productive/reproductive dichotomies which, for (im)migrant women and women of colour, have institutionalized 'domestic' aspects of work and relegated these women to work in the lower ends of the 'care taking' and 'service' professions (Hill-Collins 1990, 1998; Brand 1999). Immigrant women are particularly 'captive' as workers when disadvantages of gender, race, ethnicity and social class are combined with a lack of language skills and legal residency or work authorization. Women of colour and immigrant women are multiply disadvantaged under capitalist market relations and, therefore, are captive workers relegated to the most poorly paid and low-status jobs. From this perspective, labour market structures must be understood as both ideological and material. Women's relatively low salaries are part of the material economic structure, while the ideologies define women and women's work. Accordingly, these two structures operate simultaneously as part of the apparatus reinforcing and maintaining women's subalternity and structuring their experiences. The apparatus, therefore, creates boundaries around possible social experiences through the interaction of specific configurations of power and, in so doing, sets specific limits on social practices and ideas.

At the level of the local political economy, racialized societies can 'profit' from racialized bodies. These bodies are constructed as inferior and therefore more vulnerable to the

exploitation of society, particularly at the economic level. At the global level, the international division of labour, which gains strength from North/South dichotomies and all that is assumed therein, operates to disadvantage Southern countries. The international division of labour maintains the unequal exchange relations between North and South and reinforces the marginalized status of export oriented countries in the South. Maintaining the unequal power relations in the international political economy necessitates the construction of 'Other' (both in the North and the South) as 'docile bodies' to be exploited in the labour market. The need for access to low-wage workers demands the ongoing production of racialized 'Others' as unskilled and un(der)educated.

To understand the inherent polarization of the economy (and society), it is necessary to examine the multiplicity of power relations stemming from North-South, race/ethnic, and gender relations. The incorporation of women into the labour market is based on the complex interrelationship of the unequal social relations of gender and class. However, labour markets subject to globalization are further informed by the racialized identities of women of colour and Southern women as workers. Thus race/ethnicity is combined with gender and class to reinforce the gendered division of labour and maintain existing power relations which relegate women of colour to the margins. In the 'new' globalized economy of 'flexible' production, low-income and working class women of colour are more vulnerable and, therefore, more readily exploitable in unsafe, isolated and un(der)paid environments. However, this vulnerability is not based on personal deficiencies, but rather on the gendered political structures, ideologies, institutions and social practices of the apparatus which authorizes the exploitation of women, as well as upon the racial structures,

ideologies, institutions and social practices which sanction the exploitation of people of colour.

‘Seeing’ Violence, ‘Seeing’ Gender

In this section I examine theories and practices of violence and expose the state’s complicity in gendered violence. In the borderlands, gendered violence dominates the everyday lives of women, however, its predominance and normalization make it invisible, expected and, at times, accepted. It is necessary, therefore, to expose the normalizing structures that allow gendered violence to prevail. I will expose the social constructions that sanction some forms of violence while prohibiting others and question what is violence and whether gendered violence is *real* violence. Utilizing critical feminist and postmodern critiques, I disclose how state-centric and androcentric definitions reinforce traditional dichotomies of public and private spaces. Building on this theoretical analysis, the latter sections link gendered violence to women’s insecurity, violations of women’s human rights, and constriction of women’s mobility. This section contributes to a transformation in thinking from violence and repression to empowerment.

(Neo)realist understandings of politics are rooted in Hobbesian conceptualizations of human nature as independent, self-interested, predatory and violent. By extension, state sovereignty and state power are grounded in tangible capabilities and state power is maintained through militarism and the threat and use of violence. Within this conceptualization, the state is the only legitimate exhibitor of violence and the public/political sphere is the only space in which violence occurs. However, Galtung’s (1969,

1971, 1996) understanding of violence as multidimensional, complex and interrelated, provides a space for analysing various forms of violence. While Galtung's peace research focuses on the role of structural violence and imperialism in international relations, his typology, which examines violence from the perspective of the receiver, can be utilized to understand the prevalence of violence beyond these narrow borders. From this perspective, there are two specific types of violence — direct and structural. *Direct violence* entails the use of intended and direct physical force by one actor against another. *Structural violence* comprises both intended and unintended violence as a result of the impact of social structures and, therefore, the resulting violence is said to be indirect. Indirect violence is embedded in the social, historical and political structures which define and order societies. As such, structural violence can be understood in terms of the discursive practices which authorize exclusions based on class, race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability or sexual orientation.

In Galtung's words:

Indirect violence comes from the social structure itself — between humans, between sets of humans (societies), between sets of societies (alliances, regions) in the world. And inside human beings there is indirect, unintended, inner violence that comes out of the personality structure (1996: 2).

Invariably, structural violence occurs in multiple spaces — political, economic and social — and at various levels — personal, communal, national and international. Galtung's typology, therefore, is an important step in extending the meaning of violence beyond its purely physical nature (Tickner 1995). It allows us to 'see' the indirect violence resulting from unjust economic and political structures which act to marginalize, batter and kill the

human body and spirit. It allows for an understanding of structural violence and the resulting repression and exploitation.

At the level of culture, violence is embedded in hierarchies of inclusion and exclusion, and functions to legitimate both direct and structural violence through repression and exploitation. *Cultural violence* is promoted through repressive and exploitative images, symbols, language, art and the media as well as through social practices and institutions such as family, church, school and legal systems. In this sense, Galtung's typology¹² is not unlike Foucault's understanding of the apparatus as violently ordering society and entrenching existing power relations. While neither Galtung nor Foucault specifically address gendered violence, their conceptual frameworks are useful in understanding statist/masculinist power relations. Within this context, gendered violence can be identified as both direct and structural.

¹² Galtung's typology is useful for conceptualizing the interaction and multiplicity of violent forms. However, Galtung relies on mathematical formulations and theorems linking causality to outcomes and therefore to predictability. This becomes problematic in terms of conceptualizing peace as 'the' resolutions. While Galtung does not understand peace in simplistic terms, as the absence of war as do many (neo)realists, his lingering functionalism focuses on peace as the predictable outcome. In contrast, feminist postmodernism links subjectivity and local knowledges to possible outcomes, rather than predicable or immutable ones (See Chapter 3). Furthermore, Galtung's challenges the "Woman : Man == Peace : Violence?" question relies on essentialist understandings of man/women, masculinity/femininity, and violent/passive understandings which are unhelpful categories for the promotion of peace (Galtung 1996: 40). Moreover, insofar as they rely on patriarchal dichotomies which emphasise a militaristic and violence modes of thinking, it is not possible to redress gender inequalities (Dalby 1994; Peterson 1992; Sylvester 1994b; Tickner 1992, 1997).

Seeing Gendered Violence

Feminist theorists increasingly question the definitions, nature and causes of violence. There are, however, two problematic aspects in the dominant analyses of violence. First, if we collapse all forms of violence into a universal ungendered category, women's specific experiences of violence often become invisible. Second, if we separate each specific form of violence against women into distinct categories, the cumulative effect and meaning of violence as well as the structural interrelationships among forms of violence are lost. It is, therefore, important to recognize that what counts as 'violence' is socially constructed, has varied over time, and reflects patriarchal power relations.¹³

Gendered inequalities of power are maintained through gendered violence. This violence ranges from direct physical violence (hitting, pushing, battery, sexual assault, rape and murder) and structural violence (public/private separations, economic segregations, job discrimination, cultural structures, inadequate health care and reproductive [health] interventions/initiatives) to psychological violence (emotional abuse, sexism, discrimination in all its multiple forms, harassment, intimidation, victim blaming, and forced internalization of oppressive stereotypes). Accordingly, "[t]he ways in which violence is used and acted out in relationships, encounters and institutions is specifically gendered and constructed by, as

¹³ See Bessant and Cook 1999; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Carrillo 2000; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Dobash and Dobash 1998; Heise 1994; Lori 1994; Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996; Hill Collins 1998; Muthien 2000; Muehlenhard and Kimes 1999; Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996; Radford, Friedberg and Harne 2000; Spindel, Levy, and Connor 2000; Thomas and Beasley 1993

well as a reflection of, the power relations which constitute hetero-patriarchy” (Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996: 4).

What is suggested here is a ‘continuum of violence’ which engages existing feminist theorization on international relations and social institutions of the state, politics, citizenship, economy, family, and church. Liz Kelly (1988: 76, cited in Kelly and Radford 1998: 57) stipulates two meanings of a continuum:

first a basic common character that underlies many different events; and second, a continuous series of elements or events that pass into one another and which cannot readily be distinguished. The first meaning enables us to discuss sexual [gendered] violence in a generic sense. The basic common character underlying the many different forms of violence is the abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat and force men use to control women. The second meaning enables us to document and name the range of abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat and force whilst acknowledging that there are not clearly defined and discrete analytic categories into which men’s behavior can be placed.

The common character of the continuum allows for an understanding of the gendered nature of violence, where men are the subjects of violence and women are the objects. The common character or key element of male power and control over women is gendered violence. In this sense, commonality refers to patriarchal structures and power relations that articulate violence against women. Furthermore, patriarchal structures act in tandem with economic, political and cultural structures to augment the continuum of gendered violence. The understanding that there is a continuous series of elements or events that pass into one another and cannot readily be differentiated allows us to contemplate the interrelationship between, and the accumulation of, violent practices. The concept of a continuum of violence addresses the dual problematic in the analyses of violence raised earlier. Additionally, the conceptualization of a continuum of violence acknowledges the multiple spaces in which

women live, without necessitating a distinction between public and private spaces. Moreover, it provides the space to examine both the commonalities and differences in women's experiences of violence. Through an understanding of the commonalities, the substantive connections among and between women and women's structural and situational experiences of violence are made visible at all levels — personal, communal and international (Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996).

Although the United Nations adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) in 1979, the convention was silent about violence against women. This omission was rectified in 1993 with an amendment of the Convention. Article 1 defined violence against women as: “[a]ny 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.”¹⁴ The convention further stipulates that violence against women should be understood to encompass, but is not limited to:

- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family ... traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community ... at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
- physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs¹⁵.

The convention acknowledges that while both men and women experience violence, violence affects women disproportionately precisely because they are women. However, it

¹⁴ www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/e4devw.htm

¹⁵ *ibid.*

fails to invoke an understanding of the continuum of violence. Rather, it demarcates violence into specific acts, categories, contexts and spaces. In so doing, the pervasiveness of violence against women is normalized. The declaration fails to specify and condemn the interconnected systems of patriarchal power which perpetuate and legitimate violence against women as forms of gendered violence. This omission renders *invisible* the structural violence against women and the commutative nature of its effects on women across all social spaces.

Pervasiveness of Gendered Violence

“Gender-based violence, whether it occurs on the streets or in homes, affects women of every nation, belief, class, race and ethnic group. It is perpetrated by men, silenced by custom, institutionalized in law and state systems, and passed from one generation to the next” (Carrillo 2000: 11). Accordingly, the prevalence of male dominated social formations prevents most women in most societies, as individuals and groups, from enjoying full economic, political, social and cultural participation in relation to most men (Bessant and Cook 1999; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Waring 1988, 1994). Violence against women in the family, community, and by the state is used to keep women in their place. It limits women’s opportunities to live, learn, work, and act as full participants in their societies. Violence against women hinders their organization and agency. It is a major obstacle to their empowerment and full participation in shaping their economic, social and political lives. Violence against women transcends national borders and all boundaries — class, race, ethnicity, citizenship status, ability and age. Moreover, in situations of conflict

and in border environments, where militarization and geopolitical security of the territorial state dominate, and where cultures of militaristic policing predominate, traditional definitions of womanhood, which repress women, are exacerbated. Under such conditions, casual attitudes toward violence against women often prevail and sanction and normalize gendered violence.

While women's subordination, repression and exploitation are often forwarded by feminist theorists and activists, little statistical evidence exists as to the range, depth and cost of gendered violence, though feminist researchers, activists, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international-governmental organizations have tried to address this weakness. Local, statewide and comparative country studies on violence against women have increasingly been undertaken as 'legitimate' research agendas. The statistics gleaned from such studies provide insight about the extent and costs of violence against women and help to raise the issue of gendered violence, on community, national and international political agendas. In its 1993 report, for example, the World Bank disclosed that gender-based violence accounted for more death and health problems than did the cumulative effects of cancer, traffic injuries and malaria among women aged 15 to 44 worldwide (Carrillo 2000: 12). In nine Latin American countries, men who marry their rape victims are not charged or punished for their crimes. Under such conditions, women are punished and often subjected to a lifetime of abuse. In Mexico, it is estimated that domestic violence occurs in 70% of families. In nation-wide studies, 95% of Mexican working women have reported sexual harassment on the job. Statistics revealing the extent of violence against women are shocking (Bunch and Carrillo 1998: 233). The World Health Organization (1997) reported that an

estimated one in five women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape at some point during her lifetime (Carrillo 2000: 12). In 1988, statistics showed that a rape occurred every six minutes in the United States (Bunch and Carrillo 1998: 232). Ten years later, a study found that in the United States, one in six women had experienced rape or attempted rape. Of these women, 22% were less than 12 years of age, and 32% were between the ages of 12 and 17 when the rape or attempted rape occurred. Moreover, in the United States the estimated costs of domestic violence range between \$10 and \$67 billion (Carrillo 2000: 12).¹⁶ However, such estimates of the 'costs' to society fail to include the physical and psychological costs to victims and their families, as well as to all women who are constantly reminded of their vulnerability.

Structural violence is pervasive. It is expressed through the failure of social institutions to address women's structural subordination at the political, economic and social levels. Throughout the world, states are dismantling social welfare systems which include social assistance, health care and education programs. Since women have been constructed as the traditional providers of basic family needs, women are directly and disproportionately affected by social welfare cuts, especially those in housing, food subsidies, education and health (Muthien 2000). Cuts to social spending also translate into fewer 'safe' community spaces such as libraries, childcare facilities, local programs and parks. Those spaces which continue to be funded have increasingly become sites of surveillance and insecurity under increasing efforts toward accountability (Fine and Weis 2000). Cuts to social spending have

¹⁶ Throughout this dissertation, the symbol \$ refers to US dollars.

also resulted in fewer and more poorly funded shelters and programs for victims of violence, and less funding for the legal redress of violent acts.

Structural violence is also evident in statistics showing that women worldwide own less than 1% of the world's land and control only 1% of the world's income (Parikh 1995). Feminists point out the social costs of military spending (Peterson and Runyan 1993; Tickner 1995; Waring 1994). They criticize the prioritization of military and economic security, when this diverts resources from social spending. Feminists remind us that military expenditures impede economic growth and that military technologies fail to provide for basic human needs. In 1985, in the US, just five hours of military spending cost \$200 million, while during the same period it is estimated that these funds could have financed 1,600 rape crisis centres and battered women's shelters (Peterson and Runyan 1993: 85).

Beyond the statistics about violence against women, three important mechanisms ensure the pervasiveness and maintenance of a culture of violence against women: normalization of violence against women; pervasiveness of the traditional public/private dichotomy; and, the silencing of women's experience of violence.

Normalization of Gendered Violence

Gendered violence, in all its various forms — patriarchal control, masculine definitions of state and citizenship, patriarchal social constructions of womanhood, masculinist theoretical, policy and programmatic conceptualizations of reproduction and population control, gendered definitions of migrant, gendered division of labour and the economy — affects women's minds and bodies. Gendered violence cannot be separated from notions of power

embedded in language, texts, media, art, and social institutions. Accordingly, power operates in places and forms that tend to disguise the political discourses of power and naturalize unequal/violent power relations. In so doing, the prevailing power structures function to reproduce, reinforce and maintain ideologies, beliefs and allegiances which ensure that the status quo remains uncontested. As part of the prevailing power structures, (dis)order is arbitrarily imposed through physical and sociological violence, as well as through the prevailing unequal power/knowledge structures. It is through these violent processes that everyday life experiences inform our subjectivity and identity and normalize the prevailing power structures (Hill Collins 1998; Shapiro 1992). The pervasiveness of the continuum of violence, together with the processes of normalization, renders the questioning of everyday inequalities and violence more difficult.

Public/Private Dichotomy of Violence

The institutionalization of public/private dichotomies is an important mechanism ensuring the pervasiveness of violence against women. This is true since violence against women continues to be construed as occurring between strangers, rather than within families and close social relationships.¹⁷ This representation reinforces the public/private dichotomies which are understood in terms of masculinity and femininity, and which define violence against women as direct rather than structural, aggressive rather than oblique, rational (read: deserved) rather than irrational (read: unwarranted), and objective rather than subjective.

¹⁷ See Bessant and Cook 1999; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Chowdhury *et al.* 1994; Dalby 1994, 2000; Fine and Weis 2000; Muthien 2000; Muehlenhard and Kimes 1999; Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996; Thomas and Beasley 1993.

This dichotomous imagery is clearly evident in the contested definitions of rape. For example, conventional understandings of rape imagine it as a crime of passion rather than a misogynist act reflecting male power and women's subordination. Similar understandings construe 'real' rape narrowly, as an attack which occurs at night, in a public space, perpetrated by a stranger, who uses force to access sexual intercourse. Instead, rape, whether a violent means of obtaining sex or a sexual means of committing violence, must be understood as predominantly designating women as the targets of male aggression. As such, men are the subjects of violence and women, the objects.

Such representations, however, conceal statistical evidence that men known to the victim commit most rapes. In fact, most women who die violently are killed by either partners or other family members. Further, the term 'domestic' violence is paradoxical: while the home connotes a secure space for women and their families, it is often more dangerous than the public space, which is socially and politically constructed as a source of threat and danger (Dalby 2000). Moreover, the social and political construction of a 'safe' space is also problematic since leaving an abusive/violent situation does not guarantee a woman's security. A 1999 study in the United States showed that 70% of reported acts of domestic violence occurred after the couple separated. In a 1996 report, 25% of women killed by male partners were separated or divorced from their killers, and 29% were attempting to leave the relationship at the time of their murder (Fine and Weis 2000: 1140). By demarcating violence in private spaces as family secrets, private matters and/or accepted cultural practices, violence against women is normalized, routinized and silenced.

Silencing Women, Silencing Gendered Violence

The third mechanism operating to ensure the pervasiveness of violence is the silencing of women's experience of violence through power/knowledge structures and the social institutions of the state, family, church, culture as well as through legal, education and medical systems. Male power/knowledge systems and definitions of violence are mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that delegitimize and deny women's experiences of gendered violence, repression and exploitation. This creates a hierarchy subordinating women's interests.

Since gendered social constructions overwhelmingly identify women with the private sphere, women's identification with 'home', domesticity and the family reinforces their exclusion from the public sector. Even as society elicits notions of respecting and honouring women, even if only symbolically as mothers of/for the nation, violence against women is pervasive (Bannerji 1999). This paradox is rooted in patriarchy, which disembodies women from their 'selves' and disenfranchises women from their human rights. Oftentimes under the control of male household heads, women are materially deprived of economic resources and are not free to engage in economic activities. These controls comprise violence against women in the home and are thereby invisible. When patriarchal power relations are coupled with the threat of physical violence, women are often prohibited from fleeing their violent environments. Without material means to escape, women too often envision themselves as trapped, thereby (re)producing the cycle of violence. Unfortunately, hierarchies of privilege

absolve men of their accountability and responsibility as perpetrators of violence. Since this privilege silences abused women, those who experience injustice are doubly violated.

(Im)migrant women and women of colour face greater difficulty accessing those social institutions intended to redress domestic violence (Hill Collins 1998). Lack of language skills, as well as community norms and customs, often prohibit immigrant women and women of colour from seeking non-traditional methods of addressing their problems and prevent some from 'seeing' domestic violence as wrong and often criminal. Unfortunately, even when aid is sought, institutional responses are clouded by social constructions of the 'Other' and by patriarchal relations. The institutions themselves are Western-centric male constructs and often fail to infringe upon what is stereotypically 'seen' as non-Western patriarchal cultural norms. Accordingly the social context of women's lives is invisible to those charged with their support. This creates a silence both about violence against women and about the social conditions of women 'Others'. The silence is also present in ethnic and immigrant communities where women are expected to suffer mutely. This silence also reinforces the patriarchal power relations that govern society and communities.

When combined, the historically unequal power relations inherent in capitalism, patriarchy, race/ethnicity and citizenship status, render women, women of colour and immigrant women multiply vulnerable to gendered violence. Universalizing approaches toward women and gendered violence silence women's voices and render the critical aspects of the diversity of experiences and perceptions invisible. To break the bonds of silence, women must speak about these issues to redress the unequal power relations marginalizing them. To speak is to assert agency and empowerment.

Security Discourses

In this section I examine traditional concepts of national security including: state sovereignty and territoriality; economy and markets; state sanctioned violence; and citizenship. The historically and context-driven shifts from national to global thinking and from East/West to North/South discourses expose the limits of the traditional discourses of 'war' and 'peace'. This conventional focus has made borders an important element of security studies. To understand the complexities of the US-Mexican border and its impact on the everyday lives of women, requires a critical examination of the concept of security. This demands a reconceptualization of security to place people at the centre of the analysis.

National Security: The Causes of War and the Conditions for Peace

The introduction of 'new' security issues into security debates has resulted in a widening of the meaning of security. By adding adjectives that contextualize the meaning of security (e.g., economic security, women's security, migrant security or reproductive security), new discursive dimensions are introduced. The practice of adding adjectives to the term security, however, is not a new phenomenon. "The concept of security is not empty; it implicitly invokes and relies on a series of accepted prior visions of what is to be secured" (Krause and Williams 1997: x). Traditional security studies have utilized descriptive modifiers including national security, collective security, common security, security dilemma, and security community, to theorize and explain power, the role of the state, and the nature of international relations. Each of these concepts is rooted in the state-centric theoretical assumptions of realism and neorealism.

Embedded in the Hobbesian conceptual framework, realism has transposed the characteristics which Hobbes (1651) attributed to human nature onto the international system of states. Hobbes typified human behaviour as independent, self-interested and predatory. He asserted that these attributes produced a state of war, which caused Man's [sic] life to be 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short'. In this 'natural' environment, anarchy was the rule, and order, justice and morality were the exceptions. Accordingly, realist theory asserts that the nature of international relations is one of anarchy, wherein the possibility of war is inevitable. Power is understood as domination and is achieved by states through militaristic interventions and violence. Under this scenario, peace is merely the antithesis of war in an environment where only one or the other condition is possible.

Conceptually, the object of security is the state and, therefore, national security concerns the protection of the state from external threats and enemies. In an environment of anarchy, where each state seeks its survival in a war of 'all against all', the balance of power, which maintains peace and ensures state survival, is tenuous. Under these conditions, states are unable to predict or assure the behaviour of other states and, therefore, what is understood as a legitimate security measure for one state can be perceived as a threat for another. This condition is referred to as a *security dilemma* and is exacerbated by the principle of state sovereignty which assumes that no authority exists above or beyond that of the state. Moreover, since power is understood as zero sum, when one state wins, another loses. For realists, state sovereignty and state power are grounded in tangible capabilities such as geographic territory, natural resources, industrial capacity, population, and quality of government. Sovereignty is invoked by states as an institution that must be both protected

and defended and is, therefore, a social construct embedded in power relations (Biersteker 1999; Biersteker and Weber 1996; Waltz 1986; Keohane 1986; Walker 1997; Dalby 1997; George 1994, Tickner 1995; Morgenthau 1948).

Collective Security, Security Community and Common Security

Against this theoretical backdrop, security studies have explored the causes of war and the conditions for peace. Following WWI (1914-1919), collective security emerged as a means for ensuring peace among nations. Championed by US President Woodrow Wilson (1914-1921), collective security and international cooperation was dismissed as unrealistic in an environment of realist states. This short-lived utopia of collective security and lasting peace was shattered by the outbreak of WWII (1939-1945). The inability to prevent war and to control rogue states led to further questions about the causes of war and the conditions for peace.

National security stresses the 'high politics' of political and military concerns, while minimizing the importance of 'low politics'. However, in the post-WWII environment of embedded liberalism and increased international trade, the low politics of economic relations between states was seen as increasingly important (Gill 1995; Strange 1988). Economics and market shares became increasingly important in determining state power and establishing a workable balance between military and economic strengths became integral to the national security agenda. Increasingly, economic interdependence and cultural interpenetration were being brokered by bilateral, multilateral and intermittent collaboration between states. These complex multilayered agreements coordinated national policies and supported the emergence

of security regimes (Booth 1999; Tickner 1995). Deutsch (1957) contends that the distinguishing feature of these regimes was the sense of a security community and the development of diplomatic-political-military practices ensuring long-term peace .

Emerging from the functionalist framework was the notion of common security. It assumes that cooperation on issues of common security, such as foreign and defence policies, would create a 'spill over' effect in other areas, especially in economic concerns. In keeping with the established militaristic framework, common security advocates further favoured the pooling of military resources under the *World Security Organization* (WSO) and the establishment of a standing international force (Haas 1961). State sovereignty and the impermeability of national boundaries, however, prohibited the institutionalization of common security. Under the dominant influence of realism, such a measure was regarded by states as a threat to their power and independence. The conflicting interests of common security and state sovereignty reflect the classic security dilemma. As the Cold War progressed, the international focus on East/West tensions became paramount for the major world powers and national security was dedicated to strengthening military capabilities. Widespread apprehension about security in general, and nuclear warfare in particular, continued throughout the Cold War (Booth 1999; Dalby 2000; Tickner 1995).

Deconstructing the National Security Framework: A Critical Security Discourse

For the most part, the realist framework for understanding national security has remained unchanged since Morgenthau (1948). While realist thought has made room for neorealist thinking about economics, state sovereignty, territoriality and population remain the strength

of competitive states. Realism assumes the sovereign state to be unitary, self-interested, autonomous and rational. Such assumptions rendered the state an unproblematic and undifferentiated given. Entrenched in the Hobbesian conceptual framework and constrained by concerns about external threats and enemies, realist thinking about the security of people/citizens focuses exclusively on the defence of boundaries, borders and territories against incoming migrants or armies. When security is of concern, it is ordered by the logic of war and violence, an ordering which can only perpetuate the militarization of international relations. Similarly, the neorealist conceptual framework, embedded in a rational, instrumental and technical understanding of knowledge and politics, imagines people/citizens as instruments of state power, particularly in terms of economic gains. The role of the state as the subject of security, and the use of violence and militarization as a means of ensuring security, have come under increasing criticism.

Critical and postmodern international relations scholars¹⁸ argue that the current debate in international relations and security discourses are epistemological. They are concerned with the question of *how we know* the world we live in. Such theorists contend that the spatial structures of the state, reinforced by the dominance of (neo)realism as a way of knowing, order knowledge about international relations and the world. This state-centric 'ordering' precludes the possibility of conceiving politics at the international or world level and thereby prevents the emergence of collective or common security. In other words, we can never see ourselves as 'one world', but only as 'many worlds' divided by territorial

¹⁸ See Dalby 1997, 2000; Campbell 1996, 1998; Huysmans 1998; Murphy 1996; Muthien 2000; Tickner 1992, 1995; Walker 1997; Williams and Krause 1997.

boundaries and marshalled by sovereign states. Accordingly, (neo)realist concepts are clearly defined and reified through simplistic reductionism which determines our knowledge about the 'world' of international relations. The state is the key actor in an anarchical system in which power is understood as power over and as domination, force is exerted to control, and security is about violence and control over territorial and geopolitical spaces.

The (neo)realist presumption of the state as a unitary actor is problematic. It conflates ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity into a homogenous population, thereby masking the multiplicity of citizenship. In so doing, a domestic order is established which articulates political, economic, cultural and social issues in terms of the state. This order is predicated on the processes of 'othering' based on race, ethnicity, gender and citizenship status. At the level of the international and local political economy, the othering society can profit from 'othered' bodies. Socially constructed as inferior, such bodies are more vulnerable to exploitation, particularly at the economic level. Marc DuBois (1991) argues that maintaining the unequal power relations in the global economy necessitate the construction of 'other' (both in the North and the South) as 'docile bodies' to be exploited in labour market relations.

Similarly, Foucault (1972) links the social body of society/the state with that of the physical body of the individual as central in ordering power relations. He suggests that societal power is embodied in, and defined by, social institutions. However, institutions do not emerge in a vacuum; they are socially and historically constructed. Accordingly, individuals — (neo)realist scholars, policy makers and statespersons — who define the state and who hold ideological power are engaged in the making of social institutions, norms and

practices that reinforce their positions of power. Similarly, those who hold material power — capitalists and industrialists — are actively engaged in reproducing their economic power. Since Foucault's analysis reveals the power relations inherent in the production of social and political hierarchies, it can be used to problematize *(i)* the notion of the state as an undifferentiated unitary actor and *(ii)* the assumption that power hierarchies are immutable and natural.

In contrast, (neo)realists' rationalization established hierarchical orders as natural and fixed. Within this framework, power is understood as influence, domination and power over others, especially 'othered' people, states and markets. The dominance of the (neo)realist framework in international relations and security discourse has provided a 'disciplining mechanism' which makes it difficult to think about security except in defensive, nationalistic, and state-centric terms. With the state as the subject of security, the subject of security remains problematic since it excludes people in its formulation.

Even under the epistemological and ontological dominance of (neo)realism beginning in the 1980s, the changing nature of international relations demanded a critical rethinking of security issues. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the nuclear arms race ended and East/West tensions subsided. Within conventional security discourses, which are conceptually constrained within a (neo)realist national security framework, the South has replaced the Eastern Bloc as the primary threat to the West. New tensions and challenges for states, therefore, have quickly emerged to replace old ones. For example, regionalization and economic integration, transnational and subnational challenges to state sovereignty, 'Third

World' debt, (inter)national migration, organized crime, spread of disease, environmental concerns, population and demographic concerns are among the new security challenges.

Under the threat of 'new' security issues, the validity of (neo)realism as a way of knowing is placed in question. The state itself — a geographically and politically sovereign territory wherein national security is the primary motor for action — is being contested. National boundaries are changing, constantly redrawing the international map. The challenges facing the international community are no longer definable or resolvable through national security directives. State boundaries are more impermeable, and national borders are increasingly vulnerable and even vanishing under 'new' security stresses.

In every historical space, specific power/knowledge systems act (violently) on everyday life to normalize the prevailing power structures. In this sense, space refers to more than geography and boundary practices, it also includes the temporal practices giving shape to definitions and provide meaning to historical periods. Therefore, outcomes/events are not predictable or inevitable, but rather vary as a result of the multiple interactions and configurations of power practices. Though territorial space is a geographical notion, it is mostly a socio-political one (Foucault 1972). Consequently, territorial spaces are controlled by specific forms of power. As maps are redrawn and states attempt to assert and legitimate their authority over imagined territorial sovereignty, boundaries are increasingly contested, and questions of power and rights are more clearly visible. The spatial practices of the state — division into official versus unofficial and local versus national space — are socially constructed around historical and normative understandings of spatiality (Shapiro 1997a, 1997b). In this mutable environment, territorial maps continue to dominate definitions and

practices by reinforcing the dichotomies of order/anarchy, inside/outside, inclusion/exclusion and domestic/foreign. Actions, practices and interpretations based on spatiality continue to determine how things are valued and how human identities and subjectivities are ascribed. To move beyond the bounds of (neo)realism which render people invisible and the state supreme, Shapiro (1997b: 31) suggests that:

rather than naturalizing spaces of enactment by focussing on the actions by which boundaries are policed, defended, and transgressed — the familiar focus of war and security studies — the emphasis must be on the practices, discursive and otherwise, for constructing space and identity on the ways that the self-alterity relationships are historically framed and played out ... Rather than naturalizing the boundaries by which states maintain their control over the representations of global issues, the focus involves both criticism and recovery. It is aimed first at disclosing how representations of alterity [dangerous Others] reproduce the identities and spaces that give nation-states and nations in general their coherence, and second at disclosing other forms of affiliation uncoded in state-oriented interpretations.

Nevertheless, the dominance of state-centric (neo)realism remains strong. This theoretical framework continues to reaffirm the classic security dilemma and ensures an environment of conflict, war, and escalating militarization. In keeping with the classical security dilemma, that framework stipulates that security for some means insecurity for 'Others'. Traditional security discourses, even those concerned with new security issues, are formulated around the notion of protection and are essentially political practices embedded in power relations. Conventional security discourses, with their accepted definitional dichotomies of national/international, inside/outside, inclusion/exclusion, friend/foe, citizen/foreigner and self/'Other', are self-reinforcing. As political communities, states are articulated as sovereign territories sharing common characteristics and encouraged to differentiate themselves from perceived 'Others'. Citizenship in such a 'secure' community connotes the eradication of all

that is foreign. Within this paradigm, difference is understood as a threat and must be confronted with violence or the threat thereof. Such thinking reifies the boundaries and barriers between the internal secure community and a dangerous external environment. Therefore, the state has come under increasing criticism as the guarantor of security.

While conventional security discourses have focussed on warfare and violence directed at states from and across national borders, many other aspects and forms of (in)security — social, economic and personal — have been systematically ignored.¹⁹ The(neo)realist state, however, is unable to independently address the challenges of ‘new’ security issues. While states remain important in our understanding of international relations and security discourses, they are no longer the only actors of significance (Krause and Williams 1997; Booth 1999). Ann Tickner (1995) goes beyond this now commonplace domain to state that new security issues, particularly as they regard human security, render the state anachronistic. Conventional emphasis on state security, particularly on military resolutions and economic determinations, limits human security and human rights.

In the current environment of globalization, economic interdependence, cultural interpenetration, multilayered complexity, national and environmental overlaps, and widespread apprehension, our future is neither predictable nor secure. The emergence of new security issues has forced the rethinking of security. In the 1990s critical questions about who is being secured and by what means are at the forefront of security analysis. By adding new adjectives to the concept of security — e.g., human security, economic security, women’s

¹⁹See Lammers 1999; Dalby 1997, 2000; Kay 1997; Muthien 2000; Suhrke 1999; Tickner 1995; Walker 1997; Williams and Krause 1997; Woroniuk 1999.

security, migrant security or reproductive security — we are introducing new discursive dimensions to address these and other questions.

Security Through Feminist Lenses

Masculinist security discourses rely on acutely gendered images to maintain the power of patriarchal capitalist states. In defining women as peaceful, nurturing and passive, and men as violent, active and aggressive, state security discourses are predicated on specific hegemonic forms of masculinity and femininity. Gendered dichotomies, which represent women as mothers of the nation and men as patriotic warriors in defence of the nation, are riddled with paradoxes. For example, while privileging the mothers of the nation, the fusion of gender and nationalist representations define women as subordinated ‘reproducers’ while men maintain their privilege as ‘producers’. In essence, statist security discourses cast women as powerless, as victims, as passive and as voiceless. In contrast, states are presented as protection regimes, but only from external/foreign/‘Other’ threats. As secondary and Other, women are excluded from statist protection regimes. Moreover, sexist metaphors often imagine women as located in the enemy camp, as antagonists responsible for undoing men. Such discourses exploit specific gender ideologies which reinforce traditional gender roles and the public/private dichotomy which devalues and excludes women. By extension, these essentialist imaginings have established a protected/protector regime. From a feminist perspective, subordination of femininity and the privileging of specific forms of masculinity are inherently linked to the emergence of war and the acceleration of militarization and

violence worldwide (Dalby 1994, Enloe 1989, 2000; Elshtain 1987, 1992; Peterson 1992; Peterson and Runyan 1993; Pettman; 1996c; Tickner 1998).

State security is defined by war, militarization and violence. The institutionalization of the modern state and state sovereignty must be understood within the context of control, restriction and organization of violence within the public sphere and political life. This dominant understanding of politics reifies the statist claim to a monopoly on legitimate authority and use of violence and prevents imagining security as anything other than security of the state. The state, therefore, under such conventional thinking is the subject of and means for ensuring security. It is impossible to expand our understanding of security within the bounds of state-centrism. To imagine people as the subjects of *state* security and agents of their *own* security is unthinkable. Consequently, feminist analyses challenge the ontological status of 'givens', including: categories of state, anarchy and formulations of sovereignty and rationality which dominate (neo)realism. In questioning these conceptualizations and in asking: whose security? and what is to be secured? feminist theorists contribute to critical security discourses.²⁰

Provoked by the silencing, exclusion and systematic subordination of women, feminist theorists explore the gendered structures that render women insecure. By exploring the contradictions between the universal (masculine discourses) and the particular (women's experience), the subject and the body of security, and the sovereign territorial state and the autonomous (male) individual, feminist theorists challenge masculinist/statist security

²⁰ See Dalby 1997, 2000; Grant 1992; Peterson 1992; Tickner 1995; O'Tuathail and Dalby 1998; Walker 1997; Williams and Krause 1997.

discourses. This epistemological and ontological shift demands the exploration of gendered power structures which operate in the provision of security. O'Tuathail and Dalby (1998: 6) maintain that conventional security discourses and interpretive practices of statecraft are also practices of *man-craft* and must be exposed as gendered and exclusionary. Consequently, women worldwide do not have political status, access, or influence equal to that of men (Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Enloe 1989, 1993, 2000).

Drawing on the concept of common security, feminist peace researchers stress the importance of understanding the structural inequities of social relations as a framework for redressing social conflict and establishing peace (Reardon 1993). A very different view of security is conceived, by emphasising diplomacy, cooperation, and the construction of communities across spatial boundaries and by de-emphasising violence, competition and polarization. By extending the assumptions of common security, the focus of security is shifted toward commonalities, unity and peace. Meaningful peace entails the end of armed conflicts, military occupations and interventions, as well as the elimination of the use and threat of force. In the feminist sense, it also demands the "enjoyment of economic and social justice, equality, and the entire range of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UN 1985 cited in Reardon 1993: 4). This statement suggests a different definition of violence. It indicates that the violence which orders peoples' lives is the result of inequality, poverty, lack of basic human needs, injustices and inequities that constitute violations of human rights and render people insecure. By problematizing the state as the subject, questions about human security and identity (racial, ethnic, gender, religious, and cultural) can enter into political and theoretical discourse. Moreover, by problematizing the use of state organized

violence as the means of ensuring security, questions about human agency and alternative means for ensuring security can be highlighted. In bringing people into the concept of security, we are contesting the use of violence as a means of preventing violence. However, such transformative thinking requires a very different understanding of power (Biersteker 1999; Biersteker and Weber 1996; Dalby 1997; Enloe 1989, 1993, 2000; Muthien 2000).

Conventionally, statist/(neo)realist theories define power as ‘domination over’. In this sense, power is assumed to be zero-sum and can only be achieved through the use of violence or the threat thereof. Grounded in tangible capabilities and substantiated by military might, states are understood as the only actors who exercise and hold power. Accordingly, people and citizens are seen as instruments of state power, particularly in the economy and military realms. However, a Foucauldian analysis reveals the instabilities of meanings, theories and practices of power (Foucault 1972; Shapiro 1992). Recognizing the arbitrary nature of all social/knowledge systems, and that the struggles among contending social forces can produce various outcomes, we begin to see that the established order is neither inevitable nor fixed, and that alternatives are always possible.

Feminist revisioning of power imagines these alternatives through three productive formulations of power — *power to*, *power with*, and *power from within*. The concept of *power to* presumes the capacity to create new possibilities without domination or the use of violence. *Power with* envisions collectivity, unity and solidarity in the pursuit of positive social change. And *power from within* visualizes the strength within every individual to participate in the creation of a secure environment for all humanity. Together, these concepts of productive power understand empowerment as both a process and a goal. Empowerment

is a relational concept and therefore imagines the elimination of all forms of inequality based on gender, race, culture, geopolitical status, age, ability or sexual orientation. In this process, women can and must be agents of their own empowerment at all levels — personal, communal, national, global as well as economic, social and political.²¹

Agency and empowerment are often misread as immediately emancipatory. In this study of the borderlands, therefore, women's small, yet meaningful, acts of agency and empowerment are often overlooked. The women participants in this study struggle daily against gendered violence and insecurity. Their ability to survive, engage in daily life, raise children, and tell their stories are acts of agency and empowerment.

'Human' Security

In this section I explore human security theory in an attempt to address the theoretical and practical questions of: 'whose security'?; what is being secured?; and, how can 'security' (once defined) be ensured? Moreover, I provide a feminist critique of androcentric human security discourses, which exclude women's experiences of insecurity and prevent the transformation of state-centric security discourses into human centred security realities.

Defining the Borders of Human Security

Even Morgenthau (1948), the champion of contemporary realist thought, imagined state security as having, at least in part, a human dimension. He asserted that *personal insecurity*

²¹ See Bose and Acosta-Belén 1995; Andina and Pillsbury 1997; Foucault 1972, 1986; Garcia 1997; Garcia and de Oliveira 1995; Hugo 1997; Kopinak 1993a; Staudt 1987; Sylvester 1994a, 1994b; Szasz and Figueroa 1997; Woroniuk 1999.

and social disintegration are reflections of nationalism. He claimed that the emotional strength of national character and the identity of the state are linked to the stability of the society within a state, thereby reflecting the sense of security among its members (Morgenthau 1948: 122-126). For Morgenthau, the greater the social stability and sense of security among citizens, the smaller the prospect of aggressive and destabilizing nationalism. Though including people, Morgenthau's analysis remains state-centric since social stability is equated with the stability of the state. Accordingly, he reifies the state as the guarantor of human security by linking increased state security with decreased human insecurity. However, as previously discussed, the term citizen excludes those people do not fit into the national, citizenship and/or identity framework of the state and, therefore, do not command its protection. Accordingly, those excluded or marginalized are rendered insecure (Lammers 1999; Tickner 1995; Walker 1997).

In the Hobbesian environment of anarchy, Morgenthau's prediction of escalating security seems impossible. Framed within the discourses of warfare and violence, within and across borders, and directed by states toward other states, people and their environments, security remains unattainable. In the current environment of globalization, economic interdependence, cultural interpenetration, multilayered complexity, national and environmental overlaps, and widespread apprehension, our future is neither predictable nor secure. The emergence of 'new' security issues has forced the rethinking of security to the centre of national and international relations and has thrust people to the epicentre of the issue.

Within this environment, the United Nations Development Program's *Human Development Report* of 1994 placed the concept of human security on the international agenda. The report condemned narrowly construed statist definitions of security for neglecting "the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who ... [seek] security in their daily lives" (UN 1994b: 22). The year 1994 signalled a watershed in defining security, not as securing national territory from foreign enemies or securing the globe from the threat of nuclear war, but as central to the everyday concerns of people for food, shelter, jobs, and personal safety. Furthermore, the report rooted insecurity in the real and imagined threats of repression and exploitation from state and non-state actors, for religious and/or cultural beliefs, or because of racial, ethnic, gender or sexual orientation. Accordingly, human security is concerned with human life and dignity.

Echoing the 1945 United Nations Charter which declared "[t]he battle for peace has been fought on two fronts: ... freedom from fear ... [and] freedom from want. Only victory on both fronts can assure the world of an enduring peace.... No provisions that can be written into the Charter will enable the Security Council to make the world secure from war if men and women have no security in their homes and in their jobs" (UN 1994b: 24). The 1994 UN proclamation reintroduced people into international security discourse. In defining the concept of human security, the report of 1994 stipulated four essential characteristics: (i) human security is a *universal* concern; (ii) the components of human security are *interdependent*; (iii) human security is *easier to ensure through early prevention* than later intervention; and, (iv) human security is *people-centred*. It specified seven categories of human security : food, health, environment and economic, personal, political and community

security. Most important, it challenged violence and militarization as mechanisms for ensuring human life and dignity. The report signified two important shifts in thinking: the first, shifts the focus away from states and territorial dimensions of security toward people, and the second redirects thinking away from militarization and armaments toward sustainable development (Dalby 2000).

This transformation in thinking implies an indivisible link between human security and development, itself a highly contested term.²² Policies and practices directed at economic development are often predicated on aggression, competition and exploitation and render people and the environment insecure (Shiva 1993). In contrast, the notion of human-centred development emerged in the late 1990s as a catchall concept (Suhrke 1999). It draws meaning from the 1970s development literature, which emphasized social justice as intrinsic to meaningful development and countered the notion that economic growth equals development. This vague concept of human-centred development suggests that human security is somewhat indiscernible from the concept of human development. To distinguish human security and human development, the 1994 Human Development Report stated that human security should not be equated with human development since human development is a broader concept implying a process of widening people's choices. This definition seems tautological. For example, if human security is both a process and a desired end essential for human development, then without human security there can be no development, and without economic or human development, human security is impossible. The distinction between

²² The controversies around development arise from differing definitions, policies and practices. Econocentric definitions equate development with economic growth and capitalism.

human security and human development is temporal since the two concepts differ only in their immediacy (Scott 1998). Whereas human security implies an immediate threat — from hunger, famine, disease, pollution, drug trafficking, terrorism, ethnic disputes, social disintegration, repression and exploitation — human development implies security from long-term social, historical and structural threats.

Notwithstanding the importance of these shifts from state-centric to human-centred security and from militarization to sustainable development, the notion of ‘threat’ remains a central organizing concept in thinking about human security. As a result, dichotomous thinking is reinforced. The report suggests that *threats loom large* throughout the globe and cites unchecked population growth, disparities in economic opportunities, excessive international migration, environmental degradation, drug production/trafficking, and international terrorism as ongoing concerns to human security (UN 1994b: 34). This emphasis on threats reifies traditional and dichotomous categories of inclusion/exclusion, them/us, friend/enemy, domestic/international, and order/disorder and can only create disunity and impede efforts toward attaining human security. While rethinking security from a human perspective has great potential for understandings of security outside the so-called ‘box’ of international relations, simply rearticulating newly emerging or newly recognized *threats* to human security will not, in itself, ensure people’s security in their everyday lives (Lammers 1999; Krause and Williams 1997). Perhaps, as Ken Booth (1991) advocates, emancipation must replace threats as the organizing principle in revisioning security. Importantly, the notion of emancipation captures the UN’s commitment to ‘freedom from fear and freedom from want’. Further, it suggests the building of coalitions, cohesion and inclusion to eradicate the

divisive dichotomies that reinforce divisions and exclusions. Emancipatory security provides a holistic approach decentring the state and techno-military might and advocating democratic forms of security not realized at the expense of Others (Booth 1998, 1991; Buzan 1998a, 1998b; Crawford 1994; Dalby 1997; Dillon 1991; Tickner 1995).

Shifting the Boundaries: Creating Spaces

In this new more critical environment, the theoretical and practical concept of human security remains largely undefined (Woroniuk 1999). Security is a contested concept (Baldwin 1997; Booth 1998, 1991; Buzan 1998a, 1998b; Dalby 1997; Dillon 1991; Walker 1997). Astri Suhrke (1999) suggests that, as a social construct, human security allows many interpretations without an international consensus on any single definition. Other theorists (Dalby 2000; Tickner 1995) submit that, so long as understandings are clearly linked to the reduction of human suffering and international humanitarian principles, placing human security on the international agenda engenders space for more critical security analyses and for the development of a more comprehensive approach.

The transformation in thinking about security reveals the irony of state-centred approaches that claim to uphold the principles of democratic institutions and autonomous civil society while simultaneously undermining these principles. Democracy implies opportunity, full participation, and freedom from exploitation and repression, while autonomous civil relations suggest independence, choice, and observance of human dignity. However, state-centred security with its emphasis on violence and militarization jeopardizes these principles. Furthermore, in state defined spaces such as geopolitical borders,

militarized environments are commonplace and human security is disregarded. Increasingly, humanitarian concerns are raised around the problematic power relations between the military and ordinary people, the effects of constant surveillance and policing, the impact of living in an armed environment, the long-term repercussions of forced detention and submission, and the consequences of invasive practices that disregard human dignity. Since the state authorizes these violent practices as part of its peace and security agenda, it has lost legitimacy as a guarantor of human security.

In 1999, international debate over the role of the UN Security Council ensued. The debate concerned the expansion of the Security Council's jurisdiction to include human security and questioned whether the Security Council could be an effective guarantor for the security of individuals (Suhrke 1999). Critical discussions about the role of the Security Council problematized the international/state directed security agenda and peacekeeping as irreconcilable with human security objectives.²³ The council continues to place military organizations and the threat and use of violence at the centre of its framework. Significantly, the frameworks of international institutions, like the security council, are constructed on

²³ Lloyd Axworthy (1997) criticized the UNDP's definition of security, arguing that the concept is too vague for practical utility. To address such weaknesses, the Canadian and Norwegian governments launched their human security initiative, the Lysøsen process, in May 1998. It emphasized the centrality of human rights, international humanitarian law, and socioeconomic development based on equality as interconnected elements of human security. Together, Canada and Norway have attempted to reorient peacekeeping operations towards human security. As 'middle' powers in the international arena, Canada and Norway have attempted to heighten their perceived positions of power by shepherding such processes as the ban on landmines, regulation of light arms trade, and the prohibition of child soldiers (Suhrke 1999). However, so long as these initiatives remain in the hands of military organizations where the underlying method of compliance is force, peacekeeping will remain *peacemaking*.

eurocentric notions of modernity and ethnocentric dichotomies of North/South, us/them and self/other. Simon Dalby (1998) refers to this divisive process as the POGO syndrome, which he defines as (P)olitical (O)rganizations to (G)enerate (O)thers. He suggests that an understanding of differences as complex facets of our interconnected humanity, rather than determining 'otherness', would create the possibility for non-violent cooperation and creative resolutions to people's insecurity at all levels. Although human security has been placed on the Security Council's agenda, the reformulation of thinking as suggested by Dalby and supported here seems unlikely. Walker (1997: 78) suggests that:

If the subject of security is the subject of security, it is necessary to ask, first and foremost, how the modern subject is being reconstituted and then to ask what security could possibly mean in relation to it. It is in this context that it is possible to envisage a critical discourse about security, a discourse that engages with contemporary transformations of political life, with emerging accounts of who we might become, and the conditions under which we might become other than we are now without destroying others, ourselves, or the planet on which we live.

As part of this reconstitution, the ways in which (in)security destabilizes people's everyday lives must be made visible. The relationships between global and local processes, and their effects on people's daily lives demand increased attention if everyday human security is to be achieved. To make people's experiences of insecurity visible, local actors, nongovernmental organizations, cooperative movements, unions, labour groups, social justice networks, human rights groups, environmental groups, women's groups, and cultural solidarity groups must be provided with space to voice their concerns and propositions for change. Addressing human security through an inclusive political process necessitates the participation of diverse social actors and ensures that the definitions, intentions and actions of human security are people-centred. We must move beyond the confines of the inter-

national political system to ensure that the experiences of insecurity, its causes, and possible solutions extend beyond the state and are grounded in people's everyday lives. Human security, therefore, can be seen as a dynamic concept that provides space for understanding how the past, present and future are linked through people's experiences and understandings of (in)security. Importantly, human security discourse creates a space for sharing local strategies for coping with insecurities (Booth 1998, 1991; Dalby 1998; Lammers 1999; Suhrke 1999; Tickner 1995).

Human Security Through Feminist Lenses

A feminist perspective allows us to expand on the concept of human security by including notions of (in)security in women's daily lives. For women, this grounding in the everyday is critical since women's experience of (in)security remains marginal to human security discourses. This is not to say that women do not experience the insecurities specified by the UNDP (UN 1994b): economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political insecurities. Rather, the normalization of women's experiences of gender violence renders the specificities of their experiences invisible within the human security framework. The question, therefore, should not be: how does women's security differ from men's security. Rather, it must be how does human security fail to include women's specific experiences of (in)security. By providing a more inclusive framework, which makes visible women's structural and situational experiences of insecurity, a greater understanding of human insecurity can be realized and, therefore, operationalized. The problem, consequently, rests not in the concept of human security, but in its masculinist discourse and use of men's

experience as *the* measure of human (in)security. In so doing, that interpretation renders women's experiences of human (in)security invisible against the false universality of men's experiences. Since women routinely experience security risks with no immediate parallels for men, the inclusion of women's structural and situational experience can only augment understandings of human (in)security (Chowdhury *et al.* 1994).

Women's experiences of insecurity are absent from the UNDP report (UN 1994b). While the report prescribes *economic security* as requiring an assured basic income, job security, freedom from the vulnerability of informal sector activities, it fails to address the gendered apparatus that orders the economy and renders women secondary, marginal and vulnerable. The report fails to address the gendered division of labour which designates women to low-wage, low-skilled and informal-sector jobs. The report is also mute about the gendered aspects of women's unpaid work. The problem for women is that their unpaid work in the home is an unmeasured support to the national and international economies, while failing to provide income and security for women. Women's socially constructed responsibility for the home also means that they have less time and energy to earn income. Finally, the report's understanding of economic security fails to acknowledge the gendered differentials determining access to and control over economic resources. The recognition that, globally, women's access to land and credit is unequal to men's was excluded from the report.

The second category of security specified by the UNDP (UN 1994b) is *food security*. It recommends that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to basic food. However, the report fails to address the gendered order and power relations that exist within families to subvert women's and girls' equal access to food. Under the category of

health security, the UNDP claims that infections and parasitic diseases are the major cause of death in less developed countries and the principal obstacles to the attainment of a healthy society. The report, however, fails to acknowledge the gendered dimensions of health since complications associated with women's reproductive health are the primary source of health insecurity for women in the South. It also neglects to recognize that women's health needs are greater than men's due to their reproductive functions. *Environmental security* is specified by the UNDP (UN 1994b) as the provision of a healthy physical environment. Moreover, the report identifies population growth as a significant environmental security issue. However, the report fails to acknowledge the problem of coercive population control policies that target women in the South, poor women and women of colour, jeopardizing their human security. The UNDP (UN 1994b: 31) specifically recognizes the importance of *community security*. It points out that:

people derive security from their membership in a group — a family, a community, an organization, a racial or ethnic group that can provide a cultural identity and reassuring set of values. The extended family system, for example, offers protection to its weaker members ... [however] traditional communities can also perpetuate oppressive practices: employing bonded labour and slaves and treating women harshly.

The implication here is that women are only 'treated harshly' in traditional communities. By focussing on female genital mutilation in Africa, the report obscures the prevalence of gendered violence worldwide and supports its normalization. Finally, the report stipulates that *political security* requires the honouring of basic human rights but it fails to recognize human rights as a gendered construct.

It is only in specifying *personal security* as the fifth category of human security that women's experience of insecurity is identified in the report. The UNDP (UN 1994b: 30-31)

stipulates that “no other aspect of human security is so vital for people as their security from physical violence”. Again, in keeping with the framework of threats, the report indicates that threats can come from the state (physical torture), other states (war), other groups of people (ethnic tension), and individuals or gangs (crimes and street violence). Threats can be directed against women (rape and domestic violence), against children (child abuse), or against oneself (suicide, drug use).

While the report acknowledges threats directed against women in both public and private spheres, it ignores the prevalence and severity of structural and situational forms of gendered violence. The continuum of violence perpetrated against women must be specified and redressed if we are to enjoy human security. Political, economic and social violence, as interrelated gendered practices, translate from one space to another forming a continuum which renders women insecure. As part of this continuum, gendered representations of nation and community are intertwined in the gendered apparatus that controls and polices women’s movements, bodies, social, sexual and reproductive relations, thereby rendering women more insecure (Espin 1995; Pettman 1996c; Radhakrishnan 1992; Yuval-Davis 1991). Accordingly, the provision of security must extend beyond the public realm to include women’s security in all the spaces where women are engaged in their everyday lives.

Women’s Human Rights

In this final section, I explore the concept of human rights as a gendered construct and the reluctance of the international community to recognize and protect women’s rights as human rights. Until 1979, issues of women’s human rights were virtually excluded from ‘universal’

international conventions, and, until 1992, these conventions failed to recognize gender-based violence as a human rights issue. By excluding women's rights and women's specific experiences of abuse, persecution, repression and exploitation, gendered violence was both perpetuated and legitimized. This exploration of women's rights contributes to the transformations in thinking from universal human rights to a heterogeneity of rights and the revaluing of local knowledges rather than the privileging of global ones. However, I am not suggesting a relativistic²⁴ framework, but rather a transformation of the understanding of 'universal' to include diversity.

Human Rights Framework and the Limitations of Sovereignty

Human security and human rights are conceptually and practically intertwined. As stated previously, the UNDP (UN 1994b) articulates the seven categories of human security as food, health, environment and economic, personal, political and community security. These categories are consistent with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which asserts that "[e]veryone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person" (UNHCHR 1948). What is *security of the person* if it is not consistent with human security? And, how can one have a meaningful *life* without access to food, health, a healthy environment, economic resources, and autonomy over one's body? Finally, if liberty is not the ability to choose one's identity, community and political affiliations, then freedom is an illusion. Specifically, the UNDP

²⁴ Such a framework precludes any understanding of women's experiences beyond one's own. As Uma Narayan (1989: 264 cited in Edwards and Ribbens 1998: 4) contends, "[r]elativism ... implies that a person could have knowledge of only the sorts of things that she had experienced personally and that she would be totally unable to communicate any of the contents of her knowledge to someone who did not have the same sorts of experiences".

(UN 1994b) states that political security demands the honouring of basic human rights. In addition, human rights have been intertwined with human development in a shared vision and common purpose to secure, for every human being, freedom, well-being and dignity. The UNDP (UN 2000a) centres on human rights as an intrinsic part of development and development as a means for realizing human rights. The report contends that the principles of accountability and social justice foster human development. Therefore, the important questions to be raised are: what are basic human rights?; who defines rights?; and, how can they be upheld?

Echoing the United Nations Charter, 1945, notions of basic human rights demand “freedom from fear ... [and] freedom from want” as well as the belief that peace and security stem from people’s ‘security in their homes and in their jobs’ (United Nations 1945). Specifically, in Article 55 of the Charter, member states are obliged to create

conditions of stability and well-being ... based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples ... conditions of economic and social progress and development ... solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems ... [and] ... universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion (United Nations 1945).

These commitments were reaffirmed by the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, which recognized the economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights of all human beings, as well as the obligations of states to take the necessary steps to ensure their recognition and observance. The rights recognized under the Human Rights Declaration were subsequently inscribed in two binding documents, the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (the Political Covenant), and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and*

Cultural Rights (the Economic Covenant). These agreements were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966, but only entered into force in 1976.²⁵ Together, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the Political and Economic Covenants are the foundation for an international human rights framework.

Despite the establishment of an international framework for the promotion and protection of human rights, state sovereignty has proven to be a major obstacle to their realization. Embedded in state-centrism and the state system, international law is conceived to regulate relations among states. In this context, states are considered the primary, although not sole, legal international actors, with both the rights and obligations of their privileged status. However, when state interests and international laws conflict, state sovereignty is privileged over the state's international obligations. Accordingly, states may lend their support, sign international declarations and at the same time, fail to uphold treaty principles. Hence, while international conventions are authoritative statements adopted by the United Nations General Assembly to express the consensus of the international community, few mechanisms exist to ensure their enforcement. As such, UN declarations, no matter how well intended, are not legally binding on sovereign states (Miller and Faux 1999; Peterson 1992).

With the adoption of a Political Covenant separate from the Economic Covenant, the human rights framework divorced civil and political rights from economic, social and cultural ones and created a false dichotomy and a hierarchy of rights within rights discourses. This dichotomy of rights is rooted in Cold War discourses, in which the United States

²⁵ The Political Covenant was not ratified in United States until 1992 and the Economic Covenant has yet to be ratified by the United States. However, both conventions were ratified by Mexico in 1981 (www.un.org).

privileged civil and political rights and the Soviet Union favoured economic, social and cultural rights. While these rights are in practice indivisible, in many rights discourses, rights are separated into generations. Dominated by Western power/knowledge structures, contemporary human rights discourses privilege so-called first generation, or civil and political rights, over second generation, or economic, social and cultural rights (Donnelly 1994). Accordingly, the United States has linked democracy with the protection of human rights as a foreign policy objective whereas Mexico, given its slow transition toward political reform, privileges economic, social and cultural rights (Macdonald 1995). Nonetheless, there are rights that cannot be demarcated into the discrete categories of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural categories. Generally, these are the rights to bodily integrity, autonomy, political empowerment and participation, and equal protection of the law. This overlap suggests that progressive understandings of human rights should recognize all rights as interrelated and indivisible, a critical recognition if international human rights standards are to be applied (Cook 1995).

Human Rights Through Feminist Lenses

While some important aspects of women's rights fall within the civil and political framework, much of the abuse experienced by women is related to social, historical and economic structures. Therefore, the privileging of so-called first generation civil and political rights over second generation economic, social and cultural rights in rights discourses disadvantages women due to their socially constructed responsibility toward their families, which fall into the second category. In this sense women are more severely affected

by violations of socioeconomic rights because of their traditional relegation to the private sphere. With women largely marginalized from the public/political sphere, violations of their political and civil rights are normalized. In fact, it took 30 years after the adoption of the 'Universal' Declaration of Human Rights for the international community to focus on the discrimination faced by women when, in 1979, the UN General Assembly adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW).²⁶

Three reasons explain this slow response by the international community and human rights organizations to women's particular 'human' rights needs. First, sex discrimination is frequently regarded as too trivial to demand serious attention. Women's rights groups, particularly those engaged in legal debates and processes at the national and international levels, often argue that the larger issues of survival must be dealt with before secondary issues of sex discrimination can be addressed. This marginalization of women's experiences of sex discrimination cultivates its 'normalization' and renders it unimportant, except for women. Significantly, the subordination of women is so pervasive and so ingrained that it is often viewed as inevitable or natural, rather than as a socially, historically and politically constructed reality maintained by the gendered apparatus. Second, many view the abuse of women, however regrettable, as a cultural, private, or individual issue, rather than one demanding political action at all levels. In this sense, the traditional notions of public and private spaces are reinforced and maintained, and the abuse of women in the home is hidden

²⁶ The United States signed the Convention in 1980, but has yet to ratify it; Mexico signed it in 1980 and ratified it a year later. See Bessant and Cook 1999; Binion 1995; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Cook 1993a, 1993b; Eisler 1995; Galey 1993; Kerr 1993; Peterson 1990; Thomas and Beasley 1993; Tomaševski 1993.

from the public. Third, constructions of women as subordinate render women's rights secondary to human rights. Consequently, women's rights issues are excluded from the human rights agenda because it is assumed that their inclusion would diminish the importance of, and slow the progress on, larger issues (Bunch and Carrillo 1998).

'Rights Talk': The Language of Human Rights

Human rights discourses have traditionally been male defined and use men's experience as the measure of abuse. The language of human rights, therefore, reflects masculine dynamics since rights are defined by who speaks, the vocabulary used, and the processes through which they are voiced. The language used in international declarations has been, at best, contradictory and, at worst, exclusionary. While women have been included at some levels, they have been excluded at others. For example, Article I of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* states that, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (UNHCHR 1948). Although women are included under the umbrella of human since women can never be considered part of the brotherhood, fraternity or other euphemisms of male bonding, they are effectively excluded from the protection of human rights. If women's experiences are to be included in human rights discourses, women must therefore claim 'rights talk' and the spaces for its discussion as their own (Bessant and Cook 1999; Cook 1993a; Eisler 1995).

Notwithstanding masculine bias, traditional human rights theory asserts that there is a universal character to human rights, based on people's common human dignity (Donnelly

1989, 1993). This claim is predicated on the assumption that ‘being’ human translates into universality and that commonality translates, in theory if not in practice, into the universal acceptance of human rights. In contrast, feminist discourses on human rights remind us that women experience gendered violence simply because they are female. Since men do not experience such discrimination, women’s experiences of human rights violations have been excluded in the understanding of male universality.

Postcolonial and postmodern feminists²⁷ remind us that universality, particularly in referring to group identities, is problematic since it highlights similarities while ignoring differences based on race, class, ethnicity, and experience. Foucault (1972) reminds us that the phenomenon of social body has been written and defined by social institutions. As such, a universal consensus is an illusion constructed and enforced by those with the power to define universal values, ideals and even the consensus itself.

Women’s human rights are therefore shaped by the culture of each society and its perception of what is and is not proper for women. Accordingly, for human rights to have significance, they must be shaped by the social, historical and cultural experiences of particular groups. They must resonate with local values and, at the same time, speak to the particular abuses experienced by women. Therefore, understandings and applications of human rights — particularly their Western conceptualizations, legalistic forms, and all that

²⁷ See Mohanty 1991a, 1991b; Hill Collins 1990, 1998; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Johnson-Odim 1991; Peterson 1996a, 1996b; Sylvester 1994a, 1994b.

this entails regarding the relations of ruling²⁸ and power²⁹ — cannot assume universality. Moreover, since international human rights laws have not effectively redressed women's experiences of abuse, the concept of universality must be challenged. This alone proves that human rights are not universal since the processes for legal redress have not been equally accessible and productive for women as for men (Cook 1993a). The reasons for this failure are complex and vary from country to country. Nonetheless, since women worldwide experience subordination because they are female, the goal of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women becomes 'universal'. And, by 'becoming the subjects of rights', women can express the specificities of their experiences of gendered violence as human rights abuses.

Rights and the Public/Private Divide

A major contribution of feminist scholarship on international human rights law³⁰ is in the recharacterization of the distinctions between the public and private spheres. Traditionally, international law relies on the separation of public and private spheres, as well as distinctions between public/state and private/non-state actors, in the adjudication of treaties and standards. This has resulted in differing levels of protection from abuse and has shaped

²⁸ The term *relations of ruling* was coined by Dorothy Smith (1990) to express how social and political process and institutions and those who hold power therein order women's lives.

²⁹ Human rights, as a Western-centric discourse, is predicated on liberalism and Enlightenment and, therefore, embedded in eurocentric notions of masculinity, rationality, individualism, whiteness, and modernity.

³⁰ See Bessant and Cook 1999; Binion 1995; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Cook 1993a, 1993b; Eisler 1995; Galey 1993; Kerr 1993; Peterson 1990; Thomas and Beasley 1993; Tomaševski 1993.

definitions of violence and its perpetrators. These distinctions are critical in articulating women's human rights issues since the current emphasis on civil and political rights only demands protection in the public sphere and ignores the many violations to women's rights in private spaces. Such traditional constructions of the public sphere imagine men as the primary actors, while traditional tendencies in international human rights laws emphasize state violations. Together, the privileging of men and states ignores human rights violations perpetrated by men in the private sphere as private individuals. The gendered apparatus, which institutionalizes male power and privileges the state, coercively and authoritatively establishes a gendered order favouring men.

Embedded in liberal individualism and its concern with the protection of privacy, human rights standards have created a regime of protection around the home and intimate relations, which are assumed to be free from outside interventions. The presumption of non-interference imagines the home to be a protected space and reinforces the code of silence that perpetuates women's subordination, repression and exploitation. The obligations of states to protect the family and the right to privacy have been outlined in both the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* and *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. However, the protection of the right to privacy is subject to distinctly gendered social constructs about private life, which are reinforced by both the state and the international community. Such protection assumes that the home is a safe haven rather than a place of precarious security for many women subjected to gendered domestic violence. Paradoxically, the obligation of states to protect the bodily integrity of individuals can be at odds with its obligation to protect their privacy when domestic crimes occur in both public and private

spaces. I am not suggesting a return to a contract theory of states,³¹ but rather, by raising the contradictory responsibilities of states, I question whether states can be adequate protectors of women's human rights.

Rights and Violence Against Women

Significantly, the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, (CEDAW), 1979, was silent on issues of violence against women. It failed to recognize sex discrimination as gendered violence and as the primary reason for women's subordination, repression and exploitation. It was not until 1993, almost 50 years after the initial *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, that the UN General Assembly approved the addition of Recommendation No. 19 to CEDAW (Women's Convention), thereby establishing violence against women as an act of discrimination. It was a landmark document in three ways:

- 1) It situated violence against women squarely within the discourse on human rights.
- 2) It enlarged the concept of violence against women to reflect the real conditions of women's lives. The Declaration recognized not only physical, sexual, and psychological violence, but also threats of such harm; it addressed violence against women within the family as well as within the general community, and confronted the issues of violence perpetuated by the state.
- 3) It pointed to the gender-based roots of violence. The Declaration reflected that fact that gender-based violence is not random violence in which the victims happen to be women and girls: the risk factor is being female (Bunch and Carrillo 1998: 237).

This augmentation of CEDAW addressed feminist criticisms that the international human rights framework failed to ensure women's security from violence. Until now, however, the

³¹ Contract theory suggests an agreement between individuals and the state, thus rendering individuals problematically universal rather than particular. In so doing, women and Others are re-made invisible under the umbrella of universalism (Krause and Williams 1997).

human rights framework has neglected to recognize the multiple forms of gendered violence as real violence and, therefore, has been unable to address the endemic violence against women. By specifying women's experiences of violence, the revised Women's Convention thwarts universalisms and challenges the masculinist distinction between public and private spheres.

Although the human rights framework provides a useful tool to redress gendered violence, some feminists question whether adopting a rights discourse is a good strategy. While victories in the courtroom provide new points against which to measure women's rights, the social, cultural and economic structures subordinating, repressing and exploiting women are unlikely to quickly change (Cook 1993; Miller and Faux 1999). Furthermore, the exorbitant price of bringing a lawsuit to fruition is beyond the means of individual women and, therefore, the protection of women's rights requires groups to engage in this process. However, these groups are likely to bring only cases that are both sensational and winnable to trial. Accordingly, women's everyday experiences of human rights abuse and violence are marginalized even by those who proclaim their importance. Therefore, to redress women's human rights abuses at the level of the everyday, a recognition of women's vulnerability is critical. Women's socially constructed dependency on men, reinforced by both the globalization of economic relations and the protector/protected dichotomy, must be challenged. The gendered apparatus that casts women as subordinate must be transformed.

Women's Rights as Human Rights

A feminist transformation of human rights discourse necessarily emphasizes women's situated knowledge and their experience of gendered violence. Feminist theorists underscore the importance of women's sexual and reproductive rights as political issues since the denial of those rights is a means of maintaining control over women and their bodies and perpetuating a gendered order. In this sense, women's bodies are the territorial spaces in which women's political struggle are waged (Bunch and Carrillo 1998). While state sovereignty readily recognizes the importance of geographic territorial space, gendered violence renders women's sovereignty over their bodies illusory.

The *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* proclaims 'life, liberty and security' as fundamental human rights; however, throughout the world, women's rights to life are violated daily by the avoidable deaths due to pregnancy related causes, inadequate gynecological care, and physical violence. Globally, women's rights to liberty are constrained by a lack of choices, freedom of movement, and access to safe contraception and safe and legal abortion. And, women's right to security is inhibited by the social, political and economic structures that define them as subordinate. Moreover, women's rights to freedom from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment³² is violated daily by the

³² In addition to the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, specific conventions on racial discrimination and torture support the international human rights framework. The *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (ICERD) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1965 entered into force in 1969. The *Race Convention* signed by the US in 1966 entered into force only in 1994. Mexico also signed this treaty in 1966, but it entered into force nearly 10 years later in 1975. Additionally, the *International Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (ICAT) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1984 entered into force in

pervasiveness and naturalization of gendered violence. The physical abuse of women is a reminder of the territorial domination of women's bodies. The many forms of gender violence such as sexual slavery (forced prostitution or marriage), sexual terrorism (forced heterosexuality, rape, molestation), forced imprisonment (confinement to the home and surveillance), and torture (emotional and physical battery) are reminders of women's subordinate status in the larger agenda of human rights (Cook 1993a; Bunch and Carrillo 1998).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have developed a broad-based conceptual and theoretical framework for examining the research questions concerning how and why women experience insecurity in the US- Mexican border towns of Ambos Nogales and how the *silences* around gendered violence — patriarchal control, masculine definitions of state and citizenship, patriarchal social constructions of womanhood, masculinist theoretical, policy and programmatic conceptualizations of reproduction and population control, gendered definitions of migrant, gendered division of labour and the economy — affect women's security. In this chapter I have exposed the masculinist and state-centric traditions of discourses of violence, security, and human rights. I identified the multiple sites, wherein women's subordination, repression and exploitation are systematic and problematically naturalized. This framework provides the theoretical foundation for understanding women's situated knowledge as 'real' knowledge and their everyday experiences as sites of power and inroads for social change.

Gendered violence greatly affects women's security and their human rights not only in the US-Mexican borderlands but also worldwide. The failure of states and the international community to address gendered violence is prefaced on the nature of the state; the state-centric disposition of the international system and international law; the primacy of civil and political rights over economic, social and cultural ones; the privileging of masculinity over femininity, men over women, and the public over the private sphere; and, deference to the family as a privileged/protected social institution. The dichotomies that riddle the discourses about international relations, violence, security and human rights ignore gender as a social construct and devalue women's experiences of marginalization. It is important, therefore, to expose not only the violations of women's rights but also to publicize women's positive experiences in redressing their insecurities. Women's proactivism in challenging gendered violence, the gendered apparatus, gendered order and gendered constructs must be understood as political and well grounded in their everyday lives. In this sense, the everyday is an arena for women's political engagement. It is the space where women can define problems, issues, actions and solutions according to their particular experiences.

Women's Voices, Women's Lives

Experience is not a word we can do without, although given its usage to essentialize identity and reify the subject, it is tempting to abandon it altogether. But experience is so much a part of everyday language, so imbricated in our narratives that it seems futile to argue for its expulsion. It serves as a way of talking about what happened, of establishing difference and similarity, of claiming knowledge that is 'unassailable'. Given the ubiquity of the term, it seems to me more useful to work with it ... Experience is at once always already an interpretation and something that needs to be interpreted. What counts as experience is neither self-evident nor straightforward; it is always contested, and always therefore political.

Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience", 1999: 96.

[All we] have are stories. Some come from other people, some from us, some from our interactions with others. What matters is to understand how and where the stories are produced, which sort of stories they are, and how we can put them to honest and intelligent use in theorizing about social life.

Jody Miller and Barry Glassner, "The 'Inside' and the 'Outside': Finding Realities in Interviews", 1997: 111.

Introduction

Since the 1960s, feminist scholarship has grown more complex, and the traditional political distinctions between liberal, Marxist and radical feminisms have become increasingly blurred. The emerging modes of feminist thought are increasingly and encouragingly interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and, at times, counterdisciplinary. This feminist scholarship has been critical in facilitating the transference of terms and concepts

across previously rigid disciplinary boundaries and has exploded the theoretical, epistemological, ontological and methodological parameters of highly resistant disciplines such as political science. In particular, feminist postmodern and postcolonial scholars³³ and qualitative researchers, spurred on by accusations of bias and questions of adequacy, credibility and representation, have raised complex questions about how we know; who can know; who speaks of and for whom; and how, why and, with what consequences.

Such questioning constitutes a process of '(re)valuing' and 'uncovering' and is theoretically supported by critical, postmodern and postcolonial feminism(s). Challenging conventional epistemological perspectives, these feminisms enhance our understanding of social events, relations and phenomenon as embedded in social constructions. Through various methods, feminist theories place women at the centre of 'knowing' and the production of knowledge. Accordingly, feminisms embrace the valuing of women's diverse experiences and take their interests seriously in effecting social and political change.

The diversity of border women's experiences emerges from the complexity of their overlapping and conflicting identities as women, mothers, wives, migrants, workers, and *Mexicanas* and *Mexicanas-Americanas*. The fluidity and heterogeneity of these identities

³³ See Alasuutari 1995; Alcoff and Potter 1993; Alvarez 1995; Anzaldúa 1987; Barrett 1992; Bell 1993; Beneria and Roldan 1987; Blea 1992; Bloor 1997; Bose and Acosta-Belén 1995; Caplan 1993; Chowdhury, *et al.* 1994; Code 1995; Connell 1987; Edwards and Ribbens 1998; Dalby 1998; Deveau 1999; Fine 1998; Harding 1987; Hooks 1984, 1990; Josselson 1996; Kelly-Gadol 1987; Kirby and McKenna 1989; Lincoln and Denzin 1998; Miller 1997; Miller and Glassner 1997; Lammers 1999; MacKinnon 1987; Millman and Kanter 1987; Mohanty 1991a, 1999; Newman and Anssi 1998; Olesen 1998; Parpart 1995; Peterson and Sisson Runyan 1993; Pettman 1996c; Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996; Scott 1999; Smith 1987; Sylvester 1994a, 1994b; Szasz 1998 Vance 1992; Walker 1988, 1992, 1993, 1997; and, Zalewski and Enloe 1995.

becomes clearer through the use of qualitative methodologies that support an exploration of women's everyday experiences and situated knowledge. Women's identities are influenced by culture, and, in the borderlands, the predominant cultural influence is Mexican. This refers to ways in which Mexican social and cultural institutions influence, condition and, at times, define the possibilities of and for border women's experience. This does not suggest, however, a homogeneous Mexican culture.

To support this argument, this chapter examines: (i) the problems associated with traditional methods and ways of knowing; (ii) the challenges raised concerning the adequacy, credibility and representations of qualitative methodologies; (iii) the qualitative methodology used in this study to gain insights into the everyday lives and the struggle for security of migrant women in Ambos Nogales; (iv) the complex relationship between researcher and informant as well as a critical examination of my place and relationship to the participants in this study; (v) the specificities of Mexican culture as they relate to women; and (vi) the Catholic culture in Ambos Nogales.

Epistemological Challenges: How We Know

Throughout the history of the natural and social sciences, scientists, researchers and theorists have engaged in the pursuit of knowledge in the form of empirical truths. In an attempt to conceive of *the* truth 'out there', the social sciences, and in particular international relations, have employed a specifically Western understanding of history and philosophy (George 1994). In so doing, the social sciences have formulated a scientific method based on empirical, observable evidence, quantitative laws and experimentation, all of which fall

under the rubric of positivism. Positivism is a philosophy of knowledge that is informed by empiricist theory. Empiricism presupposes that the subject/object relationship, or more explicitly the relationship between the observer and the observed, is without bias. This assumed neutrality asserts that the subject/observer is free from any socially, politically or culturally conditioned contexts or constructs, and can, therefore, produce 'objective' knowledge (Code 1995; Harding 1987). Consequently, this narrowly focussed understanding of society has led to the totalizing, homogenizing, gendering approach to theory and methodology that dominates the social sciences. In other words, the 'in here' becomes the lens through which to examine and imagine the 'out there' (Dalby 1998).

As part of the Enlightenment project, the modernist metanarrative in the post-Enlightenment period, is based on scientific positivist foundations and aimed at rational control, and remains a discourse full of dichotomizing paradoxes. These dualisms — order/anarchy, inside/outside, inclusion/exclusion, domestic/foreign domestic/international, self/other, objective/subjective, identity/difference, men/women, masculine/feminine — continue to constrain the boundaries of, and to write, what 'is' in international relations, violence, security, and human rights discourses. Consequently, historical and cultural specificities which fall 'outside' the parameters of the West are excluded from legitimate ways of knowing the world 'out there'. In this way, the production, consumption and dissemination of knowledge remains 'true' to Western epistemological and ontological foundations. Consequently, Western/American defined 'objectivity', has become the subjective 'object' of Western scholarship.

Development discourses, for example, are embedded in ethnocentric, colonial, and postcolonial discourses which are designed to perpetuate North/South hierarchies rather than redress them. Similarly, Western discourses represent and imagine 'Third World' women as uniformly poor, powerless and vulnerable, in contrast to 'knowing', modern, educated, and sexually liberated Western women (Parpart 1995). The power hidden in such discourses of Othering require exposure. By providing new insights into women's lived experiences, and by revealing women's subjugated knowledges, the power of hegemonic discourses can be diffused. Critical, postmodern and postcolonial feminist scholarship seeks to disrupt and unsettle these representations, imaginings and givens. The legitimization of women's situated knowledge as 'real' knowledge, and of women's experiences as valid sites of scholarly investigation, is an important and strategic step in this creative process. When knowledge is conceived of as emerging from dialectical and dialogical processes in which all parties involved exert power (Schrijvers 1991), women are understood as conscious 'subjects of knowledge' and agents in their own lives.

(En)countering Criticism Through Reflexivity

The hegemonic discourses of scientific neutrality, universal truths, masculine ethnocentric knowledge, and researcher dispassion, reinforce dichotomous thinking and places boundaries around how we know, who can know, and what is worth knowing. Armed with 'truths' proven through empirical and statistical evidence, positivists wage war on qualitative research methods. However, social research can never provide the mirror reflection of society contrived by positivists since this would assume that time is stoppable, meanings are

immutable, and the social world is static. Such a view ignores the constantly changing social relations which affect, give meaning to, and help make sense of, our lives. Alternatively, qualitative research methods can provide access to the meanings and values which people attribute to their lived experiences and social, political and cultural worlds. Although interviews are subjective interactions, this does not discount the possibility that knowledge of the social world beyond those interactions can be obtained (Miller and Glassner 1997). In-depth interviews which ask open-ended questions reveal both the commonalities and differences in women's experiences. Through this interactive process, and through listening to women's stories, it becomes clear how frequently women's experiences are minimized in, and excluded from, the dominant discourses of security, violence and human rights. Moreover, they reveal how definitions within disciplines such as international relations, assume gender-neutrality, reinforce the dominant structures of male power and authority, and silence women (Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996). Nonetheless, criticisms of bias, adequacy, credibility and representation continue to plague those of us who draw on disparate sources of knowledge through alternative methods.

By examining the power of traditional methodologies, however, it becomes clear that even seemingly 'objective' scientific knowledge, while touted as gender and culturally neutral, is produced through a subjective gaze. It is also located and, therefore, embedded in, particular power relations (Lammers 1999; Harding 1987; Sylvester 1994b). As Walker (1997) contends, modern accounts of security are precisely about subjectivity, subjection, and the conditions under which subjects are constructed as subject to subjection. Nonetheless, so-called bias is only attributed to qualitative research methodologies.

I am not suggesting here that 'experience' is an incontestable 'truth', nor am I suggesting that all experiences be referenced. Rather I am suggesting that experience provides an alternative and credible site of inquiry and source of knowledge. However, experiences are relational, contextual, and must be located and historicized to understand how they are constituted. As Joan Scott contends,

It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience. Experience in this definition then becomes not the origin of our explanation, not the authoritative (because seen or felt) evidence that grounds what is known, but rather that which we seek to explain, that about which knowledge is produced (1999: 83).

In this sense, the danger of treating experience as purely abstract, or divorced from social and historical context, is minimized. Moreover, through reflexivity, and the self-conscious unpacking of such notions, critical qualitative researchers can weave crucial, contextual and experiential 'evidence' back into the research framework (Fine 1998).

Qualitative Feminist Research Methodology

Given my emphasis on women's situated knowledges and lived experiences, in-depth interviews and narrative life stories were utilized to reveal in-depth 'located' knowledges. Newman and Annsi (1998) contend that the study of narratives, together with theoretical discourses, are central to understanding all types of boundaries, particularly those of state and identity formation. Discourses of gender, violence, security, foreign policy, immigration, and reproduction, as well as notions of 'us' and 'Other', must be examined if we are to understand how discourses shape everyday experiences. Consequently, I have drawn upon a wealth of literatures from feminist, postmodern, postcolonial, cultural, historiographic, ethnographic and international relations scholarship. Beginning with this theoretical

grounding and the belief that women's situated knowledge is legitimate/real knowledge, I employed qualitative methodologies including narrative accounts from individual migrant women and in-depth interviews with activists, women's groups, academics, doctors, health care workers, and international and human rights organizations, particularly those engaged in social, economic, migration and reproductive health issues. Furthermore, newspapers, investigative reports, newsletters, journal articles, government reports, and internet web sites were utilized.

Constructing the Field

In the process of undertaking this dissertation, four important international conferences influenced my thinking as a student of international relations: the 1993 Conference on Human Rights in Vienna; the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo; the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and the 1996 International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Women's Citizenship in Brighton. These conferences witnessed a new level of inclusion of feminists, activists and researchers in consultation with international institutions, national and local governments. The connection between these conferences on human rights, women, population and development, and violence, as I saw it, was women's struggle for security. Accordingly, I began the process of unravelling the complex interrelationships between theory and practice, subject and object, security and insecurity, and migration and population control. My previous research regarding Mexican migration, population, development and the environment (Bromley 1997, 1996, 1994); and gender and Mexican *maquiladoras* (Bromley 1993),

provided me with a foundation and desire for exploring these issues in greater detail. From this groundwork, I recognized the need to gather more experiential evidence about women's lives in the US-Mexican borderlands.

Rife with illicit trade and (im)migration, the US-Mexican borderlands are increasingly targeted by the US Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) and Border Patrol. With the surge in illicit activity, the US and Mexico have adopted increasingly militaristic and violent measures to control this state-defined space. Nonetheless, the Sonoran-Arizona segment of the US-Mexican border is the least studied sector. Though Ambos Nogales reflects wider border experiences, it demands specific analysis to understand the specificities of this geopolitical space. To contribute to this analysis and begin filling some of the gaps in the literature, particularly about the everyday experiences of migrant women in Ambos Nogales, I undertook the present study.

The field, however, is not a fixed space in which research can be objectively conducted. Rather, it is a gendered social construct wherein we must navigate complex meanings and understandings. In this sense the field is inherently political. It is shaped by multiple and complex social, ethical, cultural and political identities and positions and, therefore, is embedded in tensions and contradictions which demanded consideration in my experience of the field.³⁴

My encounter with the field spanned six months, from April to September 1997. My field research in 1997 was divided into two parts. During the first stage, I spent three months in Mexico City moving between the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the

³⁴ See Lincoln and Denzin's (1998) discussion of qualitative field research.

Reproductive Health and Society Program at *El Colegio de México*. During this period, I reviewed reproductive health and migration policy issues, and utilized institutional and academic research facilities, to gather theoretical and case study materials which explored the border environment. I developed a network of contacts, and met with academics, women's groups, and national and international organizations concerned with issues of gendered violence, human security and human rights.

During the last three months of field research, I was located in the US-Mexican border region where I moved, albeit not 'freely', but consciously, and at times, uncomfortably, between the United States and Mexico, English and Spanish, North and South, 'developed' and 'developing', theory and lived experiences, and whiteness and 'Otherness'. This movement between, to which I am referring is the complex and tangled relationship between Self and Other, which exists between researcher and participant. Here, and there, I struggle with what Bell Hooks (1990) refers to as the 'politics of location' and what Michelle Fine (1998) refers to as the 'hyphens'.

For Hooks, marginality is the site of [Black] women's politics. Located at the margins, women, according to Hooks, should embrace this space as a place of innovative and revolutionary struggle for social change.

[Marginality] much more than a site of deprivation ... is also the site of radical possibility, a space of resistance ... a central location for the production of a counter-hegemonic discourse that is not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives ... [It is a site] one even clings to because it nourishes one's capacity to resist. It offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds. This is not a mythic notion of marginality. It comes from lived experience (Hooks 1990: 149-150).

As a white, middle-class, educated woman, however, I am located 'in between' what Hooks terms the margin and centre. While I experience gendered violence, I am educated and privileged, and neither poor nor 'of colour'. This places me somewhere in between the Othered margin and the masculine centre. I must, therefore, wrestle with my inclusions as well as exclusions since my inclusion is as problematic as my exclusion. While I am included as 'white', middle-class and educated in some contexts, I am excluded as woman in others. Conversely, as woman I am included with 'Other' women, but excluded from 'Othered' women by my 'whiteness', middle class status and education. Consequently, as Fine suggests, I must work the 'hyphen', the 'in between' of Self-Other. This requires the conscious probing of my place in relation to the contexts and participants I seek to 'know'. Subjectivity exists in all research, and consequently, I cannot be an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests which require scrutiny. In other words, I must examine my politics of location. In so doing, I recognize the complex relationships in which my research is embedded, including those which are epistemological, ontological, political and disciplinary. As Fine (1998: 146) suggests, I am "working the hyphen, reconciling the slippery constructions of Self and Other and the contexts of oppression in which both are invented."

In so doing, I have chosen not to simply write *about* the 'Other'. Rather, I choose to participate in the counter-hegemony which disrupts the apparatus which exploits and Others. I am using my privilege to attempt to create a space for the voices of Othered women to be heard. Consequently, this dissertation is an opportunity for me to engage in social struggles *with* those who have been exploited and Othered. It reaffirms my position that the everyday

‘is’ an arena for women’s political engagement, as well as a space where women can define problems, issues, actions and solutions according to their particular experiences. However, while ‘experience’ provides a crude understanding of women’s stories of insecurity, I am not suggesting that only those ‘in the experience’ can speak of its injustice. Such an argument would presume that only women can/should ‘do’ gender, only people of colour can/should ‘do’ race, only women victims of violence can/should tell the stories of violence, and only migrant women can/should narrate migration. These contentions are clearly essentialist.

I recognize that the individual interview processes, like all other ‘tellings’, provide a fractured narrative of complex lives and overlapping, conflicting identities. In this sense, the stories told are only partial insights into women’s everyday existence in the borderlands. Further, the interview questions suggest that the coding, categorizing and typologizing of women’s stories add to the splintering process, rather than provide a ‘wholeness’. Moreover, the writing of this project into compartmentalized chapters which satisfy disciplinary and other academic criteria can further disrupt the narratives of women’s lived experience of insecurity, and struggle for empowerment, which are at the root of my enquiry. In other word, numerous levels of representation stand between the moment of ‘primary experience’ and the reading of this dissertation.

In this dissertation I try to honestly describe delimited segments of everyday lived experiences of women in the borderlands and by so doing, perhaps contribute to the creation a space for understanding the everyday lived experiences of these women. However, I recognize that the stories told here might have taken different forms if someone else were to formulate the questions, listen to the answers, and interpret the responses. Accordingly,

the narratives provided were, in part, shaped by my position as a Canadian, white, educated, middle class, woman, outsider.

Recognizing these constraints, in my attempt to move between the 'hyphens', and conscious of my politics of location, I engaged the assistance of Teresa Leal, who facilitated my 'inclusion' and integration in the border communities. As a Mexican, migrant, woman, mother, anthropologist and social activist, she is intimately familiar with the struggles of women in the borderlands. She is the director of *Proyecto Comadres*, a grass-roots women's organization concerned with cultural³⁵ and environmental issues. Her identities as activist, Mexican, woman, mother, and community member, facilitated her role in this research as intermediary and mediator³⁶ in the interview processes. Her assistance with issues of cultural sensitivity was helpful since the interviews dealt with sensitive and personal issues such as sexuality, reproductive practices, and women's everyday struggles for survival as well as the illegal practices of abortion, gendered violence and the possibly illegal practices of migration.

³⁵ While in Ambos Nogales, I attended *Colectividad Fronteriza II: Raíces de Resistencia*, August 1-3, 1997, which was a celebration of cultural diversity in the US-Mexican border region. *Proyecto Comadres* actively participated in the organization of the festival which brought together indigenous, cultural, environmental, activist, youth and women's groups from throughout the borderlands. Conferences and workshops were organized around culture and the environment and combined with musical and dance performances which strove to blur the border(s) between Mexican, American and indigenous peoples in the borderlands.

³⁶ Ms. Leal's support and insights were invaluable in fostering linkages among and between border women, women's groups, migrant communities, and health care professionals. Furthermore, by sharing her home during my stay in Nogales, I gained insight into women's everyday lives and agency in the borderlands. Though well-known among the experts and activists in Ambos Nogales, Ms. Leal was unknown to the participants in this study. Her participation in the study, therefore, was unlikely to have significantly affected the responses of the women participants.

While in the borderlands, I explored how and why migrant women experience insecurity in Ambos Nogales. Accordingly, I undertook an exploration of the impact on the social, economic, health, reproductive practices and choices of Mexican women who migrate either within Mexico, or from Mexico to the United States. As insecurity looms, their quest for a better life and economic security, for the most part, remains 'imagined'. While there are many reasons for migration, only a few reasons are viewed as legitimate. Narrowly defined economic constructions of migrants, worker and refugee, ignore and exclude the many other reasons for migration. Nevertheless, these other reasons are crucial in making the connections between the past, present and future. My research attempts to reveal and rethink some of these other reasons. Consequently, I move beyond the dominant paradigms of violence, security and human rights, and their application to population and migration control.

In the field, I had expected to 'discover' the ways in which migration and population policies impacted on women's lives and rendered them insecure. I began with a set of questions with which to initiate an in-depth interview process. To clarify and fine-tune my questions, I conducted several pilot interviews. Once this process was completed, I reevaluated my questions and changed some of the language to address any weaknesses, and to incorporate or expand on specific issues raised by the subjects of the pilot project. Language is a critical aspect of all research.³⁷ It is crucial, however, when conducting qualitative research in 'Other' spaces, cultures and languages. Language is embedded in cultural values and meanings which can differ depending on the social context of the interaction, who is

³⁷ See Barrett 1992.

speaking, how one speaks, why one is speaking, and to whom one is speaking. Since Spanish is not my first language, I acknowledged the sometimes not so semantic linguistic, cultural and social distinctions which were revealed, and made the necessary adjustments which were suggested to me by native speakers of Spanish, including Ms. Leal.

For the primary interviews, I selected a non-random, discretionary sample of 30 women participants between 19 and 49 years of age from *Colonia Solidaridad* in Nogales, Sonora, and Nogales, Arizona. Only two criteria were applied in determining a woman's 'inclusion' in the study. Since I was interested in examining the relationship between migration and population control, the participants were required to have migrated during their reproductive years. Migration was defined for this study as the movement from one city/town/region to another, both within and across national borders, regardless of the reasons. This criteria allowed an exploration of the impact of migration on a woman's sexuality and reproductive health/ practices. The second criteria required that the participant be of low-income. Since most the population of Ambos Nogales is indigent, this standard was easily achieved. Furthermore, efforts were made to ensure that the ages of the participants spanned all stages (early, middle and late) of a woman's reproductive cycle. For US participants, I did not ask questions about their legal status. Since determining legal status of the participants was not central to this study, questions about legal status might have caused some women not participate.³⁸ A woman's current legal status, moreover, does not necessarily reflect how they crossed the border initially. By not asking about their status, I provided a safer environment

³⁸ Though such questions were not asked, it is possible that some women who were illegal residents, fearing for their security, may not have participated.

for these women to openly discuss their experiences. In this environment, five women chose to reveal their undocumented status, however, this may not reflect the actual number of women in this study who were living undocumented in the US.

An initial survey was conducted to find willing participants which fit the criteria by selecting households and approaching the occupants. During this initial contact, the women were informed that one hour of their time was needed to conduct the interview. If they were willing, and they fit the criteria, a mutually convenient time to conduct the interview was arranged. The interviews were then conducted at the specified time in the houses, and the outdoor spaces which surrounded the women's homes. This was an informal process and some women held, nurse and care for infants while we talked. Other women explained that their children were in school, at a neighbour's, or with a family member, so that they could talk without distraction.

The survey process was a rather long but interesting one.³⁹ The survey questions were formulated to discover the links between migration and reproductive health. The questionnaire was divided into sections which were likely to facilitate this process, including: household demographics, economic conditions, family history, family migration history, personal migration history, production and work relations, health and economic conditions, children, reproduction, family violence, and sexuality.

³⁹ The interview was based on a research schedule comprising a total of 146 questions, and consequently, the interview process was seldom conducted in one sitting. Rapport, trust and confidence were developed through two or three interviews, which typically lasted an hour. The personal nature of the research questions, particularly those addressing sexuality and gendered violence, necessitated the development of a safe, secure and caring space in which women felt free to tell *their* stories.

Of the 30 women participants included, half lived in Mexico, the rest in the United States. This methodological division reinforces the artificial construction of two separate groups of migrant women — those who crossed the line and those who did not. This geopolitical demarcation, however, is less decisive than might be imagined. Formal and informal community, family, cultural and religious linkages, as well as ongoing transborder movements (legal and otherwise), continue to blur the separation of Ambos Nogales.

This study explores the experiences of those women I interviewed and, therefore, may not represent other women's social, migration and reproductive experiences. The importance of the experiences of this small group of women should not be underestimated since these women's experiences, at many levels, highlight experiences shared by many 'other(ed)' women. In fact, the information gathered through the interview process supports findings elsewhere, while providing new understandings of women's (in)security at the individual level. The experiences of these 30 women, as they struggle in their personal choices about life, culture, family, marriage, reproduction, sexuality and migration, are important to understanding of the specificities of women's insecurity in the border. The dissertation is not meant to be a comprehensive analysis of all women living in the US-Mexican border region. Rather, it is a study of some women in Ambos Nogales, a microcosm of a diverse and constantly changing and evolving border region.

An open-ended research schedule was used to stimulate discussion rather than to control/define the voice of women participants (Appendices: I and II). With the permission of the participants, and in keeping with the practices of informed consent, interviews were recorded and later translated into English. Participation in the interview process was fully

voluntary, with informed consent provided both verbally and in writing (See, Appendices III and IV). An oral summary of the investigative intentions of the research was offered to ensure that the participants were fully aware of the implications of the interview process and of my status as a researcher. They were assured that I had no formal or informal affiliation with the US government, US Immigration and Naturalization Services or the Border Patrol. Orality ensured that the women participants had a clear understanding of their role in the research process and that illiteracy did not compromise 'informed' consent. Participants were apprised of their prerogative to answer or not answer questions as they saw fit. Accordingly, all participants had the right to choose not to answer any or all questions in part, or in total, without fear of reprisal. A safe environment for participation, free from risk and/or discomfort, was ensured.

While I continually indicated that all interviews would, following accepted social science procedures, ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants if requested, virtually all the participants were opposed to anonymity. They wanted to know that what they said would matter and be heard. Consequently, they actively engaged in what was, at times, described as a catharsis, despite the personal pain that it caused. They believe, as do I, that their stories can help others and provide understanding and meaning for their lives. Many of the women participants remarked that the telling of their stories broke with many of the traditions that had silenced them. Although their stories are neither unique nor necessarily new since women in the border have long suffered insecurity and gendered violence, speaking about their lives seemed to be an empowering experience. In some sense the telling of their stories to an 'outsider' was easier than speaking to family and community members.

Jody Miller and Barry Glassner (1997), suggest that people organize and understand their lives through the stories they create to explain and justify their life experiences. In this sense, participation in a culture includes participation in the narratives of that culture, its constructed values and associated meanings. These 'cultural' narratives are embedded in social, political and power structures which order and stereotype experiences. In contrast, 'collective stories' challenge and resist the inscribed power relations and stereotypes of cultural narratives by telling alternative stories which give voice to those who have been silenced. Importantly, interactive in-depth interviews provide the space for self-reflexivity among participants, which facilitates the expression of feelings, beliefs, and private doubts that contradict or conflict with 'what everyone thinks'. The anxieties, uncertainties and ambivalence that inform women's conformity/non-conformity on such complex issues as the role of the Church, rights talk, security, heterosexuality, abortion, and gendered violence were insightful and will be expanded upon throughout this dissertation.

Although I thought that I had prepared for my inquiry into migrant women's insecurity, during the several in-depth interviews with each of the women participants, I was nonetheless overwhelmed by the prevalence and extent of gendered violence and human rights abuses in the everyday lives of these border women. However, it was the women's proactive engagement in redressing this violence, insecurity and human rights abuse which moved my research forward. The significant amount of time contributed by the women participants must not be underestimated. Their contributions must be understood as having informative value for this and other studies, but also as a continuation of the processes of resistance practised by women throughout the world who assert their agency through the

telling of their life stories. While working with the participants it became increasingly evident that their struggle for empowerment and agency were central in shaping their decisions to participate in this study.

Consequently, this dissertation is not only mine since it also belongs to the 30 women who participated in this study, and to the many women who choose to speak about their struggles, their dreams, and their lives. In sharing their situated knowledges and experiences, these brave women are agents of social change, inspiring hope for a more equitable, safe and secure future. If all we have are stories, as Miller and Glassner (1998) contend, then the stories of this dissertation are accounts of transition; they are narratives of 'being' woman and of 'becoming' self through the everyday lived experiences of gendered violence, migration and reproduction, which together comprise 'our' story.

Methodologically, I employ a discursive analysis of the interface between individual experiences and economic, social, political and cultural structures, as well as relations of gender, race and class. In so doing, I contend that an examination of structures and institutions alone cannot fully explain women's experiences of insecurity in the US-Mexican border region. I follow Cynthia Enloe's (1989, 1993, 2000) method, which examines women's lives in various social and political spaces to expose conventional international relations and practices as complicit in gendered violence and women's insecurity. Likewise, I explore the everyday lives of border women, in their multiple identities of worker, migrant, mother, wife and agents, to expose the social and political practices which subject women to violence and render them insecurity. Furthermore, by drawing on Connell's (1987) framework of power, labour and cathexis, I can examine the structures which determine a

gendered order in Mexican/Mexican American societies. I examine, for example, institutions of masculinity such as the state and the Catholic Church, the traditional gendered separation of domestic life from the economic and political world, and structures which institutionalize heterosexuality. To this end, I employed qualitative research methods and conducted in-depth interviews to move beyond what is 'known' and provide a space for women to speak of their experiences.

Theory, Culture, Religion and Gender: In Practice, Inseparable

If situatedness is central to understanding migrant women's experiences of gendered violence, insecurity and human rights abuses in Ambos Nogales, it is necessary to explore how Mexican/Mexican-American⁴⁰ history and culture shape women's lives. As stated previously, I am not suggesting that there is 'a' Mexican culture, but rather that cultural institutions influence, condition, and at times, define, the possibilities of/for women's experience. Again, I am careful not to assume that the experiences of the participants in this study — as women, migrants, workers, border residents, *Mexicanas/Mexicana-Americanas*, mothers and wives — are universal or that the women participants form an undifferentiated

⁴⁰ For simplicity I refer to Mexican/Mexican-American culture(s) as Mexican culture from this point forward. Although I also recognize the wealth of diversity within all cultures, and among cultural practices, and while I acknowledge this problematic conflation of 'Mexican Culture', the term is used predominantly to reflect the Mexican origin of the participants in this study, regardless of their geographic location north or south of the border. I also recognize the existence of a diversity of 'border cultures', which will be explored in other chapters, and acknowledge that this cultural heterogeneity is the result of a complex interweaving of Mexican, Spanish, Indigenous and American cultures and practices.

category. On the contrary, they provide a diversity of experiences upon which to build an understanding of the specificities of women's everyday lives in the border.

The concepts of households and family were important elements for understanding the everyday lives of the women participants. Importantly, such concepts are social constructs which vary across time and space, and according to who is defining the category. Often a household is defined in economic terms, rather than by the social relationships which bond families and fictive families together. Commonly, for example, government statistics identify a household as a single family unit of four people, consisting of two adults, and two children (DOC 1999). Heterosexuality is implicit in the understanding of 'two adults', as one male and one female. Since women are traditionally paid less than men, however, a household consisting of two women would likely have a lower standard of living in statistical representations. Likewise a household of two men would have a higher standard of living. Furthermore, single parent households, extended families with several adults, and adolescents, living within, and contributing to, one household do not fit into neatly constructed governmental definitions. The latter practice, is common amongst new immigrants. Are these households absent from government statistics? And, if not, how do the multiple earners' incomes fit into the category of 'household'? Are they problematically lumped together, thereby skewing average household income statistics? Perhaps even more importantly, the root of the term household, *house*, is virtually absent from Census statistical representations. An analysis of the house in which a household resides, however, reveals the household's standard of living. The problem of 'household' as a category of analysis proves

overwhelming, as is the methodology for calculating income and standard of living based on its loose definitional application.

Following Hondagneu-Sotelo's (1994a) exploration of Mexican migration experiences, I also advocate the use of the term 'family' rather than 'household'. In practice, however, these terms are often used interchangeably. Hondagneu-Sotelo suggests that the concept of 'family' acknowledges the ideological and cultural meanings embedded in family relations. It allows for an exploration of the often underestimated impact of kinship structures in regulating social life across borders and without boundaries. The most important social relations identified by participants in this study are those of family — mother, wife, daughter, sibling and extended kin relations. Together with patriarchal cultural constructs, women's location within the family constructs and reconstructs gendered relations as well as forms of resistance. In this sense, family relations infiltrate all aspects of peoples' lives, and influence incidents of gendered violence, insecurity and human rights abuses.

Another important aspect of understanding the everyday lives of women in the borderlands is the culture of a specific form masculinity.⁴¹ This social construct, commonly referred to as *machismo*, imagines men as strong, virile, and sexually experienced. *Machismo* is

⁴¹ Michael Hardin (2002) provides an interesting analysis of the evolution of *machismo* in Latin America. His work traces the origins of hypermasculinity, stereotypically associated with Latin males to the Spanish Conquest. Hardin contends that the adoption of the Spanish male behavioural archetype was the product of forced sublimation of indigenous male sexuality. He argues that while homosexuality is considered a recent construction, it was present in various forms in pre-conquest indigenous society. The imposition of hypermasculinity on indigenous men, was grounded in Spanish Catholicism and demanded visible demonstrations of heterosexuality to escape punishment. Such demonstrations of *machismo* demanded that men display their physical power, social domination, and scorn all feminine, or supposedly feminine traits. An essential element of this display was the domination of other men, the pursuit of women, and the demonstration of sexual prowess.

woven into social, cultural, historical and political relations and practices which attempt to exclude, repress and exploit women (Franco 1996, 1989; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994a, 1997; Melhuus 1996; Prieur 1996). This image of hypermasculinity, however, is a stereotype which does not represent men as a whole, or even all aspects of men as individuals. Nonetheless, the structures of patriarchy and *machismo*, together create a fluid and shifting set of social relations in which men wield power and control over women, to varying degrees and from various locations, while women simultaneously collaborate with and resist their subordination. Unequal gender relations are constructed and exercised in various social spaces including the labour market, state institutions (ministries, education and health care systems), social institutions (the Church), and the family.

Equally important to Mexican culture, is the influence of *marianismo*. Like its binary masculine opposite, *machismo*, *marianismo* is a social construct. It imagines women as mother, passive, dependent, weak, virginal, sexually inexperienced and importantly, sexually loyal (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994a; Melhuus 1996; Szasz and Figueroa 1997; Szasz 1996). Furthermore, *marianismo* is interwoven with Catholic religious representations, in particular the devotion of the Blessed Virgin Mary who is celebrated in Mexican culture as Our Lady of Guadalupe.⁴² Together with Church doctrine, Mexican culture has idealized woman in representations of the Virgin of Guadalupe. This has created a paradox wherein Mexican women, like the Blessed Virgin, are imagined as both virgin and mother. Consequently,

⁴² In the Mexican shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Virgin Mary is depicted on the poncho of Juan Diego, a humble Indian peasant who claimed to have seen Blessed Virgin a few miles from Mexico City on December 12, 1531. The painting portrays the Virgin as a dark complected *mestiza*, reflecting her indigenous roots, rather than the European representation of the light skinned Madonna (Sweeney 1997).

every woman shares the exalted and revered status of Mary as *Madre* and accepts her vocation of service, devotion and sacrifice.

Mexican cultural history plays a equally significant, although decidedly different, role in articulating gender relations and representations of womanhood. The folkloric story of *La Malinche* tells of the betrayal of indigenous people by the indigenous woman who was given to Hernan Cortés as a concubine. *La Malinche*, both indigenous and woman, represents the treachery inherent in woman as ultimately responsible for the undoing of men (Franco 1989; Hardin 2002; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994a; Melhuus 1996). Melhuus (1996) contends that *La Malinche*'s active role is constructed in opposition to the Virgin's passive state. In representations of nation, noted Mexican author Octavio Paz frequently juxtaposed the images of virgin and whore, to depict the violence and forced penetration of Latin American by the Spanish *conquistadoras*.

During the NAFTA negotiations, the image of *La Malinche* became a prominent metaphor for tradition and backwardness. It was an attempt to reverse the traditional Mexican gaze, which imagines the United States as enemy, to reflect inwardly and resolve internal weaknesses. This reflection defined Mexico's failings as indigenous and inherent to Mexican society. Mexico's feminine, inferior and indigenous identity demands, therefore, external/international resolutions to internal/domestic 'deficiencies', through the domination of big business and the tutelage of White entrepreneurial men (Marchand 1996).

The cultural representations of *machismo* and *marianismo*, however, do not constitute actual patterns of behaviour. As Hondagneu-Sotelo contends, however, "distinctions between Mexican cultural legacies and contemporary lived realities are easily ignored, as Mexico is

popularly viewed as the epitome of patriarchal domination” (1994a: 10). Similarly, Melhuus (1996) contends that representations of women are grounded in different world views and a multiplicity of gendered discourses. She argues, therefore, that gendered constructions are political, and that these constructs have come to be seen as part of the cultural and social structures of Mexican society.

The power of the Catholic Church, which shapes beliefs about, values of, and meaning for, the social world, is of central cultural importance in the privileging of men in Mexican culture. It is my intention to explore some of the policies and practices of the Church in order reveal the underlying, and at times coercive, power relations therein. All religions have both liberating and repressive tendencies, and Catholicism is no exception. The Catholic Church is important in defining mechanisms of control over women’s domestic and reproductive lives. Church doctrine is integral to the gendered apparatus which governs cultural relations and the prevalence of gendered violence in the borderlands.

Religion on the Line

While secularization has an established history in the West as part of the processes of democratization and modernization, Mexico formalized this practice in the Constitution of 1917 by explicitly refusing to recognize the legal personality of the Church. The state had two objectives: first, to limit the economic, political and cultural power of the Catholic authorities; and second, to establish the separation of church and state. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church remains a formidable social force in Mexico today. Historically, it has been

the most important social actor in Mexico.⁴³ During the 1970s and 1980s, however, priests and bishops became increasingly active in speaking out against the Mexican and other Latin American governments. As part of their critique of the impoverishment of the majority through political corruption and austere economic policies, Christian Based Community leaders advocated popular protest to address these issues. Increased social protest signalled that the liberation theology movement had taken hold throughout Latin America. The movement initiated a radical shift in Catholic and Christian beliefs, and initially created a space for the transformation of women's traditional roles and unequal gender relations. This struggle, however, has been a slow process, rife with contradictions and conflicts across all social spaces.

Liberation theology imagined an alternative power structure which empowered the laity with an authority previously reserved for the ordained. In so doing, the power pyramid which privileges the Vatican as the apex of power was inverted. Liberation theology contradicted traditional teachings that 'people would be rewarded in heaven for the sacrifices which they

⁴³ According to the 1970 Mexican census, 96.9% of the population self-identified as Catholic. By 1990, that number dropped to 89.7% of the country's 71 million people. With a population of 91,158,290 in 1995, it is safe to assume that upwards of 75% of Mexicans continue to identify themselves as Catholic (Puente Lutteroth 1996). However, David Stoll (1990) points out that Protestants now make up more than 10% of the population, with most converts joining Pentecostal churches. Some researchers suggest that evangelicalism provides women with a sense of moral autonomy and supports women's increasing independence in the domestic sphere by redefining and reshaping gender expectations and roles. Arguably, the boundaries of male public and female private life are redrawn through these processes. However, Steigena and Smilde (1997) contend that religious affiliation is not a good predictor of attitudes toward gender equality in Latin America. They suggest that socio-economic indicators including education, occupation, age, sex, urban/rural status, parenthood, and the reading of newspapers influence peoples attitudes towards gender relations. These arguments, while important, will only be addressed peripherally in this dissertation.

made on earth'. In contrast, it advocated for liberation from the struggles of poverty and inequality on earth. It urged people to be 'subjects' of their own lives and to transform the adverse social conditions that they encountered. Liberation theologians raised strong criticisms of government policies that sacrificed the majority for the gain of the minority (Alvarez 1997; Sweeney 1997). This social movement coincided with concerted efforts by the Vatican to exercise its influence in the rewriting of state constitutions. In its attempt to secure Catholicism's constitutional place as *the* state religion, the Vatican exercised its considerable power in the rewriting of the Mexican Constitution (Kissling 1995).

Within this environment and in desperate need to foster political alliances and mend political weaknesses, President Salinas pushed for a quick amendment to the Constitution in 1992. This rewriting of the Constitution followed the papal visit of Pope John Paul II in May 1991. Salinas argued that recognition of the Catholic Church as a legitimate actor, with political power and influence, was a necessary part of Mexico's democratization process (Puente Lutteroth 1996). While this amendment acknowledged a plurality of political parties, given the democratic model's prescription of political plurality, the Church's reestablishment as a key political actor is problematic. Arguably, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* — Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), sought a political alliance to bolster its weakening political position under the emerging competition created by political pluralism. It is also likely that the PRI aimed to subvert the strong historical links between the opposition party, the *Partido Acción Nacional* — National Action Party (PAN), and the Catholic Church. Given the role of Catholicism as a *de facto* element of Mexican culture, with significant influence over the lives of Mexican people, reestablishing the Church was a strategic

political act. It can be argued, however, that rather than moving Mexico forward in its quest for democracy, recognition of the Church was a serious regression. Leftist government critics and social activists argued that this was a means of formally controlling and subordinating the rise of Christian Based Communities and Liberation Theology. Advocates of liberation theology, as well as critics of the government, contended that liberalizing the political system was an effort to 'rein-in' and control priests and bishops who spoke against traditional Catholic teachings.⁴⁴ Collaboration, and perhaps collusion, between the PRI and the Vatican on these efforts seems likely since traditional Church teachings form a strong foundation for the advancement of capitalism by engendering a docile, obedient and hardworking labour force (Puente Lutteroth 1996).

Women and Catholicism

In Mexican culture, Catholicism is an important influence in all aspects of women's lives.⁴⁵ This influence is politically demonstrated by the Vatican's maintenance of strong

⁴⁴ Nowhere in Mexico was the attempt to control priests and bishops less effective than in Chiapas. One of the most impoverished states, together with Guerrero and Oaxaca, the soil is not arable, the land is heavily forested, and it is predominantly inhabited by indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, in Chiapas priests and bishops are at the centre of the revolutionary struggle, denouncing the injustices and human rights violations experienced by indigenous peoples. While the 1992 Constitutional amendment was an outward attempt to convince the international community that Mexican democracy was underway, the underlying attempt to control anti-government protest and activities by the Salinas government has failed in Chiapas. In contrast, the Mexican government has been more successful in silencing some priests and preventing their rise to positions of power within the Church hierarchy, in Mexico City where the seat of national power and 25% of Mexicans reside (Puente Lutteroth 1996; Alvarez 1997).

⁴⁵ The role of the Church in defining women's sexual and reproductive capacities is considered in detail in Chapter 8.

bilateral, formal and diplomatic relations with Mexico. As a major provider of humanitarian, educational, and health services worldwide, the Vatican wields tremendous influence over recipient states' public policies, particularly those addressing reproduction, contraception and abortion. Given this power, and its international status as United Nations 'observer', the Church cannot simply be regarded as a non-political actor. Rather it is a powerful political institution which articulates a political agenda which constructs women as inferior and imagines men as in-charge. Furthermore, the Church's rigid hierarchical structure suppresses the questioning of its, and men's, authority. The Church's promotion of the unquestioning acceptance of social and cultural practices, reinforces a culture of *machismo* and patriarchy. This cultural bonding influences all aspects of social, political, cultural, work and family life. The social construction of a male dominated world in which women are presumed passive, subordinate and obedient, is not a 'Latino invention'. Such imaginings mirror the near universal pattern of unequal gender relations (Sweeney 1997).

Notwithstanding these global tendencies, in Mexico, unequal gender relations within families are formalized by Catholic doctrine.⁴⁶ For example, the ordinances of marriage, seemingly decreed by divine law, articulate women's role as 'to love, honour and obey' ... 'in sickness and in health'; and, declared that a couple are 'man and wife', rather than husband and wife or man and woman. Each of these proclamations reinforce men's dominance and autonomy, while relegating women to a subordinate position. The seemingly divine dictates of obedience, and the indissolubility of marriage, are especially problematic

⁴⁶ Doctrinal orthodoxy reinforces the claims of truth established by Catholic pedagogy.

in cases of domestic abuse and violence.⁴⁷ This problematic is exemplified in the Pope's beatification⁴⁸ of an Italian woman several weeks before the 1994 Cairo Conference. This woman endured an abusive marriage, including repeated incidences of physical abuse and abandonment by her husband. Following her death in 1825, from what were stated as natural causes, the woman's husband entered the priesthood. The controversy arises not from the woman's beatification *per se*, but from the reason for her honouring. It was not because she was a victim of abuse, rather it was because she stayed in her abusive marriage and thus preserved the sanctity of the 'family' unit (Kissling 1995).

The sacrament of marriage establishes and privileges the family as a pillar of society. In so doing, it embraces heterosexuality as the norm. In direct contrast, it establishes homosexuality as an abomination against God (Ammons 1999; Elshtain 1993). Most importantly, it validates the family as a male-headed social institution. Nonetheless, two parent households are not the reality for many women. In the border, women raise children alone for various reasons including self-migration, the migration of their spouse, marital break-down and gendered violence. Furthermore, sexuality can be linked to the issues of population control and women's reproductive freedoms. Even the most liberal factions of the Church tend to uphold abstinence and the rhythm methods as the only legitimate forms of birth control. In Mexico, however, Catholic bishops have been decidedly silent about the government's implementation of population control campaigns. In practice, the Church has

⁴⁷For an excellent examination of the collusion between the state and the Church in the condoning of domestic violence, see Ammons (1999).

⁴⁸In the Catholic Church, beatification by the Pope is a declaration of a deceased person as blessed and worthy of public honour. It is usually the last step before canonization.

erected a border around women's sexuality. Sex, therefore, is imagined exclusively for the purposes of procreation (de Barbieri 1993; Hunt 1996; Szasz 1996). In this sense, the Church dismisses women's sexuality, subjectivity, agency and women's rights to reproductive choices. The Church's authority and immutable position, which precludes women's autonomy over the conditions of conception and motherhood, is problematic. Sexual relations are often not by choice, but are rather engaged in as part of the exchange between unequal actors in the protector/protected regime of marriage and the masculine world which imagines women as objects of male sexuality. In this environment, pregnancy is often a detrimental determinant in the construction of women's subordinate social, economic and political status.

As a male-dominated institution, the Catholic Church's patriarchal hierarchy mirrors the established gendered social, cultural and political power structures which order Mexican society. As such, the Church legitimates and reinforces women's marginalization, while simultaneously subverting protest through the promotion of unquestioning obedience. Since it is male priests and bishops who define the direction of the Church, women are excluded from this important process. Further, priests and bishops are the only interpreters of the word of God, which leads to a patently male perspective of the Wor(l)d. When women are formally included in Catholic institutions as nuns, they continue to occupy subordinate positions and are often relegated to cloistered lifestyles.⁴⁹ In practice, women's roles are restricted to either spiritual or biological mothering. In this sense, while most women

⁴⁹ Although women played significant roles in the Christian Based Communities (CEBs) championed under Liberation Theology, CEBs were not wide-spread in Mexico, nor were they sanctioned by the Church hierarchy (Alvarez 1997).

perform the function of mother biologically, nuns are restricted to fulfilling this role spiritually. As such, the Church reinforces patriarchal structures and stereotypical gender roles and relations, which reduce women's roles to those of service and self-sacrifice. Furthermore, despite increasing shortages of priests throughout Latin America, the Church continues to exclude women from most forms of ministry. Without access to real power or decision-making within the Church hierarchy, nuns are relegated to canonical obedience to the Vatican and the masculine authority embodied in the male priesthood. Even without voice, women continue to be the main support of local parishes and the principal agents in the protection of religious practices. Ironically, these women participate in the dissemination of principles that reinforce their subordinate status by indoctrinating the young, through the teaching of catechism, into the unequal and stereotypical gendered expectations of the status quo. Interestingly, as protectors and disseminators of religious beliefs, Mexican migrant women have been highly successful in transplanting a Catholic legacy north of the border (Sweeney 1997).

The Culture of Catholicism: A View from the Border

The Catholic Church is important in the cultural socialization of Mexicans/Mexican-Americans even though the majority do not formally practice their religion by attending Mass on a regular basis. All but one of the 30 women participants claimed Catholicism as her religion. This prevalence correlates with the statistical findings cited above regarding the predominance of Catholicism among Mexicans and those of 'Mexican origin'. Six of the women participants declared themselves to be Evangelical Catholics, nine women claimed

to be formally practising Catholics, while the remaining 14 women stated that they were Catholics, but practised only informally. In other words, the claiming of Catholicism in the border takes diverse forms, and the ways in which women define their beliefs and practice Catholicism vary. The women's religious beliefs and practices, however, were not obviously influenced by their location north or south of the border.

Of the six women who claimed to be Evangelical Catholics, half practised their religion formally and the other half informally. Evangelical Catholicism, influenced by the rise of Pentecostalism in Latin America, emerged alongside the liberation theology movement, and similarly advocates more participatory and inclusive practices. Importantly, these women asserted that their informal practices did not imply that they believed less than those who practised Catholicism formally. Rather, one of the seemingly most devout women interviewed was a self-defined Evangelical Catholic. During the interview process, María Elena referred and deferred to God continually, even though our interaction was not discussing religion *per se*. However, as María Elena narrated her story, it became clear that God's intervention was paradoxical. While God provided her significant spiritual comfort in times of need, He also problematically held ultimate and total power over the processes of her life. For example, María Elena explained: "I had just lost my baby, and my mother had been murdered by my stepfather. We thought that it would be better here by the Grace of God, so we came. But I am only here because He willed it. If it were not for Him I would have died."

For the 24 women who identified themselves as religious, the belief in God strongly impacted their lives. Unravelling the interrelationship between Mexican culture and religion is a difficult task since the two are closely intertwined to the extent that much of Mexican

culture is derived from Catholicism. As Veronica explains: “My beliefs are part of who I am, what I think, what I do. I don’t go to mass or to confession, but that is not necessary. I believe and God provides me with guidance. I know what is right and what is wrong. It is part of who I am.” Similarly, Mirna confides: “I am a Catholic, but really I have no religion. I am very spiritual. I have a relationship with God, but the Church does not come into it. But that is not necessary it is part of our culture, we *Mexicanos*.”

Of those women who declared their formal practice of Catholicism, most perceived God as their spiritual guide, rather than their priest. While they attended mass and confession regularly, these women affirmed their personal relationship with God, rather than their subjugation by Catholic authority. They explained that their beliefs were both a comfort from the challenges of everyday life, and an inspiration to continue their struggle. While I do not dispute their relationship with God, I question their presumption that they are free from the control of the Church, as Catholicism virtually defines Mexican culture. More specifically, I question this freedom given the Church’s influence over the definitions of woman and meanings of motherhood which impact the reproductive lives of these women.⁵⁰

As the traditional guardians of faith within the family, many Mexican women regard their role as spiritual nurturer as an important essence of their maternalism. Reinforcing cultural values and religious beliefs becomes seemingly more important to women as they enter their reproductive years. As 19 year old Maria Aide explains: “I used to be a very bad Catholic, but now that I have children, I think that it is important to teach them about God. So before,

⁵⁰ The influence of the Church on decisions about reproduction, contraception and abortion are explored in Chapter 8.

I still believed, but I did not go to church or confession. Now it is more important because of the children.”

Of those women who practised Catholicism informally, two reasons for this informality emerged. First, the women criticized the Church’s attempt to control peoples’ lives; and second, they condemned its hierarchical hypocrisy. The latter view was clearly articulated by Ramona: “I wouldn’t be caught dead with those priests and nuns in the institutional Church. They always try to make you feel like you are not a good person. Still, the Catholic religion is part of who we are, so I can’t say that I am not a Catholic and I do trust in God.”

Religion and culture, together and independently, can be both liberating and repressive. However, as has been shown here, the latter is the predominant experience of most of the women interviewed. By attempting to define women’s roles, expectations and experiences, and exerting control over their bodies and movements, religion and culture are significant contributing factors to women’s experiences of gendered violence, insecurity and human rights abuses. Women’s situated knowledge, however, is often in conflict with religious and cultural norms, as they struggle for autonomy and survival.

Conclusion

In this chapter I explored some of the boundary blurring changes by examine problems associated with traditional methods and ways of knowing. I examined qualitative methodologies as legitimate alternatives to positivism by addressing questions of bias, adequacy, credibility and representation levelled. Importantly, I examined the complex relationship between researcher and informant, while providing a critical interrogation of my

place in, and relation to the participants in, this study. I have embraced a self-conscious reflexivity in my narration of the field and writing processes of this dissertation. As Fine (1998) suggests, I have 'traded' on my racial and class privilege, and colluded with the structures which silence the Other, to re-present stories of subjugated border women which might otherwise remain untold.

Privileging women's everyday experiences and their situated knowledge through an application of a women-centred approach, I explored the diverse, complex, overlapping and conflicting identities which shape the everyday lives of *Mexicana/Mexicana-Americana* women in the border. I acknowledged the fluidity and heterogeneity of these identities, which are shaped and reshaped through social and cultural institutions, and which influence, condition, and at times, define the possibilities of/for women's experience. Significantly, I have shown how Catholicism and culture have become interwoven, and even indivisible, in the everyday lives of border women. Finally, I provided a link between the methodology and the case studies, through an examination of Catholic beliefs, to expose how culture and religion contribute to women's experiences of subordination, marginality and exclusion.

The contributions of the 30 women who participated in this study cannot be underestimated. Their participation is a tribute to their continued resistance to the powers which attempt to define them. In choosing to speak about their struggles, their dreams, and their lives, these women actively engaged in the processes of empowerment and inspire hope for a more equitable, safe and secure future. As Patricia Hill Collins asserts, social change begins in a woman's consciousness.

Change can also occur in the private, personal space of an individual woman's consciousness. Equally fundamental, this type of change is also empowering. If a [Black] woman is forced to remain 'motionless on the outside,' she can always develop the 'inside' of the changed consciousness as a sphere of freedom. Becoming empowered through self-knowledge, even within conditions that severely limit one's ability to act, is essential (Hill Collins 1990: 111).

Consequently, even though the lives of these women did not immediately change, by telling their stories, they initiated empowerment from within. They have created their own space to define problems, issues, actions and solutions according to their particular experiences.

Securing the Border

or

Border(ing) Insecurity?

The simple truth is that we've lost control of our own borders and no nation can do that and survive.

President Ronald Reagan, 1984 (Martínez 1988;1).

When we think of 2025, there is not going to be a border. There will be a free movement of people just like the free movement of goods. There will be better relations between the sides. But this will only happen if we can close the gap of income disparities between the two economies.

President Vicente Fox, *Migration News* 8(2), February, 2001.

*Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish **us** from **them**. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants.*

Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera* 1987.

Introduction

Borders are complex sites of contradiction and conflict where power struggles and violence ensue. Central to realist discourse, the conceptualizations of borders and international state system are inspired by doctrines of territoriality, national sovereignty and state

security. The state's pursuit of security, protection of its sovereignty, and defence of its territories often results in escalating militarization of its borderlands. This, however, renders the borderlanders insecure, an insecurity that, for women, is exacerbated by gendered violence.

Notwithstanding the predominance of state-centric and realist border discourses, the study of borders is an emerging field spanning diverse theoretical perspectives and social science disciplines. Such discourses explore the meanings of borders, boundaries, barriers and borderlands from the perspectives of communities and individuals. These alternative understandings view borders as fluid, social and historical constructs. They reveal the paradoxes of borders, boundaries, barriers and borderlands in the current environment of globalization. In the case of the US-Mexican border, these paradoxes are evident in the contradictions of globalization and the unequal development and power relations between North and South. The paradox of globalization is that it frees up the flows of capital, goods and services while maintaining old and erecting new barriers against the movement of people. Globalized borders have the paradoxical purpose of keeping people *out* while enticing them *in*. To understand the implications of this for those living in the US-Mexican border region, we must move beyond simple state-centric concepts of border and security to encompass ethnographic concerns.

By exploring the experiences of the border for migrant women in Ambos Nogales, the understanding of borders becomes broader and clearer. The participant's narratives show that women are agents who exercise power in (re)creating boundaries and producing safer communities where they can live and raise children.

To support this argument, this chapter examines: (i) the difficulties with state-centric definitions of borders; (ii) metaphors and meanings of borders for identity formation, border communities, and migrant women; (iii) the effects of globalization on borders and borderlanders; (iv) the impact of borders on notions of nation, community, transnationalism and transnational communities; (v) migrant women's experiences of transnational migration and insecurity; (vi) the authorization for border crossing; (vii) the escalation of militarization on both sides of the border; (viii) the insecurity and civil and human rights abuses resulting from hyper-militarization; and (ix) the link between racism and the border's militarization and the consequent impact on women's security in Ambos Nogales.

What is a Border?

Survival and security are the essence of the border. They reflect the contradiction between state policy and human needs where state priorities dominate. The root of this domination lies in the definitional characteristics of border and in the power of states to control border discourses. But what is a border? For the state, the answer seems obvious. For the borderlanders, it is less clear.

In the field of international relations, borders have traditionally been defined as international, territorial and political boundaries between sovereign states.⁵¹ Within the dominant international relations paradigms of realism and neo-realism, states are recognized as unitary actors engaged in a perpetual struggle to maximize their national power in a highly

⁵¹ See Bustamante 1990; Carens 1987; Compton and Newland 1992; Gibney 1988; Kearney 1995; Martínez 1988, 1994, 1996; Newman and Anssi 1998; Pettman 1996c; Stoddard 1991; Teitelbaum and Weiner 1995

competitive and confrontational international environment of sovereign states. The principle of state sovereignty allows states to act autonomously. It thereby legitimates the exercise of state power and authority at home, and the struggle for power and dominance abroad. The authority and legitimacy of the state as a bounded unit is uncontested. Challenges to, and renegotiations of, state-centrism and established state principles, remind us that the state is a problematic construct. The state, therefore, is not a fixed entity, but is rather always in a process of becoming (Murphy 1996; Pettman 1998; Peterson 1992). Part of this process is the evolution of and discourse around the defence, significance and language of state, borders, boundaries, frontiers and borderlands.

It is evident that traditional state theories conceive the border as a tangible and ‘natural’ boundary, which is reinforced by state power and objectives. In other words, the state requires borders to define itself and emphasize distinctions between *us* and *them*. In consolidating its power, the state becomes an agent of marginalization, both within and without its borders. The naturalization of the US-Mexican border as a boundary between North and South has been used as a mechanism for reifying existing unequal power relations. Discourses surrounding the role of boundaries, therefore, are intimately connected to the concepts of state territory, territoriality and sovereignty.

State security discourses of border, as President Reagan’s statement above demonstrates, are rooted in the language and conceptualization of threats to state sovereignty and national interests. Presumed under siege, the state is forced to act in its own defence. Consequently, state security is predicated on the impermeability of its borders and the possibility of fortifying and protecting its sovereign territories. According to this definition, the essential

function of the state is to protect, command and make impenetrable its domain. Likewise, the essential function of the border is to control and regulate that which occurs within state boundaries. The success with which a state controls, regulates, and even seals, its borders is seen as a reflection of its ability to impose its sovereignty and to ensure its national integrity and security. The state, therefore, creates a bounded community, and, through this process of controlling and regulating within, there is a corresponding impact without (Alvarez 1995; Basch *et al.* 1994). Conversely, circumstances outside of the border affect occurrences within. The extent of cross border influence, however, is dependent upon a host of factors, including capital flows, politics, ideology and hegemony. As the predominant emphasis on state security demands escalated defensive measures on one side of the line, the environment of threat inevitably multiplies on the other. The resulting milieu is one of mounting tension on both sides of an arbitrary and artificial divide.

In international relations theory, the interrelationship between territory and population has been linked to the power of states. This interconnection legitimizes a defensive state national security discourse, which claims to protect both borders and the people within them. Consequently, the establishment of border security has been extended through immigration and citizenship politics, as well as through foreign and defence policies. Accordingly, territorial boundaries are patrolled in the name of the state, in its function of ‘representing’ and securing its citizens within protected national borders. This assumes that the population within a state is homogenous and equal in all respects and, therefore, entitled to parallel protection. In practice, however, some populations within the state are privileged over ‘Others’ regarding human rights and security. According to this interpretation, security is

socially constructed and, therefore, paradigmatically bound to nationalist politics; politics in which identities depend upon the social construction of boundaries, and representations of Others, Otherness and Other worlds. In this way, borders are functional, rather than static. The paradox is then in the (un)written barriers creating closed and open borders/societies and defining the varying levels of contact and/or separation between peoples within and among states (Murphy 1996; Pettman 1996c; Newman and Anssi; 1998; Tickner 1998; Walker 1988). Such divisions heighten debates about who belongs and who does not; who is threatening and who is not; and, who is *us* and who is *them*. Debates over nation, state and nation-states, reveal the problem for those who live inside the state, but outside the nation, and determine those with rights and those without. In this environment of backlash against the Other, access to social resources and jobs are insecure for new, established, documented and undocumented migrants. This backlash continues even while the state proclaims defensive measures in the name of its people. Accordingly, both geo-political and social barriers serve to reinforce unearned privileges, rendering those on the margins and in the borderlands insecure (Carens; 1987: 270; Pettman; 1996c: 268). The border therefore, is not merely a physical, territorial and political divide which is defined and defended by the state, but a daily reality for those who live in its shadow.

Metaphors of Border

Attempts at understanding the border are mired in the numerous terms used to explain it. Terms such as border, borderlands, border regions, and frontiers are used interchangeably as atheoretical, and unproblematized descriptors. These seemingly neutral terms, however,

are imbued with social, cultural, political and theoretical significance. Borders and their various manifestations — borderlands, border regions, and frontiers — are social and historical constructs. When the border, therefore, is understood as mutable rather than static, state-centric understandings are challenged.

Metaphoric images are often employed in an attempt to defend these state-centric understandings. Images of barriers, walls, and blockades are used to create a sense of the impermeability of the border. By likening borders to barriers, walls and blockades, perceptions of state security are reinforced. Such rigid metaphors, however, contradict peoples' experiences and understandings of the border. This study, therefore, recognizes the concepts of border, boundary, borderlands, border regions and frontiers as social and historical constructs. It accepts that meanings and understandings change across time and space and that these alter the multiple identities and practices that continuously redefine borders, borderlands, border regions and frontiers.

At one time, frontiers were regarded as unsettled, uninhabited and vacant spaces to be tamed, settled and civilized. In the US-Mexico border, the doctrine of *terra nullius*, legitimated the domination of white colonialists and denied the rights of the indigenous populations living therein. Frontiers were understood as necessary strategic buffer zones between adversarial states. More recently, borderlands have been defined by the territorial spaces which surround the geo-political divide, as well as by the complex social relations which occur therein. In the US-Mexico borderlands, the adversarial relations between states, which characterized frontiers, have been replaced by conflicts between states and individuals

(García 1998; Newman and Anssi 1998; Tinker Salas 1996). Consequently, within the borderlands, state and human security is directly mediated by the border.

The changing meanings of borders, boundaries, frontiers and borderlands, are expressions of the border's multiple landscapes. Images of barriers, obstacles, walls, divides, divisions and separations are employed by the state to construct, explain and legitimate social, cultural and political boundaries, limitations and distinctions. Those who live in the border, however, view these landscapes as areas of connection, interrelation and cooperation, where social, cultural and political bridges are built. This experience of shared spaces and multiple identities conflicts with the ideas of separated spaces and singular national identities promoted and protected by the state. Boundaries, from this perspective, are seen as more permeable than in the past, and some would argue that they are disappearing altogether (Newman and Anssi 1998: 189-191; Pettman 1996c). The September 11, 2001 attacks on US sovereignty and security, however, make President Fox's prediction that the border will disappear by 2025 highly improbable.

The language of borders and boundaries is entrenched in the political, geographical and historical experiences of state building and formations of social and political identities. Initially conceived as no more than a line separating sovereign territories, the border has emerged as a defining characteristic of national sovereignty and state security. A national boundary, by definition, constitutes the line of separation, point of demarcation, edge of contact and fringe of territoriality. This spatial divide may be explicit, as in the separation between states, or implicit, as in the differentiation among, and between, groups and/or individuals. Traditional theorizations of geo-political definition of border fail to recognize

that points of separation are also points of contact which create a social environment defining 'us' and 'Other'. In other words, borders order social relations by privileging some and punishing others. The everyday experiences of people in the US-Mexican borderlands, however, demonstrate that the border is a temporal and spatial construct. They challenge and contest the artificial and fixed divides which characterize the state system, and the attempt to separate those who live in the borderlands.

Globalization and the Border

While states reinforce separation, the economic and social processes of globalization, which take place within and between nations, transcend it. The use of the state as a unit of analysis, without an understanding of these processes, yields an incomplete assessment of the effects of globalization. Since global processes are increasingly decentred from specific state territories, they take place in global spaces which extend beyond the jurisdiction of any single state. Similarly, transnational processes, while located within states, also transcend states and their territorial claims (Kearney 1995: 548). Globalization, with its many temporal and spatial layers, has significant implications for geographic definitions of the world. It implies a shift from distinct national boundaries to multidimensional global spaces which are unbounded by state-centric criteria.

Technological advancements in communications, production, transportation, and military capabilities, have transformed the international political map. These changes have tempered the function of the border as an obstacle, barrier or wall. The role of the border as a means for controlling what crosses and what enters into state-defined territory, has been challenged

by the emergence of a global economy with corresponding global security threats. Like the liberation of capital, goods and services, under NAFTA, global threats cross national markers without regard for state sovereignty or territoriality. Under siege from new transnational security threats such as water, air and soil pollution, the (re)emergence of pandemic diseases such as tuberculosis, cholera and HIV/AIDS, and the most recent experiences of international terrorism, conventional notions of national security seem absurd.

Similarly, the emergence of multiple social, cultural, economic and political identities, undermines classical IR distinctions between relations inside and outside of the state, between foreign and domestic policies, and between inclusionary and exclusionary politics (Pettman 1996c). These state-centric distinctions must be contested to understand the everyday experiences of life and insecurity in the borderlands. By challenging unidimensional and statist definitions of border, and by defending border crossings, borderlanders continue to establish and reinforce associations and relationships across boundaries. By participating in movements across and within borders, borderlanders and migrants are writing and reflecting the changing processes, power relations, and social, cultural and political identities which transcend national divides (Bhabha 1990a, 1990b). In the current environment of escalating militarization and defensive practices, however, it is increasingly difficult to cross the border and to build transborder communities.

In the US-Mexican border, where North meets South and First World meets Third, asymmetries frame the security debate (Donnan and Wilson 1994; Herzog 1990s; Alvarez 1995; García 1998). The unequal power relations between the states and the domination of global capitalism are both manifest at the local levels of the border. The borderlands

graphically map the conflicts and contradictions of an hierarchically ordered world. Two thousand miles long, the US-Mexico border demarcates profound differences in power, economics and human conditions. Asymmetrical relationships of surplus and scarcity, wealth and poverty, and employment and un(der)employment meet at the geopolitical divide. Furthermore, employment opportunities and wage differentials are determined and ordered by gender and ethnicity. Although states impose geo-political boundaries, the clashes of culture, values and language are borne at the level of the individual; disrupting, challenging and fortifying social harmony on, and across, the line. The result is an environment of inequality and inequity, where the border serves to reinforce the power dynamics and distinctions between North and South.

Globalization, like the border, emerges as a contradiction, stimulating both integration and segregation. The human struggle for dignity, social harmony and security is absent from media images and popular imaginings which focus on incidences of people smuggling, drug trafficking and political corruption. The media's reporting and documentation of border conflict, reinforces unresolved cultural and racial problems which plague the US and other Northern states. Consequently, those who engage in ideological discourses about the incommensurability of cultures, continue to reinvent borders and reinforce cultural, gender and racial divides.

Similarly, discourses implying an invasion of the Other inevitably lead to anti-immigrant and anti-Other sentiments. Such discourses ignore the United States' historical role as an invader and colonizer, and the experiences of immigration that formed the basis of American society. The threat of and backlash from these perceptions reinforce the US government's

commitment to protect and defend its borders. Concerns over national security and sovereignty grant the state unrestricted power to act in its own defence. Borders, therefore, have become places of defence, sites of militarization, and lines to be protected. The result is an escalation in insecurity for Others, particularly those who live in the borderlands.

The economic integration and technological advances of globalization have resulted in the weakening, and elimination, of some functions of the border. While these changes have removed obstacles to the movement of capital, goods or services, they have erected new barriers for people. Globalization, therefore, is weakening some aspects of borders, while strengthening others. As the processes of globalization unfold, the visions of a 'borderless world' and the 'end of the nation-state' seem close at hand (Sassen 1996; Newman and Anssi; 1998: 192; Walker 1988). These visions of borderlessness and nationlessness, for people, however, seem less realizable since borders remain open to some and closed to Others. For people, therefore, borders continue to produce and reproduce dichotomies of an *us* and *Other*.

Nevertheless, the US-Mexican border is not impermeable, impenetrable, inviolable or sacrosanct. It is a space governed by interdependent relationships which are constantly being (re)negotiated, especially those regarding the economy, drug trade, environment and migration. The border constitutes a transnational marketplace of consumers, capital and workers. The forces of capitalism flow across the border in both directions without regard for state boundaries or authority. The resulting impact has created a "first world in many thirds, and growing third worlds in the firsts" (Swasti Mitter, cited by Pettman 1996c: 265).

Globalization involves more than economic flows across international boundaries or the massive exchange of goods and services at the local and individual levels. Globalization is a daily encounter, which alters lifestyles, behaviours, values and ideas. It is often understood as unidirectional, spreading from North to South and from the West to the rest, and drawing toward an 'Americanization' and homogenization of the world. Nevertheless, globalization does not inevitably mean homogenization since it can also produce fragmentations (Garcia 1998; Agnew 1994; Gilbertson 1997). Globalization demands a structural transformation which reinforces asymmetrical relations of inequality, uneven regional development and spatial differentiation. It increases the interdependence and integration among states, thereby rewriting geo-political definition of state sovereignty and boundaries (Martínez 1994, 1996; Newman and Anssi; 1998: 193). Globalization, however, cannot be understood as a simple and unidimensional transposition of northern/Western culture and practices on Southern/non-Western spaces. Rather, globalization results in multidirectional and reciprocal flows of culture, values, ideas and economic relations. The forces of the North/West do not exclusively extend into Southern spaces since the forces of South also permeate and impact on Northern spaces. The growing Americanization of Mexican and Latino cultures, therefore, is emerging concurrently with the Latinization and Mexicanization of aspects of American culture, especially in the borderlands and the southern US.

The effects of the processes of globalization have been depicted in various artistic genres. Yukinori Yanagi's 1994 artistic work, for example, was a visual representation of the effects

of international migration on national identities and state sovereignty.⁵² Likewise, since the mid-1980s an artistic movement representing border lives and the borderlands has emerged. Based in the twin cities of San Diego and Tijuana, this predominantly *Chicano/a* activist-artists group formed the *Taller de Artes Frontarizo* — Border Arts Workshop in an attempt to create awareness about social, political and economic issues in the borderlands through various artistic genres (Jenkins and Aitken 2000).

Nation, Community, Transnationalism and Transnational Communities

To understand the processes of borders as they interact with and within globalization, it is important to examine understandings of nation, community, transnationalism, and transnational communities. Such terms, like the border itself, are complex social and historical constructs. Their definitions, therefore, are intimately linked to theory, ideology, epistemology and ontology and infer both multiple and contradictory meanings depending on who is attempting to define them. In IR, the term ‘nation’ is commonly used interchange-

⁵² The multidirectional flow of cultures, practices and identities has been depicted in Yanagi’s rendering, *In Site* (Cited in García 1998: 122). It consisted of a wall covered with more than 100 acrylic boxes filled with coloured sand. Each box displayed a different state flag as a symbol of statehood and sovereignty. The flags were interconnected by plastic tubes, demonstrating the interdependence of the international state system. Yanagi then released ants into the exhibit and within two to three months all the flags became unrecognizable as ants crossing borders between flags, transferred, blended and confused territorial representations. Yanagi’s demonstration of international migration can be understood as an artistic refutation of the border as a barrier, wall and divide. By representing transnational flows and ‘counter flows’, his work contests the impermeability of national boundaries and deconstructs theories of nationalism, nationality and imperialism. Yanagi’s work, therefore, reveals borders to be false and artificial separations of people and community. Although, *In Site* cannot be seen, other works by Yukinori Yanagi can be seen at www.artseensoho.com.

ably with that of 'state', as illustrated by the use of the title 'United Nations' to describe an association of states. Nation-states are traditionally defined by territory, population, system of governance, common language and ethnicity. The most important of these distinctions, however, is the state's territorial base since it provides the foundation for claims to sovereignty, autonomy and security. Challenging this notion of natural and unproblematic unity, Bhabha (1990a, 1990b) defines 'nation' as an impossible, but symbolic force of unity. Accordingly, the terms 'nation' and 'unity' can be used either to support or challenge state power, legitimacy and autonomy. According to Anderson's (1983:15) understanding of nation as "an imagined political community", popular imaginings can emancipate nation and community from state-centric and geographic limitations. Communities, therefore, can be imagined as resilient and dynamic forces, rather than static and discontinuous entities bounded within nation-states. From this perspective, the community can be understood as transcending territorial, social and political borders.

Simple definitions of community, like those of nation, converge around common language, culture, practices, struggles, experiences and imagined unity. The difference is the absence of a geographic or territorial base. Community, therefore, must be understood as socially and historically located, constructed through self-defined collectivity, and emerging from local experiences and folklore. It mediates understandings and practices of national identity, and provides locally constructed alternatives. Political identities and their boundaries, however, shift according to context. This possibility provides sites of confrontation and conflict, as well as opportunities for social change. Since people can, and do, have multiple identities, conflicting social, economic, political, cultural, racial, ethnic and

gendered concepts of self and community can arise (Bhabha 1990a, 1990b; Newman and Anssi; 1998; Pettman; 1996c; Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995; Stasiulis 1997).

Campbell (1998) argues that identity is an inescapable dimension of being, which is constructed in relation to difference or Otherness. Statist ideologies exploit these differences and distinctions in the construction of national identities and in the formation of binary inclusions and exclusions. Boundaries, therefore, are symbols and manifestations of power relations and social institutions that become part of daily life and the formation of community. Consequently, national, community and individual identities are continually contested, shifted and accommodated. Border community and culture are profoundly influenced by such imaginings and the boundaries which they exert. Border crossings, therefore, result in a blurring of ethnic and cultural boundaries, and a renegotiation cultural and socio-political identities. As will be seen, for women who live in the borderlands, this process of renegotiation is further complicated by their gendered identities. At the border, women continue to challenge masculinist state-centric definitions and social constructions, through their interrogation of patriarchy and global capitalism. The crossing of borders, and women's participation in this process, has challenged the separation of communities by borders. Consequently, community is 'unbounded' since those who define it reject geographic constraints. This freedom provides fluidity, mobility, and space for people to (re)negotiate and integrate their personal experiences.

The idea of the borderland as an extended community was first expressed by Whiteford (1979). She offered a cross-border and transnational perspective that questioned unidimensional, state-centric, definitions of border. The concept of an impermeable divide was

displaced by that of an extended community, which provides a clearer understanding of the socioeconomic and political reality of borders as well as a sense of connectedness that exists across the line. Border communities, therefore, are defined by social spaces, cultural practices and common values, rather than national, geopolitical and geographic ones.

Expanding on the concept of extended community, transnationalism emerged to define the processes by which migrants “forge and sustain multi-layered social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Basch *et al.* 1994: 7). Transnationalism emphasizes the building of social relations across geographic, cultural and political boundaries by those who cross international borders. The essential element of transnationalism is the recognition of the many relationships and identities that transmigrants sustain both at home and abroad. Transmigrants, for the most part, continue to regard their country of origin as their home, even after they have established themselves in their country of choice.

Transnational communities are formed through the processes of transnationalism. The mixing, blending and blurring of barriers, as well as the building, moulding and forming of connections is especially pronounced in the borderlands. It is too simplistic, however, to understand the borderlands as one community, united by the space between two states. In this concept of border community, assumptions of ethnic and cultural homogeneity ignore diversity, and mask the problems, conditions, and struggles of people (Alvarez; 1995).

A particular language has emerged to express, understand and imagine the processes of transnationalism at the border. The language around which border communities are imagined is a discourse which continues to influence political identity, consciousness and

mobilization. Life in the borderlands is more succinctly expressed through stories and metaphors than through empirical data. Even when statistical representations can be provided, they are confronted and distorted by the imagined realities of those who live on the line.

Bridging the Divide: Women's Transnational Migration Experience

The borderlands span an entire spectrum of spaces — social, cultural, linguistic, economic, and gendered — necessarily crossing geopolitical boundaries. Nevertheless, state boundaries exist in varying concrete and symbolic forms as part of both the state system and everyday lives. State-centric metaphors, which describe borders as divides, barriers, partitions, fences and walls, imply that they are impenetrable, closed, untraversable, and secure. The international state system reinforces this illusion. In everyday practices, however, culture, language, and people are constantly crossing *man-made*, rather than naturally occurring, divides. In the endeavour to erect barriers around and through these communities, governments have systematically rendered transnational migrants and transborder communities insecure. Consequently, there is an ongoing challenge to the 'bounds' and boundedness of the borderlands. By imagining a community across borders, those who live in the borderlands contest and redefine traditional meanings of nation, sovereignty and community, within the emergent, and emerging, complexities and processes of globalization. The US-Mexican border is an unsuccessful attempt to disrupt and divide an interconnected community. Regardless of the barriers, people continue to move in all

directions — South to North, South to South, and North to South — facilitated by the processes of globalization.

Conforming to state-centric understandings of borders, one of the major weaknesses of much migration research is a focus on either migrants in the US, or migrants in Mexico. The limits of state-centric, geographically conceptualized divisions, demand a more thorough understanding of the determinants and consequences of migration. The complex web of transnational movement across the border, challenges the traditional dichotomies of ‘old/new country’, ‘host/home’, and ‘sojourner/settler’, which dominate both international migration literature and American assimilationist immigration paradigms. Moreover, gender is an important dimension in rethinking international/transnational migration. By ‘remembering’ their place of origin, transnational migrant women bind communities across borders (Goldring 1996; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Perpignan 1996).

“Authorized to Cross”: Migration and the US-Mexican Border

The borderlands present a unique environment for transborder crossings and transnational migration. Recognizing the extensive historical and contemporary linkages across this geopolitical divide, the US government authorizes much of the daily crossing at official ports of entry. It is these crossings, for the most part, which ensure the maintenance of transborder community connections. Popularly known as *micas* or *pasaportes locales*, border crossing cards (BCCs) had no expiration date and were issued exclusively to Mexican citizens to facilitate crossing into the US. Issuance of a BCC required specific documentation — a

Mexican Passport, voting card issued by the *Instituto Federal Electoral* (IFE),⁵³ evidence of residence and employment in Mexico, and bank/financial records. To issue a passport, several additional documents are required such as an original birth certificate or a military service card. Often borderlanders do not have these documents, and some are unable to secure them. This means that the cost of obtaining a *mica* can escalate. The card authorized holders to move within the border region, up to a maximum distance of 25 miles from the international divide, and to stay in the US for a duration of 72 hours. This privilege elicited economic and social benefits until September 30, 1999. While these privileges existed, BCC's facilitated economic exchange through shopping and tourism, and allowed for cross-border community relations.

The elimination of BBC's and their associated privileges was part of *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act's* (1996) 'get tough on immigrants' policy. On February 9, 1998, the INS and the Department of State announced the replacement of the BCC with a new *Laser Visa*. With the issue of the Laser Visa, responsibility for border crossings by Mexicans was transferred from the INS to the Department of State. With this change, the possibility for local applications for authorization to 'cross', formerly available

⁵³ *Instituto Federal Electoral* (IFE) is responsible for regulating elections in Mexico. The IFE card provided to Mexican citizens free of charge and is considered the most valid form of identification in Mexico. It is required for such practices as cashing cheques, receiving pay, and for the issuance of legal documents. The card is issued based on fingerprinted data. Depending on the level of inter-governmental cooperation and the pressure that the US places on Mexico for the 'war on drugs' and migrants, IFE and the US may well develop links regarding visa records and data-base information systems.

at any US port of entry, was ceded to the jurisdictions of the US Embassy and the US consulates.⁵⁴

New, more rigorous, and complex application processes are also attached to the Laser Visa, such as the fingerprinting of all applicants. According to INS internal documents,⁵⁵ this is an attempt to make US borders more secure and to reduce both incidences of misuse, and the use of fraudulent documents. Since fingerprints are unique personal identifiers, they can be matched to verify the identity of the Laser Visa user. Consequently, the difficulty of using another person's visa will inhibit the establishment of a 'black market' for lost/stolen Laser Visas.

The encoding of fingerprints in the Laser Visa has some long-term implications for both data collection and the monitoring of peoples' lives. US officials contend that Laser Visas will be useful to law enforcement for tracking criminals, including drug and human traffickers, previous detainees and deportees, and numerous other violators. In a further measure to secure US borders, Mexicans who have misused their *micas*, either to work or

⁵⁴ In contrast to free BCC, initial applications for Laser Visas carry a charge. This is a significant expense for most border dwellers. For a *maquila* worker, it represents almost two weeks' pay. Critics contend that this fee is a money making proposition for the US since the application fee exceeds the costs. With INS estimates of the number of existing BCCs at between 8 and 11 million, the profits are big (*Migrant News*, July 1997). One of the most significant criticisms of the BCC was that it was issued for life. It was argued that the lifetime issuance has led to problems in verifying the identity of the person using the card with its owner. Since BCCs have been in use for more than 40 years, the picture on the *mica* often failed to resemble the holder. This raised problems for both officials and the person crossing. The ten years limited validation period of the Laser Visa attempts to address this problem.

⁵⁵ Telephone interviews July 18, 2000, with INS officer, Don Mueller, INS Washington; US Embassy, Ottawa, Researcher Kyle Malone; and, the US State Department, Consular Affairs Christian Lamora.

live in the US without authorization, are denied Laser Visas. This process is facilitated by cross referencing applicants through intelligence systems like the INS's computerized fingerprinting system IDENT, which is used in the tracking and monitoring of illegal crossers, and the interlinked database NADDIS-X, which is connected to the FBI, CIA, DEA, and the Treasury Department. It is interesting to note that while the incidences of fraud and forgery, as well as misuse and abuse of BCCs by holders and presenters, are widely alleged, INS officials offered only anecdotal data to support such claims (Interview, Mueller, INS, 2000).

The INS's claims regarding the abuse and misuse of BCCs were supported by many borderlanders. They argued that, even when one wants to cross legally, access to BCCs was complicated by a lack of available documentation and the costs associated with securing them. Yolanda's encounter with the border exposes this problem:

I first crossed when I was 14 years old. I came to join my boyfriend, but nobody knew that was why I was going. I was not married at the time, but I did migrate with my boyfriend. He was an American citizen so I had no trouble getting a *Mica*. But it cost a lot of money \$180 US, and that was almost 15 years ago. I remember how much because it was so much. I think it was so much because I was young and did not have papers and my boyfriend had to pay someone to get the papers so that I could cross.

Procuring documents which will secure a *mica* can be even more costly, as Mirna contends:

I first migrated when I was 31 years old. I crossed the border at Nogales using a *mica*. It was a costly process because I did not have any documents, I did not have a birth certificate. So, I had to go to Tijuana to get the documents and photographs done. The documents were made for me because I paid a lot of money. I paid \$500 US, you can get documents made if you have money, even if you do not have proof of what you say. I did it because I really wanted to jump.

While anecdotal, allegations of fraud seem legitimate and have led the Department of State to make the Laser Visa extremely difficult to counterfeit.

Militarization of Border and the Ideology of Security

This more rigorous screening of who and what crosses the border, is rooted in the historical relations of and between the US and Mexico. In the contemporary context, the past 50 years are characterized by an increasingly impermeable border and escalating militarization. By 1950, US government's concern over an impending invasion of immigrants from the South prompted the allocation of most Border Patrol resources to the southern border with Mexico, rather than the northern one shared with Canada. It was during this period that Operation Wetback (1954 to 1964) was implemented marking the closing of US doors to Mexican migrants and the beginning of a (re)militarization of the southern border. US immigration policy defined wetbacks as Mexicans who swam or waded across the Rio Grande to enter the US without authorization. The operation involved the mass deportation of Mexican immigrants living in US territory without documentation (Weintraub 1997). Since much of the southern US had been ceded from Mexico, Mexicans/Mexican-Americans had lived legally in the US for generations. The underlying assumption of Operation Wetback, however, was that all Mexicans were illegals and, therefore, subject to deportation unless proof of authorized status was produced. Accordingly, undocumented migrants were treated as 'enemies' to be apprehended, detained and driven out at all costs. This initiative marked the first large-scale, systematic implementation of military strategies by the INS against Mexican (im)migrants (Dunn 1995).

The escalation of militarization along the border since the 1950s, amounts to a domestic programme of low intensity warfare and conflict. Until the late 1980s, however, low

intensity conflict (LIC) had only been used by the US military in foreign policy initiatives in relation to Central American countries. As Congress systematically eroded the traditional ban on the use of the military in domestic policing, LIC became the model for controlling the US southern border. In particular, LIC focus on control over ‘targeted’ civilian populations, has been especially effective in monitoring, controlling and repressing Latino border communities. LIC’s flexible strategies have allowed the INS to adapt and redefine earlier foreign policy initiatives, in response to perceived domestic threats to US sovereignty and national security. The use of LIC strategies on domestic soil was justified as a defensive tool against the threat of illegal and unwanted migrants and the smuggling of illicit drugs and materials (Barry *et al.* 1988; Dunn 1995; Palafox 1996).

Under the Reagan Doctrine, the US conducted an anti-terrorist campaign in which military tactics were employed against ‘acts of terrorism’, a nebulous category that grouped illegal immigration together with the smuggling of narcotics. The *Posse Comitatus Act* (1878), however, prohibited the military from any involvement in domestic law enforcement and policing. To rescind this prohibition, the US Congress passed the *Defense Authorization Act* in 1982. It was the first in a series of legislative and congressional initiatives which opened the door for military activities on US territory. It allowed the military to provide equipment, intelligence and facilities to aid civilian law enforcement in preventing ‘contraband’ from entering the US. Although the legislation authorized military involvement in immigration issues, its principal purpose was to stop cross-border drug trafficking. Building on this initiative, the government formed the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) in 1986. In conjunction with *Operation Alliance* (1986-1992), the NNBIS

facilitated the cooperation of 15 federal, state and local agencies to stem the flow of drugs, weapons, currency and aliens across the border. This massive expansion in the number and type of agencies involved in cooperative initiatives was unprecedented. The agencies involved included: INS, Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Coast Guard, Customs Services, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Internal Revenue Service, US Marshals' Service, US Attorney's Office, National Guard, Secret Service and the Department of Defense. According to 1988 Department of Justice records, 85% of all Border Patrol officers were located along the US-Mexican border, leaving the US-Canadian border virtually unguarded by comparison (Dunn 1995).

During this period, the introduction of the *Immigration Reform and Control Act* of 1986 marked a renewed focus on illegal Mexican⁵⁶ migrants and the US-Mexico border. The Act was primarily concerned with the prevention of illegal immigration. Perceptions of a growing presence of undocumented aliens galvanized efforts to close the 'back door' to illegal immigration across the southern border. The Act implemented a three-pronged approach, aimed at reducing the number of illegals in the US. First, it allowed the legalization of many undocumented immigrants including some temporary Special Agricultural Workers. Second, it provided for the enforcement of sanctions against employers and established anti-discriminatory labour provisions. Finally, it targeted

⁵⁶Since a large majority of illegals were perceived to be Mexican, Mexico was the central target in the stemming of migration flows under the *Immigration Reform and Control Act*. Public opinion, spurred by xenophobic media campaigns which scapegoated Mexican migrants, coupled with official perceptions held by INS, Border Patrol and government officials predominantly interpreted the term 'illegal alien' as the equivalent of Mexican. For more on this Act, see Chapter 7.

improved border controls. Although the Act continued to be a three-pronged programmatic approach, the sanctioning of employers who hired undocumented workers, and the implementation of tighter border controls remained less important than the apprehension of illegal migrants (Baker 1997; Dunn 1995; Freeman and Bean 1997; Massey *et al.* 1990).

Accelerated Militarization: The US War on Drugs

The US War on Drugs provided the space for policy coordination between foreign policy and domestic operations and under *Operation Alliance* (1986-1992) there was greater coordination of anti-immigration and anti-drug initiatives and cooperation among federal, state and local law enforcement agencies along the border. It was the combination of the US Customs Services and the DEA, however, that supplied the authority to exercise what were previously seen as ‘unconstitutional’ search powers. Under the guise of national security, extraordinary powers were used in the endeavour to prevent the entry of contraband into the US. This expansion of search powers increased the possibility of apprehending undocumented immigrants. Under the banner of national security, the apprehension of illegals was further justified, and Mexicans were labelled as ‘alien terrorists’ and ‘undesirables’ (Dunn 1995). Consequently, *Operation Alliance* remained faithful to the anti-terrorist doctrine of the Reagan administration. The US military was also pressed into action to secure US territory and render American borders impermeable. The protection of national security outweighed the protection of civil and human rights, even while evidence of abuse was mounting.

In accordance with a commitment to the War on Drugs, the military’s role in domestic drug enforcement activities was formalized under the *Defense Authorization Act* of 1989.

Three directives were assigned to the Pentagon: first, to integrate American command, control, communications and intelligence for the monitoring of narcotics trafficking; second, to enhance the National Guard's role in drug interdiction and enforcement operations; and third, the Pentagon was to serve as the lead agency in detecting and monitoring the transportation of drugs within the US. The Pentagon's concern over the military's direct involvement in domestic law enforcement and policing, however, prevented the fulfilment of these mandates.

To strengthen and empower domestic law enforcement with military means, however, the INS and the Border Patrol were authorized under titles 19 and 21 of the *US Criminal Code* to enforce both drug and contraband laws. This effectively authorized INS and Border Patrol agents to act in the capacity of DEA and US Customs agents, enabling INS to conduct searches without warrant. Since the standard for stopping and searching a 'suspect' is significantly lower for INS and Border Patrol agents than for police, together these groups formed a formidable alliance in the war on drugs and immigrants. The INS and Border Patrol are allowed to request proof of citizenship or legal authorization of entry or residence from anyone, anywhere in the US. The standard of 'reasonable suspicion' is easily met since it is predominantly involves racial profiling. The reasonable suspicion profile, commonly targets Latinos as objects of suspicion. This profiling becomes even more problematic as INS efforts move away from the border since the practical definition of illegal alien is synonymous with Mexican. Furthermore, for many in law enforcement, Mexicans are indistinguishable from other Latinos, and (im)migrants are indistinguishable from Mexican-American citizens. Consequently, while Mexicans and Latinos account for only 39% of the undocumented

immigrants in the US, they represent 90% of those questioned, detained and arrested by INS (Parenti 1998; Seltzer and Kourous 1998).

Despite Pentagon concerns, in 1991 the *Defense Authorization Act* further expanded domestic military authority and assigned the Pentagon to train federal, state and local agencies as well as foreign governments in anti-drug operations. It further sanctioned military aerial and ground anti-drug reconnaissance missions, heightening the military's active presence in, and around, the border region. While military personnel continue to be prohibited from making criminal arrests, their 'rules of engagement' permit them to 'shoot to kill' if a physical threat is evident. Rules of engagement were a central feature in the 1997 border shooting of Esequiel Hernandez, a 17-year old American citizen, by a US Marine attached to the Joint Task Force Six (JTF-6) in Redford, Texas. This was the second shooting of 1997, but the first fatality since the programme was established in 1989. The JTF-6 conducted some 70 armed surveillance and reconnaissance missions along the border in 1997, prior to the May 20, 1997 Hernandez shooting. The JTF-6 led over 1,260 anti-drug support missions between 1990 and 1993 without incident (AI 1998a, 1998b; Bayler and Kamel 1997; Nathan 1997). Since these missions are always conducted without the knowledge of the community and local officials, there is a significant increase in real insecurity for border residents, as this shooting demonstrates. The growing military presence in the border poses a clear and substantial threat to both citizens and migrants. This position is supported by the Texas Rangers' findings of inconsistencies in the Marines' account of the shooting. The Marines' claim of only returning fire in self-defence, were contradicted by the evidence found by the Texas Rangers who investigated the fatality. Clearly,

borderlanders are made insecure and vulnerable by the War on Drugs, and the power which it places in the virtually unaccountable hands of the military.

JTF-6 tactics and covert operations mirror those of LIC. Together with Border Patrol and US Custom Services, JTF-6 provides a formidable civil-military apparatus for drug and immigration law enforcement. The military provides training in patrolling techniques, intelligence and advanced military tactical manoeuvres. Logistically, the military provides engineering for projects which facilitate surveillance and control, such as fencing, road repairs and range construction. Moreover, the JTF-6 provides military intelligence and research technologies which can be used in civilian law enforcement (Bayler and Kamel 1997; Nathan 1997).

Accelerated efforts to 'seal' US borders against 'contraband' [illegal migrants] and 'illicit' materials [narcotics], have resulted in the targeting of traditional urban migrant crossings. The INS suggests that this shift pushes illegal crossers away from areas where they can 'disappear' into local Hispanic communities without detection or apprehension. They claim that the detection of unauthorized alien crossings is made easier by pushing migrants into less populous rural regions. These tactics, however, force migrants into more dangerous areas, where major drug trafficking and enforcement operations occur. Coupled with this shift is the accelerated use of sophisticated technologies which render migrants more visible and, therefore, more vulnerable. These initiatives emerge out of the states' construction of fear, threat and insecurity, an ideology supported by the notion of contra colonization. Accordingly, accelerated efforts to secure the US border with Mexico were undertaken. In September 1993 Operation Blockade, later renamed Operation Hold the Line, was initiated

in El Paso, Texas. In 1994, Operation Gatekeeper began in San Diego, California, and was expanded into eastern California in 1995, under the name of Operation El Centro. Of importance to my research is Operation Safeguard which, from 1995, concentrated on the Arizona border, especially at Nogales and Douglas.

In 1996, the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act* authorized a further increase in personnel, equipment and technology at all US ports of entry. The legislation called for stronger barriers all along the southern border. It intensified the anti-smuggling initiatives and increased penalties for alien smuggling. The statute expedited the deportation process and implemented more rigorous grounds for the exclusion of aliens. Moreover, it increased the detention space for criminals and other deportable aliens (DOJ 9/30/96), paving the way for the use of closed US military bases for holding detainees.

Additionally, in August 1997, *Operation Rio Grande* renewed the emphasis on securing the Texas-Mexico border at McAllen, Texas. The *Traficant Amendment* was introduced in 1998 to defend the US from an apparent national security threat. This legislation extended the *Defense Authorization Act* to sanction the deployment of thousands more US troops along the border to aid the enforcement of immigration and anti-drug laws. These initiatives, together with the legislative changes that authorized them, mark a strategic progress in the war not only on drugs, but on people.

The border has become a heavily armed war zone at great costs in dollars, resources and technology. The INS's budgets continue to rise to pay for the escalation of militarization, and in 1995 alone, technology transfers from the US military were estimated at \$260 million by the Department of Defense (Nathan 1998). Between 1993 and 1995, when most government

departments and agencies were experiencing significant budget cuts, the INS's budget increased by over 72%. In 1999, the INS's budget was \$4.2 billion and since a doubling of the number of agents has been projected (DOJ 1999; Stern 1998). In light of September 11, 2001, this figure is expected to rise even more drastically.

The INS is the leading federal agency involved in patrolling the border, with the highest number of personnel who are authorized to carry weapons and make arrests. Even though an estimated 60% of illegals enter the country without crossing the southern border, 85% of all enforcement resources are allocated to this border (Seltzer and Kourous 1998). Interdiction resources used by INS include: klieg lighting, permanent and temporary fencing, ground sensors, mobile infra-red night scopes, low-light cameras, vehicles, helicopters, aircraft and horse patrols. Furthermore, sophisticated surveillance devices have become commonplace in INS operations, such as hypersensitive microphones, which are designed for listening, monitoring, identifying and apprehending illegal crossings of both people and materials.

Military intelligence is also used to provide a more thorough and intense surveillance of the border. From Briggs Army Airfield, the El Paso Texas Intelligence Center (EPIC) provides military translators, linguists and analysts to decipher intercepted messages. The results are fed into massive interlinked databases, such as *NADDIS-X*, which is connected to the FBI, CIA, DEA, and Treasury Department. National intelligence centres addressing drug crimes have also proliferated, including the Treasury Departments' Financial Crimes Enforcement Center (FinCEN), the CIA's Counternarcotic Center, the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) and the Defense Intelligence Agency's Counterdrug Intelligence

Center and the Pentagon's Center for Low-Intensity Conflict. All of these centres have interconnected data bases as well as access to the information of state and local crime agencies. Another important data collection system is the INS's computerized fingerprinting system *IDENT*, which is used in the tracking and monitoring of illegal crossers. Once apprehended and fingerprinted, the personal data of an illegal can be stored permanently for future use. Since personal data is readily accessible to INS agents, this system will become increasingly important in the punishment of so-called 'repeaters', who are caught crossing the border without authorization more than once (Dunn 1995; Palafox 1996; Parenti 1998).

The dollars, resources and technology appropriated for Operation Safeguard (1995) have assured Arizona's full participation in the institutionalization of a border war zone (Appendix V, Arizona Border Patrol Resources, 1994-2000). To monitor and police the miles of isolated border, the number of Border Patrol agents has increased exponentially along with the transfer of military technologies and personnel from foreign to domestic service. Arizona Border Patrol claims that Operation Safeguard has restored 'order' to the Nogales and Douglas areas, and that Nogales, previously the busiest illegal immigrant crossing corridor in Arizona, is now under 'control'. A 70% decline in Border Patrol apprehensions and a 40% drop in crime rate in Nogales are cited as proof of the effectiveness of Operations Safeguard's increased policing (DOJ, 10/8/99). Tucson Border Patrol's arrests accounted for 31% of all Border Patrol prosecutions along the Southwest border in 1999, and Arizona's US Attorney's Office leads the nation in prosecution of alien smuggling cases; prosecuting a total of 328 cases in 1999, with more than 2000 cases pending in the year 2000 (DOJ 5/2/2000).

Erecting Barriers: Desperate, Dangerous and Illegal Crossings and Human Rights Violations

As militarization of the border escalates abuses of power and authority and incidences of violence have erupted. Between 1985 and 1994, an estimated 3,000 migrants died in attempts to cross the border. It is predicted that this number will continue to rise with the intensification of militarization at the border (Bailey *et al.* 1996; Seltzer and Kourous 1998). Technological advancements, along with the coercive activities and abuses of authority condoned by LIC strategies, have made border crossings increasingly difficult. These impediments are both real, evidenced by the presence of armed militia, and perceived, due to the concentration of surveillance mechanisms targeting Latinos. American hyper-militarization of the border is justified by grouping undocumented migrants, drug trafficking and criminals into the undifferentiated category of 'terrorist' activity. This definition, which equates migrant with terrorist, sanctions abuse of authorities and authorizes human rights violations. Altogether, these efforts contribute to the escalation of violence on both sides of the border and the exacerbation of insecurity and human rights abuses.

During the course of field study in 1997, Operation Safeguard, resulted in an intensification of detection and surveillance technologies and militarization continued, transforming both the border and the lives of borderlanders. This hyper-militarization increased insecurity (both real and perceived) for those who live in the borderlands, especially for women. Border residents, for example, widely believe that local public telephones along the border are monitored by electronic listening devices. Many of the participants contended that migrants who called friends and relatives from the pay telephones located in the downtown core of

Nogales, Arizona, were later apprehended. Some of the women participants noted that even those people authorized to cross were later arrested outside of the BCC's 25-mile limit, as a result of an ill-placed telephone conversation.

Anti-drug and anti-smuggling units, moreover, are increasingly visible and commonly involve heavily armed US Marines, DEA and Border Patrol agents. US officials allege that increased militarization on the US side of the border reduces numbers of illegal crossings in the targeted areas by facilitating the apprehension of those who cross at these points. Such efforts, however, force migrants into increasingly isolated and treacherous terrains to cross undetected.⁵⁷

Nonetheless, smuggling has become a major business in border towns. Many potential transnationals believe that smuggling networks offer them better chances for a successful crossing. Those who make their living from smuggling, locally referred to as *coyotes*, have raised their prices to compensate for the increased danger. The fee for being guided across the border ranges from \$100 US to \$1,000 US — a fortune for those for those intending to cross. The rise in smuggling fees is a sign of both the INS's effectiveness in cutting the flow of illegal immigration along traditional routes, and the rising desperation of transnational migrants. Working in teams, smugglers lead migrants to 'holes' in the border fencing and through the remote deserts areas of the border region. *coyotes* instruct their clients to walk along remote roads where they claim their partner will meet the migrants and deliver them to their destination safely. The risks of relying on a *coyote* to cross the border are well

⁵⁷ See AI 1998a, 1998b; Hartman 1999a, 1999b; Seltzer 1998; Dunn 1995; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997b, 1994a, Nuñez 1998, 1997; Portillo 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1998a, 1998b.

documented. The testimonies of migrants, smuggled across the line, detail multiple experiences of desert abandonments, assaults, inadequate preparations and misinformation from *coyotes*. Notwithstanding these risks and the usual depletion of the migrants' savings, perceived opportunities in *el otro lado* continue to beckon, prompting migrants to engage in increasingly risky behaviours in increasingly dangerous environments.

From the perspective of states, unauthorized crossings of geopolitical borders jeopardize state sovereignty and national security. Illegal alien smuggling, however, presents a further concern because of their presumed connection to organized crime. In a market-driven economy, where workers are needed and workers need jobs, human smuggling is a highly profitable enterprise. In the border, the smuggling of humans has become an everyday practice and people trafficking, particularly of women and children, is increasingly common. People trafficking, by definition, includes any activity which results in the recruitment, transportation, or harbouring of any person for the purpose of exploitation.⁵⁸ Perhaps more problematic for states, the trafficking of humans, like other highly sophisticated criminal operations, is often facilitated by complex networks of corruption. Offices which issue travel documents, and border control areas, are vulnerable to abuses of power (Phinney 2001; Beare 1999). Such abuses render not only states, but people insecure.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Exploitation is defined as sexual exploitation, sale, forced labour, slavery, servitude and organ removal (Phinney 2001).

⁵⁹ American markets, moreover, provide extensive prostitution networks which rely on the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation. Trafficked women and girls are also used for the distribution of drugs in the US. Many women who pay *coyotes* to secure their crossing of the border, subsequently become victims of drug and prostitution networks. Sold into a life of sexual exploitation and criminal activities, girls are commonly between 16 and 19 years old (Gensalud, *Noticias de CIMAC*, September 17, 2001). Furthermore,

Commonly, *coyotes* and alien smugglers are Mexican citizens who live in border towns. They search out possible *jumpers* at bus stops, town squares, through word of mouth, and at the *ad hoc* rooming houses which have emerged to shelter the many migrants arriving at the border prepared to cross. Most smugglers operate through cross-border organizations, which employ lookouts on the US side of the border to monitor Border Patrol activities. These well-coordinated linkages which connect smuggling teams across the border, significantly raise the probability of successful migrant crossings. Additionally, smugglers often use decoys to divert Border Patrol surveillance efforts away from illegal crossers. They frequently do this by employing young Mexican-Americans, who assume the identities and practices of illegal crossers to distract and mislead Border Patrol agents. The risk to the decoys, who are US citizens, is perceived as minimal since proof of illegal activities is difficult to gather. In contrast, if Mexican smugglers are caught leading illegal migrants, they face severe criminal sentences on both sides of the border. In Mexico, during 1995, more than 700 smugglers were jailed: a staggering increase of 80% from 1994. In 1997, the application of the US *three-strike rule* resulted in one of the most severe sentences to date for alien smuggling when a Mexican man was convicted and sentenced to 20 years in a California prison (*Migrant News*, February and June, 1997).

Incarceration, however, is not the most severe sanction. The hazards of illegal crossings can be lethal. On August 5, 1997, for example, a group of 12 migrants — eight men, three

women are trafficked for use as sweatshop labour, domestic servants, agricultural workers and chambermaids. It is estimated that more than 10,000 people are trafficked from Latin America annually. US government reports sharp increases in alien smuggling to the US in the late 1990s based on rising numbers of undocumented aliens apprehended (*Trafficking in Migrants*, 2000, No. 21; Human Rights Watch 2001).

women, and a small child — tried to cross the border from Agua Prieta, Sonora to Douglas, Arizona. Under the direction of a *coyote*, the migrant group was led through a small four-foot diameter storm drain which connects the drainage systems of the two cities. The tunnel pathway under the border is only nine city blocks in length. In this case, however, a flash flood caused a wall of water to shoot through the tunnel. Seven of the migrants were swept away and subsequently drowned. After waiting two hours for the torrential downpour to cease, the five survivors surfaced from the drainage system in the US; however, as they emerged to street-level they were immediately arrested by Border Patrol Agents (AI 1998a).

With traditional crossings virtually closed under accelerated surveillance, would-be crossers are forced into more dangerous terrain. For Arizona crossers, the desert lands of the Tohono O'odham Nation offer desperate migrants a chance for success. The reservation lands comprise nearly three million acres in southern Arizona and extend southward into the Sonoran desert in Sonora. Additionally, the Yaqui Nation reservation encompasses more than 1,000 acres in New Pascua in southern Arizona as well as significant *ejido*⁶⁰ lands in

⁶⁰ *Ejidos* are communally owned indigenous lands, organized around traditional indigenous community agricultural practices and cooperation. Under Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917, provision for land reform and the return to traditional communal ownership of land for indigenous people were established. However, under increased pressure from the US, constitutional changes have been made to allow for the sale of *ejidos*. This shifted land ownership from indigenous peoples to the private sector. In 1937, land redistribution increased the *ejidal* land allocation to 40% of the total Sonoran River Basin. This provided the Yaqui with 17,000 hectares of land naturally irrigated by the watershed of five major rivers in Sonora. However, with the unprecedented expansion of commercialized agriculture and the development of irrigation subsystems, the traditional practices assumed by *ejidos* had shrunk to a mere 17% by the 1950s. In an attempt to compete with the dominant commercial agriculture producers, the Yaqui were prompted to convert traditional practices into modern production methods. To facilitate this transformation, the Collective or Coalition of *Ejidos* for the Sonora Valley was formed in the mid 1970s (Bromley 1994). Moreover, the passing of legislation in preparation for NAFTA has

northern Sonora (AI 1998a). The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) and the *Mesilla* Treaty (Gadsden Purchase) (1854) enshrined the tribal rights of Native American and indigenous people as sovereign nations with the legal authority to freely cross the geopolitical border between the US and Mexico. In practice, however, freedom of movement for Native Peoples has been increasingly hindered by the militarization of the border. Often indigenous people are harassed when crossing the border, particularly when they are unable to produce the documents demanded by INS and Border Patrol. Forcing Native People to produce 'crossing' documents is a direct violation of Treaty rights. In response to reports of abuse, the INS has proposed the creation of a *Tribal Accreditation Card* which would be recognized at the border as an acceptable form of identification for Native Peoples. To subject indigenous people to such alienating practices, however, violates the freedom of movement guaranteed by the treaties. These problems prompted the formation of the *Alianza Indígena Sin Fronteras* — Indigenous Alliance Without Borders in 1997. The following year, I had the opportunity to attend several meetings, concerts and plays and to speak with organizers. These organizers maintained that they do not cross borders, but rather it is the border that crosses them (Interview, Leal August 1997).

Migrants attempting to capitalize on Native Peoples' freedom to cross, are frequently drawn to outlying and isolated border crossing areas. Often the migrants carry little water and Aboriginal lands offer few sources of fresh water to supplement them on their arduous

provided for the sale of *ejido* lands to commercial agribusinesses.

walk across sweltering desert lands.⁶¹ In June 1997 alone, 17 illegal immigrants, including a three year old child, were rescued in the desert near Tucson. The undocumented migrants later revealed that they were abandoned by a *coyote*, with no food and little water for several days (AI 1998a, Hartman 1999a, 1999b). The death toll from dehydration and heat exhaustion along the Arizona border continues to escalate as hyper-militarization pushes migrants into more remote and treacherous terrains.⁶²

Not only are undocumented migrants subject to increasing levels of insecurity — US border communities are also vulnerable to the effects of escalating militarization. Racial profiling targeting Hispanics, for example, has led to abuse of authority and use of excessive force in these communities. During the course of my field study, a massive immigrant ‘round-up’ in Chandler, Arizona, conducted by the INS on July 27, 1997, revealed the extent of these excesses. Aided by local police, military forces and Border Patrol agents, heavily armed SWAT teams conducted a house-to-house ‘search and seizure’ in the city’s Latino sectors. Agents targeted and detained those who ‘looked’ Mexican, leading ‘suspects’ at gunpoint from their homes in various states of disarray. Ironically, ‘looking’ Mexican, in this Hispanic barrio, places most residents in jeopardy. The INS blitz lasted for five days and has been frequently cited for its flagrant violation of the Fourth Amendment, which prohibits unlawful searches and seizures. The Arizona Attorney General condemned the raid, referring

⁶¹ Medical experts assert that the human body requires one gallon of water per hour to survive the extreme desert temperatures. This critical information, is seldom relayed to migrants who are attempting to cross the line.

⁶² In 1999, for example, eight people died in the Arizona desert, and a further 275 people were reportedly rescued by Border Patrol (Hartman 1999a, 1999b).

to police radio transcripts which revealed that the agents openly ignored the conventions of 'probable cause' and 'reasonable suspicion' (Parenti 1998; Magruder 1998; Nuñez 1998, 1997). While these actions shocked the community, they validated long-standing allegations of police racism and abuse and confirmed concerns for people's (in)security.

SWAT-style operations invariably lead to abuse of authority and threaten people's security. The frequency of such militaristic manoeuvres, however, continues to escalate and unsettle relations between law enforcement officers and Latino communities. The real and perceived threats which authorities pose to individuals and their communities ensure that most raids remain uncontested, and consequently, uninvestigated. INS and Border Patrol's cooperative military initiatives, therefore, continue to terrorize border communities. I would argue that these practices serve as a visible and concrete mechanism for social control of racialized Others.

Given the environment of militarization, invasion, hyper-surveillance and racial profiling, in 1998, in Nogales, Arizona, public opinion strongly opposed the use of military forces for the interdiction of drug or migrant crossings. The mayor of Nogales, nonetheless, authorized their use for surveillance in surrounding areas (Portillo 1998b). This has resulted in an armed human wall, in addition to the existing steel one, to prohibit unauthorized crossings. As was the case in Chandler, there have been significant negative implications for Nogales residents who have perceived a heightening of insecurity with the militarization of civilian spaces. The military's emphasis on the use, and show, of force, which utilizes large numbers of soldiers and equipment, invariably heightens civilian vulnerability, particularly in communities which are predominantly Hispanic and Mexican in origin. Further, since illegal

(im)migration and drug trafficking are international issues, rather than regional or local phenomena, the militarization of borderland civilian spaces is even more problematic since it reinforces negative stereotyping. Nonetheless, the escalation of militarization in Arizona, and throughout the border region, continues.

Evidence supports allegations of racism and abuse of power by INS and Border Patrol agents made by Latino border community residents. One such incident involved the intimidation of two Latino children, ages seven and ten, by Border Patrol agents. While waiting to be picked up after school, the children were warned by Border Patrol that if they failed to carry their US birth certificates, they would be deported to Mexico. While this incident was documented in Texas, the trend toward abuse of power and authority in other locations suggests that such conduct is not limited to Texas Border Patrol agents (Siskind 1998). Alongside claims of direct abusive practices, allegations of Border Patrol agents' failures to provide appropriate medical attention abound. On August 22, 1997, for example, a pregnant migrant woman was chased by Border Patrol and subsequently fell on her stomach. The woman experienced immediate abdominal cramping and vaginal bleeding. While she complained to the Agents that she was miscarrying, her cries for help were ignored. Two hours later, when she was deported to Mexico, Mexican border officials summoned an ambulance and she was taken to the hospital (AI 1998a).

These stories of abuse echo those told by the women participants in this study. The women said that they always made sure their children carried proper documentation at all times. They told of friends who had been apprehended and mistreated, and they spoke of their special vulnerability, as women, to sexual violence. Incidents of racial profiling and the

targeting of Latinos by US Border officials are clearly jeopardizing the security of those who live in the borderlands. Systemic abuses by the Border Patrol, INS, police, and military continually reinforce the realities of human insecurity. The reputed security relationship of protector/protected, between state authorities and people, is clearly disrupted by this threatening environment. For those who are subject to abuse by authorities, the long-term effects are devastating.

Vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse, intimidation and exploitation, women who attempt to cross the border illegally face unique risks. Notwithstanding the usual risks — dehydration, hypothermia or abandonment by *coyotes* and smugglers — migrant women report physical assaults and robberies at a higher rate than male migrants. Once apprehended, moreover, women face the additional threats of sexual violence. Records show that sexual assaults of women in detention account for 13.3% of the reported human rights violations in 1997. The practice of releasing deportees at the border late at night is problematic for women. Alone in an unfamiliar area, and without resources or a place to stay, women are at great risk. Late at night, after local buses have stopped running and when street gangs roam, women are easy targets for abuse. Recognizing women's specific vulnerability, in May of 1997, the INS agreed to stop deporting unaccompanied women into Mexico at night. Nonetheless, reports of this practice continued well into 1998 (Interview with Dr. Eleazar Garcia 1997; AI 1998a).

Many women who are victims of physical and sexual assault suffer in silence, conditioned by the prevalence of gendered violence in their communities. Consequently, INS and Border Patrol abuses are probably largely unreported. Even when abused women recognize their

rights, few confront authorities because of their fear of retaliation and/or deportation. Consumed with the everyday struggled for survival, few women in the borderlands are able to summon the strength necessary to lodge a formal complaint, particularly when they view the process as futile.

Likewise, on February 14, 1997, a 22-year old pregnant Honduran woman was apprehended and sent to an INS detention centre. The woman stated repeatedly that she was unwell. Her concerns, however, were ignored by officials and after 18 days in detention, the woman suffered a miscarriage. While it is against INS policy to detain pregnant women, the INS reported that in this case they had not had time to complete the appropriate paper work which would have released the woman. As of July 1, 1997, Arizona declared that it would no longer provide prenatal care to illegals. This initiative was prompted by accounts that Arizona spent \$7.2 million on prenatal care for illegals in 1996. Advocates for increased militarization along the Arizona border, are quick to cite reports that more than 800 deliveries to illegal alien mothers occurred per month in 1996 (*Migrant News*, February 1997). Denying women the right to prenatal care and delivery services, based on citizenship, further jeopardizes the security and rights of women and their unborn children.

Mexican Militarization of the Border

South of the line, militarization has also escalated at the expense of people's security. The Mexican military has become a more visible presence in the border region, even though Mexico maintains one of the smallest armies in the world in proportion to its population. In Article 129 of the Mexican Constitution, the military is designated the role of addressing

national security and integrity, and unlike the US, Mexico has never specifically prohibited the military from participating in operations regarding public security, crime prevention or domestic policing. In the absence of a significant external security threat, the Mexican army has become the country's largest domestic police force. Beginning in 1988, when the widespread fraud associated with the election of President Carlos Salinas led to outbursts of popular outrage, the military has been increasingly used to repress social unrest and political protest. Under President Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000) the military became increasingly involved in domestic law enforcement and drug interdiction (Yarrow 1999). As a result, indigenous and human rights groups accused the Zedillo government of using the military to wage LIC in the southern states of Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca, as well as in the northern state of Sinaloa, which was identified as one of the centres of the illegal drug trade (Moore 1997).

In 1996, a week before the US agreed to a \$20 billion bailout of the Mexican economy, following the peso crisis of 1995, Mexican officials agreed to greater cooperation with US initiatives, and to expand policing operations regarding immigration and drug interdiction. Consequently, the tasks of the *Grupo Beta*, Tijuana's border police tactical unit, were extended to the border towns of Nogales and Matamoros. Although *Grupo Beta* was established to protect emigrants from criminal activity, and is prohibited by law from intervening in law enforcement, there is increasing pressure for *Grupo Beta* forces to be used to prevent migrants from moving across the border. Under intensified American pressures, Mexico has used *Grupo Beta* forces to prevent the 'mass rushing' of US ports of entry (Palafox 1996).

In 1997, Mexican military and police personnel accounted for one-third of the students enrolled at the *School of the Americas*,⁶³ and almost one-third of those attending the Inter-American Air Forces Academy. In 1997, US sales and transfers of arms and military equipment to Mexico topped \$62 million. This figure includes tuition to: the US's *International and Military Education Training Program*, from which Mexico has been the top recipient of funding since 1996; the *Special Operations Forces Training*, which provides theoretical and practical instruction in air assault and drug interdiction for Mexico's Army Air-Mobile Special Forces Groups and naval forces; and the *Foreign Military Interaction Programs*, which facilitates cooperation between the US military and military institutions throughout the Americas by sponsoring high-level military conferences, collaborative efforts and exchange programmes (Yarrow 1999).

While the US attempts to coopt Mexico in its War on Drugs, a significant portion of the Mexican economy, estimated at \$15 billion per year, can be traced to the reinvestment of drug profits. US officials estimate that 70% of South American cocaine and 80% of imported marijuana enter the US via Mexican drug cartels, which earn between \$30 billion and \$50 billion per year from sales in the US. These figures dwarf the \$7 billion earnings from oil,

⁶³The US Army School of Americas (SOA), based in Fort Benning, Georgia, trains Latin American soldiers in combat, counter-insurgency, and counter-narcotics intelligence and interdiction tactics. According to the public watchdog group, School of the America's Watch, graduates of the SOA have been responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America. Among the SOA's nearly 60,000 graduates are the notorious dictators Manuel Noriega and Omar Torrijos of Panama; Leopoldo Galtieri and Roberto Viola of Argentina; Juan Velasco Alvarado of Peru; Guillermo Rodriguez of Ecuador; and, Hugo Banzer Suarez of Bolivia. Many other SOA graduates have participated in human rights abuses, and the assassination in 1980 of Salvadorian Archbishop Oscar Romero, and the El Mozote Massacre of 900 civilians in El Salvador in 1993, have been attributed to SOA graduates (School of the America's Watch, <http://www.soaw.org/>).

Mexico's leading 'legal' export. If drug revenues were to be cut in half and the laundering of money through Mexico's various financial institutions halted, the fragile Mexican economy would be seriously destabilized (Yarrow 1999). Consequently, the US War on Drugs places Mexico in a very precarious position.

Furthermore, the July 1997 arrest of General Jesús Gutiérrez Rebollo confirmed allegations that drug cartels were long under PRI protection. Gutierrez Rebollo, the chief of the government's anti-drug forces, was charged with running a sophisticated drug operation together with Mexican drug cartels, and with protecting the powerful Juárez cartel (Moore 1997). Wide-spread corruption in anti-drug programmes led the US to debate Mexico's recertification under the Drug Country Certification Program⁶⁴ — an action which would have resulted in the levelling of trade sanctions against Mexico. Recertification was awarded in 1997 amidst pressures to provide US drug enforcement agents with greater powers within Mexico. Zedillo, however, vehemently denounced the US proposals, arguing that such efforts would violate Mexican sovereignty. Evidence of corruption and abuse among military and police forces continued to surface throughout Mexico, while in the border region, military and police personnel have been accused of kidnapping and murdering suspected drug traffickers. The acceleration of anti-drug efforts within a political economy governed by drug

⁶⁴ The US certification process, required by law since 1986, is an annual assessment whereby the US President presents evidence, collected by Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), to Congress indicating whether major drug producing and drug transit countries have cooperated fully with US anti-drug initiatives and have taken adequate steps on their own in meeting the goals and objectives of the 1988 United Nations *Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*. Section 490 of the US Foreign Assistance Act, requires the President to prepare a list of the major illicit drug producing and transit countries (Andreas 1999, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c; Barry and Honey 1998).

cartels, has made the border region an extremely dangerous place, where murders of, and violence towards, politicians, journalists, police, tourists and citizens have become common (Interview with Dr. Arturo Valenzuela Vasquez, Nogales, Sonora, July 1997; García 1998; IWRAW 1999).

Racism and Militarization

The escalating militarization of the border responds to a perceived invasion of contraband from the South, and involves a demonization of the 'Other'. In reaction to an imagined defenselessness, both Mexico and the US have redrawn the boundaries of citizenship in an attempt to exclude 'Others'. The war on drugs and on illegal migration has created a war zone in the heavily armed and guarded border region, at great human cost. Under this paradigm, national security is equated with the impenetrability of borders, and militarization provides proof that borders are inviolable. This imagined 'integrity' of borders allows states to maintain perceptions of preserving national security. One aspect of national sovereignty, the power to admit and to exclude, reinforces this fragile sense of state security. While preventing some from entering, however, the militarization of borders forces Others to enter by extraordinary means. For the INS, in the borderlands and elsewhere in the US, Others are overwhelmingly Hispanic, Latino or Mexican. Profiling of, and in, these communities have resulted in increasingly adverse and insecure conditions for residents. Policies of militarization exacerbate negative attitudes towards those defined as Other, and in the long-term, translate into violence, hostility and insecurity. California's notorious *Bill 187*, passed in 1996, for example, rescinded the rights of undocumented migrants to basic services such

as education and health care. It demands that teachers and doctors report illegals and 'suspected' illegals to INS authorities, creating the environment of mistrust, suspicion and Othering which dominates many minority communities. Furthermore, by coopting community members into surveillance forces, the provision of much needed services is severely curtailed. Most important, however, is the institutionalization of 'reasonable suspicion', based on ethnicity, language and skin colour. Others, therefore, are made vulnerable and insecure because of who they are. Such legislation is based on the misconception that (im)migrants are a burden on the US economy. This idea remains widely held, despite well publicized statistics from the National Commission for Reform of Immigration in the United States, which reveal that immigrants contribute an estimated \$10 billion per year to the US economy (Fix and Tumlin 1997; García; 1998: 124; Martin 1995). Nevertheless, conservative officials and popular discourses surrounding immigration continue to sustain prejudices and discrimination in direct contradiction to the empirical evidence.

The passage of *Proposition 187* in California has been followed by the re-emergence of English Only movements throughout the US. In 1999, Arizona's attempt to establish English as the state's official language was stalled by the US Supreme Court's decision not to hear the case. Nevertheless, attempts continue to withdraw funding from bilingual education services throughout Arizona. Consequently, communities are increasingly divided along linguistic and ethnic lines. Furthermore, these communities experience inwardly-directed hostility, fear, suspicion and violence under the heightened military presence, surveillance and blockade-style border enforcement strategies. This self-disciplining apparatus results

in a 'militarization of people's minds'. By preventing people from 'seeing' the Other in human terms, barriers are erected and stereotypes are reenforced. Such practices are legitimated by, and evident from, the militarization of the language and discourse surrounding immigration issues, which employs such terms as national security, threat and danger (Pettman; 1996c). This trend, combined with the redirection of US resources towards the War on drugs, renders those of Hispanic, Latino and Mexican ethnicity increasingly insecure in the borderlands and throughout the US.

South of the border, ethnic conflict is also evident. Tensions between Mexican and Central American migrants have emerged due to the INS's practice of dumping illegals at the border. Ethnic tensions are precipitated, for the most part, by US deportations, especially since Central Americans and other Latinos often claim Mexican nationality. Deportation to Mexico is preferred by illegals since this allows 'repeaters' to attempt immediately to cross again.⁶⁵ As US authorities become familiar with these fraudulent claims, the abuse of illegals has escalated. In one such case, when a 17-year old Salvadorian's claim to Mexican citizenship was contested by US authorities, the boy was beaten, threatened and denied food and water before admitting his true nationality. In some juvenile cases, children have been transferred to Mexican authorities for interrogation regarding their citizenship. These authorities are reportedly much more brutal and such practices constitute serious violations of INS policy, US national law and international human rights standards (AI 1998a).

⁶⁵Migration, immigration and human trafficking are explored in greater detail in Chapter 7, *Gender, Migration and Community: Erecting Barriers and Building Bridges*.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I used the theoretical and methodological framework developed in the previous chapters to explore the history, meanings and images of borders for state, community and personal identity formations. I showed how the ongoing and violent power struggles which surround borders are inherent to the realist discourse, theory and practices of the international state system. I explored the meanings of borders, barriers and boundaries from several theoretical and social perspectives and various attempts to define the border from the perspective of states, communities and individuals were examined.

This chapter provided a brief historical review of border disputes between Mexico and the US, emphasising those concerning the Arizona-Sonora sector. I also examined the ongoing escalation of militarization in the borderlands, and the state directed violence which creates and perpetuates an environment of insecurity. Borders were revealed as complex paradoxes, and sites of contradiction and conflict, and I argued that we must move beyond simple state-centric concepts to understand their impact on the everyday lives of border women. I have shown the border to be a social and historical construct where those who live in its shadow construct their own understandings according to their experiences. Women, therefore, are agents of change who create and re-create boundaries, social spaces and communities.

Efforts to make national borders secure, particularly through militarization, render borderlanders insecure. For women, this insecurity is exacerbated by various forms of gendered violence. In this environment of hyper-militarization, warfare and violence, where

migrants are understood as alien terrorists and undesirables, human security will remain an unattainable objective. The emergence of new security issues, however, has forced national and international relations theorists to rethink security, and to place people at the centre of their analyses. Accordingly, questions of who is being secured? and, by what means? are at the forefront in borderland security discourses.

(En)gendering Social (In)security

Gender inequality and discrimination harm girls' and women's health directly and indirectly, throughout the life cycle; and neglect of their health needs prevents many women from taking a full part in society.

UNFPA, State of the World Population 2000

Under the gendered division of resources, women not only have little access to resources ... but also are treated as resources themselves, to be used and abused when it suits the purposes of powerful men, states, and industries. What women need and want is rarely considered in the calculus of how resources are defined, divided, and used. As a result, not only women but also the planet and its other inhabitants suffer from this far-from-benign neglect.

Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues: Dilemmas in World Politics*, 1993: 111.

There is a political geography of gender that appears to be universal, although it takes specific socio-cultural forms in different times and spaces ... [there is] a direct correlation between women's spatial segregation and their status.

Jan Jindy Pettman, *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics*, 1996a: 187.

Introduction

The UNDP (UN 1994b) framework defines health and the environment as important categories of human security and cites infection and parasitic disease as the major cause of death in less developed countries and the principal obstacle to the attainment of a healthy, secure society. The framework fails, however, to acknowledge these categories as gendered

constructs wherein women are assigned to bear most of the responsibility for their families' health. Likewise, social and historically constructed gender roles and expectations assign women most of the responsibility for household issues. This inequality is maintained through the gendered apparatus that structurally and systematically designates gendered spaces and responsibilities and operates to institutionalize public/private dichotomies, gendered structures and gendered violence. The gendering of spaces has defined the family and the home as women's areas of responsibility. In the home, women's work is traditionally un(der)valued and unrecognized for its social and economic contributions. Yet, women's care-taking practices are integral to family and social security.

The concept of social security is commonly associated with the emergence of the welfare state in the post-WWII period, however, the absence of a more comprehensive term to encompass the wide variety of social issues of concern here forces the appropriation of this term for an alternative use. In this study of the Ambos Nogales borderlands, the term social security refers to broader social issues absent from or underdeveloped by the UNDP's human security framework. Along that border, social security is often endangered by overcrowded living conditions, deficient shelter, wide-spread poverty, health problems, poor health care systems, environmental degradation, inadequate water distribution and waste-disposal infrastructures, and unequal access to utilities. These precarious conditions exacerbate the insecurity of migrant women in the borderlands and make the attainment of social security for women and their families very difficult.

To develop this argument, this chapter examines: *(i)* demographic challenges to social security in Ambos Nogales, *(ii)* migrant women's experiences of social insecurity and an

unhealthy border, (iii) health care systems and women's situated knowledge of health, (iv) crossing the line for health care, and (iv) the gendered structures and gendered violence that inhibit women's attainment of social security.

Demographic Challenges to Social Security in Ambos Nogales

Nogales, Arizona is predominantly Spanish-speaking, and Mexican in both ethnic origin and cultural identity. It is a small town with a population of 37,870 people in 1997. There has been a slow but steady population increase of approximately 1,000 people per year, and 30% of this increase is attributable to immigration. Nearly 60% of the residents are over 25 years of age, and this age distribution remained unchanged in the 1990s.⁶⁶ The relatively small population increase can be attributed to a weak economic infrastructure, non-arable land, limited water supplies, and environmental degradation. Furthermore, it has been targeted by the INS as one of the highest migration corridors in Arizona, which makes it an unlikely and unfriendly location for migrant settlement.

Across the line, *en el otro lado*, Nogales, Sonora, demographic conditions differ greatly from those of its northern counterpart. The Mexican side has witnessed rapid population growth, initially through migration from more southern parts of Mexico. Currently, however, population growth is predominantly due to migration from within the Sonoran region. In 1990, the population of Nogales, Sonora, was 107,936 and nearly 60% of the residents were under the age of 25 (PAHO; 1994). Between 1990 and 1997, the population more than

⁶⁶Evidence of this steady growth is reflected in estimated populations of 29,676 in 1990; 37,870 in 1997; 38,155 in 1998; and, 39,150 in 1999 (PAHO 1994; DOC 1999).

doubled to 250,000 and continued to grow by more than 150,000 people per year. In 2000, there was an estimated 600,000 inhabitants in Nogales, Sonora (INEGI 2001). Since the ongoing processes of change and establishment make accurate census data collection difficult in Mexican *colonias*,⁶⁷ these figures are probably well below the actual population level. Drawn by the promise of opportunities, the border population continues to grow.

While many Mexican Americans, throughout the US, suffer from low household income and poor standards of living, residents of border towns on the US side like Nogales, Arizona are disproportionately disadvantaged. Poverty is a significant problem in these border communities, where the percentage of indigents is well above the national average. In 1995, an estimated 10,000 people, were living in poverty in Nogales, of whom 4,300 were children under the age of 18(DOC 1996). Almost 30% of the enumerated population were living beneath the poverty line, not including the undocumented migrant population. In 1996, while the median household income in the US was \$24,000, 36% of Mexican American households fell below this level and 15% these households had an annual income below \$10,000. Only 18% of Mexican American households fell into the top category, earning over \$50,000 per year (DOC 1997).

This data reveals the poverty and poor standard of living facing most Mexican Americans. In practice, the social construction of households varies according to context. Often a household is defined in economic terms, rather than by the social relationships which bond families and fictive families together. The incorporation of extended family relationships is

⁶⁷ The term *colonia* literally translates from Spanish to *housing estate*. In the border vernacular, however, it simply means neighbourhood. *Colonias*, then, refer to the many *ad hoc* neighbourhoods which arise within and around border cities and towns.

a common survival strategy among migrants. Consequently, physical house(hold) statistics can artificially elevate incomes levels for 'households' which include multiple income earners.

Poverty in Mexican border communities is rampant, with 60% of the population living below the poverty line. Women perform daily 'miracles' providing for their families. Even when many wages contribute to the household income, families are unable to meet their basic needs. In the *maquiladoras* which dominate the formal economy of Nogales, Sonora, workers' wages range between \$25 and \$50 per week depending on gender, age, skill and seniority. Furthermore, a reliable income is increasingly precarious in the large informal sector in which women predominate. Sixty percent of the population belongs to female-headed households, illustrating a feminization of poverty in the borderlands (CODESPA Foundation 2000; Gimenez 1994). Migration, abandonment, and domestic violence exacerbate women's experiences of poverty and insecurity. The position of women and their families was compromised by the 1994 peso crisis, which reduced real Mexican wages and purchasing power by more than half. Economic restructuring has eliminated food subsidies, and led to cut backs in spending on education and health care (Standing 2000; Langer and Lozano 1996; Asthana 1994). For the many migrants arriving daily at the border, the absence of community and kinship networks can mean disaster since these networks are often the only available relief from absolute and abject poverty.

The lack of adequate housing in border cities is one of the most significant problems facing women throughout the border region. On the US side of the line, housing is often run-down, poorly maintained, and costly in relation to women's low incomes. Rental housing is

scarce and vacancy rates, even for sub-standard housing, are extremely low. For those who can afford it, mobile housing has become a common alternative to purchasing land or existing homes. The ability to own a home, while leasing the land, offers a sense of permanence and security. Mobile homes, however, are not located in established and well maintained trailer parks, but most are clustered along the Nogales Wash.⁶⁸ These strips of land are often poorly serviced and public transportation is usually located at some distance.

While availability of transportation is often ignored in measures of well-being, reliance upon inefficient public transportation systems is an ineffective use of women's time. None of the women I interviewed owned cars, and public transportation was necessary for them to access doctors, hospitals, shopping and employment. Buses and taxis are available, although taxis were too expensive for most of the participants. While buses are infrequent, they follow regular schedules and routes. Furthermore, many of the major commercial shopping chains have established free buses, which depart regularly from the main border port of entry and transport 'crossers' to outlying shopping malls. This practice has drawn trade and commerce from the downtown corridor of Nogales, Arizona.

On the Mexican side of the border, lack of housing is also a problem. Due to the enormous daily influx of migrants to border cities, an ongoing housing deficit in the emerging *colonias* is inevitable. In many cases, *colonias* are formed when migrants usurp unoccupied spaces and begin building their homes. Once a *colonia* is established, migrants are usually required to pay rent to local governments for the use of land. Migrants rarely have

⁶⁸ The Nogales Wash is the natural water system which runs underground from one end of Ambos Nogales to the other, unhindered by the border.

a sense of real permanency since local governments seldom allow migrants to purchase lands. Rather, governments choose to rely on long-term rental incomes from the migrants residing on public lands.

Like most of the many *colonias* in Nogales, Sonora, *Colonia Solidaridad*, where the women in this study live, first emerged as a squatter community. Perched on the side of a steep, sandy hill, this *colonia* is part of Nogales, yet also separate. It is a shanty town which sprung up to house migrants crossing the border in search of a better life. Homes are often built piecemeal from available materials, and living conditions are rudimentary and substandard. As María Teresa (Mex) explained: “We want to build another room, one is not enough for all of us. So, every week I buy one [cinder] block, it cost only two pesos, so each week that pile over there, it grows by one and then one day we will have another room.” More frequently, as in the one room house where María Teresa and her family now live, houses are made from whatever can be scavenged. Common building materials include cinder blocks, wooden pallets ‘found’ behind *maquilas* and grocery stores, scraps of plywood, cardboard taken from dumpsters, old tires filled with sand, and corrugated tin.

On the outskirts of Nogales, Sonora, companies have erected subsidized housing for *maquiladora* workers. Many of the workers are housed in *dormitorios* — military-like barracks, segregated by sex, with little or no privacy. Some women voiced suspicions and repeated rumours of lesbianism and harassment by lesbians in the *dormitorios*. Such comments reflect the culture of heterosexuality and *marianismo* which predominates in Mexican culture, as discussed in Chapter 3. Since women fear that they may be labelled lesbians, these rumours may encourage women to marry and stay in abusive heterosexual

relationships. Consequently, the rumours reinforce a culture in which women's movements are constrained, their dependence is constituted and their opportunities for alternative lifestyles are circumscribed.

One particular *maquila* in Nogales, Sonora, provided finished housing for some of its workers through a program called "*La Esperanza*" (Zabin 1996). Single units (one room with a kitchen and a bathroom) were built at high costs using misappropriated government subsidies, which went to private developers rather than the low-income residents for whom they were intended. These 'luxurious' individual family facilities are often reserved for more skilled workers and *maquila* managers, to keep them tied to the company. Furthermore, living in company owned and subsidized housing renders employees highly vulnerable since workers are reliant on the company for both wages and housing. The possibility of an abuse of power within such a relationship has been well documented in historical and popular accounts of company towns in mining and lumbering communities in the United States and Canada (Tolan 1996; Crawford 1995).

While most of Nogales, Arizona, is serviced by electricity, many households in Sonoran border towns lack access. In Nogales, Sonora, it was estimated that 14% of households were without electricity in 1990, while to the east, in Agua Prieta, the percentage was even higher, at an estimated 17% (PAHO 1995, 1997). With the ongoing *ad hoc* establishment of *colonias* and increasing migration, it is likely that the number of homes without access to electricity is severely underestimated. Access and use of electricity can be dangerous since it is often 'pirated' from across the border or from the municipality. Cooking can also be dangerous since fuel containers commonly fail to meet official health and safety standards. When

people can afford gas/propane, conventional stoves are used, otherwise more traditional methods and alternative sources of fuel are used.

The twin cities lie in a small valley, 24 kilometres long and only 0.8 kilometres wide. The climate is semi-arid and annual precipitation is unequally distributed. The rainy season fall in July and August, and flash flooding is common during this period (Ingram *et al.* 1995). The flat surface of the Nogales flood plain is a natural site for urban development. Consequently, housing, transportation routes, and utility lines were erected along the natural contours of the watercourse, and this has made the two towns susceptible to flooding. Even minor rains cause huge interruptions in the flow of people and goods across the border. During severe rainstorms, extensive property damage, personal injury and even deaths occur.⁶⁹

The Nogales Wash flood tunnel system serves as a makeshift home for many street kids living south of the border. Human security is fragile under such conditions. Furthermore, the

⁶⁹ To minimize these damages, the two federal governments, under the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), undertook a joint flood control project which consisted of five kilometres of covered channel and an additional two kilometres of concrete lined channel. The submerged portion of the channel begins one mile (1.6 km) south of the border. Here the Nogales Wash enters the 22 foot (6.7 m) wide, 12 foot (3.7 m) high channel which has been built under the downtown core of the two cities. The channel surfaces on the US side less than one mile (1.4 km) north of the border (Ingram *et al.* 1995).

tunnel serves as a link to the US for illegal migrant crossings.⁷⁰ Consequently, surveillance is heavy and significant barriers to human crossing have been constructed.

The damage caused by flash flooding south of the line is astounding. Homes are routinely swept from the sides of sandy slopes, and makeshift privies and sewer systems overflow, contaminating huge areas of land. I visited *Colonia Solidaridad* a day after the flash storm, and was told that a flood of mud and waste gushed through the centre of peoples' homes. I was also advised that in outlying areas the delivery of utilities was interrupted. Water containers, commonly kept outside houses and covered only with a loose piece of plywood, were contaminated by debris. Garbage barrels, which usually stand beside these water containers, were pitched, strewn about and carried away, depositing waste throughout the *colonia*. While official clean up efforts focussed on the downtown core and the zones leading to the official ports of entry, many women worked long hours in an attempt to retake control of their homes.

Urban development on both sides of the border has significantly altered natural water flows, and with the increase in demand and consumption, water stores have become scarce. According to the World Bank (1992), health and human survival require the consumption of 20 to 40 litres of water per person each day. This provision is based on the assumption that this water is used for waste disposal and sound health and hygiene practices. Research

⁷⁰ On August 5, 1997, while this study was being undertaken, a flash flood occurred. The downpour, which lasted only two hours, resulted in the closing of the US-Mexican ports of entry at Nogales for more than four hours. The deluge of flowing mud, debris and overturned vehicles, which were washed down the steep sandy hills to the city centre of Nogales, Sonora, streamed across the border. What was perceived to be a secure and impermeable border was assaulted by the invasion of a turbid contaminated deluge.

indicates that water is only used for fundamental hygienic purposes after water availability exceeds 80 litres per capita daily. Daily per capita needs, therefore, do account for 'luxuries' as flushing toilets and washing clothes. Residents north of the border with housing linked to the water delivery system, tend to use much more water per capita than their southern counterparts. This statistic is not surprising since most residents of Sonora do not have ready access to water and must fetch and carry water for personal and family usage. For many people, water is brought to the *colonia* twice a week by truck. These trucks are often contaminated by the petroleum or chemicals which they previously hauled. Water is collected by women and children in various containers and carried back to the household, where it is poured into larger barrels. This is a time consuming and strenuous job because of the difficulty of carrying water and the use of makeshift storage containers. Furthermore, the quality of the water is doubtful since water and garbage are often kept side by side in large industrial barrels, distinguishable only by the piece of plywood placed on top of the water barrel to keep flies and other contaminants out.⁷¹

Access to fresh clean water is an important component of health and healthiness and, therefore, a central concern in analyzing human security. As the demand for water increases, accessing adequate water becomes increasingly problematic in Ambos Nogales although in an asymmetrical way. In an attempt to meet current water demands, and in anticipation of population increases, Nogales, Sonora applied for and received \$39 million in funding from

⁷¹ Some water barrels have been lined with unused body bags left over from the Gulf war, purchased by local activists, in an attempt to prevent the leaching of chemicals, formerly contained in the plastic drums, into potable water (interview, Leal, 1997).

the NADBank⁷² in 1996 for a water supply and distribution project. The Sonoran state received an additional \$8.5 million in federal funds for the construction of the aqueduct. These funds are targeted into a two-phase strategy. The first phase is dedicated to upgrading the current water distribution system. This demands the construction of a new aqueduct, regulating tanks and peripheral waterlines as well as the rehabilitation of the existing aqueduct and several water and sewage lines. The necessary waterline survey and information system (GIS) were completed in October 2000, and it is expected that an updated user registry and a management information system (MIS) will be completed in early 2002. The estimated cost of phase one was \$25.5 million. Phase two focuses on the development of a controversial pumping station, which will draw scarce water from the shared aquifer of Ambos Nogales. The Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) certified the project on January 18, 1996 (Kelly *et al.* 2001; NADBank 2002; Sprouse and Mumme 1997).

In addition, there were growing concerns over the now outdated and inadequate wastewater treatment plant shared by Ambos Nogales which dated to the 1950s. In 1946, the original plant located in Nogales, Arizona, boasted a sewer system which serviced almost all local residents and businesses, however, south of the line in Nogales, Sonora, residents continued to rely on cesspools and makeshift pit toilets.⁷³ The natural topography of the

⁷² Under NAFTA, provisions for monitoring and managing the trinationally shared environment. In the border region the principal governing institutions mandated with border environmental protection and improvement are the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) and the North American Development Bank (NADBank).

⁷³ Toilets are often ditches or holes in the ground, with wooden pallets and cardboard constructed to provide some sense of privacy in a densely populated and public spaces.

region, and water system flow from south to north, made the absence of a waste disposal system south of the border an increasing concern to Arizona residents. Furthermore, as the population of Nogales, Sonora, expanded waste disposal became an increasingly significant health hazard on both sides of the border. To address these health concerns, sewage from Mexico was treated, and disposed of, on the US side of the border. The US Congress authorized the construction of the Nogales International Water Treatment Plant (NIWTP) on the northern side. The plant which serviced Ambos Nogales receive funding from both the US and Mexican governments and was completed in 1951.⁷⁴

As the population of Ambos Nogales has grown and economic development has expanded, initially under the *maquiladora* program and currently under NAFTA, the production of waste has out-paced the capacity of the 1950s wastewater treatment plant. To replace portions of the sewer system and upgrade and expand the wastewater treatment and conveyance system, Nogales, Arizona applied for \$74 million from the NADBank in 2000 (NADBank 2002). In January 2002, Nogales, Arizona applied for an additional grant of \$50 million to assist in the upgrade (Nauman 2002a).

The growing number of project submissions to the NADBank and the BECC has overloaded the administrative capacity of the sister institutions. The ever-increasing demand for water and waste management infrastructures in the arid and growing borderlands, however, means that the project submissions will continue from communities on both sides

Waste and garbage removal systems are virtually absent and human waste continues to accumulate in the makeshift facilities which dominate the landscape.

⁷⁴This 1950s bilateral cooperation followed the earlier precedent of a shared wastewater treatment plant, located in the US, between Douglas, Arizona and Agua Prieta, Sonora.

of the border. Unless these projects are allowed to go forward, environmental and human security concerns within the region will continue (Nauman 2002a, 2002b; Kelly *et al.* 2001).

In Ambos Nogales, environmental degradation is clearly evident and questions of environmental and human security are frequently raised by local activist groups. On the Sonoran side of the border, the collection and disposal of garbage is random, leaving an unpleasant visual reminder of the insecurity and poor living conditions facing people in the *colonias*. Nevertheless, little is wasted in a community where ingenuity is necessary for survival. Furthermore, most streets are unpaved, either made of gravel or a rutted compression of dirt. The number of automobiles in the region has increased due to population growth. The growing number of cars, absence of vehicular emission controls, and use of poor quality gasoline contribute to poor air quality in the region. In this environment, women's domestic work is onerous. In the dirt and dust of the *colonias*, it is difficult to keep houses and families clean. Cooking is arduous without access to running water and secure power sources. Tending to sick children, the elderly and family members is a formidable task when access to health care is limited and medicine is expensive.

In addition, US and Mexican border cities continue to violate environmental standards. Disposal of hazardous waste has become a primary concern since border industrialization has grown during the past 30 years.⁷⁵ Inadequate disposal of toxic waste, as well as mismanagement of pesticides, has created significant environmental hazards. For example, in 1992, more than 32,000,000 pounds of toxic materials were released in, or transferred to,

⁷⁵ See Cruz-Valderram 1997; Bruhn and Brandon 1997; Garza 1995, 1993; del Carmen *et al.* 1992; Guendelman and Jasis 1992; McKeith 1990; Samimi *et al.* 1988.

the border region. In 1996, the San Pedro River in Naco contained 35 times the federal allowable maximum for lead in drinking water and five times the federal maximum for arsenic. Furthermore, high levels of lead have been found in the soil around Douglas, Arizona and Agua Prieta (USMBHC 1999).

Insecurity of Unhealthy Borders

From a public health perspective, sovereign distinctions between the US and Mexico are irrelevant since border populations are in direct and indirect contact on a daily basis. The interconnectedness of this artificially demarcated community is evident in its shared circumstances. Although Ambos Nogales is artificially divided, the community shares common environmental health problems such as poverty, poor nutrition, and lack of clean water. The population faces further health risks due to the absence of basic sewage systems, including higher rates of waterborne, airborne and other infectious and non-communicable diseases. The inability of geopolitical barriers to prohibit the transfer of air, water, pollution, and diseases reinforces the argument made in my thesis that border issues and problems are inappropriately addressed through and within doctrines of sovereignty and national security, and escalating militarization.

Communicable and non-communicable diseases pose an imminent threat to the health and security of all who live in the borderlands. Poverty, poor sanitation and the contamination of water contribute to outbreaks and epidemics which regularly plague border communities. Residents of Ambos Nogales suffer from high rates of vaccine-preventable diseases. Morbidity rates for measles and mumps, for example, are above national averages, and

incidences of rubella are at between six and ten times the US national average. In 1997, the United States Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC)⁷⁶ reported outbreaks of pertussis,⁷⁷ commonly known as whooping cough, and meningococcal meningitis.⁷⁸ Infants and children are vulnerable to both of these diseases. Furthermore, many diseases remain undiagnosed and untreated because of high health care costs and lack of health insurance.

According to PAHO (1994, 1999), the leading cause of infant death on both sides of the border are diseases of the perinatal period, followed by congenital anomalies. Although congenital anomalies and birth defects are evident on both sides of the line, the incidence of anomalies is twice as high south of the border. Of those interviewed, 30% attested that congenital anomalies played a significant role in the health of their children⁷⁹ and there was

⁷⁶United States Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC) was established to coordinate health delivery services on both sides of the international divide. Its objectives include the identification and prioritization of common binational health problems and needs, collection of health related data, determination of plans and strategies to increase preparedness, development of a binational health surveillance system, produce primary care research initiatives and expansion of financing for border health care services (Crespin 1994). Additionally, the US-Mexico Border Health Association (USMBHA), established in 1943, is a binational body which coordinates border health strategies and programs among the 10 states and two federal governments in the borderlands. The group operates from the El Paso Field Office of the Pan American Health Organization and works with communities on both sides of the border. It emphasizes training trainers, peer educators and lay health care workers (*promotoras*) as well as collaborating on projects oriented towards maternal and child health.

⁷⁷Infants with pertussis-related complications may require hospitalization and even those with mild symptoms can spread the disease if they are not treated properly.

⁷⁸ Meningococcal meningitis is caused by bacteria transmitted through respiratory secretions. The symptoms are sudden, with the onset of fever headache, skin rash, nausea, vomiting, and stiff neck. Although most people will fully recover, with appropriate and immediate antibiotic therapy, between 5% to 20% of survivors suffer permanent nervous system damage.

⁷⁹ The third leading cause of infant mortality south of the border is pneumonia and influenza. In contrast, north of the border Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the third

an unwarranted sense of self-blame among the women participants concerning their children's health problems in these testimonies. María Teresa (Mex) confides: "Anabel didn't cry when she was born, she had a heart defect ... and Azuzane was born with a cleft palate. They say that these are congenital problems, but I don't really understand what I did to cause this for my children." Similarly, Yolanda (US) states:

Gabriel also has some medical problems, he is different [developmentally disabled] so he attends special education classes and he takes physical therapy. I think it is because I did not have prenatal care. I was very old and had started menopause when I found that I was pregnant with him. I think that I was too old to have another child and that is why he is like he is.

For Marta Emelda (Mex), the search for a reason seemed particularly important:

My son has bad eyes, he has problems with his vision and his eyes do not make tears. Also, he has problems with his weight, he is very small and has trouble gaining weight. I take him to the *Hospital Básico* every month to see the doctor. The doctor says that his problems are congenital, but I think that it is because of the environment.

Gastrointestinal diseases are also a significant problem for adults and in Nogales, Sonora, the incidence of deaths resulting from these diseases is second only to Mexicali. In US border communities, salmonella and shigella dysentery are diagnosed three to four times more frequently than in other parts of the United States. South of the line, in Mexican border towns, the incidence of salmonella is 26% higher than the rest of Mexico (USMBHC 1999). Acute Diarrheal Diseases (ADD) and parasitosis also plague the region. The elderly and

leading cause of infant mortality. While cases of SIDS in the border region are lower than the national average, this can be attributed to fewer and less intensive investigations into infant deaths in the border. On the Mexican side of the line, SIDS is virtually absent from health and mortality statistics. This can be accounted for by the virtual absence of any investigations into infant deaths, rather deaths are attributed to the most obvious conditions of poverty. Further, in this strongly Catholic society, unexplainable death is often explained in religious terms as 'God's will'. Although less prominent north of the border, infectious diseases of the intestine are cited as the fourth leading cause of infant death south of the line.

infants are vulnerable to these health risks (Alvarez and Gonzalez 1993; Bruhn and Brandon 1997). Furthermore, hepatitis A is increasingly diagnosed on both sides of the line, as a result of fecal contamination of the water supply (Faulkner 1998a, 1998b). Higher rates of gastrointestinal disease can be linked to poverty, inadequate and poor quality water supply, and an environment of insecurity.

With 94 reported cases per 100,000 people, Nogales, Arizona, has the highest rate of lupus erythematosus (SLE), a disease which targets the connective tissues throughout the body, in the US. Myeloma, a form of bone cancer, is reported at two and one half times the national average and exceeds predicted rates of increase in the borderlands. There is also concrete evidence of a resurgence of diseases once thought to be contained, such as drug resistant forms of tuberculosis (TB) and syphilis. The rate of reported cases of TB, in 1995, in the four US border states (California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas) was 13.3 cases per 100,000, well above the US national average of 8.7 cases per 100,000 (Faulkner 1998a). South of the line, in the Sonoran border towns, 107 new cases of TB were reported in 1996. Each person with communicable TB infects a minimum of 20 people with the disease (PAHO 1995, 1997). The spread of TB poses a more serious health risk for those infected with HIV/AIDS⁸⁰ because depressed immune systems make these people far more vulnerable to infectious diseases.

The participants of this study suffered from additional health problems including respiratory problems, acute respiratory infections (ARI), stress, domestic violence, reproductive

⁸⁰Issues of reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS are addressed in more detail Chapter 8, *The Sexual Politics of Reproduction: Wife? Mother? Woman?*

complications and menopausal problems. Respiratory problems were cited as a significant health problems for 17 of the 30 of the women I interviewed, and were equally distributed north and south of the border. Respiratory problems ranged from acute asthma and emphysema to ARIs, which are commonly associated with changes in weather. Environmental hazards and toxic emissions from local *maquilas* irritate existing respiratory problems and caused new ones.⁸¹ ‘Monitored’ border communities in Arizona — Douglas, Nogales and Yuma — continually fail to meet the minimum air quality standard of PM 10 established by the EPA.⁸² Lupita’s (Mex) experience illustrates the double jeopardy of living in the border — poverty and environmental hazards:

The children have many health problems. They have difficulty breathing, you can hear them gasping for breath, also they have chronic coughs. I think the problem is because of the contamination here. Also, our house is not good, especially for the very cold winters. Last year we had two feet of snow and the children had no winter clothes or boots.

All of the women who specified respiratory problems linked them to environmental degradation and the growth of *maquilas* in the area. Mari (Mex) contends:

When you work in the *maquilas*, like my children, there are many chemicals and things that are in the air which you breathe. Those can give you a headache, make you sick and make it difficult to breathe. Even if you don’t work in there, you still breathe the air contamination.

⁸¹ Medical professionals argue that even at levels considered safe by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), air pollutants are a serious health risk. Evidential links between air pollution and lung cancer; and, carbon monoxide and ozone deterioration are associated with eye irritations and respiratory tract ailments, as well as causing dizziness, headaches, sleep disturbances, and memory impairment. Prolonged exposure to particulate matter, smaller than 10 micrometers in diameter is related to decline in lung function and the exacerbation of asthmatic conditions and emphysema, resulting in increased hospitalization and premature deaths (Faulkner 1998a, 1998b).

⁸² I emphasize here monitored since not all border communities are monitored, and those that are monitored, are not done so equally or regularly.

Twelve of the 30 women participants cited stress as a factor detrimental to their personal and family health. Although stress factors are more commonly associated with Western upper and middle class lifestyles, the daily struggle of poverty and survival is a source of great stress for women living at the border. María Elena (Mex) notes that her stress is both situational, as a result of migration, and cumulative since she has endured 15 births and suffered the loss of eight children in their infancy. She acknowledges:

My health has really deteriorated, my health has been seriously affected by the stress of coming here because I don't like it here, it was very peaceful back there [Agua Prieta]. I also got pregnant during my menopause, this was a surprise because I thought that I was finished having babies. Having this baby has placed a lot of stress on my bad health. It is difficult to lose so many children and not to know why. Only God knows the reasons for our struggles.

Stress is caused by conditions of poverty, where the struggle for daily survival is difficult and precarious. Marta Emelda (Mex) tells how uncertainty creates a vicious cycle of stress and pressure in the absence of access to health care and diagnoses:

My husband has migraines, lung problems and pain in his chest. I think the headaches are due to stress because right now he doesn't have a job and we have money problems. This could also be the cause of his chest pains. But I worry because we have no money to see the doctor. So we don't really know what is wrong.

Mari's (Mex) experience points to the physical and emotional insecurity of life in the borderlands as a cause of stress:

There is lots of insecurity on the streets, like when we were robbed at gun point. Also, for the children, there are pressures from the job and studies. Elivra [who is 16 years old and works in a *maquila*] gets lots of headaches and when she was asked to take a pregnancy test for her job... She was very stressed because she said this was putting her reputation in doubt. These types of investigations and questions cause stress for her and then she gets more headaches.

Even the struggle to care for and raise children in the borderlands can be extremely difficult. The social and cultural expectations which define women's maternal responsibilities add to the pressures of everyday life, especially when women believe they are not meeting (unattainable) expectations. This seems to be Virginia's (Mex) experience:

I suffer from bad nerves and stress. The children are often very cranky and I have no patience with them, like I should. I definitely think that the stress is bad for my health. It is because of how we live. There is too much work and too many worries. I worry about money, the children, and the future. Nothing here is certain.

Securing Peoples' Health: The Insecurity of Health Care Systems

These public health risks are made worse by the weak health care infrastructure which prevails on both sides of the border. Reporting agencies like PAHO, USMBHA, and USMBHC can only record those health problems which are reported. In the border, incidences of disease and other health related problems are under diagnosed and unreported because of the emphasis on curative measures within the health care infrastructure and people's health care practices. This focus on treatment rather than prevention was evident from the narratives of the women I interviewed. In Ambos Nogales, 12 of the 30 participants said that they practised preventive medicine for themselves and/or their children, however, only one of these woman lived south of the border. Clearly public health problems in the border region are much more serious than reported. Marta Emelda (Mex), for example, confesses: "I think that [my husband's] lung problems are serious . He has been in bad need of medical care for a long time, but the tests and X-rays, they are too much money for us, especially since he is not working." While Marta Emelda's spouse may have contracted TB, it will likely remain undiagnosed and unreported. Diseases are spread throughout the

borderlands because health care is outside of people's reach. The absence of preventive medicine can be explained by the lack of available services, the cost of regular check-ups, the time needed for preventative measures, and the prevailing culture of curative medicine.

Although the Mexican Constitution promises 'universal' access to health care,⁸³ the Mexican population can be divided into three groups based according to varying levels of access (Tamez and Molina 2000a, 2000b; Langer and Lozano 1996; Frenk 1994;). The first group includes those who are insured under the government's *Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social* (IMSS), which provides health care to workers in the formal sector of the economy, and it is financed through contributions from the federal government, employers and workers. The second group includes large sectors of the middle class who are able, without government supported health insurance coverage, to access private health care facilities. The third group are the poor and who lack health care insurance, or the financial resources to access private health care facilities. The social and environmental circumstances of poverty make this group especially vulnerable to health risks. Although the *Secretaría de Salud* (SSA) — Ministry of Health and the *Desarrollo Integral de la Familia* (DIF) — Integral Family Development Institute provide free and discounted medical services to the indigent

⁸³In 1983, an amendment was made to Article 4 of the Mexican Constitution. The amendment effectively raised health protection to a constitutional right, creating a foundation for universal accessibility. In 1995, modifications to the *Ley del Seguro Social* (Social Security Law) and the adoption of the *Programa de Reforma del Sector Salud* (Program for Health Sector Reform), 1995-2000, specified health sector reform program for the period 1995-2000 to support the provision efficient and cost effective health care. Nevertheless, the poor, including most borderlanders, continue to be marginalized from the process.

through the *Hospital Básico*, cut-backs have resulted in severe shortages of both human and material resources.⁸⁴

In Nogales, Sonora, 11 of the 15 women interviewed had no access to government insured health care. Unlike in many other developing countries in Africa and Asia, however, Mexican women and girls are not specifically prevented from accessing health care resources, nor are they disadvantaged in the family's distribution and rationing of food. For Mexicans, men and women alike, access to health care is limited by poverty and rural location. While Nogales, Sonora, is classified as an urban centre because of its dense population, its population is denied most urban amenities and is overwhelmed by poverty. Sonoran women are among those who are most structurally marginalized, often lacking formal sector employment and the health care benefits that come with it. This structural marginalization is inherent to the gendered apparatus and is a manifestation of gendered violence. It is often difficult for women to pay for health care since their employment is usually contractual and subject to the uncertainty of the informal economy.

Private doctors, pharmacists and the *Hospital Básico* meet the health care needs of disadvantaged women in the borderlands. Since the *Hospital Básico* is poorly equipped, under staffed and badly managed, it is predominantly used for extreme emergencies and obstetric deliveries. The cost of a single visit to a private practitioner in Nogales ranged from

⁸⁴ Personal interviews with Dr. J. Gerardo Mada, Epidemiologist, August 1997; José Romero Keith, PAHO, May 1997; Dr. Arturo Valenzuela Vasquez, ObGyn, July 1997; Dr. Eleazar Garcia, Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center (SEAHEC), July 1997.

15 to 30 pesos,⁸⁵ with additional charges for tests or laboratory work. The women interviewed estimated that these costs average between 100 and 115 pesos — almost half of a week's salary. Accordingly, 14 of the 15 participants practised curative rather than preventive health care. Since health is considered to be a woman's responsibility, added stress and burden is placed on women to meet the health care needs of their families. Furthermore, the reproductive capacity of women requires them to pay more for health care resources. This double burden amplifies the gendering of poverty in the border region.

In contrast, most of the women participants in Nogales, Arizona, had access to subsidized health care, which is financed by federal government transfers to the state for Medicaid. Those ineligible for Medicaid can access funding through the various Arizona State health care programs. State and federal funds are administered through Arizona's Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS).⁸⁶ Fourteen of the 15 US participants in this study accessed health care through AHCCCS. In a 1996 study, Arizona researchers (PAHO 1997) found that 46% of working women in Nogales, Arizona, did not have private health insurance coverage and, therefore, were reliant on AHCCCS. The women participants' dependence upon AHCCCS reflects their poor wages, lack of employment benefits, and informal-sector work.

⁸⁵ In 1997, \$1.00 US was approximately equal to seven Mexican pesos, and \$1.00 CDN was approximately equal to five Mexican pesos.

⁸⁶ The purpose of AHCCCS since its introduction in 1981, is to coordinate the effective and efficient use of public and private health care resources. In this way, the system provides for the mainstreaming of recipients of federal and state health care funds into private health care facilities (Arizona Department of Economic Security 1996). Interestingly, Arizona state law requires that emergency care be provided to everyone, regardless of citizenship (Pope 1998). Access to the system, however, is likely to be curtailed by the fear of deportation.

In an environment where wages are the mainstay of human security, single income and female-headed low income families are especially vulnerable. Money, however, is not the only factor influencing women's decisions to use health care facilities in borderlands. Time is also a critical issue both north and south of the line. Pilar (Mex) explains:

I only take the children to the doctor when they are very sick because it takes a lot of time, you have to arrive early in the morning, around 6:00 am, and wait in line to get a number and then you wait until your number is called. Sometimes, you may not even get to see the doctor that day and then you have to do the same thing again the next day.

For women on the margins, an entire day in a line up to see a doctor is unproductive and costly since they must forfeit a day's earnings in the process. Consequently, health care is sought only in extreme cases and seldom for prevention.

Another obstacle to the practice of preventive medicine in the border is a culture which regards medicine to be the exclusive preserve of trained practitioners. In this study, women on both sides of the border expressed apprehension about dealing with health care practitioners, and this can be linked to the gendered and power structures which surround the medical profession. Doctors in the borderlands are usually male, and their decision-making processes are governed by traditional cultural interpretations of womanhood. The subordinate role of nurses, who are usually women, reinforces this alienating and gendered power structure. Since social pressure dictates that women place their trust and control in the hands of men/doctors, women have few opportunities to make decisions regarding their health. This inhibits women's agency, while reinforcing the power of doctors and the health care industry. Aside from the patriarchal relationship between male doctors and female patients, there is also an underlying power relationship, in which formal medical training is

privileged and women's experiential knowledge is denied. Maria Aide (US) confirms: "Sometimes I have confidence in the doctors, but sometimes they give me the same medicine again and again ... even though I say it is not working ... but they don't seem to listen and I don't feel that I can ask for something different, something that will work."

The culture which surrounds medicine and doctors, reinforces a knowledge hierarchy and patient alienation. Paternalism (and even misinformation) on the part of doctors can only strengthen the power of health care practitioners over their patients. María Teresa (Mex) recalls the experiences following the birth of her first child:

The doctor said that Anabel's heart problem was congenital and hereditary. But I investigated in both families, and no one had any of these problems. So, I went back to the doctor and told him. Then he said that it was a problem with the moon. I did not understand, but he would say no more.

Participants from both sides of the border stated that, at times, they did not have confidence in the doctors who they saw or in the services they provided. Their lack of confidence fell into two categories — continuity of care and competence. The women participants contended that continuity of care was lacking in federally funded clinics where patients are seen by the 'next available' practitioner. Since these clinics are staffed on a rotational basis, the practitioner often varies with each visit, and the health care provided is inconsistent. Yolandita (US) explains the implications of this discontinuity:

I have confidence in most of the doctors there, but sometimes I don't. It is by chance that you get a good doctor or the one you want because the clinic has a rotating staff and the doctors change very often. They don't stay here long, I think they can make more money somewhere else.

In a more serious example, which questions practitioner competency, Marta Emelda (Mex) recounts her terrifying experience:

I don't have confidence in the doctors at the *Hospital Básico* because when I was having my caesarian section for my last child, they gave me the operation [tubal ligation] at the same time. I seemed to wake up and I heard the doctor say: 'hey don't forget to move those scissors or you might forget and leave them inside'. I told the doctor: 'oh, please don't leave the scissors inside', and the doctor scolded me and told me: 'this is our business and we know what we are doing'. How can I have confidence after that, who knows if what they did was the right thing or if the operation worked.

Another problem in ensuring the continuity of health care and, therefore, health security, is poor patient record keeping. Studies show that there is a need for record keeping which follows the patient instead of remaining with the clinic. This is important in the frequent cross-border utilization of health care services.⁸⁷ People tend to see more than one doctor if the first treatment seems to be ineffectual, and the resulting duplication in testing adds to their medical expenses. Furthermore, specified treatments may contradict each another, or encourage patients to discontinue one medication in favour of a newly prescribed one before the initial treatment has the opportunity to take effect. The focus on curative, rather than preventive, medicine also increases the possibility of duplication.

Crossing the Line for Health Care

A 1990 survey of health care in Ambos Nogales, showed that 14% of women (and their children) living on the Arizona side crossed the border for medical care (Vogel 1995). Likewise, three of the 15 (20%) participants in this study reported that they crossed the line into Mexico for medical services, and three families reported crossing for dental care. Studies also show that 67% of US border residents cross the line to purchase medications

⁸⁷ See Cordes and Forster 1994; Bruder 1994; Vogel 1995; Stehney 1994; Homedes *et al.* 1995, 1994, 1992; Hurtado 1993; Sotelo 1993; Chacón 1992; Interviews: Gomez 1997; Garcia 1997.

which are either less expensive in Mexico, or unavailable in the US (Vogel 1995; Rosenau Vaillancourt 1997). These studies indicated that poor and uninsured US residents were the predominant crossers for health care.

In addition to the lower costs of services and medication in Mexico, culture and language are important factors in the decision to seek health care south of the line. Most residents in the Arizona borderlands are Spanish-speakers, and 93% of the women in this survey preferred to speak Spanish with health care professionals. Although most health care providers are currently bilingual, 10 years earlier only 17% of the providers in Nogales, Arizona, spoke Spanish (Pope 1998). For the most part, Mexicans cross the border for health care to access specialty medicine or for prenatal and obstetric care. Mexicans with financial means are more likely to cross than the poor.

Health Care and *Promotora* Systems

In the 1970s, declining budgets led to reduced resources for health programs and initiatives, and Mexico introduced the innovative *promotora* system to address health issues more effectively, efficiently and inexpensively (Gonzales *et al.* 1994; Miester *et al.* 1991). This is a community-based model of health care for the disbursement of health services and related information. The *promotora* program provides for the training of lay health care workers for local communities, and most of the trainees are women. There are many benefits to this system: first, the program enables women to provide critical resources for health care at the community level; second, the training and knowledge that it provides facilitate women's empowerment, both for *promotoras* and for women responsible for the health of

their families; third, the individual *promotora* achieves a previously unattainable status within the community and this status contributes to the revaluing of women's knowledge and ability. In much of Latin America, *promotoras* are on the front line of primary health care in small communities and *colonias*. They have become an integral part of their communities since people are inclined to turn to those they know and trust for information and health care advice.

The training and labour practices of the *promotora* programs are, however, questionable. *Promotora* training varies from one week to six months in duration, and includes informal discussion, preparation for positive role modelling, and formal instruction on specific health issues.⁸⁸ Since instruction focuses on family planning, and maternal and child health, *promotoras* can become pawns in population control policies.⁸⁹ There is also the risk that *promotoras* may not seek professional medical care for their clients when needed since they may be under social pressure to overstep their knowledge base. They may not have the training necessary to recognize the limits of their knowledge, and to discern when a medical practitioner is needed. Furthermore, I question the practice of using lay health care workers as a source of cheap labour, which acts as a bridge between professional health care and family planning providers. With increased emphasis on cost cutting, there is the risk of

⁸⁸ interview, Gomez, August 1997

⁸⁹ The *promotora* system, as means for dissemination of information and distribution contraceptives, are revisited in Chapter 8, where I also discuss the illegal practice of abortion, sometimes performed by traditional healers, many of whom have become *promotoras*.

redirecting funding to informal *promotora* programs at the expense of formal medical facilities.

Despite these criticisms, the *Promotora* system has been adopted by US health care providers, especially those servicing Latino communities. According to the director of the USMBHA's Training and Technical Assistance project, Rebeca Ramos, the concept of community outreach workers, *promotoras*, to help promote healthy lifestyles and preventions is a importation of *Mexicano* knowledge and 'technology' (Ramos and Ferreira-Pinto 1995; Ramos and Benedicto 1995). In the Arizona-Sonora borderlands, *promotoras* play an important role on both sides of the line. In Ambos Nogales, *promotora* programs are affiliated with the Mariposa Community Health Care Clinic and the St. Andrews Clinic both based on the Arizona side.⁹⁰ South of the border, *La Red Fronteriza de Salud y Ambiente*-Border Health and Environment Network (SALAM), centred in Hermosillo, Sonora, provides a cross border network of *promotoras*. Community outreach is also provided to communities within and across the border by University of Arizona's Department of Rural Health,

⁹⁰ The Mariposa Community Health Centre (MCHC) has its own insurance plan which requires a co-payment ranging from no payment to 90% of the actual cost of the visit depending on the client's family income. This sliding-scale payment, according to the women participants, ranged between \$1 and \$20 per visit. Furthermore, since 1995 the MCHC has operated a free bus which shuttles clients between the border and the clinic, encouraging those south of the line to use its facilities. The St. Andrews Clinic, housed in an Episcopalian Church, provides free health care services, including tests, one day per month. Neither of these facilities requires the verification of citizenship, which allows women from Sonora to access health services across the line. Recognizing that many women travel from Sonora, the St. Andrews clinic also reimburses patients for their travel costs. The University of Arizona's Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Centre (SEAHEC) also operates a training and outreach program. It serves people on both sides of the border in Ambos Nogales (interview Dr. Garcia, Nogales, AZ, August, 1997, Pope 1998).

Preventive Medicine Residency Program and the Department of Family and Community Medicine (Cordes and Rea 1994).

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined migrant women's experiences of social insecurity in Ambos Nogales. I provided experiential accounts of border women's lives as they struggle with the everyday problems associated with attaining social security. I examined the demographic challenges of overcrowded *colonias*, inadequate shelter, poverty, access to utilities and water, improper waste disposal, unhealthy conditions and weak health care systems, as well as an inhospitable and degraded environment. This section was followed by an analysis of the insecurity created by unhealthy border conditions. Using the participants' narratives, I revealed women's experiences of health and health care in Ambos Nogales. I showed that women's situated knowledge provides insight into the unhealthy conditions facing border families. In my examination of formal and informal health care systems, I questioned the states' commitment to securing people's health. I contended that the gendered apparatus and gendered violence disrupt the social security of women in the borderlands. I have demonstrated that gendered violence cannot be separated from the notions of power which are embedded in language, practices and social institutions. Most importantly, however, I showed how women's struggle for social security in their everyday lives is a confirmation of their agency.

Work, Wages and Women

The Political Economy of Insecurity

Violence is part of the domestication of women, whereby their subordination and service come to seem natural, so guaranteeing men's access to women's bodies and to their labour ... The surveillance of women and the disciplining of women's sexuality relates to the maintenance of family and community honour and status, and to competition for resources. Patriarchal policing joins with the border patrols of the nation/race/community, marked on the bodies of women.

Jan Jindy Pettman, *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics*, 1996a: 186-187.

Poverty, unemployment and social disintegration too often result in isolation, marginalisation and violence. The insecurity that many people, in particular vulnerable people (women and children), face about the future, their own and their children's is intensifying ...

The Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March, 1995

Introduction

Many Mexicans have long viewed their proximity to the US as a curse rather than an opportunity. This stance is captured in the commonly evoked saying "so far from God, so close to the US" in the borderlands (Oboler 1997). This saying became even more poignant with the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on January 1, 1994. Under NAFTA, North American economies became even more integrated. This has

significant gendered impact as revealed by the narratives of women from Ambos Nogales. Their testimonies show that economic integration mediates women's everyday lives, survival strategies, work experiences, and attainment of human security.

Human security, as defined by the UNDP (UN 1994b) framework, assumes the provision of economic security, including job security, an assurance of basic income, and freedom from the vulnerability of informal-sector activities. Economic security, however, fails to address the impact of economic models that favour business interests over human ones and turn a blind eye to gendered violence and abuse of workers' rights. Likewise, the concept of economic security ignores the gendered apparatus that orders the economy and renders women subordinate, marginal and vulnerable. An element of the gendered apparatus, the gendered division of labour, which relegates women to low-wage, low-skilled jobs, undervalues women's unpaid work in the home, and often consigns them to the informal sector, is also unchallenged by the notion of economic security.

To develop this argument, this chapter examines: (i) women's experiences of economic (in)security in the borderlands; (ii) the implications for women of economic restructuring, unequal globalization, and the institutionalization of a (neo)liberal political order; (iii) *maquiladora* capitalism as the predominant structure shaping the formal and informal economies in the border region, both north and south of the line; (iv) the impact of NAFTA on women workers in the formal and informal sectors of Ambos Nogales; (v) the social constructions of women's work and responsibilities; and (vi) the institution of marriage as a mechanism for women to achieve economic security.

(En)gendering Economic (In)security in the Borderlands

Women in the border region have been increasingly drawn into the paid workforce in the border region, however, this has done little to improve their economic security as (neo)liberal theorists would suggest. The 1994 Human Development Report states that *economic security* requires an assured basic income, job security, freedom from the vulnerability of informal sector activities, however, it fails to address the gendered apparatus which orders economic relations. Consequently, while border women are actively engaged in paid employment, the gender division of labour relegates them to low-wage, low-skilled and informal sector jobs. Furthermore, the gendered apparatus operates to devalue women's unpaid work in the home. Consequently, women's unpaid work in the home is an unmeasured support to national and international economies, which fail to provide women income and economic security. Gendered social constructions overwhelmingly identified women with the private sphere, and this identification with 'home', domesticity and the family reinforces their marginalization in the public sector. Although women are increasingly entering the public sphere, their participation is constrained by patriarchal power structures which favour men. Furthermore, the traditional allocation of responsibility for the home to women, means that they have less time and energy to allocate toward income generation. Issues of time and money management, however, are critical factors mediating women's social well being. Finally, the UNDP's understanding of economic security fails to acknowledge the gendered differentials which determine access to, and control over,

economic resources. The report failed to recognize that, globally, women's access to land and credit structures are unequal to men's.

Gendered violence, in all its various forms — patriarchal control, masculine definitions of state and citizenship, patriarchal social constructions of womanhood, masculinist theoretical, policy and programmatic conceptualizations of reproduction and population control, gendered definitions of migrant, gendered division of labour and the economy — affects women's minds and bodies. Gendered violence cannot be separated from notions of power which are embedded in language, social institutions, economic relations, job markets and work relations. Since power operates in places and forms which disguise the political discourses of power and to naturalize unequal/violent power relations, the marginalization and exclusion of women from achieving economic security is part of as the naturalization and pervasiveness of gendered violence. "What constitutes 'women's work' and 'men's work' in nearly every society, typically stems from the gendered division of violence." (Peterson and Runyan 1993: 91). While the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* proclaims security as fundamental human rights, women's right to security is inhibited by the social, political and economic structures which attempt to define them as subordinate. Consequently, north and south of the line, women's rights to *security* are violated daily, in the home and at work.

Furthermore, speaking to the 35th meeting of the Health Researchers Advisory Committee (CAIS), in Havana Cuba in July 2000, the Director general of PAHO, George Alleyne, identified *inequality* as the worst disease that people must confront in the Americas (cited in Gensalud, PAHO, August 2000). The gap between 'haves' and 'have nots' is increasing throughout Latin America and Mexico. In the globalized political economy, links between

foreign and domestic elites are increasingly intimate, particularly in border regions where ‘north meets south’. Social unrest and disruptions of economic stability are met with oppression and repression by internal and external forces. South of the line, authoritarian practices are imposed to ensure access to low-wage workers and to promote economic confidence for foreign and domestic elites. In the current environment of economic integration, however, poverty is spreading and with it, so to is economic insecurity.

In this environment, the leadership of Mexico’s *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), the dominant political party until the July 2000 elections, has failed to produce a strategic balance between economic growth and genuine development. Economic growth demanded more workers in the formal economy, however, the informal economy also expanded in an unplanned and unprecedented way because of fluctuating unemployment rates and job insecurity. Informal sector activity was estimated at 12.7% of Mexico’s gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000 (*Globe & Mail/Reuters*, August 24, 2000).

Economic insecurity escalated with the institution of the *Pacto de Solidaridad Económica* — Economic Solidarity Pact in 1987, which introduced wage and price controls, and government specified minimum wage increases. Since 1987 increases have been insufficient to meet the rising cost of living. Minimum wage legislation no longer works to ensure income security since minimum wage laws are not universally enforced throughout Mexico, and especially not in the *maquilas* at the border. In the manufacturing sector, the Ministry of Labour helps to break strikes, eliminates the bargaining power of unions, and prohibits the formation of independent unions (Standing 1999; Zapata 1996). The PRI encouraged direct foreign investment by guaranteeing capital a cheap and malleable labour force, and

providing a working environment where existing labour regulations are not enforced. Although the PRI was voted out of power in 2000, its bureaucratic legacy remains intact and will be slow to change. Accordingly, the promises of reform made by the newly ruling *Partido Acción Nacional* (PAN) are unlikely to materialize in the near future.

Globalizing the Border Economy: The Engines of Growth

The Sonoran economy has historically been based on large-scale mining, cattle ranching and commercial agriculture for export to the US. To compete with Mexican agricultural production, however, and to make commercial agriculture economically feasible in the southwestern US, there was a need for a large-scale low-wage labour force. In 1951, therefore, the US introduced the *Bracero* Program to recruit low-wage foreign workers, particularly Mexicans, to meet the seemingly never ending labour shortages in the agricultural sector (Freeman and Bean 1997).

In 1965, however, the Mexican government introduced the *Border Industrialization Program* (BIP). This marked a shift from an emphasis on primary economic production to industrialization. The BIP was prefaced on the expansion of the free trade zone, which had existed between the US and Mexico since the 1930s. It was argued that economic development along the Mexican side of the border would serve to discourage future migration to the US. The BIP was expected to transform the ‘backward’, desolate and isolated border region into a dynamic source of economic growth, and the benefits of this growth were expected to eventually ‘trickle down’ to the many. Accordingly, the US supported the BIP as a

continuation of trade, investment and foreign assistance policies aimed at reducing migrational push factors in Mexico.

The BIP marked the beginning of *maquiladora* capitalism along Mexico's northern border. The Mexican government encouraged foreign firms to build factories along Mexico's northern border, to provide jobs for the men who were returning from the US after the termination of the *Bracero* Program. The dual possibility of luring foreign investments and building factories for assembly production along Mexico's northern border seemed to offer the economic growth that Mexico needed. The 'assembling for development' model, led to changes in both US and Mexican laws to allow for the import of machinery, vehicles, and parts, into Mexico duty free (Angeles 1996; Blanco 1996; Kopinak 1996, 1993b; Sklair 1994; Gereffi 1991; Ruiz and Tiano 1987). Using foreign and US capital, equipment, patents and technology, and cheap Mexican labour, assembled products are returned to the US, subject only to the duty on the 'value added' to the product. For capitalists and industrialists this minor increase, based mainly on cheap labour and subsidized low overhead costs, was a small price to pay for high profits.

The Mexican government hoped *maquiladora* industries would buy locally produced products and components in addition to those imported from the US, creating linkages across the border.⁹¹ While these secondary and tertiary industries, like the *maquilas*, were expected to provide much needed employment for local border people, few such linkages resulted, and only exploitative relations of production prevailed. Furthermore, by the 1970s, *maquiladoras*

⁹¹ See Fernández Kelly 1996b, 1983a, 1983b; Kopinak 1996, 1993b; Skalar 1994; Beneria 1992; Fatemi 1990; Herzog 1990a, 1990b, 1996.

were no longer confined to the border region, and could be established throughout the interior of Mexico, especially around urban centres like Mexico City and Guadalajara, where accelerated migration and urbanization created large pools of cheap labour. Moreover, during this period, other less developed countries entered into the competition to host the assembly plants of multinational corporations (MNCs), by providing free trade export processing zones (EPZs). This created an increasingly competitive environment amongst all the less developed countries.⁹²

Foreign investment to establish more *maquiladoras* was promoted by the Salinas government (1988 - 1994) during the NAFTA debates as well as under the Zedillo (1994 - 2000) and Fox regimes (2000 -) following them. *Maquiladora* capitalism continued to expand during the 1990s, following the introduction of NAFTA. Rules of origin⁹³ regarding production inputs were an important element of NAFTA. They ensured the US privileged access to Mexican *maquila* production, which targeted the US as the end market for their products by levying high taxes on foreign production inputs to ensure that foreign entities, particularly Japanese, South Korean and European, were unable to access to North American markets and Mexican cheap labour. NAFTA, therefore, was both exclusionary and inclusionary. It resulted in externally directed and controlled industrialization, which

⁹² For those countries involved in assembly production, there was an increasing national economic dependency on the importation of industrial inputs, technology, technocrats and capital for the export of domestically produced but foreign financed manufactured goods as in Mexico.

⁹³ Rules of origin stipulate US inputs in Mexican production are not taxed when re-entering the US after assembly. Other countries' inputs in Mexican production are heavily taxed when entering US commercial markets.

reinforced an ongoing legacy of neocolonialism, and seems unlikely to change under the newly elected PAN. The unequal power relationship of NAFTA confirms the Mexican axiom, 'so far from God, so close to the United States', and the concerns it expresses.

Women's 'Flexible' Insecurity

By the 1970s, the global economy was in crisis, under pressure from rapid industrialization, technological change, and the internationalization of capital, labour and production. The restructuring of economic and productive relations ushered in a new era of global competition. During the 1970s, Mexican policy makers were caught between neo-Keynesian economic expansion policies and monetarist conservatism. In the 1980s Mexico experienced severe financial crisis which prompted the state to embrace monetarism and initiate the privatization of revenue-draining public sector enterprises. With this shift away from Keynesianism, private investors were privileged over workers. In addition, Mexico's economic development strategy was further focussed toward export oriented industrialization. Mexican industries were promoted as highly competitive in the global markets. In the borderlands, the expansion in the number of *maquiladoras* was encouraged (Erfani 1995).

Globally, industrial production models were changing to incorporate new technologies which would increase efficiency and corporate profits. In the *maquiladora* sector, however, industrialists were slow to incorporate technological innovations which would replace workers in the production process. Instead, most *maquilas* continued to rely on large pools of cheap labour since this had been a major reason for their relocation of production south

of the line. In an attempt to maintain their competitiveness, *maquiladora* industries increasingly adopted specific aspects of 'flexible production'. While technological innovations remain few, and transfer of technology and knowledge remains incomplete, workers increasingly serve as 'flexible' inputs in the industrial process. The source of *maquila* flexibility has been the shift to flexible of wages wherein contract and part-time workers can be used as variables in the (re)organization of production. Flexiblization has introduced variable work hours, decreased paid leave, deregulated the timing and number of rest periods, eliminated company payments for social security benefits, and ruled out retirement labour protection clauses (Zapata 1996). This has resulted in what Wilson (1990) has termed a 'caricature' of flexible production.

In the *maquilas*, flexibility is further ordered by the processes of othering based on race, ethnicity, and gender. At the level of the international (and local) political economy, *maquiladora* industries can profit from othered bodies. I have argued previously that socially constructed as inferior, these othered bodies are more vulnerable to exploitation, particularly in the border where economic security is tenuous. In its promotion of *maquiladora* capitalism, the Mexican state has relied on the construction of the Mexican workers as 'docile bodies' to be exploited in labour market relations in the same way that the unequal power relations of the global economy necessitate the construction of 'others'. This need for access to low-wage workers demands the ongoing production of 'others' as unskilled and un(der)educated. In this order women are further disadvantaged by the othering processes of the gendered division of labour.

Through this caricature of non-technological and non-innovative flexibility, economic growth has occurred in Mexico, but not the ultimate goal of genuine development. As a result, the benefits of development have been illusive, and human security remains a goal yet to be reached. Those who live and work in *maquilas*, in the borderlands and throughout Mexico, have yet to become a highly paid, highly skilled and highly organized work force. While *maquiladoras* generate much needed employment, it provides few skills for workers, and the skills which are accumulated are not portable from one *maquila* to the next. This renders workers insecure, immobile and dependent on a particular *maquila* for income.

In this environment of state compromised human security, the industrial sector has shifted to 'Mexican flexible production'. This has resulted in labour market insecurity, where workers are exposed to unpredictable layoffs, as well as to the vulnerabilities of the emerging and uncertain environment.

Maquiladoras, Women and Work in Nogales, Sonora

The Mexican government's focus on the modern sector and industrialization encouraged an explosive urbanization in Nogales, Sonora. In 1967 the first, and only, *maquila* in Nogales, Sonora was established. By 1993, immediately prior to the introduction of NAFTA, Nogales hosted 77 *maquilas* (Ingram *et al.* 1995). One year later, the number of *maquilas* more than doubled to 182, employing 43,670 workers. By 1999, 252 *maquilas* were in operation, employing more than 85,600 workers (Coalition for Justice in the *Maquiladoras*, 1999). Industry's need for access to large pools of relatively cheap, unskilled labour, has shifted the orientation of labour away from rural agricultural production, which was once a

mainstay of the Sonoran economy, towards urban industrialization. Even in Nogales, a smaller urban centre compared to other border cities like Tijuana or Ciudad Juárez, *maquiladora* capitalism fails to absorb the rapidly growing supply of labour. Suffering from declining standards of living and seduced by the possibility of jobs in the growing *maquiladora* sector, migration from the central and southern states of Mexico supply most workers. Many of those drawn to the border are peasants and indigenous people who have been dispossessed from their lands as a result of changing economic relations, globalization, and the shift from subsistence farming to agricultural export, and have been encouraged to migrate to the border in hopes of a better life. In contrast to this pattern, Nogales, Sonora, is a centre of interregional migration, mostly from other parts of Sonora and the state of Chihuahua. A growing industrial centre, Nogales, is burgeoning due to the *maquiladora* sector which draws in migrants, most of whom arrived in the last five years.

Where employment opportunities exist in the border, they tend to exacerbate the traditional gender division of labour which subordinates and segregates women in the labour market. This gender division of labour relegates women to poorly paid, unskilled and unstable employment.⁹⁴ Employment often reflects the traditional 'talents' of women learned in the home. I use the term 'talents' here to reflect the patriarchal understanding of women's work as natural, rather than learned, and as unskilled rather than skilled. This social construction of work devalues women's work, both within, and outside of, the home.

⁹⁴ See Benería 1995, 1992; Benería and Roldán 1987; Bergmann 1997; Cheng 1997; del Alba Acevedo 1995; Elson and Pearson 1991; Fernández Kelly 1996a, 1996b, 1983a, 1983b; Pettman 1996a, 1996b; Fernández Kelly and Sassen 1995; Garcia and de Oliveira 1995; Mies 1986; Peña 1997, 1987; Peterson and Runyan 1993; Safa 1993; Saraceno 1992; Tapia 1995; Tiano 1987a 1987b; Waring 1994, 1988 .

Consequently, the gender division of labour reinforces the structural subordination of women, resulting in the promotion of gendered stereotypes, lower wages for women and exclusion from many sectors of the economy. Women's mobility in the patriarchal power hierarchy of skilled labour is limited. Together, these processes act to create an environment of gendered violence.

In relation to Mexican *maquiladoras*, gendered stereotypes have been important in managing production. According to such representations, women workers are defined as having 'nimble fingers' (small and highly dexterous); able to work at repetitive and dull jobs for long periods of time; unable and/or uninterested in labour organizing; malleable; dependent; and subservient (Elson and Pearson 1991). Women's paid employment in the border, therefore, is restricted to low paying jobs including: cleaning houses, selling food, teaching, nursing, health *promotoras*, factory work, pressing and laundering clothes, and childcare. These jobs are, for the most part, extensions of women's domestic labour responsibilities. Since women's domestic work is socially constructed as a 'natural' or inherent talent of womanhood, their learned skills are not valued, neither at home nor in the labour market. Paradoxically, women's traditional roles in the home allow employers to define women as unskilled and, therefore, deserving of lower wages than men.

Women also contribute to this social construction of women's work as Clare's (Mex) understanding of a 'real' job reveals:

Since I came here I have had many jobs ... but only as a domestic servant, which is not a real job. I had to search for these jobs and it was really difficult. It took me more than a week. Since I came [to Nogales, Sonora], I have only had one real job in a *maquila*, but lots of cleaning, cooking, washing and ironing, but as I told you, these are not real jobs.

It is difficult to measure the specific impact of life experience, age, patriarchal structures and culture in Clare's definition of 'real' work. Evidently, her understanding is mediated by each of these factors. The interrelationships among and between the factors has created a process through which 'real' work is socially constructed for Clare.

During the 1980s owners overwhelmingly chose to employ women in the border *maquilas* because they could pay women less, and because of stereotypical beliefs about women's work and women workers. During this period, approximately 80% of *maquila* workers were women (Adamache *et al.* 1995; Sklair 1994). This has had negative implications for men, women and families, however, because men were, and are, increasingly unemployed and underemployed, and traditional meanings of manhood and *machismo* came under threat. With women contributing to the family income and security at levels equal to, or higher than their own, men can no longer claim the title of sole supporter of their families (Tiano 1987a). Consequently, women were increasingly seen as depriving men of jobs and traditional social position — constructing the *emasculated* man. Even today when the number of men employed in the *maquilas* almost equals that of women, the effects of threatened male power and privilege are linked with rising incidences of alcohol abuse and domestic violence (McWilliams 1998; Teran 1999; and interviews,

1997).⁹⁵ This gendered violence dominates the lives of women in the border, and threatens family structures, survival and security.

Traditionally, young, unmarried and childless women, between the ages of 20 and 24, had the highest labour market participation in Mexican *maquilas*. By the 1990s these socio-demographic characteristics changed markedly, however, and the age of most working women had risen to between 35 and 39 years old. This transforms the conventional views of working women, who were assumed to be passing time between school and marriage (Blanco 1996; Szasz 1998, 1994b). This shift marked a significant change in labour market patterns and reflects the deteriorating economic conditions for those who live in the borderlands. Under these worsening conditions, statistics show that married women and those in conjugal relationships, as well as single, widowed, divorced, and separated women with children, have the highest labour market participation. Perhaps by the age of 35, women have completed their active childbearing years and can re-enter the workforce. Nevertheless, such indicators are problematic since they fail to reveal women's participation in the informal economy, which allows them simultaneously to care for their children and provide economic support for their families. Regardless of when women enter into economic relations, their participation has significant impact on the traditional meanings of wife, marriage, motherhood, children and household.

⁹⁵ The link between alcohol to gendered violence, were recently confirmed by the World Bank discussion paper, "Gender Dimensions of Alcohol Consumption and Alcohol-Related Problems in Latin America and the Caribbean" (Pyne, Claeson and Correia 2002). It finds that, for men, (i) alcohol plays a significant role in provoking violent behaviour and domestic violence, (ii) the use of alcohol is a major cause of disease worldwide, and (iii) alcohol is the fourth biggest cause of disabilities in men in less developed countries.

NAFTA's Exclusion: The Insecurity of Women Workers in Ambos Nogales

Debates over the implementation of NAFTA have been controlled and defined by the United States. American hegemony and structural power resulted in the marginalization, silencing and exclusion of Mexican and Canadian nationalist interests (Marchand 1996). In NAFTA deliberations, boundaries were clearly drawn to exclude socio-political issues, particularly those involving class, gender and race.

Notwithstanding, the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation (NAALC) was instituted as a companion to NAFTA (Compa 1999; Grinspun 1996; Reza *et al.* 1996; Perez-Lopez 1996; Human Rights Watch 1996a). The signing of the NAALC set an international precedent for including labour in a negotiated trade pact. In theory, the agreement was intended to 'protect, enhance and enforce basic workers' rights'. In practice, however, NAALC's mechanisms are weak and largely untested. While workers, labour organizations, and NGOs, can seek adjudication through the National Administrative Office (NAO) in each country, review practices are based on voluntary participation and action by national governments. Consequently, the NAALC is ineffective.

The NAALC agreement establishes three spheres of protection for workers: first, it entrenches freedom of association and the right of workers' to organize; second, it prescribes the protection of workers from discrimination; and third, it provides for the protection of child labour as well as workers' occupational health and safety⁹⁶ (Human Rights Watch

⁹⁶ The task of NAALC is daunting since health in the border is increasingly precarious, as demonstrated in Chapter 5. Furthermore, child labour in *maquiladoras* is common, and

1996a, 1998; Velasco 1996). In addition to protecting workers' rights to free association and organization, the Mexican Constitution establishes the rights of workers to wages which ensure the satisfaction of basic human needs for themselves and their families. While constitutionally sanctioned, and further asserted in the UNDP's definition of human security (1994), these basic provisions are violated daily south of the border, where workers are paid for a day's labour what US workers earn in an hour. Furthermore, freedom of association is denied since organizers of independent non-governmental unions are subjected to significant interference, repression and retaliation by employers, who are known to hire private police forces and thugs to intimidate workers, by government agents, and by the government controlled *Confederación de Trabajadores de Mexico* (CTM).

The second provision of labour security under the NAALC is in the prohibition of discrimination based on sex. While it demands that women and men be paid equally for equal work, it falls short of ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.⁹⁷ It also provides for the protection of migrant workers, an important issue for undocumented and seasonal workers in the US and Canada. Nonetheless, sex-based discrimination prevails in Mexico's *maquila* industries (Primary interviews; Human Rights Watch 1996b; Pérez Duarte 1996;). As Human Rights Watch (1996) documents, women face discrimination, particularly in the

minimum wages, even when adhered in accordance with labour legislation, continually fall below the ever increasing cost of living (Standing 1999). In this unstable and insecure environment, the ability of the NAALC to protect workers seems doubtful.

⁹⁷Equal pay for equal work refers to women and men receiving the same pay for working at the same job. When women and men do different work, traditionally male jobs are valued greater than those traditionally performed by women. The difficult task of assigning value to work, therefore, is subject to traditional gendered constructs.

hiring processes, when they are subjected to invasive and sex-specific testing and questioning. Not only are women forced to submit urine samples for pregnancy tests, they are also informed that not being pregnant is a condition of hiring, which constitutes sex discrimination. Furthermore, women are routinely questioned about their menses schedule, sexual activity, marital status and use of contraceptives. Questions regarding the number of children a woman has and her desire for children in the future were also frequently asked during the hiring process. Potential employers' questions about induced or spontaneous abortions are even more problematic since abortion remains illegal in Mexico. Such questioning seems to be an intimidation tactic, aimed at suppressing and subordinating women's opposition, contestation, agency and authority (Primary interviews, 1997; Ana Enrique, *Factor X*, September 1997, Tijuana, Mexico; Teresa Leal, *Las Comadres*, July 1997; Nogales, Sonora; Anderson, 1999). Some women in this study also noted that they were asked if their husband had given them permission to work. This line of questioning is supported by, and supports, patriarchal structures which attempt to define and control women, women's movement and their access to economic security. In Marta Emelda's (Mex) words:

I had to look very hard for a job. But I got a job in a *maquila*. But it only lasted one year because then my husband got out of prison and he did not want me to work. But I wish that I could go back to work now because my husband is not bringing home any money because he does not have a job. So things are very difficult for us.

Marta Emelda's experience explains how, by asking questions about permission, the power of patriarchal structures, and the subordinate position of women within them, are reinforced and perpetuated. Since patriarchal structures permeate Mexican society, when women are

asked if they have permission to work from their husbands, they are reluctant to deny that this permission was either sought or given. Women's experiences of subordination, therefore, exacerbate their exclusion from work and economic insecurity.

Participants in this and other studies contended that the pregnancy testing, and invasive and explicit questioning, which targets women, is demeaning, stressful and embarrassing. Some of the women suggested that the obligatory recording of the date of last menstruation was later used against them since they are often called to update their medical records around the time of their next menstruation. At such times, women are then forced to produce proof of menstruation. This monitoring and surveillance of women heightens insecurity and jeopardizes their rights.

Such practices are surprising since Article 123 of the Mexican Constitution establishes the rigorous protection of workers' rights. For women workers, it prohibits discrimination based on sex and establishes equal pay for equal work. Since pregnancy testing and questions regarding reproduction are only asked of women, these practices must be regarded as a form of sex discrimination. Since many women who work in the *maquilas* are single mothers, and/or major contributors to the economic well being of their families, sex discrimination makes them more vulnerable and insecure. Mexican labour law also requires that women be paid maternity leave, and paid leave for the nursing of infant children since this is regarded as necessary for the protection of children and the social function of motherhood. Women are entitled to 12 weeks maternity leave at full salary, which can be taken before or after the birth. Furthermore, mothers have a right to two half-hour nursing leaves per day, without suffering a monetary penalty (Denman 1992a, 1992b).

By screening out pregnant women, however, *maquiladora* owners and operators avoid paying government stipulated maternity benefits. By excluding these women, moreover, employers are not forced to incur the costs and inconvenience of replacing pregnant workers, suffering lower productivity due to worker turnover, and training new workers. Since Mexican law does not explicitly prohibit pregnancy testing, or specify it as an act of sex discrimination, and since the government clearly favours corporate interests over women's rights, testing remains both permissible and pervasive. Furthermore, in May 1997, the Mexican government specifically requested that the US NAO not investigate claims of sex discrimination on the grounds that such investigations would place Mexican labour law in question. The state-centrism which surrounds NAFTA makes it difficult for the US NAO to contest Mexican labour law since to do so would challenge Mexico's sovereignty. Mexico's failure to protect women workers, however, must be interpreted at the international level as a failure to uphold its obligation as a signatory to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. Arguably, in signing the convention, Mexico forfeited its right to hide behind patriarchal notions of sovereignty as a justification for sex discrimination.

Despite protest by the Mexican government, a submission was filed with the US NAO by Human Rights Watch, the International Labor Fund and the *Asociación Nacional de Abogados Democráticos* — National Association of Democratic Lawyers of Mexico (ANAD) concerning gender discrimination through pre-employment pregnancy screening and post-hire dismissal of pregnant women on May 16, 1997, and it was accepted for review

by the US NAO on July 14, 1997.⁹⁸ Through a consultative process between US, Canada and Mexico Labor Secretaries, on the recommendation of the US NAO, the three ministers signed an agreement to undertake an action plan in response to sex-discrimination which would be completed by July 1999. The first phase of the plan occurred in November 1998, in Mexico City, where officials from the three governments met to discuss: pregnancy discrimination in the workplace, legal avenues available to Mexican women workers to seek redress against pregnancy discrimination, and the enforcement of laws in all three countries dealing with gender discrimination, as well as the 1997 submission. The second phase of the action plan demanded that the US and Mexico hold seminars to disseminate information to workers, employers, government representatives, and women's organizations, on the rights and protections available to female workers. The third phase required that a conference be held and a report published by the Secretariat of the Commission for Labor Cooperation, on mechanisms in each country to protect the rights of women workers, and on programs to ensure the observance of laws against employment discrimination. The US and Mexico NAOs have met the requirements of the action plan by holding the agreed upon

⁹⁸ "The submission alleges that *Maquiladora* employers regularly require female job applicants to verify that they are not pregnant, and some employers discharge employees who become pregnant. The submission asserts that these are in violation of Mexican law and Mexico is failing to enforce its law in violation of NAALC Article 3(1). It also contends that this is inconsistent with the Preamble of NAALC and the Labor Principles included in Annex 1 of NAALC. It further contends that Mexico is in violation of Convention 111 of the ILO, the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW), and the American Covenant on Human Rights. The Mexican NAO stated that a review of the submission would exceed the intended scope of NAALC in that it questioned Mexican labor law rather than its application or enforcement" (www.naalc.org).

governmental and public conferences and outreach sessions.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, such practices continue.

Although not all incidences of sex discrimination and intimidation are submitted to NAO, they are well documented by NGOs and human rights groups working in the region. During my field work the women I interviewed clearly indicated that sex discrimination and intimidation were common practice in their experience. Maria Luisa (Mex) asserts:

Everyone knows that every *maquila* asks women about pregnancy. They make you take a lab test and have a medical at the *Hospital Básico*, also some *maquilas* have clinics. It cost a lot of money each time you have to do it. But if you don't, you can't work. And, if in the first month of the contract you are found to be pregnant, then you won't be rehired on a longer contract. But even the longer contracts are only for six months. So it is always costing the women workers.

South of the border, all of the women participants who worked in the formal economy were required to take pregnancy tests as a condition of employment. The fact that this practice extended to government positions needs emphasis. Mari (Mex) explains: "I worked for the [Sonoran State] government, from 1985 until 1992 here in Nogales. But even with the government, they questioned me about pregnancy. I had to take regular tests to prove that I wasn't pregnant." Since the government also practices sexual discrimination and refuses to enforce labour laws, it seems an unlikely champion of women's rights.

⁹⁹ On March 1-2, 1999, the conference on the Rights of Women in North America was held in Mérida, Yucatán. This was followed by an outreach session on the rights of women workers under employment laws and protection from pregnancy discrimination held by the US NAO, in McAllen, Texas, on August 17, 1999. The following day, across the border in Reynosa, Tamaulipas, the Mexican NAO held a similar outreach session on laws protecting women workers from discrimination in general and pregnancy discrimination in particular. A final outreach session was held by the Mexican NAO in Puebla, Puebla in May 30, 2000 (www.naalc.org).

Accordingly, women in the border proactively contest sex-discrimination. Clare's (Mex) experience illustrates her attempt to assert her rights and circumvent the routine pregnancy testing. She explains:

When I went for the job, I asked them if it was true that they tested women and then fire them if they get pregnant ... but they said 'no'. After that, they did not ask me to take a test. But after I was hired, they told me that if I became pregnant within the first three months, I would not be rehired on a longer contract.

Often, even older women and those who claim to have undergone tubal ligation are subjected to pregnancy tests. In her own way, Virginia (Mex) contests mandatory pregnancy testing and is sometimes able to ward off the test, but not the indignity and personal intrusion such discussions involve. Virginia confides:

Like my mother, I work, but I work in other peoples' homes, cleaning and cooking. In the past three years I have had eight different jobs. I usually leave because there is too much work and not enough pay. They always question me to see if I am pregnant, but I usually don't have to go to the doctor to prove it ... I just tell them that I already had the operation and no more babies will come. But, sometimes they insist.

Unlike Clare, most of the women interviewed felt they were unable to contest the power structures which legitimate discrimination against women. Nevertheless, they had a clear understanding of the reasons for the sex discrimination which they experience. Lupe (Mex) explains:

My fertility was in question before I got hired. They told me if I became pregnant I could no longer work there. They made me get a pregnancy test so that I could prove I was not pregnant. It is their way of making sure that they do not have to abide by the government rules about women workers. It is true that there are laws which protect women, but no one really cares if they are followed, only us women. So the *maquilas* can do whatever they want because there are so many others to take your place if you leave.

Even with this understanding of the power structures which subordinated women, economic insecurity prevails in the border and forces women to endure these blatantly prejudicial practices. Maria Luisa (Mex) contends:

It is not very difficult to find work here, there are lots of jobs, but they pay very little. The only problem that some people have is that they have to prove residency, sometimes that can be difficult. Before I left, before I was pregnant, I worked in a *maquila* that made sun glasses. I left that job after about a year to work for a clothing manufacturer. I thought that it would be better, I thought that the pay would be better, but the *maquilas* they are all the same. I stayed there for almost two years, then I got pregnant. They told me I could not work there anymore. So many problems were happening at the same time — marriage, money, pregnancy — I was very upset. Eventually, I decided that I had to leave. Now I am back working and I am still struggling in another *maquila*.

The women I interviewed contended that coercive practices were common in the *maquilas* and that once an employer determines that a woman is pregnant, she is forced to resign. Before Lupita (Mex) underwent a tubal ligation, she experienced the pressure of forced resignation. Lupita reflects:

At first it was good [working in the *maquila*] because I was eligible for Seguro Social [IMSS, social security], there was disability insurance and an attendance bonus. But still, all the women had to take pregnancy tests, so in a way I had **no choice** [her emphasis] but to leave when I got pregnant again.

Unfortunately, fear of job loss and/or loss of paid maternity leave can force women to hide their pregnancies at a significant risk to themselves and their unborn child¹⁰⁰. Cases of women not being paid for their maternity leave or not being provided with legislated job protection for the return to work following maternity have been documented by NGOs.

¹⁰⁰ Many of the women confided that they were told by their employers that they would not be paid maternity benefits, even though the government guaranteed this right, because they would be fired before they could collect. In this sense, women feel intimidated and that they have no choice since leaving their jobs seems inevitable. Undaunted by such threats, some women stated that they tried to conceal their pregnancy long enough to ensure their entitlement to maternity benefits.

Eight of the 15 participants in Nogales, Arizona, also experienced questions regarding sexual practices, pregnancy, children and permission to work during the hiring process. This number rises to 12 women when those unemployed or working in the informal sector are included. These women also experienced questioning about sexual practices, pregnancy, children and permission to work. Questions regarding pregnancy, moreover, were not limited to the *maquiladoras*; they affected women on both sides of the border. Veronica (US) reflects:

I used to work in a different store, but it closed like all the stores here [Nogales, Arizona]. I worked there for two and a half years, now I work here. We sell used things, many people come from the other side to buy things here. I have no benefits here but they pay me \$4.75 per hour. But even here they asked me: “Are you pregnant?” and, “Are you going to get pregnant soon?” They said that because the work in the store involves lifting heavy boxes and things, a pregnant woman couldn’t do the job. They told me that they did not want to have any problems. They said that: ‘If you are pregnant there is no job’. The problem is that I only work three days, just 21 hours. It is more than I could make on the other side, and the work is not so difficult as over there.

Sexual harassment is a common experience for marginalized, low-wage, unskilled, and economically insecure women workers. On the job there is little recourse for working women if they are sexually harassed. Speaking from her experience, Guadalupe (US) confides that there is no resolution to sexual harassment:

I worked in a store for five years and then it closed. Then I got a job as a maid in a hotel. I worked there for three years and did a good job, but the owner, he fired me. He wanted something [sex] from me and when I said no, he fired me. So I went to a different hotel, he wanted the same thing. But after just six months I had to leave because I was pregnant [not from her employer].

Even when not being pregnant was not a condition of work, many women felt compelled or forced to resign when they become pregnant, as Maria Aide (US) maintains: “They say they don’t care if you get pregnant because there is always someone else who wants your job.

So they did not ask me about those things. But when I became pregnant after only six months, they made me feel like I had to leave.”

The similarities of experiences among these working women on both sides of the border demonstrate that unrelenting sex discrimination reinforces and legitimates patriarchal structures and the gendered division of labour. These practices subordinate and marginalize women, jeopardize their economic, physical and emotional security, and violate their rights.

Social Constructions of Women’s Work and Responsibility

Even if NAALC could protect workers, women would continue to be subjected to gendered violence — structural marginalization, patriarchal structures and cultural definitions of womanhood, wife and mother. Gendered violence south of the line is evident in the unending work of women in the border, where leisure is a virtually unknown luxury. Lupita (Mex) reveals that the responsibilities of motherhood, wifehood, and worker consume her life and make it impossible for her to relax or enjoy personal time. When Lupita worked at the *maquila* and only had one child, she reflected that her days began at four in the morning, when she would take a few minutes to address her personal hygiene needs; however, quickly Lupita’s ‘personal time’ was transformed into work, both unpaid domestic work and ‘real’ paid work in the *maquiladora*. Lupita (Mex) reflects:

I worked in a *maquila* that made wire cable for electronics. I worked in the plant, then as a file clerk and then as a cashier. I worked at the same place for three years. But I had to leave because I got pregnant again. I had to look after my husband, our home and two children ... it was more difficult to take two children to the childcare centre. Also, I was very unhappy with the childcare at the *maquila*. So, I struggled to pay my neighbour to care for my children. She was good to them and looked after them well, but it was still very difficult for me because the children cried when I left them and I felt very guilty about leaving them with someone else. But then I got pregnant again and here I am with

this one, only six months old. It is better now to work in the streets selling, or when I can find the work, I can work for the *Norteños* — keeping house, cooking, cleaning — and I can take the children with me. I think this is better for me now. I am a hard working woman, I will make it somehow.

Lupita's experience reveals the difficulties of life south of the border, where personal time and private space are seldom available, where women endure a triple workday — with responsibility for their homes, children and paid employment in the formal or informal sector, and where women suffer the consequences of gendered violence — patriarchal social constructions and sex discrimination. In this environment, women's everyday struggle for security is an unending battle, dominated by stress and anxiety. Furthermore, Lupita's narrative reveals how working women often compromise their traditional and cultural definitions of motherhood to provide for their families and children. Consequently, they redefine the concept of 'good mother', beyond the daily care giving activities, to include the provision of economic security. The personal costs of this redefinition are clearly evident in guilt, anxiety and the loss of time with their children. This transformation from mother to provider, dispossesses women of the traditional rights attributed to cultural understandings of motherhood.

For children these costs can also be high. Children, especially girl children, as young as eight and nine years of age, are increasingly responsible for the care taking of younger siblings. As Virginia (Mex) explained, leaving her younger children with an older one is a necessity:

When I am at work, the children stay at home, the 14 year old, she takes care of the younger ones. She has been doing this for so many years now, but still I worry about them. I worry if they will eat something, or they will need something. I feel guilty about

not being there, but the need is greater than the feeling of guilt. My older sons work, they contribute money to the family, but it is very little, barely enough to cover their food.

The consequences of leaving children to care for children is significant. Loneliness, fear and isolation can lead children, left unsupervised, into trouble and to the dangers of the streets. This is evident in the growing numbers of street kids, 'tunnel kids' and gangs in Ambos Nogales. Studies also show that women's childcare responsibility jeopardises their economic security since most women miss work because of their children, and one in three women quit their jobs because of problems with childcare (Denman *et al.* 1992a, 1992b).

Even with the pronounced inequalities and prevailing poor standards of living south of the border, *maquila* managers and owners continue to rationalize the provision of jobs. They flippantly state that a *maquila* job is better than being homeless. More blatantly classist and racist are assumptions that border people because they struggle, live and laugh, are happy with their position on the margin of economic security. They contend that Mexicans do not strive for success, but are merely interested in survival. Such notions fail to consider that under the current conditions little more than survival is practicable. Such blindly classist and racist interpretations of the lives of disadvantaged border people, can only be explained as self-serving reflections of power and privilege. My assertion is supported by evidence that shifting jobs south of the border can save up to \$25,000 per worker annually (Tolan 1996). In stark contrast to Ambos Nogales, just eight miles (13 km) north of the border in Rio Rico, Arizona, where many of the *maquila* managers (both Latino and Anglo) and owners reside, wealth and ostentation prevail. Rio Rico's elite live in large, expensive, Spanish-tiled houses which overlook irrigated putting greens and fairways and have multiple vehicles parked in

expansive paved driveways. The greenness alone is a distinct contrast to the semi-arid desert environment of Ambos Nogales.

Women's Experience of Work and Insecurity in Nogales, Arizona

On the US side, economic insecurity takes a somewhat different form. Nonetheless, economic insecurity was the experience of more than half of the women participants in Arizona who relied on unemployment benefits, welfare, *Workfare*, food stamps and AHCCCS. In the last chapter, I examined the economic dysfunction experienced as a result of the decline of Nogales, Arizona. Unemployment and poverty are still rampant in this environment and the opportunities for people to achieve economic security continue to deteriorate. Frequently, the gendered division of labour and traditional perspectives that women are not the major economic providers for their families and, therefore, are choosing to work prevail. Low wages, limited opportunities and a poor economy, however, make women's paid employment necessary, even when other wage earners or husbands/partners are also contributing to the family income.

One of the most significant sectors of the economy, and sources of employment, is the processing and distribution of agricultural produce. Almost half of all the Mexican production of winter vegetables consumed in the US crosses the border through Nogales (Ingram *et al.* 1995). However, the retail economy is in steady decline and has resulted in a loss of employment for many of the women who predominate in the service sector. The legends of the old west ghost towns is almost a reality north of the border.

Yolandita's (US) experience corroborates the problematic of a weak economy for many women in Nogales:

Although I am currently unemployed I have worked in many jobs, but many of the places have gone out of business. They have gone bankrupt because of the bad economy. So many stores are closing because they have opened big malls for people to shop, and they have free buses to take you to the shopping centres. I have had seven jobs in the past three years. I keep looking and I keep trying.

Likewise, Maria Aide (US) asserts:

My parents got divorced because there was a lot of stress over money and jobs, there was never enough of either. *Mexicanos*, we come here for a better quality of life, which starts with work, but it is not easy because we have only minimum wage jobs and it is difficult for us to get ahead. Finding working on this side has not been easy for me.

Unlike Sonora, the state of Arizona provides some assistance to young women with children. Training programs tend to focus on short-term rather than long-term solutions, often without programmatic integration of policies for permanent employment. The failure to provide concrete skills and accredited training, leads many women towards failure in the job market. Lack of success leads to frustration and a return to economic insecurity; and, perhaps more children. Maria Aida (US) explains: "I was lucky because we were classed as a low income family and I was admitted to job core [Job Training Program Assistance (JTPA)]. I worked as a teacher's aid for one year. It was good. But then the training program ended and so did the job."

For those who are undocumented the prospects of finding paid work are even more difficult. Although legal status in the US was not a subject of this study, two women felt comfortable enough with the interview process to reveal that they were, or had been, in fact

undocumented. While Mirna has now gained legal resident status in the US, her understanding of the difficulties which she and other women have suffered is important:

When women cross to this side illegally, they really suffer because of it. Often they cannot find a job ... because they do not have the papers needed. So they are underpaid and often abused. They have no legal rights, they cannot question what is happening to them because they would face deportation if they are found out. So, often they suffer in silence and no one knows about what they go through. It is even worse if you have children because children have needs and women will do anything for their children. That is how it was for me.

For Leonela (US), undocumented status continues to be a reality, but a reality which she endures:

I have had some good and some bad working experiences here. Finding a job is not really a problem, but when they asked me for my papers, that is when it becomes difficult ... but, I still get some jobs. I have worked at four different jobs in the past three years. Mostly, the companies have closed, there are so many problems with the economy. Before, I was working in fast food places, but now I am working as a janitor. I have been at this same job for more than two years. I like it because they don't ask many questions, but they don't have any benefits either and this is a problem. I work there everyday ... yes, seven days per week, but I only work for four hours each day. They pay me minimum wage. This is not bad because I know others without papers that get paid much less. But this is not enough to live on, so we are struggling.

Women's Experience of the Informal Sector as Insecurity in Ambos Nogales

National census data captures only a partial picture of women's work. Women's employment in part-time, informal, precarious and unpaid work is absent from this representation. In the informal sector, women with and without children, in conjugal relationships and not, are highly economically active at all stages of the life cycle. Working in the informal sector varies from common street vending and self-employment, to various forms of illegal activities such as drug trafficking and prostitution (Wilson 1997). While only two women

in the study stated that they had engaged in sex for money, the analysis of marriage for economic security (to follow) sheds new light on the definition of prostitution. The informal economy offers women flexibility in terms of hours and timing of work; it allows them to continue to maintain traditional roles (and values) of mother and wife by caring for their children and household while simultaneously earning an income. Complex time management skills are necessary to juggle these multiple identities and responsibilities, skills which are seldom recognized or valued in women. Nevertheless, the monetary incomes generated by women in the informal sector are critical to family survival.

The acceleration of more flexible production (Standing 1999; Mitter 1986) has resulted in the growth of the informal sector. The casualization of employment has heightened employment insecurity in the formal economy and shifted many workers to the growing 'hidden economy'. In Mexico, between 1982 and 1990, formal employment declined from 92% to 74% of the total workforce, whereas employment in the informal sector grew from a meagre 1% to 14% (Fleury *et al.* 2000). Low wages have resulted in many women working in both the formal and informal sectors simultaneously as Lupita's narrative demonstrated. Similarly, Marta Emelda (Mex) contends that her *maquila* salary is insufficient to meet her family's needs: "Usually, I worked only five days in the week at the *maquila*, but sometimes they make us work on Saturday. If I do not work there on the weekend, I am working cleaning houses. It is a necessity." Similarly, Maria Luisa (Mex) contends that one job, even when a spouse is also working, is inadequate:

What I make in the *maquila*, it is not enough for us to live, even with my husband's work. So, to earn more money I knit at home and on my breaks, and I sell the sweaters that I

make. This brings in some extra money, but not that much and it takes some time to make them. Also, I have to buy the wool and it is expensive, but it helps some.

With the notable expansion of informal employment, women's decisions to enter the informal economy is not surprising. It must be recognized that this is not a free choice, but rather, a decision based on necessity. In actuality, therefore, women are given limited alternatives to the informal economy. Exclusion from, or limited access to, participation in the formal economy forces many women (and less often men) into the informal sector. The economic recession (1982-1994) exacerbated this shift in that real wages have fallen by 67% during this period (Zapata 1996). This has resulted in the implementation of a family economic survival strategy. The strategy entails more family members working, and even under conditions of multiple wage contributions, family incomes have declined. Where the family wage has become the norm in as strategy of survival, the pooling of economic resources has also become grounds for contention. In many cases it has changed family dynamics, placing new emphasis on economic earning power.

According to Wallerstein and Smith (1992), householding refers to the processes through which household members pool their income and resources, make decisions, and assign household tasks and responsibilities. However, this distinctly economic definition tends to blur the power relationships and gender inequalities which dominate householding as a social practice. Even in highly homogenous households, members do not necessarily share the same objectives. As such, the household can be a site of conflict and contestation, particularly in terms of gendered power relations and the gendered division of labour. The traditional values and the internalization of *machismo* and *marianismo* are embedded in

household negotiations. Social constructions of the meanings of wife, marriage, motherhood and children as well as gendered definitions of domestic work and sexuality are intimately linked to the meaning of householding.

As such households do not operate in a vacuum, but in relation to other households. They operate within an environment of interconnected households, linked by family ties, location, cultural practices and common need. These community, neighbourhood and *colonia* connections, can and do cross international boundaries. Women depend on these linkages when seeking work, particularly in the informal sector where word of mouth is the primary medium for exchange of information. The *colonia* becomes the primary economic environment for women working in the informal sector. In this way, community becomes both a source of economic income and support, by both providing employment and services. In the borderlands, people depend on extensive and complex economic and social exchanges with family, friends and community.

The emergence of the family wage and householding was strongly indicated in the current study as a necessary evil. Many women noted that their wages combined with their spouses' were insufficient to meet daily needs. They also confessed that their children, many of whom were under the age of 15,¹⁰¹ were also working and contributing their earnings to the family

¹⁰¹The *Minimum Age Convention, No. 138*, adopted by International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1973, stipulates that the minimum age for employment is 15 years old, and may not be set lower than the age necessary for the completion of compulsory schooling. Additionally, Article 3, states that the minimum age for admission to any type of employment or work which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be less than 18 years (www.ilo.org).

income. In one such case, María Teresa (Mex) explained the necessity of her daughter working and the guilt which it induced:

It was very hard on Azuzane, she was only nine then. She needed the operation [to remove a tumour from behind her left ear], but we could not afford it. She is such a good girl and never complains. She got up with me very early in the morning, we made the tamales and tortillas, then she went out to sell them in the street. Sometimes she sells candies and gum too. I feel badly because she has missed more than a whole year of school. What else could we do. But now that she has had the operation, she is much better and is doing well at school.

During my several interviews with María Teresa, she ceaselessly kept watch over her simmering pots and continued to sell *tamales* and tortillas from her one room home as we talked. The real skill and generosity of ‘women’s work’ was reflected in María Teresa’s balancing these multiple tasks while conducting time consuming interviews. Her resourcefulness and positive attitude were remarkable. When asked from where she drew her strength, she laughed:

I draw my strength and example from my mother ... because my mother, in whatever way she could, was able to provide for us. Just like she provided for us, I am now having to provide for mine. And, if my husband is able to earn some money in his trips [as a trucker], then he provides for us. But if he can’t, I provide! I used to work in a factory. I used to sew clothes. Now, because of my children I sell in the street,... I sell whatever I can, used clothing, *tortillas*, *tamales*, *empanadas*, ices, sweets, cookies. I am always working.

Most informal sector activities allow women to combine a minimal capital outlay with the possibility of maintaining their home and meeting family responsibilities, while simultaneously earning a meagre income. It is for these reason that women are increasingly entering this sector, despite the poor, unstable and insecure working conditions. However, given the gender division of labour, the devaluing of women’s skills, and the social construction of women’s work, women remain at the bottom of the labour market hierarchy,

in both the formal and informal sectors. Rosario's (Mex) experience highlights the gender barriers of work, even in the informal sector:

When I first came here, to Nogales, I worked for a nurse and I took care of her children and the house and that was fine. It was the kind of work that people expect women to do. Later, I worked with my husband in his shop. He was the main source of income, but I have always worked with him. But now that he is dead, I do not know ... I may have to sell the business. I cannot keep it working by myself, and people do not want to come to a woman mechanic. I do not know what will happen to us. It is not so easy to find work, especially with children, and no one to look after them when I go to look for work.

In this environment, women in Ambos Nogales, both documented and undocumented, turn to alternative means for earning money. Such alternatives may even include the illegal activities of the drug economy, an economy which is growing at an alarming pace. Lured by seemingly easy money, quick access and short investments of time, many turn to illegal practices. Many reap huge financial rewards but most, suffer the significant consequences — addiction, jail, deportation. Furthermore, families are torn apart and lives are ruined. In this study, eight of the 30 participants stated that they, their partners, or their children, had experienced the consequences of the growing drug trade. This number was equally divided north and south of the border.

Only one woman confided that she herself had been convicted of a drug felony. She recounted that while undergoing a routine border check outside of Tucson, drugs were found in the trunk of the car which she was driving, a car which did not belong to her but to a friend. She explained that she was unaware of the drugs, a claim which is supported by her suspended prison sentence; however, the costs of her conviction have been high. Many of her rights of citizenship have been suspended, including her right to AHCCCS. This was problematic as she had a life threatening medical condition. Moreover, as the sole support

of herself and her children, the felony conviction closed the door to many employment possibilities as well as her access to welfare support. The costs of her short car ride were significant. Women and children are often targeted by traffickers to transport drugs across the line and within the US because they have been traditionally viewed as less likely drug carriers by drug interdiction teams. Furthermore, their often desperate need to care for their families within an environment of economic insecurity make them more easily coerced into the risky positions of 'mules'. Drug trafficking in Ambos Nogales is increasing, even under rising militarization and surveillance. Nogales' remote border crossings continue to be used by the drug cartels for smuggling marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and weapons (Andreas 1999, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c; Portillo 1999a, 1998a; Barnet and Ruiz-Brown 1997).

Marriage as an Avenue to Security

While women are often recruited due to labour shortages, in the border region, women's economic participation is a necessity of family survival. Unlike men, women contribute their entire income to their families, often placing their personal needs below those of their husband and children's (CODESPA Foundation 2000). This pressure to provide has transformed women's understanding of marriage as a safe and secure haven. Once thought to be an avenue to economic security, women in the border note that marriage no longer provides such protection.

Of the women interviewed, 23 saw marriage as a means of ensuring their economic security. In this sense, sex is understood as a commodity for exchange, and love is the

imagined medium in which the exchange takes place.¹⁰² Still, notions of love and loving are less often taken into account in the economic transaction of marriage (Roldan 1999; Young, Wolkowitz, and McCullagh 1991, Hartsock 1985). The reward of economic security, found in this study to be a central factor in the decision to both have sex and to enter into a conjugal relationship, for poor border women seldom materializes. The social construction of sex, marriage, and women's protected position as wife and mother therein, is naively recalled by María Luján (US):

Well, I didn't know about sex. But then, I thought it was like in the movies, very romantic and everything, so I wanted to try it. But, when I got pregnant and I knew that my grandparents would kick me out of the house, I thought that my boyfriend would take me away and look after me and the baby... but it didn't happen that way. My grandmother made me get married to that boy ... I was only 14 when I got pregnant. Soon after the marriage, he left us. Actually that is the only man that I ever legally married, the father of my oldest daughter, but it was my grandparents who looked after both of us, not him. So now, even though I would marry for love, I would also need security. He would have to care for me and my children. I feel a lot of pressure to be married. Women can live without being married, but it is difficult. Marriage is expected. Society, family and men ... they all expect women to be wives and mothers, to be married.

Marriage for women does not inevitably mean economic security. Women are expected to continue to straddle the traditional and modern definitions of women's work, to be both unpaid and paid labourers. This was evident on both sides of the border, where over half the women who stated that they married for economic security continue to work for wages in both the formal and informal sectors. That number increased from 15 participants to 21, when the number of women currently unemployed, but seeking employment, was factored

¹⁰² To understand household relations as more than simply economic it is necessary to reveal the power and gendered relationships which impact households. Chapter 8 presents a more extensive analysis of the notions of love, marriage, sex and reproduction.

into the equation. It is evident that even after marriage women continue to bear much of the financial as well as virtually all the household responsibilities.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored women's experiences of economic (in)security in Ambos Nogales. I examined globalization of the international political economy and the implications of adopting the economic growth model. I explored how these processes operate in tandem with patriarchal structures, to marginalize women and render them insecure. Furthermore, I examined Mexico's experiences of *maquiladora* capitalism and the emergence of women's flexibility in the border region. I analyzed the impact of NAFTA on the everyday lives, work and (in)security of border women. Through an examination of women's work and working experiences, in the formal and informal sectors, I showed the extent of women's insecurity in Ambos Nogales. In this chapter, I also unmasked the predominance of state-centric territorialized and capitalistic economic space in which gendered violence and violations of workers' rights continues. In this environment of insecurity, I demonstrated that marriage is often seen as a mechanism for women's realization of economic security. While revealing the economic insecurity of border live, the women's narratives also demonstrate the extent of their agency and their commitment to attain security in Ambos Nogales.

Gender, Migration and Community

Erecting Barriers and Building Bridges

[T]o be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul

Edward Said, "Reflections on Exile" 1990¹⁰³

[In the migration process] woman remains silent and invisible, present as a variable, absent as a person.

Mirjana Morokvasić, *One Way Ticket: Migration and Female Labour*, 1983: 18.

[T]he extent of women's involvement in international migration has generally been overlooked, mainly because women have been viewed as 'dependents,' moving as wives, mothers or daughters of male migrants.

Hania Zlotnik, "The South-to-North Migration of Women", 1995a: 230.

Introduction

Migrant women in Ambos Nogales face multiple insecurities and gendered violence.¹⁰⁴ patriarchal control, gender social constructions of womanhood, masculinist theory and policy, gendered division of labour and the economy and gendered definitions of migrants.

¹⁰³ cited in Lammer (1999: 16)

¹⁰⁴ Gender violence was extensively explored in Chapter 2. It refers to the patriarchal processes of control, domination and oppression, and the unequal gendered cultural and social construction of power which govern women's lives. Women's experiences of gendered violence, repression and exploitation affect every aspect of their everyday lives.

Despite this, gendered violence is nearly invisible in the migration literature. Conventional masculinist economic theories exclude women as agents in migration and ignore their experiences. These theories fail to examine who the migrants are and, in particular, why *women* migrate. In response to this void, this study uses the experiences and situated knowledge of a sample of 30 migrant women to reveal insights and answers to these questions.

The narratives reveal that women participate fully in migration and indeed often migrate for reasons hitherto ignored in the literature. They move to gain security for themselves and their children, get control over their lives, and escape gendered violence and the patriarchal social constructions confining women. Women's participation, therefore, demands reexamination. Indeed, women are active, not passive, agents in their everyday lives as revealed by the experiences of women migrants in Ambos Nogales as their daily struggles, strategies for survival, and quests for security attest.

For women, however, migration can also result in new insecurities and experiences of gendered violence. These dangers arise in partly because of state-imposed policies to secure the border through escalating militarization and increasingly stringent immigration control policies which are largely stimulated by US fears of contra colonization.¹⁰⁵ State efforts to make the border impermeable have led to abuses of power and to violations of the human rights of (im)migrants. Intensified fortifications of this militarized zone divide communities

¹⁰⁵ The concept of contra colonization, which imagines an 'invasion' of people from the South, was coined by Soguk (1996).

and families and impede the connections from shared culture and language that bond those living in the borderlands.

The inefficacy of militarization and its injustices have compelled governments, policy makers, scholars, and NGOs to rethink border policies. Nevertheless, the migration literature fails to provide an understanding of the special insecurities that uprootedness entails: the loss of familiarity and the separations from family, friends, culture, language and community (Said, 1990). The implications of uprootedness are revealed by women's perceptions and experiences of 'othering', as revealed by the narratives of women migrants in Ambos Nogales.

To develop the above argument, this chapter examines: *(i)* the history of Mexican migration northward and US policies concerning Mexican (im)migrants, *(ii)* conventional migration theories, from a feminist perspective, and *(iii)* the experiences of women in national and transnational migration.

An Unsettling History: Contemporary US Immigration Policy

Managing immigration while appearing to control the national borders has been a priority of the US since its appropriation of Mexican territories. Management and control involves the exclusion and deportation of those migrants who are deemed undesirable, including illegal border-crossers, legal entrants who overstay their visas, those who work without authorization, non-genuine asylum-seekers, and criminals (Castles and Miller 1998). Although the security of the border is considered essential to US national security, identity, social cohesion, and peace, the current environment of globalization coupled with ambiguous

labour practices that allow migrants to underwrite the US economy makes this a difficult task.

The *Immigration and Nationality Act* of 1965 removed some of the limitations and conditions for admitting (im)migrants to the US. The statute responded to the slowly changing attitudes toward race and nationality and supported a diversity of domestic and international political objectives. The Act rejected the *National Origin* quota system,¹⁰⁶ which had been in place since the 1920s, and embraced an immigration system based on family reunification and needed skills. Although the Act allowed women to legally migrate as independents, the majority migrated as spouses or children of male migrants who had gained access to the US under previously male oriented labour recruitment policies. The precedents set by these policies reinforced and perpetuated the predominance of Mexican male migration and reified traditional and stereotypical definitions of women as ‘dependents’ (Kanaiaupuni 1995).

By 1968, however, domestic concerns and xenophobia overshadowed the benevolence of the 1965 initiatives. US fears that the population of Latin America would continue to soar led to fear of contra colonization. The potential for massive influxes of migrants from south of the border prompted US officials to set immigration ceilings for migrants from within the

¹⁰⁶ The revocation of the quota system was mainly due to its inability to entice migrants from Northern and Western European countries whose numbers had fallen well below the quota by 1965. Having failed, the quota system was easily overturned by arguing that a distinct shift towards more equitable immigration policy was needed. In reality, however, it only marked the abandonment of an ineffective immigration policy, not the institution of an altruistic ethnic and racial diversity regarding migrants.

Western hemisphere to severely restrict the admission of Mexican and Latin American immigrants.

The introduction of the *Immigration Reform and Control Act* of 1986 renewed the focus on Mexican migrants. Under consideration for more than 15 years, the legislation was inspired by compromises between a host of domestic interest groups. Its supporters were mainly concerned with the prevention of illegal immigration. Perceptions of a growing presence of undocumented aliens in the US galvanized efforts to close the back door to illegal immigration (Boyd 1996; Díaz-Briquets 1995; Donato 1993; Freeman and Bean 1997; Zlotnik 1995a).

Only 18% of the Special Agricultural Workers granted amnesty were women, probably because of formal and informal male oriented labour recruitment policies. Nonetheless, women's associational migrant status — as daughters and wives — accounts for the predominance of women among permanent residents admitted to the US between 1930 and 1980. The *Immigration Reform and Control Act* opened the door to the eventual legalization of nearly 2.5 million undocumented migrants, 43% of whom were women. While women's applications for amnesty nearly equalled those of men, far fewer women than men actually legalized their status under the Act's provisions. Since many (im)migrant women were employed in the informal sector as housekeepers and nannies, they could not provide the necessary documentation to legalize their status in accordance with the Act (Matthei 1996; Zlotnik 1995a, 1995b, 1996).

The unintended consequence of heightened border controls, however, was to strengthen migratory networks as the policy for family reunification was extended.¹⁰⁷ As a result, the previously temporary, circular migratory patterns were transformed into permanent US residency for many Mexicans. The establishment of a permanent and legal transnational community, paradoxically, inhibited the Act from meeting its objective of stemming illegal migration since established residents provided links for would-be residents.

With the institutionalization of migrant networks, the number of illegal aliens residing in the US has continued to grow. Although their number declined with the Act's amnesty, new illegal migrants replace and increase the population of resident illegal aliens aided by complex support systems within the legally resident Mexican immigrant community. Presumably, many illegals are awaiting the *next* amnesty program.

Amidst contentious domestic debate, the *Immigration Act* was passed in 1990. The Act sought to appease opposing interest groups: those seeking to increase the immigration ceilings as well as conservatives demanding restricted immigration. These new ceilings provided for family reunification whereas, prior to the Act, immigration ceilings applied only to independent applicants. By creating new categories of immigrants in the quota system, the Act mitigated anti-immigration groups' concerns (Díaz-Briquets 1995).

Despite the new 'diversity' provisions and attempts to redress past discriminatory practices, US immigration policies can only be understood within the predominant culture of national security. Central to this culture is the perception in the US that the growing

¹⁰⁷ Family reunification was a key criterion for the selection of new immigrants. During 1980-1989, 70% of all immigrants to the US were admitted because of their close family ties to either US citizens or permanent residents (Zlotnik 1995b).

numbers of people in the South, projecting and extending into the sovereign territories of the North, constitute an immanent threat. The perceived threat to national borders and territorialized spaces has served to legitimate statist policies aimed at maintaining the status quo, control, and hierarchal power relations and stemming the contra colonization of Western spaces (Soguk 1996; Hodagneu-Sotelo 1994). That threat is apparently verified by the increasing number of border apprehensions, the detention of illegal migrants, and the rising demographic pressures in Mexico. The fear of contra colonization is rooted in ethnocentrism and racism, reinforcing the practices of Othering and the sense of vulnerability to an invasion of Blacks, Browns, and Yellows from the South. From the perspective of many in the US, such an invasion threatens the Western political, economic and cultural hegemony of white Western/Northern states and peoples.

The passage of the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act* in 1996 catered to these fears and perceived insecurity, facilitated the deportation of undocumented and illegal migrants by expanding the list of deportable crimes, restricting the rights of immigrants to appeal actions by and the INS and Border Patrol, imposing a threshold income test for those seeking family reunification, and increasing the penalties for overstaying visas. The objective of the Act, however, is not to eradicate organized crime, nor the capturing of drug dealers and known criminals, but rather to expansion the program of policing that often violates human rights and renders people increasingly insecure.

Under the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the US economy continues to rely on low-wage, unskilled, undereducated (im)migrant workers, while a weakened economy encourages many Mexicans to migrate to meet their basic needs. Within Mexico, this has

meant migration to *maquiladora* centres along the northern border and throughout the central region. Taking advantage of this environment, Mexican migrants have adopted a myriad of survival strategies, including internal and international migration, trans-border movements,¹⁰⁸ and temporary, seasonal and circular migration. The definition of migrant is, consequently, problematic.

Efforts to make the border impermeable, however, run counter to the international tendencies of globalization. Pulled by the globalization of economies and societies, which engenders an obsolescence of geopolitical borders, international migration is often conceptualized as eroding geopolitical borders. On the one hand, globalization reflects the emergence of a global community where ethnic and racial diversity is celebrated and equality is attainable; and, on the other hand, it is perceived as a threat to state sovereignty. The economic power of MNCs and international financial institutions increasingly rivals the economic power and autonomy of states. Likewise, state authority and territorial integrity are perceived to be challenged by the uncontrollable movements of people across national boundaries. Within domestic spaces, however, (im)migrants are often thought to destabilize ethnic, racial, cultural and political equilibriums. In an attempt to assert state sovereignty and authority, state have erected borders physically and metaphorically in constructions of Others, Otherness and Other worlds thereby fulfilling multiple functions. State definitions portray the enemy as external, visible, tangible and destructible. US concerns over a

¹⁰⁸I distinguish trans-border movement from international migration, because participants in trans-border movements often do not identify themselves as migrants, but rather, are engaged in daily, weekly or monthly border crossing for short periods of time without intending to seeking residence on the 'other side' (primary interviews 1997).

perceived contra colonization have resulted in an atmosphere of fear and imagined insecurity.

Despite statistical evidence that migration is predominantly within and between developing countries of the South, the US and other Northern/Western countries continue to sound the alarm about the 'invasion' of immigrants from the South (Castles and Miller 1998; Weiner 1993; Soguk 1996). Underlying these concerns are conventional assumptions about (under)development. The widely held presumption that those who migrate are unskilled and uneducated, however, is challenged by the ongoing emmigration of educated professionals, managers, and skilled workers from the South. Despite US concerns over territorial sovereignty, the US economy greatly benefits from the movement of international migrants. Agriculture and manufacturing, for example, rely upon the influx of low-wage, (im)migrant workers to reduce overhead costs and increase profits. Still, under NAFTA, capital is freed but not labour. Free trade, therefore, remains a contradiction, facilitating the free movement of information, technology, investment, capital and commodities across borders, without easing the movement of people.

These contradictions become more significant under the proposed 34-country Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement. While the FTAA is modelled after NAFTA, its scope and power are far greater. Prompted by the international business community, the FTAA attempts to integrate the most ambitious aspects of the services agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and the powers of the failed Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), into one

hemispheric pact. If NAFTA has negative implications for people and workers, its extension through the FTAA would invariably erode human security throughout the hemisphere.

Gendering Migration Theories: 'Seeing' Women

Globalization and the traditional emphasis of migration theory on labour and economic migrants have effectively excluded women from migration literature and analyses. Women are defined as associational migrants — daughters, wives and sisters — in accordance with gendered assumptions about roles and expectations, but little knowledge exists about why they migrate (Zlotnik 1995a). In the current environment of economic integration, however, women have emerged as the 'new' Mexican migrants. The prospect of employment in low-wage, low-skill, low-protection, high-stress *maquiladoras* has encouraged women to migrate from rural regions to urban border centres. Even when considering women as labour migrants, economic migration models tend to assume that they migrate for the same reasons as men: jobs and economic opportunities. This partial misrepresentation of women's experiences tends to simply extrapolate the experiences of male migrant and transpose them onto female migrants. Accordingly, women's specific experiences as migrants and migrant workers are silenced. When such models take family relations into consideration, the family is equated with the economic unit of the household. The assumption here is that the family/household operates as a harmonious unit. This makes the gendered power relations within families invisible. Such models are silent about the perceived non-economic social roles women fulfil in the home and in conjunction with migration.

The 'Push' and 'Pull' Model and the Rational Male Actor

Economic perspectives continue to dominate the study of Mexican internal and international migration.¹⁰⁹ Macro-level push/pull models ultimately understand migration as a mechanism for stabilizing spatial and market disequilibrium. According to such theories, migrants are rational actors pushed and pulled in deciding to migrate. Push factors are the negative conditions in their countries of origin, such as a weak economy, poverty, inadequate incomes, unemployment, social upheavals and political unrest. In Mexico, an increasing emphasis on commercialization and export-oriented agricultural production has diminished the demand for agricultural labour and it has resulted in higher unemployment and poverty in the communities from which the migrants come. These threats to human security constitute many of the reasons for internal and international migration. Pull factors comprise conditions in receiving countries which attract migrants, e.g., perceived economic and employment opportunities, higher wages, greater levels of economic development, social and political stability, and cross-national social networks that can facilitate future migration from one area to another.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ See Alba *et al.* 1998; Bean *et al.* 1997a, 1997b, 1990; Butler and Pick 1991; Baker and González 1997; Böhning 1994; Bronfman 1993; Bustamante 1990; Cruz Piñeiro 1998; Camara 1979; Cameron 1996; Castillas 1996; Castles and Miller 1998; Chavez *et al.* 1997; Churgin 1995; Cohen 1992; Coleman 1992; Cornelius 1990; Cornelius and Martin 1993a, 1993b; Cornelius, Martin and Hollifield 1994; Durand, Parrado and Massey 1995; Ghosh 1992a, 1992b; Goldring 1996a, 1996b; Massey 1997, 1995; Massey *et al.* 1990; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Massey *et al.* 1994; Taylor 1997; Rosow 1994.

¹¹⁰ See Cornelius, Martin and Hollifield 1994; Goldring 1996a, 1996b; Kanaiaupuni 1995; Pessar 1998; Massey *et al.* 1994; Perpinan 1996; Portes 1995.

Conventional push and pull analyses, along with rational male actor models, assume that migrants operate under a profit/utility maximization rationale, and that individuals and families consider cost and benefit when deciding to migrate. Under such masculine economic models, migrant flows from Mexico are prompted by conditions in both the US and Mexico. The focus on pull factors, particularly labour force migration, has excluded women from many analyses of migration. Feminist scholars argue that these narrow economic approaches to the study of women's migration present a limited view of their participation in the migration process (Pedraza 1991; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Matthei 1996; Zlotnik 1995a). They contend that gender distinctions in labour migration are emphasized only to represent women as more exploitable sources of labour than men. As such, the stereotypical social construction of women and women workers as powerless, emotional, dependent, passive, nurturing, malleable and subjective are emphasized, while women's individual needs, desires and goals are minimized.

For women desiring permanent migration to the US, domestic service provides one of the few opportunities for them to migrate legally as workers. Policies that generally discourage the admission of unskilled migrant workers, nevertheless admit domestic workers, often stipulating that these types of workers must be women. Legal admission provides some guarantees of fair treatment for prospective workers (e.g., a minimum wage, access to health care) but these are seldom enforced. Despite non-enforcement of protection for workers, confinement to domestic employment is more strict. Consequently, women can choose or change their employer but not their occupation. Government regulations about the treatment of foreign domestic workers, therefore, are partly responsible for relegating them to insecure,

dependent and low-status positions (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997, 1994a, 1994b; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Zlotnik 1995b).

Given this environment, migration research during the 1970s and early 1980s was dominated by studies of young, economically-motivated, male migrants. These studies established the young Southern male as the prototypical (inter)national migrant. Micro-level migration theories, which traditionally emphasize cost-benefit decision-making models, assume a rational male actor, actively engaged in weighing wage and income differentials at home and abroad. Such analyses exclude alternative ways of understanding migration by reducing human agency to male defined economic decision-making. Social, political, cultural, gendered and psychological circumstances are invisible in the analysis. Nonetheless, women actively contemplate their options and decide whether to migrate based on those factors.

A migrant needs finances to make the journey. The poorest of the poor seldom migrate. Commonly, migration theories assume that migrants are male, since men have traditionally had greater access to and control over resources and capital, allowing them to raise funds for the journey (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Kanaiaupuni 1995; Pessar 1988). Patriarchal structures cast men as the primary economic earners. This social construction is interwoven into gendered understandings of family relations and the overarching protector/protected family security model. As such, men are expected to fulfil their socially constructed role as the family's economic provider and protector. In this capacity, they tend to have the ultimate authority in family decision-making and control over financial resources. Consequently, men have traditionally been the first to migrate and often make such decisions without consulting their wives.

In contrast, women are traditionally seen as passive, secondary or associational migrants. Conventional migration theories assume that while women participate in migration, they do not decide to migrate. By assumption, women migrants depend on and simply follow men (Boyd 1996; Donato 1993; Massey 1997; Morokvasić 1983; Re Cruz 1998). Traditional masculinist theories imagine women's migration as part of maintaining family unity, and therefore, as a natural extension of their social and domestic roles as wives, mothers, and daughters. As secondary movers, women's decisions to migrate are predicated on the decision of primary male movers who are 'rationally' motivated by potential economic rewards. Arguably, a woman's role as wife and mother, under the patriarchal influence of her husband, can condition her participation in migration (Kanaiaupuni 1995).

Often overlooked in such simplistic analyses are the other factors that motivate women to stay or to go. Women are not necessarily passive migrants because they move for the purpose of reunification: they actively engage in deciding and defining their own goals (Budryte and Duplissis 1997). This construction of women as associational migrants reinforces their invisibility in both the migration processes and migration literature. The social realities of patriarchy, class, ethnicity, and gendered experiences make it necessary to examine women's migration through a different lens than that used for understanding men's migration. I argue, therefore, that women from the same family, culture, class, ethnicity and location will have very different migration experiences from men.

Household Theories and Family Strategies

Household and family strategy theories attempt to bridge the gap between macro (push/pull) and micro (rational choice) levels of migration analyses. They attempt to integrate social and cultural relations with economic ones by utilizing the household/family/domestic group as the basic unit of analysis. Household and family strategy theories, however, fail to explore the gendered relations which define both households and families. These theories assume the household to be an ungendered, rational, kinship-bounded unit through which opportunities are seized and conflicts resolved. This is problematic since opportunities and conflicts are defined narrowly in masculine and economic terms. The nature and dynamics of households are narrowly viewed from a position of assumed gender neutrality. This analysis ignores unequal gendered power relations, gender roles, cohesion of interests and actions. The supposed unity and harmony of the household results from an imagined equality of membership, reciprocal exchange relations, and common goals wherein the individual's needs and goals are subordinate to the household's.

Conflicts are bound to emerge within the family, and gendered power hierarchies tend to define the outcomes. Three interrelated power structures within the household define the economic, political and social hierarchy of households:

- The economic hierarchy is ordered by a gendered division of labour, pooled income, and economic collaboration and contribution.

- The household political hierarchy structures the values assigned to various age and gender spaces.
- Social power hierarchies are defined by cultural and gendered norms, and in turn, reinforce unequal relations within the household.

Inequalities and asymmetries of power, therefore, are gendered dynamics.¹¹¹ Households are flexible socio-historical constructs only comprehensible within a specific time and space. The socio-historical construction and dynamics of households demand a gendered analysis since the unequal gendered power hierarchies dominating all social relations are most evident within households where male authority frequently defines women's subordination.

Traditional notions of unity, pooled resources, and common goals are important in forming household migration strategies. The strategic household migration model suggests that migration mitigates economic and political instability, reduces uncertainty and minimizes risks. As a result, household migration strategies are a mechanism for ensuring family security.

The security of the family is based on the notion of a 'family' wage. Economic survival demands that more and more family members seek paid employment to contribute to the family wage. The Mexican family is commonly the primary source of economic, emotional and social security in accordance with patriarchal traditions. Under traditional household strategy models, gendered power relations and roles are articulated within narrowly defined

¹¹¹ See Benería and Roldán 1987; Budryte and Duplissis 1997; Donato 1993; Garcia and de Oliveira 1995; Harris 1991; Hugo 1997, 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997, 1994a, 1994b; Kanaiaupuni 1995; Lim 1995; Matthei 1996; Szasz 1998, 1994a, 1994b; Tapia 1995; Zlotnik 1995b

cultural traditions, and the gendered apparatus inhibits women's access to paid employment. While the income of women is an important contribution to the family wage, most studies of household/family migration focus on male household heads and emphasize male labour force migration. Rooted in masculinist economic theories, which define work as paid employment, these studies also ignore women's unpaid traditional roles, which are integral to the economic survival of the family unit.

Even if family is narrowly defined as the nuclear family, composed of a married couple and their children, it is unclear how family members can be considered a 'unit' when they live in different countries/physical spaces, as is the case in many family migration strategies. This definition of family is further complicated by the new families that migrants frequently create in their new spaces. A commonly stated reason for women's migration, aimed at family reunification, is women's fears that her spouse/partner will begin a new family with another woman. These fears are clearly rooted in the cultural provisions of *machismo*, which emphasize men's sexual prowess and legitimates male infidelity. How do these 'families' fit into traditional definitions?

To address the spatial separations associated with migration, the term household is often used to specify a group of people that are directly connected through kinship relations and economic ties, such as remittances. Ethnographic research demonstrates the strong ties of household members to kin and kinship obligations, many of which extend beyond the household unit. In fact, social and cultural norms that define extended kinship relations and responsibilities are often stronger and more enduring than the marital ties that frame households, particularly as the strains of migration wear on marital bonds. Nonetheless,

migration is undertaken as a survival strategy by many families, both permanently and temporarily. While migration disrupts familial and familiar social relations and practices, it provides a somewhat flexible economic strategy. The end result, sadly, is often family breakdown, economic insecurity and violence, rather than the 'better life' imagined.

Although household and family strategy theories attempt to bridge the gap between macro and micro levels of migration analyses and seem to bring agency into the migration process, their economic focus tends to obscure the social and cultural power relations which influence behaviours, decisions and practices. For example, the common assumption that women will enter paid employment following migration suggests that the position of women within the household/family will improve. Equal participation in economic and productive relations, however, does not necessarily translate into equality in other aspects of women's lives. While women tend to contribute all of their earned income to the family, men uphold the tradition of maintaining male independence and normally allocate only a portion of their income (Tienda and Booth 1988). The understanding of household as monolithic, altruistic and united, fails to recognize the gendered power relations, conflicts and negotiations which characterize the everyday realities of domestic relationships.

As economic relations become increasingly insecure, it is difficult to distinguish between women's decisions to migrate based on economic motives and those prompted by family relations. Ivonne Szasz (1998, 1994a, 1994b) argues that while both individual and familial reasons influence the decisions of Mexican women to migrate, economic relations are the primary motivator. However, all the sources of women's insecurity must be explored, particularly their experiences of gendered violence, to understand why Mexican women

migrate. This is not to deny the economic motives that invariably influence women's migration experiences, but rather to expose the problem of reducing women's decision-making solely to the economic realm. By widening the scope of the analyses, women's multiple and gendered reasons for migration become visible. Uncovering their experiences in migration is critical to understanding the social, historical, political, economic, cultural and gendered structures which condition their participation.

Although there are significant problems with household theories of migration, the family perspective remains an important focus for the analysis of women's migration. As major participants in 'family migration', women's locations within their families, their roles and contributions — economic and otherwise — are critical to the family's success in the migration process. Evidence shows, furthermore, that women are important economic actors and that their participation in paid employment is usually related to the needs of their families. Women's decisions regarding employment and migration cannot be fully understood without an examination of their locations within the family. Recent studies, for example, indicate a correlation between the life cycles of women and their decisions to migrate (Donato 1993; Kanaiaupuni 1995). These analyses are informed by an understanding of women's socially constructed gendered and reproductive roles and the constraints these may have on their movements and decisions to migrate throughout the course of their lives.

The life cycle model suggests that women only migrate during particular stages of their lives — before marriage and after childbearing. Their socially constructed roles as wives and mothers, it contends, influence critically the decision to migrate. Traditional social and cultural norms that define Mexican women as mothers make migrant motherhood an

objectionable practice and, therefore, may deter some women from migrating while their children are young.¹¹² Furthermore, evidence shows that married women are more likely to migrate if their husbands have already done so.¹¹³ By reinforcing the position of women as mothers and associational migrants, however, the life cycle models disregard their participation as active and independent agents within the migration process. Both the life cycle and the associational models reinforce the gendered social and cultural practices which attempt to restrict Mexican women's movements to the home and to define women's lives according to their reproductive capabilities. The associational migrant model removes much of women's agency by failing to address the changing social, economic and political realities affecting women's migratory choices. While the life cycle model provides insight into the complexities of women's migratory decisions, the analysis that it offers is incomplete.

While the demands of motherhood limit the mobility of women, my research revealed that young children are not necessarily a deterrent to women's migration. Of the 30 women participants in this study, six women between the ages of 15 and 25 migrated with one or

¹¹² Recent research on transnational motherhood challenges conventional assertions that 'good mothers' do not migrate. Transnational motherhood reinterprets women's long-distance relationships with their children as good mothering rather than haphazard interactions. The redefinition of motherhood as a transnational practice counters traditional understandings of mothers as the *everyday* providers of their children's rearing. The study of transnational motherhood reaffirms the traditional value of including the extended family in child-rearing practices. Transnational motherhood, moreover, allows mothers and children to define their relationships and value the communication fostered through letters, telephone calls, remunerations, and gifts (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997).

¹¹³ My earlier assertion that women's associational transnational migration is conditioned and reinforced by the design and implementation of immigration laws and regulations in the US which favour men. These policies are conveniently mediated by the prevailing concepts of family and socially constructed gendered roles. For the most part, these initiatives tend to include men, and exclude women, as independents.

more young children. An additional five women were pregnant with their first child when they migrated. More than one third of the women interviewed contradict the above theory, suggesting that a woman's stage in her life cycle is not the primary factor influencing the decision to migrate. A further eight women who migrated fell within the early age range, being neither married nor in consensual unions at the time of their migration. While the migration of these eight women seems to support the contention that women tend to migrate before having children, a closer examination of their motives is necessary before assuming that they fall within the macro/micro economic models of migration.

Conventional life cycle models further indicate that women are more likely to migrate when their children can contribute to the 'household' as wage earners or caretakers. These distinct categories of contribution are based on the traditional gendered divisions of labour that govern public and private spaces. Male children, therefore, are often encouraged to enter into paid employment, while female children are expected to take responsibility for domestic duties. It is common, therefore, for girls as young as nine years of age to be removed from school to care for younger siblings and to assume household chores previously done by their mothers. According to life cycle theorists, women have a greater propensity for migration and paid employment if they can rely on their children's contributions to the household (Donato 1993; Kanaiaupuni 1995).

The migration models examined so far have failed to take gendered relations and women's particular experiences of migration into account. While the household model attempts to integrate macro and micro levels of migration analysis and to integrate social and cultural factors with economic ones, its masculinist foundation neglects the inherent

gendered relations of migration. In an attempt to 'include' women in the analysis of migration, the life cycle model is an extension of traditional sex-based theories, which focus on women's reproductive and domestic roles rather than on rigorous examination of gendered relations and women's experiences of migration.

The migrant experiences of the women in Ambos Nogales interviewed did not clearly fit into these theoretical models. Nine women in this study migrated during their 'mature' childbearing years (30 to 40 years old). Eight migrated with their children, while one was pregnant at the time of her migration. Only three of the women in the 'mature' category had actually completed the childbearing stage of their life cycle. None of the women suggested that their decision to migrate was associated with their children's participation in the labour market or household duties. While social and cultural norms can restrict women's movements, my research indicates that these influences were less important than other factors, such as access to health care, educational opportunities, family reunification and experiences of gendered violence, in determining their decisions to migrate. The evidence suggests that women's lives are more complex than the unidimensional household and life cycle models propose as will be seen in the next section.

Building Bridges: Gendering Migrant Social Networks

Perhaps the most helpful paradigm for understanding women's experiences of migration is the migrant social network model. Recent migration literature increasingly emphasizes the role of social networks in determining and maintaining migration flows. This framework of analysis provides insight into how families engage in migration and how networks are medi-

ated by gendered relations. Recent research shows that both internal and international migration is strongly supported by social networks. Networks have long helped the migrant to succeed and have become an integral component of community life in both sending and receiving communities. These networks tend to guide migration to specific locations and reduce the risks associated with migration. In particular, social networks provide informal connections among family, fictive family, and friends to facilitate migration. The long history of these networks has institutionalized many migratory patterns and practices.

Upon arrival in a new community, networks provide migrants with critical support and disseminate information. Networks offer assistance to migrants seeking employment, housing, and access to local resources that aid resettlement. By doing so, they provide a sense of connection and community for those who find themselves in a new, strange, and often inhospitable environment. Given their multiple functions, social networks are crucial for migrants whether they are crossing geopolitical borders or simply migrating within national boundaries as the testimonies from this study demonstrate.

Mari's (Mex) experience of borderland networks demonstrates the sacrifices which people, connected by networks, willingly make for others, and the importance of such support mechanisms for migrants and their communities:

Although my brother lived in Nogales, [Sonora] I could not stay with him and his family because they only had a one room house. So, my brother sent me to live with an elderly lady. She was a wonderful woman, she comforted me and took care of me. I realized that some of the bad views of the border, how we try to picture it, are not true. Although people cannot afford to offer economic support since they are struggling, people still give economic support. It may not seem like they are sacrificing, but when people open their doors and share their homes and whatever little they have with complete strangers, this is real support. Now, what little we have here, we share with others who need our help.

Mari's reflection provides some insight into the ways in which networks are constructed and strengthened over time. Historically, Mexican communities have been culturally organized around extended family relationships. This long established community-based model serves as a foundation for the development and extension of migrant social networks both within Mexico and the US. Extended family households commonly operate in supportive interconnected clusters, which are informed by economic and social linkages among family, fictive family, and friends.¹¹⁴ Important ceremonial events such as baptisms, weddings and *quinceañeras*¹¹⁵ are critical elements which maintain the interconnectedness of these household clusters and social networks. Moreover, social networks are often used as an exchange mechanism for informal and unpaid labour. Often childcare, household

¹¹⁴ Household clusters consist of a core household that is predominantly comprised of economically active middle-aged-to-older adults who are linked to peripheral households through kinship relations in a spoke-and-wheel pattern. Peripheral households, by contrast, are commonly engaged in early life cycle patterns such as childbearing and child rearing. Tapia (1995) suggests that core households often consist of grandparents who serve as a focal point of activities. Clustering was also found among the women participants in this study. For the most part, however, the household linkages were not necessarily spatially defined or determined by kinship relations. For example, many women in Ambos Nogales explained that they initially lived in extended households and often built homes in nearby vicinities or moved to nearby houses to ensure their networks remained strong. These patterns tend to parallel Tapia's understanding of household clusters.

Perhaps more interesting than the physical clustering configurations are the social connectivity which social networks provided across physical boundaries of space and social boundaries of kinship. Tapia suggests that household clusters are often delimited by the geographic distance between relatives and, in the borderlands, by the border itself. I found, however, that the structuring of household clusters in the borderlands was much more flexible than Tapia's model suggests. Many of the women described complex household, kinship and fictive kinship relations which extended across great distances and especially across the US-Mexican border.

¹¹⁵ A *quinceañera* is the celebration of a girl's fifteenth birthday.

chores, and maintenance for homes and cars are traded among community members, thereby reinforcing social network systems.

In addition to networks formed by family and friends, religious leaders and groups also provide networks of support to migrants. This evidence is supported by other studies, particularly those which explore the conversion of Catholics to Protestantism among women immigrants in the US.¹¹⁶ María Elena (Mex) explains:

We moved here because my brother was here and we knew the priest. The Church was a sanctuary for us when we first arrived. They helped us to find a place to live and warned us about the places that we should not go. My brother could not have done everything without the Father's help.

Access to migratory networks raises the likelihood of migration and the probability of successful migration for both men and women. The structures of migrant networks, however, are gendered and, therefore, produce different migration experiences for men and women.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Re Cruz (1998), for example, examines the role of Protestant networks and the processes of conversion to Pentecostalism. Her study, conducted along the Texas border contends that the socio-religious networks that initially support women migrants' resettlement provide a liberating environment that fosters conversion. While religious networks were utilized by some of the women participants in this study, none suggested that they influenced their religious beliefs or resulted in conversion.

¹¹⁷ Historically focussed on labour recruitment, studies of migrant networks have tended to document the movements of men as rational actors seeking economic opportunities within and across geopolitical borders. Accordingly, understandings of migration circuits have been an important focus of study. Analyses of migratory circuits suggest that migrants are motivated solely by economic opportunities and, therefore, fall within the realm of push/pull migration theories. The availability of short-term jobs in another region arguably 'pulls' migrants from their places of origin, while poor employment prospects in their home communities 'pushes' migrants to move for specified periods of time. Circuit migration analyses also fall within the rational choice model which assumes migrants conduct in-depth cost/benefit analyses to aid decision-making. Circuit migration predominantly encourages male participants. For the most part, it excludes women even as associational migrants following their spouses. Consequently, circuit migrations is a gendered practice. Nonetheless, little research has been conducted on the role of gendered relations in

Social networks, traditionally defined and maintained by men, are less accessible to migrant women. Evidence suggests that married women have greater access to networks through their husbands (Budryte and Duplissis 1997; Kanaiaupuni 1995; Tapia 1995; Zlotnik 1995b). Men, however, remain the primary beneficiaries of these male-centred migratory networks. Arguably, this trend will persist as long as men continue to be the first to migrate and control migratory networks. The predominance of research on male-centred networks, moreover, reinforces masculinist migration theories which deny the agency of migrant women.

As women have become increasingly active agents of migration, their use of migrant networks has expanded. As more women migrate, the gendered structures of networks have begun to change, and women are playing a greater role in the creation and maintenance of migrant social networks. Women-centred networks, consequently, have begun to emerge, ensuring greater access to and control over this valuable resource. With this transition, women can increasingly access information, transportation, new households and jobs, independently of male family/household members. Often women-centred networks provide the financial support, through informal lending structures, which enables women to migrate. Julia (US) explains the importance of having her mother as a support mechanism upon her arrival in the US:

When I was 15, my mother, she jumped the line and she stayed on this side. She left me with her sister in Mexico ... but when I got pregnant, I decided it was better to have my baby on the other side. Since my mother was here, she understood how things worked and she was able to help me once I arrived.

migration circuits. And, it was not essential to the migratory experiences of the women in this study.

Women-centred networks are critical to ensuring the security of women throughout the migration process and afterward. Their vulnerability to gendered violence necessitates well-developed networks, which can disseminate reliable information and provide solid support and trustworthy contacts. Of the 30 women participants in this study, only four (13%) reported that they migrated without the use of social networks. Caroline (Mex) explains the importance of having some access to social networks:

I chose Nogales [Sonora] because my brother had moved there five years earlier and he was established. But in reality, I had no other choices as to where to migrate. We, I mean women, must rely on knowing someone when we go to a new place that we do not know, otherwise bad things can happen to us.

Women's socially constructed responsibility for the maintenance of family ties is often extended to the preservation of long-distance and transnational kinship relations. This experience is frequently used by women to consolidate women-centred networks and facilitate the flow of people, goods, services and information between sending and receiving communities. Women commonly maintain their matrilineal ties as well as connections with their husband's family, and these bonds can be used to strengthen women-centred networks. Matrilineal networks, moreover, often provide security for migrant women and their children if their husbands die, abuse or abandon them. Maria Luisa (Mex) recalls:

After some time I needed to get away, so I went to stay with some family that are still in Chihuahua. I migrated there because I was pregnant and I needed to escape from the violence and the control of my husband ... but I had my family there to help me. I did not know them, but they were my mother's family. That is why I could leave.

Migrant networks are important for internal migrants as well as for both documented and undocumented migrants who cross geopolitical borders. More than 80%, or 26 of the 30 women interviewed, stated that they used social networks to facilitate their migration. Only

four women stated that they did not have access to a network that could help them migrate. For illegal migrants, transnational networks are critical since they often provide protection from detection, interdiction and deportation. While undocumented status renders all migrants vulnerable, undocumented women are especially insecure since the risks of gendered violence are exacerbated by their lack of status. Five of the 15 women participants in the US stated that they were undocumented migrants at the time of this study.¹¹⁸ Only two crossed illegally through unofficial ports of entry. The other three women, crossed using a *mica* (border crossing card) but failed to return to Mexico in accordance with the conditions of the *mica* and chose to remain illegally in the US. Furthermore, one Mexican participant also crossed the border illegally, but eventually returned to Mexico without detection. Leonela (US) recalls her experience of crossing the border illegally:

I came with my three children. We could have gone somewhere else, but there was family here so I thought that they would help us. We came across through the canyons. I was undocumented, but I did not use a *coyote*¹¹⁹ because sometimes they take your money and they do not help you. Someone told me how to do it. They told me where to go ... so yes, I had help but not from a *coyote*. I only came across that way once, that was enough. Crossing all on my own, with three children was very difficult. I was lucky crossing, I did not run into any bad things ... but, lots of women, especially if they have children and try crossing with them have problems.

¹¹⁸ I did not ask about the participant women's legal status in the US for two reasons. First, their current legal status did not necessarily reflect how they crossed the border. Second, by not asking, I increased their sense of a safe environment, thus encouraging them to openly discuss their experiences. The five women who chose to reveal their status, therefore, may not reflect the actual number women in this study who were living undocumented in the US.

¹¹⁹ *Coyote* is a borderland term referring to someone who guides undocumented migrants across the US-Mexican border.

Paradoxically, while networks can increase women's security, the participants noted that networks also serve to elevate gendered violence by increasing surveillance, maintaining traditional roles, and reinforcing patriarchal cultural values. Consequently, many of the women (im)migrants were forced into the undesirable position of needing to trust network contacts, while remaining cautious because of their vulnerability and the prevalence of gendered violence. Clare (Mex) explains that the possibility of gendered violence is always present for women who migrate:

I came alone to this place. No one came with me. I had some family that had already migrated here, but when I arrived I realized that they were not able to help me. So really, I was alone and did not know anyone. I had to trust people that I did not know ... but, I was very careful. Some people are good but others are ... I just cannot say ... they use women and take advantage of us ...

The dilemma of trust and trusting is also clear in Marcela (US) story. She recounts her predicament:

Although I crossed with a *mica*, it was very expensive for me. I did not have the proper documents, so I had to go to Tijuana to get photographs and papers. It cost me more than 500 US dollars. But if you do not get papers made, you cannot get a *mica*. Tijuana is the best place to go to get these things, but you need money and contacts. It was even dangerous to travel to Tijuana to have the documents made since I was a woman on my own. But ... these things are always done through someone who knows someone who can help, or someone who has done this before ... and I had to trust the woman who gave me the information.

Recent adaptations of the migrant social network model engender an understanding of how women engage in migration and how gendered relations attempt to exclude women from migratory networks. Analyses of migratory social networks offer a space for the interrogation of gender relations and an investigation of women's experiences of the processes of migration. This exploration shows that from women's positions of marginality,

they have continued to engage in migration not as associational migrants, but rather as active agents in migration. Located at the margins, women migrants have established and extended women-centred migrant social networks by building on their undervalued skills and their socially constructed responsibilities of nurturing, caring, and maintaining family and fictive family relations. As Bell Hooks (1984) suggests, marginality is a space which women must embrace for innovation and revolutionary struggle for social change.

Gendered Violence and Insecurity: The ‘Other’ Reasons Women Migrate

While some inroads have been made to ‘see’ women in the migratory process, gendered violence as an impetus for and consequence of women’s migration remains invisible in the literature. Even when masculine economic models consider women migrants beyond their supposed associational status, they assume that women migrate for the same reasons as men — employment opportunities and the illusive ‘better life’. This is not to suggest that women do not migrate for economic reasons or to improve their living status, but rather that such assumptions fail to expose the many ‘other’ reasons why women migrate and to comprehend women’s experiences of migration. The 30 women participants in this study suggested various reasons for their migration. Although economic opportunities invariably affect women’s decisions to migrate, not one woman said that economics was her sole reason for migrating. Surprisingly, 12 of the women, almost half of those interviewed, made no mention of economic incentives as an influence on their decisions to migrate. This lends credence to feminist critiques of masculinist economic migration theories. The remaining 18 women cited economics or job opportunities, usually for their spouse, as only one of the reasons for

their migration. The women provided various combinations of 'other' reasons for their decision to migrate, including education for themselves or their children (9 of 30), access to health care or improved health care for themselves and their children (5 of 30), and family reunification (9 of 30).

Yolanda (US), for example, cites both health care and education opportunities for her disabled children as the greatest impetus for her migration. She also claims, however, that economic opportunities and reunification with her husband were important factors in making her decision. Her migration was facilitated by her husband's amnesty under the 1986 *Immigration Reform and Control Act* since he was working in Nogales, Arizona, at the time, and provided Yolanda with a 'green card'. Yolanda asserts that while crossing the border meant greater economic opportunities and that her family would be reunified, she emphasised that the primary reason for migrating to the US was to provide her children with the special education and health care facilities which they needed:

I decided to cross because there were more economic opportunities ... but, most importantly, I crossed for my children. They needed special health care and education because of their disabilities. There is nothing for children with disabilities on the other side. They just do not have anything. We already had one child when we migrated. Arturo was only two years old at the time, but it was already clear that he had many health problems, so I brought him here. It was better here because my husband had work, and he could work better knowing that we were close by. He takes good care of us and I take good care of him. Before, I was travelling back and forth across the border and it was very difficult with a small child with disabilities. So this helped me to decide to join my husband over here. I am no longer travelling back and forth across the line, except to visit or shop.

Clare (Mex) contends that the social pressures to marry instigated her migration. She suggested that since marriage is a defining characteristic of womanhood, she would not be accepted unless she were married. Clare's desire for cultural acceptance is common. It is

fuelled by socially and culturally constructed gender roles. The gendered construction of the protected female and the male protector incorporates traditional gender roles. The public/private dichotomy also devalues and excludes women. Such constructions reinforce the imagined protection and security which marriage offers women. Clare recalls:

I was born in Navajoa. It is a very small town in the country in southern Sonora, where there are no opportunities. I came to Nogales, [Sonora] when I was 18 years old to look for a husband. There is so much pressure on women to have a husband that can provide for her and the children ... Also, I heard that there was work here.

Ramona (US) recalls that while she decided to migrate for many reasons, her desire to be a good wife and mother and to keep her family together were primary. Ramona's desire to provide her children with more opportunities, especially educational ones, spurred her decision to take them to join her husband who had begun to establish himself in the US.

We have been here 10 years now, but we crossed to this side because my husband was already here. He had a job and he was given amnesty in 1986. So, I gathered the children and we left. Keeping the family together is part of our culture. It is our life. Also, I heard that the opportunities in the United States were better and the quality of life was also better. So, in reality, I came for my children, to ensure that they would have a better life and a better education than I had. This is very important. If you want a better life you need education.

Lupe's (Mex) decision to migrate was also multiply motivated — by family reunification, economics and a search for independence. Though Lupe suggests that, because of the prevailing social and cultural conventions, she had no choice in her decision to migrate. She imagines that migration will bring her a new sense of autonomy.

I first migrated when I was 20 years old. I came to Nogales, Sonora to join my husband. He had found a job here and said I could find one too. The economy and opportunities are much better here and I wanted to work so that I would be independent. But in reality, I had no choice, I was married to him so I had to follow him, even though I had no children at the time.

Evidently, a woman's decision to migrate is complex and varies according to her lived experience and her particular circumstances. Yolanda, Clare, Ramona and Lupe's narratives, recounting their decisions to migrate, demonstrate that women migrate for many other reasons apart from economic ones. These narratives further suggest that socially constructed gender roles and the patriarchal structures reinforcing them seem to influence many women's decisions to migrate. In most cases, as demonstrated by the narratives, women are engaged in the decision-making and choose to migrate. Accordingly, they must be seen as agents in their own lives and not simply as associational migrants. Even Lupe and Ramona's decisions to migrate, which appear to fit the conventional secondary migrant model, demonstrate their agency. Since Lupe also sees herself as an economic migrant who will participate in paid employment and gain independence through migration, she contests her assigned secondary status. It is evident from these women's experiences that a woman's decision to migrate is largely based on her specific location, her experience, her hopes and her desires.

Other common reasons for women's migration include the desire to escape marital problems and the opportunity to develop more social independence (UN 1994). A cursory inclusion of women's other reasons for migration, however, fails to expose the prevalence of gendered violence as an influence upon their decisions to migrate. Women's insecurity was the most important motivation for most of the women I interviewed. Furthermore, my research exposes the prevalence of gendered violence in the everyday lives of women in Ambos Nogales and the insecurity which it produces.

To explore gendered violence as an impetus for women's decisions to migrate, it is necessary to revisit the theoretical analysis of violence developed in earlier chapters. It is important to recall that the concept of violence is socially constructed, has varied over time, and reflects patriarchal power relations. In addition, women's multiple experiences of gendered violence form a continuum of violence rooted in gendered inequalities of power. Gendered violence, therefore, ranges from direct physical violence (hitting, pushing, battery, sexual assault, rape and murder) and structural violence (public/private separations, economic segregations, job discrimination, cultural structures, inadequate health care, and reproductive health interventions/initiatives) to psychological violence (emotional abuse, sexism, discrimination in all its multiple forms, harassment, intimidation, victim blaming, and forced internalization of oppressive stereotypes).

Women's decisions to migrate are complex even when gendered violence is the primary cause. Social and cultural definitions of woman and womanhood invariably mediate women's life choices and decisions about migration. My research demonstrates that some women migrate to gain control over their lives, others to escape the patriarchal social constructions that confine them to roles as powerless and passive mothers, wives and daughters. These gendered power relations, which constitute structural violence, together with the physical and psychological violence they sanction and produce, render women insecure. Despite the culture of gendered violence, I found the women in this study to be active agents in migration and in their own lives.

More than half of the participants (17 of 30) cited some form of gendered violence and the insecurity which it precipitates, as the primary reason for their decision to migrate. Six

of the women who cited gendered violence as an impetus for migration crossed the border to the US, while the remaining 11 women migrated within Mexico. The choice of where to migrate, however, is not directly related to these women's experience of gendered violence or their decision to migrate. Other factors, such as access to migrant social networks, financial ability, access to crossing documents, geographic location and distance from the border, played a role in women's decisions to migrate within Mexico or internationally.

Caroline, Mirna and Rosa's stories suggest the diversity and extent of the gendered structural violence that motivates women's decisions to migrate. Caroline (Mex) contends that, although many factors combined to motivate her to migrate, her lack of security was primary. Caught in the complicated and often violent world of marijuana production and drug trafficking,¹²⁰ Caroline decided that migration would provide her with the security that she sought. The promise of jobs, land and opportunities in the border region supported her decision to escape her environment.

I first migrated from the city of Guasabe in Sinaloa. It is a fairly large urban centre, but most people work in agriculture ... that is the most important economic activity. You know that [the state of] Sinaloa is also one of the major marijuana producers in Mexico. My family had a small *finca* [*hacienda*, farm], but it was too small to produce anything. In reality, the land is very poor, although my parents are still there. I migrated to Nogales, Sonora because it was becoming very dangerous to live there. I did not feel safe. It was a scary place and you saw things that you did not want to see. I thought that there were opportunities here — land and jobs — so we came. I thought my prospects would be better here, that my children would have a better education. And health care is much better here. I had family here, so that also made it easier for us.

¹²⁰ As discussed in Chapter 3, the drug business is decidedly gendered. Women are often enticed and forced to engage in trafficking as a means of obtaining economic security. Women can often cross the border with undetected contraband because many border officials are influenced by gendered stereotypes that 'see' women as passive.

For women, migration is often associated with new or increased social, economic and sexual freedoms. These are freedoms that Mexican women are often culturally prohibited from exercising in their home communities. Such limitations on women's choices constitute structural violence, and when these choices are enjoyed by men and not by women, they constitute gendered structural violence. Mirna's (US) decision to migrate was motivated by such gendered violence. The social and cultural structures which define heterosexuality as the norm made Mirna's decision to migrate necessary:

There were a lot of reasons why I had to get away. I was having so many problems, I was confused about who I was. I was questioning my sexual identity and this was not something which was possible in Mexico. I wanted to have economic independence, job opportunities and money so that I could care for my child. I.... I was pregnant at the time when I crossed. As I said, I was confused, but I am glad that I have my son. All of these things were important, but I also needed to escape the domination of that man [the father of her child] ... he was not my husband, he never could be, but he thought that he could control me, he thought that he could change me.

Mirna's experience illustrates the narrow socio-cultural constructions which define womanhood. Her story demonstrates that the binary opposites of *machismo* and *marianismo*, reinforce social constructions of sexuality and fidelity. Together, *machismo* and *marianismo* imagine the exercise of male sexual prowess to be central to masculinity, whereas sexual naiveté is women's assigned role, and heterosexuality is the enforced norm. In this sense, social and cultural traditions have severely restricted the ability of women to explore their sexuality beyond the confines of heterosexuality. Furthermore, the prevailing gendered apparatus equates women's virtue with their fidelity and reinforces the view of women as associational migrants. Many women hope that migration will liberate them from these narrow constructs. Rosa (Mex) confirms: "Migrating allowed me to be more sexually

liberated, free from the violence of my relationship, free from aggression, the scoldings, the sleeplessness....everything. There was no authority over me. I felt that the pressure was gone and I could take control of my life.”

María Elena, Ana, and Mari’s experiences provide a glimpse into the terror and violence permeating the everyday lives of many women in Ambos Nogales — a key motive for their migration. Moreover, their search for security is clearly evident in their stories of courage and flight. María Elena (Mex) reveals:

I moved from Chihuahua when I was 26 years of age. I moved because I was afraid. My stepfather was very violent and one day he exploded and he shot my mother right in front of me. There was so much fear inside me that I could not stay ... he was not my father and I knew that he didn’t want us around. So, I moved to Nogales, [Sonora]. I will never go back, never.

Similarly, Ana (US) explains the importance of security for women. Her decision to cross the border reveals the extent of her determination to ensure her security and that of her unborn child. It also shows how women can be agents of change in their own lives, even from the margins. Ana recalls: “When I was 17 and I found myself pregnant, I decided to go across. I was married at the time, but my husband was very bad, he abused me. So, I wanted to get away, I wanted to be separate from him, I wanted to be safe, I wanted my child to be safe. So I left.”

As evident from their testimonies, women migrate for various reasons. While gendered violence is a primary incentive, the decisions made by these women to migrate are complex and multiply motivated. The necessities of everyday life — food, clothing, and shelter — must be satisfied. The essentials of long-term human security and well being — education,

health care, jobs and safety — must also be ensured. As Mari (Mex) explains, women's security is multifaceted:

I migrated to Nogales because there were jobs here on the border, so my prospects for economic security were better here than there. I migrated so that my children could have a better education. Access to health care is much better here. I have a heart problem so that was also a concern for me. But most importantly, I migrated to escape the violence from my [first] husband. I had to keep my children safe. They were not safe there. We were all in great danger from my husband. I left my husband several times, but he would always come looking for me and drag me back ... Because of my fears and the violence which I knew would continue, I had to put enough distance between us so that he could not find me. If I had stayed in that cycle of abuse, I would have died, he would have killed me. It has happened to other women.

María Teresa and Angelica's experiences of psychological violence provide insight into the ways in which gendered relations can exacerbate women's insecurity. The various ways in which violence is acted out in relationships is gendered and is mediated by particular patriarchal cultural constructions. The power over women which *machismo* gives men, provides an underlying insecurity for women who choose not to conform to male demands.

María Teresa (Mex) relates:

I migrated to Tucson first because I was not married and I was about to have a baby. When the man found out I was pregnant, I no longer wanted to live with him but he came to my house at night to harass me. He wanted sex. He threatened to take the baby away when it was born. He played loud music and he drank. He would not let us be! He would try to run me over with his car, I think that also affected my pregnancy and the birth of my child. I only left because he would come to my house and give me problems. So I moved to Tucson.

Angelica's (Mex) experience suggests that the patriarchal cultural constructions of male power and male violence inform women's understandings of their security. While Angelica's narrative carefully constructs her experience of violence as 'nonviolent', the problem of defining gendered violence as 'real' violence is clear. Angelica rationalizes: "He was not

physically violent, but he had rifles and guns and that is why I wanted to leave ... to live somewhere else. I was scared, especially when he was drunk. Although he did not use the rifles and guns, he did threaten me with them.”

By recounting these women’s stories, I am not advocating the separation of forms of violence against women into distinct categories. Differentiation, however, has been useful here in demonstrating that the prevalence and diverse forms of gendered violence are a primary influence upon women’s decisions to migrate. To understand women’s experiences of insecurity, it is therefore necessary to consider the cumulative effect and meaning of violence as well as the structural interrelationships among various forms of violence. An understanding of the continuum of violence allows us to contemplate the interrelationship between, and the accumulation of, violent practices that render women insecure. Likewise, it is important to recognize that what counts as violence is socially constructed and reflects patriarchal power relations. Accordingly, gendered violence as a primary motivation for women’s migration has remained invisible in masculine economic migration theories, models and literature.

Perceptions and Possibilities: Social Change and Internal Migration

Many of the women participants imagined that migration would result in new freedoms, greater control over their lives, and the crossing of traditional gendered boundaries that define women’s spaces. Commonly, migration has been associated with new or increased social, economic and sexual freedom. These women’s narratives, however, suggest that their decisions to migrate had mixed outcomes. In some cases, the women claimed that their

situations improved; in others, they lamented that the socially constructed gender roles and the patriarchal structures, which serve to define Mexican women, remained intact following their migration. These women stated that migration brought little change to their everyday lives, and some even suggested that their situations worsened. Others perceived improvements in some areas of their lives, though not in others.

Although María Teresa (Mex) continues to struggle with the everyday insecurities of living in the borderlands, she is confident that her decision was an emancipating one. She contends that migration removed her from the social and cultural constraints, patriarchal domination and gendered violence which permeated her daily life. “Migrating allowed me to be free. No man could control me; I had control over my life. I did not have to obey. I did not have to succumb to the violence around me. When I migrated I understood these things.”

Similarly, Caroline (Mex) asserts that migration was a life-altering process that transformed both her expectations and her sense of self. In escaping the insecurity of violence and patriarchal domination, Caroline developed self-confidence and redefined her understanding of socially constructed gendered expectations about both men and women. Caroline explained to me that she no longer imagines men as aggressive, violent and domineering. More importantly, she does not envision herself or women as passive recipients of male violence and control.

By migrating, yes, I feel liberated from the violence and control of my husband. I am calmer and more self-assured. Also, I have more self-esteem and I am more understanding. I am a much stronger person because of my experiences. I know that I deserve more. Now I have a good husband, and we have a positive relationship which doesn't make me afraid.

Socially and culturally constructed gendered roles and expectations are so ingrained that women often do not expect that migration will completely transform their lives. The difficulties that migration invariably presents, coupled with the gendered insecurities women frequently encounter, often verify their lived experiences of subordination. By migrating, however, some women find that the gendered violence which attempts to define and constrain their lives, can be overcome. Migration, therefore, can provide a space wherein women can assert their agency, as well as redefine and reconstruct their lives. Virginia (Mex) recounts:

Migration was more difficult because I am a woman, because women are vulnerable, easily left alone and abandoned. Alone, a woman can make it but it is harder to gain respect. Men and society, they see us differently when we are alone. But migrating, and then being abandoned by my husband, made me stronger. I am now much stronger. It changed my expectations, my views of myself and of other women who were trying to make it. I made it on my own even though society tells us women that we cannot succeed alone ... that we must have a man. I think that migrating released me from my family's expectations. I feel released since I came here, especially after my husband left. I can go out freely. No one is monitoring my movements.

Pascal's (Mex) experience suggests that migration has led to mixed results. Women often enter into paid employment after migrating. While this adds to their responsibilities, it can provide a greater degree of autonomy and authority within familial relationships. As economic contributors, many women use their new positions to assert their power and transform gendered relations within the family. Pascal explains:

Migrating to this place has changed my expectations about women's roles. Women here need to work more because we cannot depend on our family. Before it was much calmer and not as demanding. But here, if you don't work you don't eat. There, where we were producing our own food, there was always at least something to eat. A lot has changed. Now, I have my own family and my own house ... I am more independent. I contribute and I have a voice.

While Maria Luisa contends that nothing has changed, her life experience as well as the experience of migration has provided new understandings of the world and her place within it. With this knowledge, Maria Luisa has gained a foundation for making choices that transform her life. In this sense, Maria Luisa's decision to migrate was a positive step in her learning process. She now realizes that she has control over her life, its direction and its outcomes. As an agent in her own life, Maria Luisa (Mex) contends: "Migrating has not changed me. Nothing really has changed. It is still the same. I am still the same here or there. But now I know what I want and so I am studying to get it."

María Elena's experience of migration is the least liberating of the women interviewed. However, in speaking of the violence and insecurity she experiences, María Elena is challenging the social and cultural structures that attempt to silence her:

Women's roles don't change. It is a difficult task to be a woman, but it is the same here and there. We work and we care for our children. I felt liberated from social and family expectations when I migrated because here I am with my own family. We have survived. But, I am still not free. I am still with my husband and he is still very controlling. So some things are the same, he is the same, that has not changed.

While migration is often assumed to refer to movement across borders, it also occurs within states. Even when migration occurs within the country, people are forced to cross many geographic, gendered, social, political, cultural, economic, and linguistic borders. The women participants in this study who migrated from within Mexico to Nogales, Sonora, like their international counterparts, indicated that gendered violence was the primary reason for their decision to migrate. Prompted by gendered violence in one space, many women are compelled to migrate to new spaces. By undertaking precarious migration, the women demonstrate their strength and agency. Migration, however, does not always ensure escape

from gendered violence which frequently prevails in these new spaces. While migration is rarely easy, the experiences of the women interviewed suggest that it is a decidedly gendered practice making it more difficult for women. Lupita (Mex) contends:

Migrating was much more difficult because I am a woman. When you come to a new place and you don't know anyone, it is difficult. I felt very alone and isolated. When we first came, we lived in our house but it was not finished. We had no electricity, no sewage, no water, and I needed help and I didn't know my neighbours. I was afraid to ask for help ... because I didn't know if there would be conflicts from my asking for help. I was worried that people would talk, and that my husband would be disappointed with me. When you are a stranger in a new place, it is very difficult. In general, the idea of the unknown is difficult and dangerous for women. It is especially difficult for women with small children. We are more vulnerable. People can see that we are alone and need help, but there are problems in accepting help. It appears that women, especially with small children, are less successful in migrating. It restricts our movements because we have to set up the house in a new environment and the home is always more responsibility for women than for men ... But moving has made me stronger because I can no longer depend on, for example, my mother. When she would see that we needed some help, she would always help us ... But now we are far away from her and on our own. So, I must be strong and accept what I have.

Overwhelmed by the violence in her life, Mari's desire to escape and protect her children was at the forefront of her story of migration. Her struggle to secure a space where violence could no longer dominate her life or the lives of her children, is a testament to her agency.

Coming to Nogales [Sonora] placed so much stress on me. I worried that my husband would follow me. It was a serious source of stress for me and placed additional stress on my already bad heart. Also, my children were very nervous and unsettled due to all of these problems. I was not sure what it would be like here, things were unknown to me. I did not want to put my children in any more danger. But, I found somewhere quickly, I sent for them after only two weeks. I did everything quickly once I moved to Nogales because I was worried that my husband would take my children from my mother's house and abuse them before I could get them to a safe place far away. Here we are safe.

Many of the women recounted the migration experiences of other women. They frequently raised concerns over the vulnerability of women to gendered violence. They cited incidences of rape, physical attack, and robbery as consequences of women's migration.

While several women stated that men are also vulnerable to abuses, these references were used to emphasize how much more vulnerable women are. Maria Luisa (Mex) emphasized the gendered stereotypes of women who migrate alone. She carefully noted that since she migrated with her family, no one could question her moral character. Clare's (Mex) narrative explains the difficulties of migration for a woman moving alone as well as the feelings of accomplishment and self-satisfaction that arise when these difficulties are overcome:

I am a woman and travelling here alone was very frightening. It was much more difficult for me than for a man because, as a woman, even if I want to rely on someone to help me, I could not because this would make me vulnerable ... someone could abuse me. There are many stories about women being raped and attacked, and sometimes they do not even arrive where they are going. But women are strong; so if we are very stubborn and are willing to struggle we can make it. We are socialized to struggle and suffer, so it is not something new to us.

Unfortunately, the greater vulnerability and insecurity of women can prompt them to engage in economic activities that they might not choose if alternatives were available. The two key activities referred to by some of the women were prostitution and drug trafficking. Rosario's experience of the exchange of sexual services for economic compensation mirrors the domestic exchange relations between married/cohabiting couples. It can be understood, therefore, as a transmutation or even extension of the protector/protected regime imagined in marriage. Rosario (Mex) reconciles her choices:

I think that the migration experience was more difficult because I was a woman, and I had three small children with me. But, women, we are born to struggle. It is definitely more dangerous for women to migrate because we are not prepared for how difficult it is in reality. Coming to a strange place where you know no one is very hard. I came with fear and three children. I had to find housing and work. We had to live in the streets until I found everything. We slept under the trees. But, it is also easier for women. Because people have pity on us and our children, we get help sometimes. For men, there is only fear and distrust. Sometimes I would meet men, sometimes they would give me money, but sometimes bad things would happen to me. I would go [have sex] with men because

my children had no food and I could not provide for them. Sometimes I would have to send my son to work as a scavenger and I had to watch this degradation. Going with men is better than subjecting my son to this.

Marta Emelda (Mex) contends that women are not free to speak of their experiences and that she is not free to tell what has happened to her. Her story of struggle, however, suggests that some of the experiences of the 'other' women to which she refers may actually be her own experiences. Marta Emelda reveals:

It is more difficult for women to travel alone to an unknown place. Migrating is much more dangerous for women than for men because if women are seen to be alone they face many dangers. Women are not prepared for the dangers they may face. They are more vulnerable to things like rape. Women do not talk about what has happened to them, they keep those things secret, if they can, so that people do not know how difficult their life is, or judge them. Let me tell you, I wish I could be a man ... because men do not have to deal with so many things, no one can force them to do anything. No one can take something from them.

The assumption that migration improves the position of women is clearly premised on the notion that new geographic spaces are more progressive and modern, where better access to health care, education, and economic opportunity will ensure women greater authority within the family. At the same time, the assumption that women's positions improve following migration presupposes that women are moving to less oppressive environments, where cultural constraints are less rigid, gender hierarchies are less inequitable, and women are not constantly surveilled and scrutinized. Migration, however, invariably results in the disruption of family relations, and this can result in increased hostility and violence. The evidence from this study suggests that some women experience more gendered violence, including abandonment, separation and divorce, following their migration. Nonetheless, most women who migrated indicated that migration had improved their lives.

Everyday Practices of Transborder Migration, Transnationalism and 'Othering'

Migration, as one of the forces of globalization, has had a profound impact on economic, political, cultural, and social relations. Nonetheless, much of the international and transnational migration literature focuses on the impact and extent of these processes at the macro level of states in host and home countries. Recent emphasis on ethnographic analysis fills the unknown spaces which surround the everyday experiences of migration — a vacuum of information which is created by the predominance of state-centric theories. Migrant narratives, however, provide insight into the micro-levels impact of economic, political, cultural and social relations of the community and the individual. In the case of transnational migrant narratives, they reveal how alternative values, beliefs and practices affect sojourners and subsequently infect those who 'stayed behind' with new, alien and Other understandings. Upon returning to their home communities, many transnational migrants try to resume traditional social and cultural beliefs and practices. In this sense, traditions are renewed, reconfigured and born anew.

In (trans)border communities, the processes of (re)negotiation are invariably mediated and complicated by the divisive realities of the border. Women in the border region assume many different identities — transnational workers, transborder migrants, daily or frequent border crossers, non-crossers, and mothers, wives and daughters of crossers. The border effects configurations of transnationalism and transnational communities across and on both sides of the line. Encountering the border, transnational and transborder migrants are forced to constantly renegotiate their culture, values, beliefs and practices in diverse social, political,

economic and geographic contexts. Invariably, this results in contradictions and inconsistencies in the lives of those who cross or do not cross. In the borderlands, women live between and within many of these multiple identities and complex spaces. Consequently, separations between and across the border are blurred; communities, reconfigured; identities, melded; and women's spaces, renegotiated.

Globalization, moreover, has created transnational consumers and many impoverished transnational workers. These asymmetries tend to create disunity and reinforce the traditional divisions between North and South by benefiting some and excluding Others. In this sense, globalization does not dissolve international borders, but rather reinvents and remakes them. Geopolitical borders have become fluid. For example, the makeshift border check points along the 25-mile perimeter around legitimate *mica* movements remake the US-Mexican border. Furthermore, mistrust, uncertainty and fear, under the guise of national security, have recreated borders throughout the US. Detentions and arrest by the INS in cities far from the border are prompted by suspicions of not 'belonging'. People are perceived as Other because of language or skin colour. This has forced Others to continually prove their legitimacy and their right to belong or even to be. The production of identity documents has become part of the Others' daily life experience particularly, but not exclusively, in the border. This has created a sense of insecurity and exclusion. The sense of Otherness is reinforced by experiencing this difference. Guadalupe (US) explains:

Because I was young [15 years old], it was like a big adventure and we already had some family on this side. But now, I feel ... different. We are different—that is why *La Migra* is always causing problems for us. Here, there is a real sense of insecurity because, even if we have papers, we tend to hide when they are out because *La Migra* can pick us up for

no reason and cause us problems. They can detain us and hassle us and worse. Even with papers, we are afraid [of the INS/Border Patrol].

Many of the women who participated in this study recounted their interrogations by Border Patrol or INS. The women contended that while such interrogations sometimes delayed or prevented their crossings, they *always* deepened their feelings of gendered insecurity. This is not to suggest that these women were impassive victims, as they are often represented by masculinist theories, but rather to demonstrate the women's understanding of the potential for physical insecurity and gendered violence permeating their everyday lives in a patriarchal world. Many of the women acknowledged that being detained, even briefly, created a feeling of being undocumented even in one's own country. Veronica (US) explains:

Each day I cross the line to see my family. On the other side [in Mexico] I feel like I am home, but here ... they [*La Migra*] are always watching and waiting. They drive those trucks up and down constantly, and then they slow down when they see us. You are never sure when they will stop and harass you. So you have to walk with your papers always. Just watch outside, and you will see how many of their [Border Patrol] trucks go by.

The ever present surveillance and militarization of border crossings renders people insecure. For women, this insecurity is exacerbated by gendered violence. Even with a legitimate BCC, crossing the border can be difficult. Ana (US) recounts:

Every day I cross because I live in both places. I have a house there and also I live here, so sometimes I stay here and sometimes there. When I cross, they sometimes look at me strangely. They ask all kinds of questions. They ask you why you are crossing?; what you are bringing with you?; where are you going?; and, how long you will stay? You have to have your papers ready, and every day it is the same. Sometimes, they may not like the way I look, and they keep me waiting a long time. You can never tell which one will stop you. My grandmother looks after my children on the other side and I work on this side, so my life is kind of complicated. I live in between two places.

Ana's experience of daily crossings, even as a legal US resident, demonstrates the racial profiling that commonly occurs at border crossings. Ethnically Mexican, Ana is subjected to the rigorous questioning designed to keep US borders secure.

Such everyday experiences demonstrate that the patrolling and securing of borders alienates those who have a legal and historical claim to border spaces. Even my experience as a brown-haired, brown-eyed, White Canadian, was met with questions. Often, I was asked by the US Border Patrol if I were Mexican. At times, border inspectors rigorously checked my papers and at other times they did not check my passport at all. When questions arose as to my reason for such frequent crossing, other border researchers advised me not to reveal my intention of conducting research and to adopt the identity of a tourist — an image more easily accepted and rarely questioned. These events grounded my understanding of the 'Othering' experience. This unpredictable official environment enabled me to empathize with and, in a way, experience the vulnerability and insecurity that those who cross (and those who don't) experience as part of their daily negotiations of the border. It provided me with insight into an insecurity defined by those in power; those who decide who can cross and who cannot. Ramona (US) confirms:

It was not difficult for me and the children to cross because we had a *mica* and since my husband had amnesty, no one bothered with us. We just walked across. I have heard the bad stories about crossing, but nothing bad happened to us. I think it just depends on who checks your papers. Some of them are very hard and some are soft, and I know that they can take advantage of women ... so it can be very dangerous if you get the wrong one.

The predominant theory that 'open borders' are a threat to national security is based on the assumption that people will move if they can. Countering this image of motion is the sense of rootedness and of belonging contended by Said (1990). As social beings, people

develop intimate relationships, social, community and familial ties, and cultural and linguistic connections that root them to particular spaces. In my research I found that, contrary to the suggestions of alarmist policy makers, not all Mexicans want to live in the US. People have established lives, family, friends and communities sharing common cultures and identities. To move across the invisible geographic demarcation between *what is* and *what could be* is to enter a culturally impermeable space that is unaccepting and, for some untenable. María Teresa (Mex) explains:

I only stayed in Tucson for six months. I returned to Mexico ... because I was very alone, hungry, and I was not accepted in the US. They would look at me strangely and stared. I was afraid. I saw a young Mexican boy shot right in front of me. I was too afraid to stay any longer, but I was afraid to go back too. I did not belong over there. They are different and I am different to them.

María Teresa's experience of exclusion is not an isolated example. Mari (Mex) also witnesses the cultural divide between the two states, a divide she is unwilling to cross on a permanent basis:

I have crossed the border. I have a *mica* so I can cross. I cross at Nogales, not very often though. I go across the line to visit my brother and his sons ... but it is very boring over there. I am always happy to see them, but when they go to work or off to do whatever they do, there is nothing for me to do ... so I just spend time watching the clouds and the birds because there is nothing else to do. It is not the same there, I am *Mexicana*, I love Mexico. I do not want to live over there. It is not my country, my culture or my language. Mexico is my home.

As Mari's story suggests, the other side is not always seen as a refuge. The US does not necessarily offer the security that American ideologies construct and media images present. The notions of freedom and democracy are too often bounded by the social, racial, ethnic, gender and linguistic criteria of affluent white, English-speaking men. The land of golden opportunity offers fools' gold for those who do not 'fit'.

Those who are excluded from belonging are often scapegoats for social, economic and political woes. (Im)migrants are constantly blamed for stealing jobs from US citizens and for depressing wages during economic recessions. (Im)migrants are frequently accused of draining social services resources and over burdening the economy. Perhaps most importantly, (im)migrants from Mexico are condemned for their cultural and linguistic differences and their inability to assimilate (Cummings and Lambert 1997; Hinojosa and Schey 1995; Ocasio 1995; Shapiro 1997a). Such xenophobia has prompted even tighter national borders to prevent the 'brown invasion' from the South. Referring to countries of settlement as 'hosts', therefore, obscures the fact that most immigrants are seen as unwelcome visitors, even when they are residents and citizens (Basch *et al.* 1994) .

The US continues, nevertheless, to be imagined as a place of opportunity for many, even if only for a brief sojourn and, therefore, Clare (Mex) envisions her future as inherently linked to the US and 'secured' by her crossing the border. Clare explains: "I have not crossed, but I would like to go ... at least for a little while to see, and work to make some money and then come back. Then I could live well here." Many borderlanders, like Clare, associate crossing the line with a specific purpose. They cannot imagine crossing to the US as a permanent decision.

Despite the difficulties of crossing boundaries and borders, connectedness and rootedness to one's home prove to be overwhelming bonds for (im)migrants. Of the 30 women interviewed, 23 had crossed some boundary — not necessarily an international border — to return to their place of origin. The desire for connectedness and of belonging seems an overwhelming motivation that overrides the difficulties of crossing boundaries. Even the

overwhelming desire to remain connected, however, cannot be overcome by the fears that returning or staying too long can engender. For Maria Luisa (Mex), the fear of staying in an abusive relationship and the alienation that resulted from her returning created an irreconcilable dilemma:

I only returned once, two years ago. I went back to get away from my husband. He was very mean and we do not get along. I do not even love him anymore. I became pregnant and then I decided to separate from my husband and return to some family that is still in Chihuahua. But things are difficult for a woman alone with a child. So, we have now decided to give it another try because of the baby. So I am back here. Life there was very lonely because that family was not **my** family. They thought that I should be with my husband. They made me feel that I was wrong to leave. They made me feel that I did not belong.

For some women, however, the fear of returning is too great a barrier. Maria Elena's (Mex) experience of violence and her terror at the thought of returning demonstrates that returning is not always an option:

I am from a very small town in Chihuahua. My stepfather murdered my mother in front of me. Then I just lost my baby. She was only an infant. Never, I would never go back. There are only bad memories for me there. I would be too afraid to go back. I don't know what would happen to me.

The borderlands are uncertain spaces, governed by violence and fierce negotiations between competing forces. Such an environment creates a sense of insecurity for those who negotiate the border. Crossing the line to return, for Yolandita (US), involves a struggle between her need to maintain family relations and unity, and her need to maintain personal security. Yolandita reflects: "I was born over there [Nogales, Sonora], but now I only return once or twice a month and only for a couple of hours, never longer. I go to visit the family, but I do not feel safe over there. It is very dangerous across the line." Yolandita's fears are not simply imagined. They are grounded in the insecurities which pervade the reality of

border crossings and everyday life in the border region. For María Luján (US), attempts to return and maintain family connections are rife with the realities of insecurity on the border.

María Luján recounts:

I cross the line once or twice a week. Even though I have family there, I only go for the day because now I am afraid to cross the border. Twice I have been robbed at gunpoint, and this is a very scary thing. It is not as if I have money or anything, but people are very desperate. I was afraid for my life. I think that crossing is more dangerous for women than for men. Women can be raped, sexually assaulted. *La Migra* ... they take your papers. Even on the other side the officials can threaten you. Also, I have seen a lot of women abused by the men who hang around the border. Even those who work there can be dangerous. The inspectors, just because they have a badge, think that they can do whatever they want. And, just because people are immigrants, they abuse them. Yes, it is about power and we have no power so we are vulnerable.

The border, however, is a fluid rather than fixed space both in peoples' imaginings and in practice. Caroline (Mex) describes the fluidity of the border wherein she must negotiate diverse spatial realities:

To move from a rural area to the *frontera* was frightening ... because we think that the border region is full of chaos, rootlessness and lack of friendship and social support ... which is a kind of orphandom ... which gives us, who are moving to the region, a feeling of hopelessness about what we should expect. Only when we come and find out for ourselves do we realize that it is not so. No, after so many years and talking to many people, I realize that this view of the border is not true. And, although the least available support people can provide is economic, people do provide economic support although it is not seen as economic. This is when people open their doors and share their homes and whatever little they have with complete strangers.

Border women do not romanticise the US as solely a land of opportunity. They recognize the extent of 'Othering' which occurs and to which they will be subjected if they choose to cross. The women participants suggested that migrating to the US would not compromise their socio-cultural gendered identities as wives, mothers, sisters and daughters although they anticipated a renegotiation of gender relations which would result in greater control and

status within their homes. For women attempting to escape the gendered violence threatening their lives, their migration, both internal and international, is an act of agency.

Conclusion

This chapter is grounded in the theoretical understandings of the border as an artificial, militarized divide. This understanding was augmented in this chapter by an examination of cross-border relations, community and women's experience of transnational migration. I revisit the notion of contra colonization and US attempts to make their borders impermeable and secure. I show how such national security practices lead to the abuses of power and human rights violations which render (im)migrants insecure. My analyses of the dynamic processes of migration are layered with narratives of women's everyday struggles, strategies for survival, and quests for security. Their stories are a testament to the agency and empowerment of border women.

Throughout this chapter, I explored the multiple insecurities of migration by exploring migrant women's experiences in Ambos Nogales. I showed how gendered violence affects women's security in the borderlands. I exposed the gendered violence of and in migration, which is largely invisible in the literature. To contextualize these women's experiences, I provided a brief history of Mexican migration to and across the border as well as an examination of recent US immigration policy initiatives, particularly as they relate to Mexican (im)migrants. Through a critical analysis of conventional migration theories, I have demonstrated how masculine economic paradigms of migration exclude the autonomous agency of women. By revealing women as agents in migration, I challenged the conventional

view of migrants as 'rational men'. In so doing, I raised the important question: Why do women migrate? State-centric, econometric and androcentric theories prevent both the asking and answering of this question. Evidence from the 30 women participants in this study, nonetheless, was used to reveal new insights into women's migration by valuing women's situated knowledge and lived experiences. By providing a space for these women to speak of their experiences, together, we contribute to a redefinition of migrant by unmasking 'women as migrants'. Consequently, women are seen as full participants in migration.

Central to my understanding of women's agency is my contention that women migrate for many reasons other than those cited in the mainstream literature on migration. The participants in this study, for example, migrated to gain control over their lives, escape gendered violence and the patriarchal social constructions confining women, and gain security for their selves and their children. Through this reexamination, which sees women as active rather than passive agents in their everyday lives, I exposed migration for women living in Ambos Nogales as both a cause of insecurity and a reaction to gendered violence. Such experiential evidence of the gendered reasons for women's migration continues to be nearly invisible in the migration literature. By exploring women's perceptions and experiences of migration, I demonstrated that gender violence can be both a reason for and a consequence of their migration both within and from Mexico. While the UN has recognized gender-based violence as *a* cause for women's migration, my research showed that gendered violence was the *primary* cause for women's migration among the women in this study. Of the participants, 17 of 30 cited some form of gendered violence and the

insecurity which it precipitates, as the primary reasons for their decision to migrate. I suggest, therefore, that listing gendered violence as just one cause among many, underestimates its importance in women's decisions to migrate.

Finally, I challenged the fears of contra colonization that propel US immigration policies and by providing experiential evidence that not all Mexicans want to migrate to the US. Many are deterred by the negative impact of the Othering that dominates US cultural, political and economic relations. Local and transnational social networks as well as transnational community relations provide women in Ambos Nogales with a sense of social, cultural, and even familial, cohesion and safety. Nevertheless, the security and rootedness to which people aspire remain illusive in this increasingly violent, militarized and uncertain environment. Consequently, women in Ambos Nogales continue to be pushed by gendered violence and pulled by the imagined safety and opportunities the new spaces might offer. Under such conditions, women will continue to assert their agency through migration. By taking control of their lives, moreover, these women have created their own spaces to define problems, issues, actions and solutions according to their experiences.

Sexual Politics of Reproduction

Mother? Wife? Woman?

I see proof every day that population [explosion] harms regional and global and ultimately jeopardises America's security interests. It strains resources, stunts economic growth, it generates disease, it spawns huge refugee [and migrant] flows, and ultimately it threatens our stability.

Warren Christopher, US Secretary of State, cited in Walker (1997: 79)

Women make up more than half the world's agricultural workforce and typically manage household resources. Yet, they are often denied the right to learn, to own or inherit land, and to control their own fertility. Enhancing women's opportunities enables them to make informed choices about family size — and to break the vicious cycle of poverty and environmental degradation.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, 11 July 2001

Wherever a woman lives with conflict and upheaval — in a violent home or a country at war — the threat of infection from HIV/AIDS and the effects of its damage are multiplied ... Our responses must recognise this deadly alliance, and put special measures in place to protect women in already violent circumstances — in refugee camps, in militarised zones, in communities that condone marital rape and subordination of women — from the added threat of HIV/AIDS.

Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director UNIFEM, World AIDS Day 1998

Introduction

Together migration, fertility and mortality are the key determinants of world population distribution and growth (Population Reference Bureau 1999). Each of these variables,

however, is influenced by a complex, interconnected web of biological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, political, and social factors. For example, since the 1950s, scientific advancements in immunology have lengthened life expectancy throughout the world. Similarly, revolutions in reproductive technologies and the expansion of family planning programmes have extended the use of modern methods of contraception. But paradoxically, while reproductive technologies gave women greater control over their fertility and the timing and spacing of children, they also increased the control of states and the international community over population issues.

In the post-Cold War era, migration and population issues emerged as significant interests in the field of international relations. By the mid 1960s the tone of debate shifted from interest to worries about how to control population growth in the South and the flow of people across borders. Such concerns are sustained by the population industry,¹²¹ which produces escalating numbers to prove the existence of a population crisis. This and the *looming threats* of excessive international migration and population growth cited by the UNDP (UN 1994b) make the current debates central to security discourses.

In this environment, attempts to limit, manage and control population growth have focussed on women as both the source of the problem and the site for its solution. However,

¹²¹ The population industry comprises governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions that define population as a problem or crisis to be controlled, an issue of numbers. The population industry became an army of experts, in governmental and non-governmental agencies and institutions. These experts range from scientists and statisticians to family-planning workers, all engaged in the fight control population growth (Bromley 1996; Hartmann 1995).

by targeting women, coercive population control strategies impair their sexual¹²² and reproductive lives, create insecurities, and constitute gendered violence, as revealed by the everyday experiences of women in Ambos Nogales.

To develop this argument, this chapter examines: *(i)* the gendered violence flowing from discourses and policies of family and population planning and reproductive health policies, *(ii)* border women's knowledge about reproduction, pregnancy and sexual relations, *(iii)* the various social and political interests controlling women's reproduction and sexuality in the borderlands, including men, families, the state, the Church, and international agencies, *(iv)* the gendered relations of reproductive health programmes and their complicity in exacerbating gendered violence and women's insecurity, *(v)* the experiences and impact of contraception, family planning, sterilization, and abortion on the lives of border women, *(vi)* the gendering of STDs and HIV/AIDS epidemics as a site of insecurity for border women, and *(vii)* the possibility of delinking procreation from sexuality as a means of ensuring greater reproductive freedom and human security.

Gendered Violence, Insecurity and Women's Rights: Reproduction and Sexuality

In the area of reproduction, direct gendered violence refers to forced sterilization, forced conception, forced contraception, the testing of contraceptives on women in the South, the dumping of poor quality contraceptives in the south, the absence of safe, legal and accessible

¹²² Many statistical analyses of women's sexuality and reproduction focus on married or cohabiting women. These studies assume the cultural and universal norm of heterosexuality and make the adoption of an alternative lifestyle difficult and insecure.

abortion, forced pregnancy testing, and the increasing heterosexual spread of HIV/AIDS epidemic. Structural gendered violence refers to population policies which target women as the source of population control, family planning policies which are designed for certain women (good/bad, married and fertile women) while excluding others (single, menopausal, postmenopausal and sterilized women), reproductive policies which fail to link family planning programs with the prevention of the transmission of STDs and HIV/AIDS, a lack of education and accessible culturally sensitive information about reproduction and contraception, and culturally and patriarchally proscribed heterosexuality and asexuality.

Gendered violence is most difficult to detect and contest when it occurs within women's 'private' sexual relationships. In these relationships, gendered violence prohibits women from negotiating safer sexual practices, exploring their sexuality, and practising voluntary motherhood. The exercise of these possibilities often results in physical and psychological violence. Psychological gendered violence refers to emotional abuse, sexism, multiple forms of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, victim blaming, and forced internalization of oppressive stereotypes. It is, therefore, difficult to disentangle psychological violence from women's experiences of physical and structural violence since it is interwoven with all experiences of gendered violence. Physical, structural and psychological violence, is a continuum that produces, reproduces and sanctions women's insecurity.

The socially and politically constructed dichotomy of public and private spheres of influence have defined reproduction and sexuality as private issues. This dichotomy, however, operates as a mechanism to reinforce unequal gendered power relations, and to normalize the pervasiveness of gendered violence. As a result, violence against women

continues to be construed as occurring between strangers, rather than within families and close social relationships.¹²³ This representation reinforces the public/private dichotomy and defines violence against women as direct, rather than structural, aggressive, rather than oblique, rational (read: deserved), rather than irrational (read: unwarranted), and objective, rather than subjective.

The narrowly constructed distinctions between public and private spheres, however, are problematic when examining reproduction. While reproduction has traditionally been relegated to the private sphere, reproductive policy and initiatives, conceived and exercised at the state and international levels, cannot be understood within the context of the private sphere. Such initiatives, nonetheless, reinforce this socially constructed division, which assign exclusive responsibility for reproduction to women, by targeting women as objects of population control. Furthermore, cultural imperatives of heterosexuality, motherhood and wifehood, cannot be understood solely as private issues. Control over women's identities and sexualities is imposed through the gendered apparatus, which orders social realities, and is embedded in unequal power relations. The public/private dichotomy, moreover, construes understandings of safe and dangerous spaces.

Power, therefore, operates in places and forms which tend to disguise the political discourses of power, and to naturalize unequal/violent power relations within the prevailing power structures. A part of the prevailing power structures, (dis)order is arbitrarily imposed through physical and sociological violence, as well as through prevailing unequal

¹²³ See Bessant and Cook 1999; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Chowdhury *et al.* 1994; Dalby 1994, 2000; Fine and Weis 2000; Muthien 2000; Muehlenhard and Kimes 1999; Radford, Kelly and Hester 1996; Thomas and Beasley 1993.

power/knowledge structures. These structures are perpetuated through violent processes, and normalized by the everyday life experiences which inform subjectivity and identity (Chowdhury *et al.* 1994; Hill Collins 1998; Shapiro 1992). The pervasiveness and normalization of the continuum of violence make the questioning of everyday inequalities and violence more difficult.

Women's everyday experiences of violence and insecurity are silenced through power/knowledge structures. Likewise, women's voices are silenced by state, social, cultural, economic, legal, medical and international institutions. Gendered violence operates through social structures which function to subordinate, censor, control, confine, and silence women. Women's everyday experiences of insecurity are further silenced by their marginalization from human security discourses. I am not suggesting that women do not experience economic, food, health, environment, personal, community and political insecurities, as specified in the UNDP (UN 1994b), but rather, that the normalizing of women's experiences of gender violence renders their experiences invisible within the human security framework. The experiences of insecurity which women face as a result of their reproductive cycles/roles, do not affect men. Understandings of human (in)security, therefore, are incomplete without the inclusion of women's experiences.

The recharacterization of the distinctions between the public and private spheres has been an important contribution by feminists engaged in international law and human rights discourses.¹²⁴ The distinction between public and private domains has been traditionally used

¹²⁴ See Bessant and Cook 1999; Binion 1995; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Cook 1993a, 1993b; Eisler 1995; Galey 1993; Kerr 1993; Peterson 1990; Thomas and Beasley 1993; Tomaševski 1993.

in international law to apply different levels of protection and to distinguish between public/state and private/non-state actors in the adjudication of treaties and standards. As a result, this distinction has shaped definitions of violence and its perpetrators. The privileging of states and international actors over individuals and women in international relations is important for understanding human rights violations, especially as they relate to women's reproductive rights.

While the current emphasis on civil and political rights demands protection in the public sphere, it ignores the public, or semi-public spheres — international policy setting forums, family planning clinics, doctors' offices, and social relations — where control over women's reproduction is exercised. Furthermore, it ignores the many violations to women's rights which occur in 'private' spaces, such as forced conception, heterosexuality, and conjugal relations. Traditional constructions invest men with power over women, and conceive men as the primary actors in both the public and private sphere. The privileging of men and states ignores human rights violations which are perpetrated by individuals in the private sphere. The gendered apparatus, which institutionalizes male power and privileges the state, establishes a coercive gendered order which disadvantages and silences women.

International Politics of Reproduction

In 1984, the World Bank distinguished population control policies from family planning measures (World Bank 1984). It argued that family planning offers information and services to help people make decisions regarding their fertility, while population control policies dictate specific demographic objectives. Although the Bank officially rejects population

control measures, countries which fail to meet specified fertility targets because of pro-natal national policies suffer reductions in foreign aid and development assistance. The adoption of family planning programs, however, ensures the extension and renewal of aid programs, which often dictate particular family planning policies (Corrêa 1994; Duden 1994; Grimes 1998; Hartmann 1995). Consequently, a woman is denied the right to choose the timing and spacing of her children, and the method and use of contraception. Humanitarian initiatives orchestrated by the population industry, which attempt to address poverty and underdevelopment in the South, are often a pretence for population control and the securing of national borders in the North.

Together, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo; the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and the 1996 International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Women's Citizenship in Brighton, have placed women's struggles against gendered violence, and for rights and security, on the international agenda. While each of these world conferences has focussed on improving the status and lives of women, no significant inroads have been made to ensure and protect women's safety and security. This failure is largely due to the strength of patriarchal structures and the population industry that continues its attempts to control women and their reproductive capacities. Family planning programmes have emerged as the most important mechanism for the control of women's reproduction.

The population industry has disguised its ideological objective by propagating the assumption that overpopulation results in poverty and underdevelopment. This objective ensures the political, economic and cultural dominance of Northern/Western states. This

ideology denies the reality that poverty and underdevelopment are the result of the unequal distribution of wealth and resources. To maintain its altruistic image and avoid critiques of Northern/Western domination, the population industry has coopted the language of population control. Accordingly, 'birth control' has been transformed into 'family planning', 'population control' into 'population assistance', and 'fertility control' into 'reproductive rights'. All of these initiatives fall under the rubric of women's health, safe motherhood, and development. This cooptation is evident in World Bank loans which privilege funding for family planning over that for primary health care, while at the same time, enforcing austere structural adjustment programmes which impede development. Population policies have become increasingly coercive and covert, controlling women's reproduction under the guises of women's health, safe motherhood, development, and offering women reproductive choices. While the outward message is women's empowerment, the hidden consequence is control over women's bodies and their sexuality (Arizpe 1994; Arizpe and Velázquez 1994; Cassen 1994; de Senarclens 1994; Hartmann 1995; Sach 1994; Shiva 1994a, 1994b).

Ongoing attempts to assert control have been a central focus of the 'national security' agenda, and the objective of securing national borders from external threats is of central importance. Wary of the population 'explosion' in the South, Western countries began to seek control over those outside of their national borders, to control the environment inside. Efforts to contain population growth led to a decline the world population growth rate from 2.34% to 1.67% between 1974 and 1984 (Bromley 1996; Duden 1994; Hartmann 1995).

US Politics of Reproduction

Not until 1965 did the Supreme Court decide in *Griswold v. Connecticut* that married couples have the right to practice birth control without government intervention. This decision was expanded in 1972, in *Eisenstadt v. Baird*, to give unmarried people the same right. Abortion, however, was excluded from these legislative initiatives and has remained a controversial political issue in both domestic and foreign policy (Chesler 1992; Ireland 1993; Jacoby 1998; Schoen 2000; Tone 1997). Instead of providing people with choices and control over their fertility, the link between population and the environment became the most frequently cited reason for controlling population during the 1980s.

As for abortion, the debate heated up in 1966 when Mississippi legalized abortion for rape victims. Following Mississippi's initiative, other states followed suit between 1966 and 1970, expanding the conditions under which abortion was legal. The circumstances which justified legal abortions included pregnancies which threaten the health of the mother, serious foetal abnormalities, or pregnancies resulting from incest. In 1973, the decision of the US Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade*, legalized abortion for any reason before the 24th week of pregnancy, at which point the foetus is viable. In an attempt to circumvent federal legislation, some states imposed funding restrictions on abortion. These initiatives were supported by the 1977 US Supreme Court decision, and upheld in 1980, to allowed states to limit the use of Medicaid funds for 'elective' abortions. In 1991, in the case of *Rust v. Sullivan*, the Court upheld a regulation prohibiting health care providers who receive federal funding from engaging in any activities that encourage or promote abortion as a method of

family planning. The decision, however, was reversed two years later. Despite this turbulent environment, in 1992, the Supreme Court reaffirmed its *Roe v. Wade* decision, in *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*. Paradoxically, while the decision maintained a woman's right to abortion, it simultaneously granted states more freedom to regulate abortion. This ambivalent outcome was a political concession to Pro-life groups who have been actively lobbying to reverse *Roe v. Wade* since 1973 (Chesler 1992; Ireland 1993; Jacoby 1998; Schoen 2000; Tone 1997).

US Foreign Policy and Population Control

US and international concern over population issues dates to the first World Population Conference which was held in Geneva in 1927. The conference, which was organized by Margaret Sanger, invited the participation of international leaders in reproductive science, demography, sociology and medicine. The growing international support for neo-Malthusianism was evident in the examination of the relationship between world population and food resources. The threat of worldwide famine seemed even more imminent in the environment of economic devastation, and decimation of industrial and agricultural production following World War II. Consequently, concerns over rising populations mushroomed, and the mandate to control the population explosion was born. In the South, however, these population concerns were seen as neo-imperialist, and Northern/Western population control interventions were considered a challenge to the sovereignty of Southern states. To counter accusations of neo-imperialism, the US encouraged the formation of an international non-governmental organization, which could promote its interests without

challenging the sovereignty of Southern states. Within this neo-Malthusian environment, the *International Planned Parenthood Federation* (IPPF) was formed in 1953. The mandate of the IPPF was twofold — the promotion of family planning and population control as mechanisms for ensuring peace and security. The IPPF is an important source of information, as well as technical and financial assistance for international family planning organizations and governments, and, consequently, wields great influence over the political environment surrounding issues of population. While the IPPF contends that every individual has a *fundamental right* to choose whether or not to have a child, some members, convinced of the threat of a population explosion, steered policy toward population control (Dixon-Mueller 1993; Hartmann 1995; Corrêa and Reichman 1994; Whitworth 1991).

In 1959, the US Senate Committee on Foreign relations recommended that the US government fund population research as part of its Mutual Security Program. By linking population concerns to national security, the US accelerated its interventions in population control. By the mid-1960s, the US government adopted population control as a condition for less developed countries' receipt of aid. By the early 1970s, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) underwrote half the budgets of the IPPF and the UNFPA, giving the US a strong influence in shaping population policies without direct political intervention. Until the 1990s, USAID was the largest single source of funding for population control in the South. In effect, the linking of US population politics and aid programs has made population control and 'development' indivisible.

In anticipation of the 1974 World Population Conference in Bucharest, the US commissioned a study of the implications of population growth on US security. Although the study

was released in 1975, under the National Security Study Memorandum 200 (NSSM 200), it was not declassified until 1980. It defined population growth in the South as a significant threat to US economic and political security, and was subsequently adopted as a national security policy. Furthermore, the document articulated the interrelationship between population growth in the South and increased flows of migrants and refugees to the US. While the memorandum warned that pressure from the North to implement family planning might be seen by as 'a form of economic or racial imperialism', it stated explicitly that the 'goal was fertility reduction and not improvement in the lives of people', and advised the 'indoctrination of the rising generation of children regarding the desirability of smaller families'. At Bucharest, however, the US mandate to control the population explosion was derailed by opposition from many parties.

The Catholic Church's traditional opposition to contraception was criticized by Eastern Bloc and Southern countries, feminists, demographers, and NGOs who argued for more equitable economic relation and genuine development. While the US delegation dismissed this criticism, it was forced to overhaul its drafted Plan of Action.¹²⁵ The final draft placed population growth within the broader context of socioeconomic transformation. It called for an integrated approach to resolving population and development concerns which incorporated family planning with health, women's programs and education. The slogan 'development is the best contraceptive' was adopted in support of integration and a basic-

¹²⁵ Erroneously anticipating little opposition, the US delegates arrived in Bucharest with a Plan of Action in hand. Rather than a directive by one state, a Plan of Action is the result of international negotiations and consensus which outlines the recommendations from conference participants.

human-needs approach.¹²⁶ Despite strong opposition to coercive neo-imperialist population control programmes, US funding of such programmes has steadily increased. Consequently, by the mid 1970s, birth control was transformed into a mechanism of controlling, not only rising populations in the South, but Southern women's reproductive choices (Bose 1994; Corrêa and Reichman 1994; Dixon-Mueller 1993, 1994a, 1994b; Grimes 1998; Hartmann 1995; Zurayk *et al.* 1994; Singh 1997, 1998).

Although the US continues to be the leading source of funding for population control programmes, it has vacillated in its funding of organizations that support abortion related activities (ARAs).¹²⁷ Although US withdrawal of funding for ARA is generally associated with the 1984 Mexico City Policy, the passage of the Helms Amendment, in 1973, banned the use of USAID for ARA. More than a decade later, President Reagan's Mexico City Policy strengthened the US prohibition. The policy denied US funding to non-US NGOs engaged directly or indirectly in ARAs. It stipulated that to receive US funds, foreign NGOs could not use funds from other sources to finance ARAs. The consequences for NGOs, such as IPPF, were immediate and significant. The IPPF estimates that it lost a contribution of \$17 million annually in financing and resources — 25% of its annual revenues. The Reagan initiative marked a return to Morgenthau's realist conceptualization of population as an

¹²⁶ The basic-human-needs approach was an international development programmatic shift in response to the failure of 1960's trickle-down theory. The approach recognized that development necessitated meeting peoples' essential requirements of food, shelter, education and health care for genuine development to occur (Benería and Roldán 1987; Bose and Acosta-Belén 1995; Hartmann 1995).

¹²⁷ Abortion Related Activities (ARAs) are broadly conceived and include such activities as abortion counselling, information, advocacy and clinical services.

asset. At the 1984 World Population Conference, the US put forth a position paper which explained its decision about funding ARA in free market terms. It contended that governmental controls of the economy were disrupting the natural mechanisms for regulating fertility (Whitworth 1991).

In 1991, Congress attempted to reverse the Mexico City restrictions but, under threat of a veto by President Bush, the efforts ultimately failed. When the Mexico City Policy was eventually rescinded by President Clinton in 1993, the Helms Amendment still barred the use of USAID funds for ARAs. He contended that the policy was “excessively broad” and that it “undermined efforts to promote safe and efficacious family planning programs in foreign nations” (Pomper 2001: 236). While the attempt by pro-life forces in Congress to reinstate the Mexico City Policy in 1995 was blocked, they cut funding for international family planning programs by 30% and suspend payments until July of the following year.

Between 1995 and 1999, bitter negotiations on foreign aid bills continued in Congress, where Republicans attempted to restrict provisions for family planning. In 1999, President Clinton was forced to partially reinstate the Mexico City Policy in exchange for the Senate’s authorization of a partial payment of US arrears to the UN. The limited reinstatement required a guarantee from NGOs receiving US funding that they would not use US or other funds for ARA counselling, lobbying or clinical services. The IPPF and WHO refused to certify this and, therefore, experienced a steady decline in funding. Once the major source of IPPF funding, US funds currently account for less than 8% of its income. Although President Clinton secured an increase in the budget for international family planning in November, 2000, Congress stipulated that funds would not be available until February 15,

2001. This provided the new President with an opportunity to pass or veto the fiscal formula. In 2001, the Mexico City Policy was reinstated by President George W. Bush, a Pro-lifer (Pomper 2001; www.ippf.org/).

Mexican Nation Building: A Pro-Natalist Era

In Latin America, population control programmes have met strong resistance. Accordingly, the population industry has attempted to focus on reproductive health and safe motherhood as the reasons for family planning. In so doing, the population industry assumed an aura of benevolence to conceal its repressive agenda.

This environment precipitated Mexico's most dramatic period of population growth, and pro-natalist policies were so successful that between 1940 and 1970, the country experienced one of the world's highest population growth rates. By the mid-1960s, however, new debates emerged which questioned the rationality of population growth within the overall development process. A perceived population problem in the predominantly rural and indigenously populated states of Tabasco, Jalisco, Nuevo León, Tlaxcala and Veracruz, was of particular concern. These populations were excluded from the Mexican development program and, consequently, were forced to migrate to survive. These states contended that while their populations were expanding, their physical territories were not. Demand for land, therefore, was outstripping availability, and threatening peoples' socioeconomic well-being. With the rise of the *Maquiladora* Program along the northern border, numerous indigenous people migrated northward and many subsequently crossed the US-Mexican border (Alba and Cabrera 1994; Cabrera 1994; Lerner and Quesnel 1994).

The debate over population growth policies continued into the 1970s, and during this period, growth rates reached 3% to 3.5%. Nonetheless, Mexico also enjoyed correspondingly high economic growth, averaging between 6% and 7% annually. While pro-natalists reaffirmed the interrelationship between economic and population growth, much of Mexico's economic prosperity was the result of the oil boom and the consequent high levels of liquidity and credit in international money markets. Despite the correlation between economic and population growth, debate over Mexico's rising population ensued. The legitimacy of an economic development model based on the exploitation of natural resources and labour intensive agriculture was increasingly contested. This model seemed unable to meet the state's economic objective since the economy could no longer absorb the rising new/young workforce. Despite the 1973 Oil Shock, population growth was identified as the primary cause of the economic crisis. Since 1973, heated debate over Mexico's General Population Law and population control has abounded. To make population control more palpable, the government argued that the revolutionary commitment to social infrastructures — universal health and education — could not be ensured if population growth continued at the current rate. A decision had to be made as to whether the state would focus on improving the standard of living for a slow growing population, or less adequate infrastructures for a rapidly growing population (Alba and Cabrera 1994; Cabrera 1994; Corrêa and Reichman 1994; Lerner and Quesnel 1994).

Mexican Nation Building in an Anti-Natalist Era

In the early 1970s, government and various groups of concerned citizens, professionals, academics and entrepreneurs supported family planning programs due to concerns about the economy, the consequences of early and frequent pregnancies for women and their families, and anxieties over the numerous illegal abortions, which often resulted in death and medical complications. Outward concern for women's health and socioeconomic welfare of families, however, concealed the ultimate goals of stemming population growth and controlling women's fertility with modern contraceptive methods.

National organizations emerged to direct and train medical practitioners in family planning and the business of population control. This removed control and decision making about fertility from the family and placed it in the hands of a medical elite.¹²⁸ Under the direction and funding of international agencies and private donors — United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) and the World and Pan American Health Organizations (WHO/PAHO), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations — several private and nonprofit agencies emerged in Mexico to promote population control under the guise of family planning. The main agencies were the Center for Research on Fertility and Sterility, now known as the Mexican Foundation for Family Planning; the Foundation for Population Studies; and, the Mexican Population Association. Mirroring developments in the North/West, several institutes for population

¹²⁸ Recently, a wealth of literature has emerged about the medicalization of women's health and reproduction. See DuBois 1991; Fee and Krieger 1994; Morgan 1998; Tong 1997; Shiva and Moser 1995.

studies also emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, including the Institute for Social Research at the — National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and the Centre for the Study of Demographic and Urban Development (CEDDU), at *El Colegio de México*.¹²⁹

Beginning in 1973, however, successively more coercive population policies were pursued by the Mexican state. The state justified these actions by contending that population growth was hindering Mexican development. Ironically, the government amended the Constitution in 1973 to reflect the equality of women and men before the law, protection for the organization and development of families, and most important, the right of all people (men and women) to decide freely, responsibly, and with knowledge, on the number and spacing of their children. In contradiction to the Constitution, however, the 1974 General Population Law eroded the rights of women to reproductive decision-making. This legislation granted the National Population Council (CONAPO) the power to influence the size, growth, age structure, and distribution of the Mexican population through family planning, education, social communication and medical services (Corrêa and Reichman 1994; Figueroa 1996; Lerner and Quesnel 1994). CONAPO's focus on the structures of demographic change failed, however, to take into account other factors affecting decisions about fertility. An understanding of the interrelationship between reproductive choices, cultural and ideological influences and social/family strategies, which influence the regulation of fertility, was absent from this programmatic approach. To achieve the desired effect of population control, and to direct the social relations of reproduction, the *Secretaría*

¹²⁹ I was affiliated with both the Pan American Health Organization and the *Centro de Estudios Demográficos y de Desarrollo Urbano* (CEDDU), at *El Colegio de México* during my field studies in Mexico City in 1997.

de Salud together with the *Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social* (IMSS), introduced family planning services *en masse* throughout Mexico under the pretext of ‘choice’.

To dampen opposition from the Church and the PAN to family planning laws, the government set three conditions for the implementation of family planning, which reflected earlier nationalist objectives. First, it contended that family planning programs were not substitutes for economic development. Second, it declared that family planning programs could not violate individual and human rights. Finally, it asserted that the state would maintain sovereignty over national family planning programs. The government’s declaration, however, seems hollow since World Bank/IMF loans are contingent on the implementation of national family planning strategies and fertility reduction (Corrêa and Reichman 1994; Hartmann 1995).

Having reversed its former pro-natalist population and state building policies, the Mexican government, starting in the 1970s, identified population growth as a threat to national security and economic development. Consequently, population control policies during the 1980s and 1990s succeeded in stemming excessive population growth in Mexico. A steady decline in fertility rates per woman declining from 6.7 children in 1977, to 4.6 children in 1987 to 3.6 children in 1992, to 3.2 children, led the United Nations to tout Mexico as a population control success story (Singh and Sedgh 1997; United Nations 1996).¹³⁰ In anticipation of the Beijing Conference, the Population Control Unit of the

¹³⁰ Women have many more pregnancies than number of children born. The average number of pregnancies per women in 1977 was 7.5, and in 1987 it was 5.4 (Singh and Sedgh 1997).

Ministry of Health was renamed the Department of Reproductive Health in 1994, reflecting a more politically correct label and program direction.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the influence of health and family planning institutions on reproductive behaviour cannot be underestimated. The government embarked on an extensive advertising campaign on radio, television and in print to promote family planning. The radio, television and print media have become crucial agents of socialization in Mexico, at least on par with traditional institutions such as the Church, schools and the family. When visiting hospitals and clinics, women are bombarded with information pamphlets and even shown videotapes offering information on reproductive choice and encouraging the use of modern contraceptives and sterilization. Often this information is disseminated to women who are vulnerable to the influences of medical authorities, after giving birth, miscarrying, or having 'pregnancy complications' (sometimes a euphemism for a botched abortion).

Women's Experience of Population Control Policies in the Borderlands: The Impact on Reproductive Choices:

The control of population growth and women's fertility by international and national programs has had diverse effects. All of the women participants in this study were aware of national and international media campaigns, as well as their objectives. The women identified two purposes of these campaigns: first, to control the number of children born to each woman and, second, to create awareness about the population problem. South of the line, *radio* and *print* media were the most significant instruments for the transmission of reproductive-choice policies, while north of the line *television* was also a significant influence.

Although the campaign rhetoric proclaims to liberate women by offering them control over the timing and spacing of children and relief from the burden of more children, 17 of the 30 participants denied that these campaigns had any effect on their reproductive choices. Reportedly, the lack of impact was equal on both sides of the border. Mari (Mex) explains: “No, these things have not influenced me. I made my decision because of my health”. Similarly, Guadalupe (US) asserts: “No one listens to those advertisements. I did not want any more children that is why I had the operation, not because of pressures. I don’t think that there should be any restrictions placed on women. The government should not tell women what to do.” Likewise, Marcella (US) reflects: “No, I do not think that they have influenced me. I do not think that there are too many people living in Mexico, but here in the US, yes, maybe there are too many people here. I do not think that the government should control women’s fertility. Women should be free to decide.”

Alternatively, nine of the women participants, five from south of the border, admitted that government and international campaigns had affected their reproductive decisions. Rosa (Mex) muses: “Yes, some, a little bit ... but I have not had the operation.... My husband and I, we might want another child.” Similarly, Veronica (US) asserts: “Yes, they are very informative. It is a woman’s civic responsibility not to have too many children, but the government ... should not control this. It is one’s own decision, but it is difficult to resist or deny what the advertisements say.”

These campaigns were significantly more successful in informing people about the problems of over population. All of the participants conceded that there were too many people living in Mexico, the US, or both. Twelve women in Sonora and 14 in Arizona,

contended that there should be some form of control over women's fertility. The mechanism for implementing this control differed north and south of the line. The Sonoran participants were more accepting of government imposed controls over women's fertility, and eight women contended that the government should implement policies to control the number of children born to each woman. Marta Emelda (Mex) asserts: "No, the advertisements do not affect me ... except now [that] I think about it, there are too many people in Mexico. But, I don't think that there are too many in the United States ... Things are better there. I think that there should be some limits to how many children a woman can have." Similarly, Rosario (Mex) contends: "Yes, there are too many people in Mexico. I should not even have to tell you that! There needs to be controls placed on how many children a woman has. The government should do this. They should limit the number to two or four at the most. I have felt a lot of pressure not to have more children. The doctors they put the pressure on me too." Only three Arizonan women, however, accepted a role for the government in controlling women's fertility. Julia (US) attests: "Yes, it makes you know that there are too many people in Mexico and that we can do something to help. I think the government has the right to place restrictions on how many children a woman has."

The belief that the government had both the ability and the right to control women's reproduction was much greater south of the line. The Arizonan participants believed, however, in the necessity of some controls over women's fertility, although they contended that there should be other non-governmental mechanisms put in place. Yolanda (US) reflects:

I think that there are too many people in Mexico, but not in the United States ... no. The streets here are very empty and quiet, but when you go across the line, the streets are full and very noisy.... The difference in the number of people is very obvious. But the government has no right to tell a woman how many children she can have. It is a woman's choice ... and how many she can look after and feed.

Similarly, Yolandita (US) explains: "Yes there are too many people in both the US and Mexico, but the government has no right to tell a woman how many children she can have ... But I do think women should place some controls on themselves to have fewer children."

Likewise, four Sonoran women affirmed that some control over women's fertility was desirable although they denied the government's right to impose such restrictions. Maria Luisa (Mex) asserts:

No, they do not influence me. But, I do think that there are too many people in Mexico and in the United States also, especially because we are all moving over there. Yes, there needs to be controls on women's fertility in Mexico because women cannot afford so many babies. Why should they say that I can have only one or two children. I do not think that the government should do that. The decision is up to the individual woman, not the government.

Lupe (Mex) confirms: "There are too many people living in Mexico. I think there needs to be some controls on how many children a woman can have. But I do not I think that the government has the right to make these demands." These testimonials indicate that the impact of population and fertility control campaigns is not as benign as many of the women believed. Clearly, these women believed that there was a population problem and that women were at the centre of the problem.

Women's Knowledge: Reproduction, Pregnancy and Sexual Relations in the Borderlands

While national and international population control programs continue to target women, the knowledge of borderland women concerning reproduction, pregnancy and sexual relations remains woefully incomplete. Most women learn about sex, pregnancy and reproduction through a combination of informal discussion and practical experience. Of the participants, 27 conceded that their introduction to sexual relations, pregnancy and reproduction began with gossip among friends. Many of the women suggested that this was a good experience. Some women confided that taboos surrounding 'sex talk' prohibited open discussion and the passing on of information. Yolandita (US) explains: "I learned about everything on the streets. My friends and I would sit around and talk. It was good because my mother would never have talked about those kinds of things. With my friends there was no judgement ... it was open." The prohibitions limiting discussions about sex and reproduction make it difficult for parents to talk to their children. Many parents feel that they do not have the tools to explain things clearly to their children. Others are shy about discussing things that they consider personal and private. Guadalupe (US) recounts:

My mother tried to tell me how everything worked. It was very mechanical and she was embarrassed to be talking to me about such things. I did not ask her any questions because this would have made the whole thing worse. She really tried to explain things, but eventually I just had to find out for myself – through experience.

Informal discussions about sex and reproduction, however, often result in the transmission of misinformation. Leonela (US) contends:

Oh, I learned most of what I know from my friends, and some from my husband. But some things that I was told, they weren't true. So some things I had to get verified, this

is where my husband helped. It was a good experience though, because my friends had a way of explaining things, that gave me a vivid picture in my mind and that made things very understandable ... strange, but understandable.

Similarly, Clare (Mex) recalls: "My older sisters taught me what they thought that I needed to know. It was good at the time. But later I found out that they did not really know very much and that I had a lot to learn."

One-third of the participants learned from experience about sex, pregnancy and reproduction. Most of these women confided that this was not the best way to learn about something so important. María Luján (US) explains:

I learned about pregnancy when I got pregnant at 15. My cousin had told me about my period when I got it, but she never told me anything about babies, or how it happens. I wish she had told me more about sex. I might have thought twice before having it. But, even though children know about sex and what can happen, they are still getting pregnant. I wish my grandmother had told me about sex ... She was old and she would never talk about those things ... She would not even hear the word sex in her house. It was never talked about. So I guess you could say I learned from experience, but it was a bad way to learn because I was already pregnant and still I knew nothing.

Five women confided that they first learned about sex, pregnancy and reproduction from their husbands. As part of the construction of *marianismo*, women are expected to be sexually inexperienced, and this reinforces the traditional roles of man/husband as teacher and woman/wife as student in sexual relationships. Ramona (US) suggests: "I learned everything from my husband because I was totally uninformed before I got married. The experience of learning from him was very good, especially since I did not know anything before." Concerned that their daughters not repeat their mistakes, several women asserted that they were sure to speak with their girls about sex, pregnancy and reproduction. Virginia (Mex) declares:

I don't really remember anyone telling me anything. I guess I learned through experience ... it was fine for me ... but, I told my daughter about everything. She needed to understand, so that she can be careful. After I got pregnant the first time, I went to a family planning clinic. I did not speak to a doctor or a nurse ... I think the woman I talked to was just a secretary ... but, she seemed to know about things. Maybe she was a *promotora*.

Almost half of the women interviewed concluded that the information that they had garnered through informal discussions and experience was inadequate. Consequently, 14 of the women subsequently attended family planning clinics, doctors offices or community classes. In general, they found the *promotoras* to be the most open to discussion. Several women commented that, because the *promotora* was a woman, it was easier to ask questions without feeling inhibited by traditional constraints. Only one woman who sought advice from a doctor, found this was a bad experience. It was only much later, however, that she realized how bad the experience really was. María Teresa (Mex) recalls:

When I wanted to know about sex and pregnancy, I asked some older people ... just like Azuzana my daughter is asking me now. But ... when I asked the doctor if I sit next to a boy, will I get pregnant? He laughed at me, without giving me an answer. So I continued. I asked him: 'Is being a virgin a problem for me to get pregnant?' He said: 'On the contrary, to get pregnant it was important for me not to be a virgin' and then he laughed some more. I also asked the doctor about having sex during pregnancy. He told me that this was helpful for pregnancy. I don't really think that he took me seriously or answered my questions well.

Only three of the 30 women claimed to have learned about reproduction exclusively through school or community programs. Such programs, however, were frequently inadequate. Maria Aide (US) confides:

I learned about reproduction in school, but I do not think that it was very helpful because I got pregnant when I was 15. After I was pregnant, I learned so much. I took classes ... with the *promotoras* at the Mariposa Clinic. This was good because they talked about many things that I would never have asked about. Also, they gave out contraceptives, these are things that women needed to take care of themselves.

Ana (US) first learned about reproduction at the age of 16, when she attended classes held at her church. She recalls that the experience was a positive one, although she laments that it was not as informative as it might have been since she became pregnant just one year later.

Regardless of the method of learning, all 30 of the women claimed to understand the biology of their reproductive systems though 23 admitted that they had experienced an unexpected pregnancy. For several women this had occurred more than once. Rosario (Mex) elaborates: “Yes, it has happened to me three or four times. In the beginning, I did not want to have so many pregnancies, so I tried to use the IUD ... but ... these things, they sometimes don’t work. Besides, my husband and I, we wanted more children, so I think that it was God’s will.” Similarly, María Elena (Mex) contends that all of her pregnancies, although unplanned, were not unexpected: “I was open to all the children that God sent to me and, therefore, none was unexpected.”

Yolandita’s unexpected pregnancy was slightly different. Two years before that, Yolandita had begun menopause and believed that she was no longer fertile. Since information about reproduction focusses on conception and contraception, women’s experiences of menopause are frequently absent. Consequently, many women are shocked to find themselves pregnant during the perimenopausal period. While this is not uncommon, it can be alarming as Yolandita recalls: “Two years after the beginning of my menopause my stomach started to grow. I was very scared, I thought that I had a tumour, but I refused to go to the doctor. When the contractions started, I had to go to the hospital. It was only then that I found out that I was pregnant. I thought it was the tumour.”

Other women explained that there were other reasons for unexpected pregnancy besides lack of knowledge about reproduction. These women attributed their unexpected pregnancies to social and familial expectations, lack of access to contraception, the need to please their partners, and the inability to negotiate safer¹³¹ sexual relations.

Nonetheless, understandings of reproduction were often the result of informal discussions which frequently resulted in misinformation. Since institutionalized sexual education has only recently become available, many women in the borderlands remain uninformed.

Procreation and Sexuality

Migration and uprootedness have transformed family relations and social networks, and consequently, have influenced attitudes towards love, courtship and coupling. In the borderlands, extended family ties and those of community identity have been weakened, as has the apparatus which governs social control and mutual obligation. As a result, many expectations no longer hold. For example, a male is no longer obliged to marry a girl/woman whom he has impregnated, even if she was a virgin prior to their relationship. Nonetheless, cultural constructs of *machismo* and *marianismo* remain strong in understandings of sexuality. Women place great value on their fertility, often viewing this as a path to marital union and eventual security. For many border women, therefore, non-procreative sexuality is often denied. Women continue to extract value from resisting sexual relations, denying desire and sexual fulfilment. Twelve of the women participants stated that sexual relations

¹³¹ In this context, safer sexual relations refers to the use of contraceptives. Many of the women contended that their partners were unwilling to allow them to use contraception. There was no reference here to ensuring protection from STDs or HIV/AIDS.

were either for procreation or for male pleasure. Leonela (US) contends: "Sex should be for procreation only. But he insists that it is for his satisfaction and enjoyment as well." Similarly, María Elena (Mex) asserts: "I don't like it [sex] ... no ... It should only be done for procreation."

Even within marital/conjugal unions, women are frequently unable to explore sexual pleasure and eroticism. The construction of 'good' and 'bad' girls/women continues to dominate female sexual identity in the borderlands. These cultural constructs also prevent women from negotiating sexual practices or rejecting unwanted sexual relations. Consequently, sexual relations frequently include aspects of abuse, violence and various degrees of coercion. In conjugal unions, sexual dynamics are defined by unequal relations of power. Women's bodies continue to be understood as erotic objects which are accessible to men for their sexual pleasure. Furthermore, several women suggested that sexual relations were a wifely duty. María Teresa (Mex) confides: "It is important to have children. So, if he wants it [sex], then I have to be willing." María Teresa's sentiments were mirrored across the line. Ramona (US) confesses: "People think that it [sex] is for reproduction, for procreating children. But it is also for men to enjoy." Nonetheless, 18 participants candidly explained that sexual enjoyment was an important part of their marriage. Rosario (Mex) confides:

Before, no, I did not like it. But, curiously enough, with this *borracho* [Rosario used this term, which means a drunk, contradictorily to express both her condemnation and her affection at different times throughout the interview process], I had a great time. It was very lovingly done and I felt free from all those feelings of shame that I had before. He was the first man that I ever really made love with.

Likewise, Veronica (US) asserts: "Children are nice, but it is important to have fun".

Contraceptives, Family Planning, and Gendered Violence

National and international family planning initiatives, especially contraceptive campaigns, have been almost exclusively directed toward women. In the delivery of family planning services, however, there is an inherent power relationship between providers and their women clients. This power relationship is based on the perceived authority of medical practitioners. Therefore, while family planning programs encourage informed procreative decisions, such decisions are not free from their influence. Family planning programmes promote 'modern' methods of fertility control such as the pill, Inter Uterine Devices (IUDs), hormonal injectables and implants such as Depro Provera, Cyclofem, and Norplant. Long-lasting contraceptives are provider-dependent rather than client-dependent. The implantation of IUDs,¹³² however, can lead to medical complications, infections and septic abortions, and are twice as likely to occur South of the border. Often, when choosing a contraceptive method, women are forced to sign consent forms without being informed about the implications of the method chosen, or of alternative choices. While women are often shown videos emphasizing the positive aspects of each contraceptive method, the possible negative implications are rarely discussed. This further removes 'free' choice from the hands of women users (Figueroa 1994; Grinmes 1998; Harcourt 1997; Loaeza 1996; Pine 1993; Szasz 1996; Szasz and Figueroa 1997).

¹³²IUDs and hormone injectables are the third most often chosen method of contraception in Mexico, preceded only by bilateral tubal ligations and the birth control pill (Aguilar, Mexfam 1997; Szasz 1996; Szasz and Figueroa 1997).

In Mexico, contraceptive use among married women has steadily risen from 30% in the mid-1970s, to the current rate of approximately two-thirds.¹³³ This increase is largely due to the institutionalization of population control programs under the guise of family planning. The contraceptive methods used, consequently, reflect the methods provided and promoted by the *Secretaría de Salud* through public health centres. Emphasis on population control since the 1970s has forced women to relegate control over contraception to health care professionals. By the early 1990s, it was estimated that 63% of the women aged 15 to 49, who were married or in a consensual union, were using contraceptives accessed through government agencies. Between 1967 and 1992, however, there was a significant decrease in the use of the birth control pill. This decrease can be attributed to the effectiveness of government family planning policies and programs which promote long-lasting or permanent contraception since during this same period there was a marked increase in the use of IUDs, hormonal injectable, bilateral tubal ligations. Although increasingly important in providing family planning, NGOs have had a small impact in comparison to governmental agencies¹³⁴ (Elu 1993).

In the US, 60% of women who seek publicly funded contraceptives do so through general health care facilities, rather than those focussed exclusively on family planning. Publicly

¹³³ The use of contraception among married rural and indigenous people, however, falls well below the national average to just one-third of the population (Szasz 1996).

¹³⁴ In Mexico, the pill and other barrier methods are obtained, in 80% of all cases, at private pharmacies. In the case of long-lasting contraceptives — sterilization, IUDs, hormonal injectables — 50% are obtained through IMSS, 20% through *Secretaría de Salud*, 20% through private pharmacies, and 10% through NGOs, such as Mexfam and FEMAP (interview: Lopez Juarez, Mexfam, Mexico City, April 1997).

funded family planning clinics, however, provided contraceptive services to 6.6 million women, which accounts for 40% of all US women requiring publicly funded contraception. Family planning clinics, therefore, are a vital source of contraceptive and reproductive health knowledge and care. More than 3,100 different agencies offered publicly funded contraceptive services at more than 7,200 clinic sites (Frost *et al.* 2001).¹³⁵

In Mexico, the use of long-lasting contraceptives is promoted among poor, disadvantaged, indigenous, and rural women. Likewise, in the US, long-lasting contraceptives have been linked to racial/socioeconomic biases which target the poor and disadvantaged, as well as women of colour. Underlying this assumption is the pejorative view that these women have difficulty maintaining control over their sexuality, bodies and lives and, therefore, must not be trusted with choice in governing their reproduction (Hartman 1997; Interview: Aguilar 1997; Malat 2000; Duong and Sun 1995). Choice in reproductive decision-making, therefore, is a privilege.

Family planning programs, however, can encourage informed procreative decision-making. The use of contraceptives allows individuals to determine the number and spacing of their children. Furthermore, wider birth spacing has been linked positively to women's health, and reductions in maternal and infant mortality rates. This epidemiological link explains the continued targeting of women by family planning programs. In so doing, however, men have been excluded. Conventionally, it has been assumed that men have little knowledge about or impact on contraceptive practices. Studies demonstrate, however, that

¹³⁵ Forty percent of family planning clinics are run by health departments; 21% by community health care centres, 13% by Planned Parenthood and its affiliates, and 26% are run by hospitals or other social agencies (Frost *et al.* 2001).

not only do men have knowledge about contraceptives, they retain virtually exclusive control over contraceptive decision-making (Hulton and Falkingham 1996; Ringheim 1996). Accordingly, women do not always have control over their fertility, but rather are more often subject to pressures from their husbands, extended family, and social and religious traditions (Szasz 1996; Szasz and Figueroa 1997). Furthermore, women's lack of autonomy over their bodies, reflects the socially and culturally defined gender inequalities, and disparities of power, which characterize social/sexual relationships in the border region. While education of girls and women can be a source of women's empowerment and an impetus for social change, this is a slow process and is dependent on the educational curriculum and the information provided. Consequently, education which promotes equality and sensitivity to gender issues is an critical element in the process of empowering women. Nonetheless, the women participants in this study retained virtually exclusive responsibility for contraception, when it was used.

Furthermore, several myths about contraception have emerged which further reduce the likelihood of contraceptive use. For example, many young women fear that using contraception before having had children will make them sterile. The use of contraception raises questions about the intent of sexual relations. If a man suggests the use of contraception, the woman may believe that this is because he is not interested in her as a life partner, but rather only for temporary sexual fulfilment. Within marriage, the suggestion of contraception by either partner, particularly the use of a condom, raises the question of infidelity.¹³⁶ While 18

¹³⁶ Women in this study indicated that condoms were seldom used because their partners did not want to use them, they reduced sexual satisfaction for themselves and their partners, or because use indicated a lack of confidence or trust in one's sexual partner. Moreover,

of the 30 women in this study said that they enjoyed sex in their marriage, their ability to enjoy sexual relations without the incurrence of unwanted pregnancies (or the risk of contracting STDs), was sometimes lost in arguments with their spouses over the use of contraception.

Border women, both Mexican and Mexican-American, understand their reproductive roles through the cultural lens of *marianismo*. This is not a static term however, and is subject to change and ongoing reinterpretation. Nonetheless, the influence of *marianismo* remains strong in defining women's role as motherhood. It is not surprising, therefore, that women are encouraged to reproduce. In this sense, *marianismo* associates women's reproduction with motherhood, and ignores women's sexuality. Accordingly, a contradiction emerges where in women are expected to have sex to procreate, yet they are constrained by 'virginal' social constructs from enjoying it. It is for this reason that the use of contraception is not associated with sexual liberation, or the separation of sexuality and procreation. Instead, many women view contraceptives as a means for preventing the difficulties of pregnancy and childbirth (Szasz 1996; and Szasz and Figueroa 1997).

The expectations of motherhood pressure young women to engage in sexual relations early, usually between the ages of 15 and 19 (*Secretaría de Gobernación* 1995). The desire of young women to be mothers, and to the attain economic security expected of conjugal union, renders women vulnerable to early pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and the contraction of HIV/AIDS. Nevertheless, contraceptive use remains very low in the

women believed themselves invulnerable to STDs/ HIV/AIDS since they themselves were not promiscuous. They failed to recognize/acknowledge, for the most part, the possibility that their husbands' might be promiscuous.

borderlands, not only among Mexican/Mexican American youths, but also among those who have yet to have a child.¹³⁷

While contraception is widely available to youths in the US without parental consent, in Mexico those under the age of 18 are unable to request contraceptives at public health clinics unless accompanied by their parents (Szasz 1996, Szasz and Figueroa 1997). In the US, however, there has been less reliance on public health messages in the mass media, to encourage the use of contraception, than in Mexico (Pine 1993). Moreover, until recently when the risk of STDs and HIV/AIDS has been of high concern, there has been a lack of readily available information about contraception or services which target youth sexuality in the US.

In Mexico, approximately two-thirds of users access contraceptives from the public sector, while the remainder obtains them from the private sector (Szasz and Figueroa 1997). In the border, however, contraceptive users are more likely to access contraceptives and family planning information from private sources, such as pharmacies, private family planning organizations, or through workplace health programs. Most women in this study who used contraceptives, purchased them from pharmacies. Most women cited the availability of money and the convenience of pharmacies as the reasons for their decision. Furthermore, pharmacies meet the need for privacy, which is largely unmet by private and

¹³⁷Duong and Sun (1995) cited the reasons for low prevalence in the use of contraceptives among border youths as: (i) lack of knowledge about the types of contraceptives available, (ii) embarrassment and the inability to purchase contraceptives anonymously; (iii) forgetfulness prior to, or during, sexual activity; and (iv) perceived invulnerability to pregnancy and STDs/HIV/AIDS.

public clinic-based delivery systems. Moreover, since government family planning services target married couples, the contraceptive needs of young and/or unmarried individuals are not met.

Over-the-counter contraceptives, especially the pill, condoms and spermicides, are increasingly subject to social marketing concepts. The costs of delivering contraceptives are minimized through the use of existing commercial distribution networks and, therefore, birth control methods are made more accessible to disadvantaged groups. Nonetheless, contraceptives are only available to those who have the means to pay. Furthermore, this method of distribution does not ensure that the health needs of users are met. Retailers seldom have the time, expertise, or inclination, to explain the correct use or most appropriate method of contraception for individual customers. Consequently, when contraindications emerge, they remain unmonitored. Some pharmacies also sell IUDs and hormonal injectables. The presumption is that women will take these products to a doctor, nurse, or *promotora* to ensure proper use. Of women in Nogales, Arizona, 67% purchase their prescription drugs across the border, and many of these women utilize private distribution mechanisms (clinics and pharmacies) to obtain contraceptives, especially hormone injectables which are more accessible and less expensive south of the border (Vogel 1995; Rosenau and Vaillancourt 1997). Contraceptive social marketing is currently supported and subsidized through USAID and IPPF (Allina and Coeytaux 1994; Ganster and Hamson 1995; Price 1994; Rees 1994).

In Ambos Nogales, between 60% and 70% of unmarried women and teenage girls use the pill. Depro Prevera injections, however, taken at three-month intervals, are rapidly becoming the contraceptive of choice. The acceptance of hormone injectables, like Depro Provera,

Cyclofem, Noristerat and Mesigyna, is very high in less developed countries, especially because of cultural beliefs that link the curative capacity of modern medicine to the use of injections. Similarly, cultural proscriptions which limit women's sexuality and touching, prohibit their use of many barrier contraceptives such as contraceptive sponges, foam, spermicides, and diaphragms (Duong and Sun 1995). Therefore, the most important factor influencing the use of contraception is culture.

In this study, culture and economic means were the most important influences on the use of contraception. While previous studies have suggested that most women use modern contraceptives to control their fertility, more than one quarter of the women in this study confided that they did not use any form of modern contraception though they were sexually active. While one woman explained that she attempted to use the rhythm method, which at times demanded abstinence, in practice she admitted that she had little control over her fertility. Other women asserted that while they knew how to prevent pregnancies, it was improper for women to use contraception since the Church forbade it. These women frequently rationalized their lack of control over their fertility by referring to the importance of children in their lives and the importance of motherhood. Only one woman seemed to hold misconceptions about how to prevent pregnancy. María Elena (Mex) indicates: "Yes, I know how to prevent pregnancy ... You drink a lot of water after sex, or take birth control pills. But mostly I pray to God. Only God has control over that. My husband and I try to decide whether to have another child, but in reality we don't make those decisions, children are just conceived naturally." Lack of control over the timing and spacing of children was a common theme among these eight women. Clare (Mex) explains:

Before, I did not have control. I did not even know how to prevent pregnancy ... So the children just came. I had no way to prevent it. I had no control over the decision to have a child ... or to decide how many to have or when to have them.... It was just how many came naturally, how many were conceived. Now, I have had the operation [tubal ligation sterilization].

Clare now has control over her reproductive capabilities, however, it was not evident from her testimony that this was the only area in which she lacked control. The despair that she experienced, at just 20 years of age, over her lack of control over her reproduction seems to be exacerbated by her lack of control over her marital problems. Clare (Mex) laments: “Contraception, it has been a problem in our marriage. We argued about having more children. He wanted more, and I did not want any more. We have no money and no work, so more children were not possible. I felt I had no choice but to have the operation five months ago, when I was giving birth.”

Of the participants, 21 stated that they had used modern contraceptives. Most women used a combination of methods — the pill, IUD, hormonal injectables, and sterilization — which varied according to their circumstances. Five women described their use of an IUD to prevent conception. Half the women interviewed, however, said that they used the pill as their primary method of birth control. Nine of these women, only one of whom lived in the US, stated that they sometimes used the pill, while other times they used an IUD, the rhythm method or even abstinence. The regularity with which they used contraception varied and, therefore, often diminished the effectiveness of fertility control. Marta Emelda (Mex) contends: “Sometimes I used to use birth control pills, but usually we had no money to buy them. So, in reality, I had no control over how many children I conceived. So they just came, I did not decide to have them.” Contraceptive failures were also blamed for women’s lack

of control over their fertility. Carmen (US) asserts: “I do not have control over my fertility, I have been pregnant several times unexpectedly. I would like to have more control; that would be good for me. I know how to prevent pregnancy. I used contraceptives. I even tried the IUD. I don’t know why, but I still got pregnant.”

Some women complained of the side effects associated with taking the pill, such as diminished sexual desire, weight gain, and headaches. Ana (US) was concerned as she explains: “I use the pill, but, I would like to try something else besides the pill. Since I have been taking the pill, it seems that my desire is gone and I often get headaches. These problems have caused some problems in my marriage.”

Although previous studies suggest a rise in the use of contraceptive hormonal injectables, this study found that only three of the women participants adhered to their use. All of these women were living in the US at the time. While injections which last for three months were available in Arizona at the Mariposa Clinic, two of the women confided that they crossed the border to get a monthly injection. Although the Mariposa Clinic bills according to a ‘sliding-scale’ for services, these women explained that it was less expensive to cross the line for their injections. María Luján (Mex) explains: “Yes, I sort of ... know how to prevent pregnancy. I take a hormonal injection. It is easier this way, I just go across the border and get a shot once a month and they don’t ask any questions or force you to go to classes. It is more private ... and I think ... it costs less money, but I don’t really know.” Leonela (US) confirms the expense of hormone injectables in the US:

To prevent pregnancy, I get a hormonal injection at Mariposa [Clinic]. I go every three months to get a shot ... but, I have to pay for the complete cost myself because the injections are not covered by AHCCCS. But, they [those at the Mariposa Clinic] really

encourage this method. This way, I decide, no one else can decide for me, when I will have a child.

Although Leonela asserts that the decision to have a child is hers alone, the encouragement which she receives from the Clinic to use contraception, and to prevent further pregnancies, must also be understood as a significant influence on her reproductive choices.

This study found that domestic violence was associated with contraceptive use and was a significant problem for many of the women participants. When asked about violence in the home, all of the women living in Sonora admitted that domestic violence was a frequent occurrence in their lives. For nine of the women living south of the border, this violence was exacerbated by decisions regarding the use of contraception. María Elena (Mex) confesses:

Contraception has always been a problem between us. My husband got very angry when I tried to talk to him about contraceptives, especially when I wanted him to use condoms. The contraceptives made me feel sick, I think that is why I have varicose veins. My husband, he is a very violent man ... he does not need a reason to become angry and most of the time there is no reason, but any reason will do. So ... yes, he has been violent over the use of contraceptives, but especially when I suggested the use of condoms. He also gets violent when he drinks or if we have money problems, which is always the case.

Only Lupita (Mex), however, blamed incidents of violence on herself. She explains:

Yes violence has been a big problem for us. But, I think that it is my fault ... because they say that after the operation women become angry more easily. I was already an angry person because of all the other problems that we had — money and work, I mean — so, I guess it was because of me, I caused some problems by having the operation. He didn't want me to have it, but sometimes the pills, they don't work.

Likewise, on the US side of the line, contraception was an issue around which domestic violence erupted. Eight of the 15 women living in Arizona at the time of this study, contended that the issue of contraception had resulted in violence. Ana (US) explains: "Yes, contraception has been a problem in my marriage. We argue over how many children to

have. We already have two children and I do not want any more right now. I feel like I have always looked after children and that is all he wants me to do.”

While most Mexican women use ‘modern’ contraceptive methods, there has been a significant increase since 1987 in the use of sterilization among married women¹³⁸. Statistics showed that in 1976 only 8.9% of women were sterilized, while in 1987 that rate had increased to 36.2%. Furthermore, since 1987, an estimated 2.3 million women have been sterilized, making sterilization the leading contraceptive method among Mexican women. According to the 1987 *Informe de la Encuesta Nacional sobre fecundidad y salud* (ENFES), almost half the women using contraception, cited sterilization as their contraceptive technique. In half these cases, however, the women reported having four or more children prior to undergoing sterilization procedures (Correa 1994; de Barbieri 1993; Figueroa 1996a and 1996b; Population Reports 1991; Szasz 1996).¹³⁹ The number of births prior to sterilization suggests a high level of resistance among Mexican women to imposed and coercive population and fertility control programmes.

Female sterilization is a highly invasive procedure. The question, then, is why has it become the contraceptive of ‘choice’ for Mexican women? Evidence shows that women do not always choose to undergo sterilization, and that increased incidences of bilateral tubal

¹³⁸ In Mexico, national survey data concerning the use of contraceptives and sterilization include only married women (interview: Figueroa, Mexico City, May 1997; Figueroa 1996a, 1994, 1995). This narrow focus is problematic since it excludes the needs and practices of unmarried women who may also be using contraception. This flawed methodology excludes a large portion of Mexican women and assumes that they are not making choices about their fertility. This assumption conforms to the cultural construct of *marianismo*, which defines women as asexual, and prohibits unmarried women from engaging in sexual relations.

¹³⁹ interview: Aguilar, Mexfam 1997

ligations reflect the government's emphasis on more permanent methods of population control (Figueroa 1996a; Ganster and Hamson 1995). According to the ENFES (1987), 12.4% of sterilized women were not given the opportunity to 'choose' the operation freely. These women claimed that they were not consulted prior to the procedure, and that the decision to sterilize was made by a doctor, nurse, *promotora*, or a family planning councilor. A further 25% of the women interviewed in the ENFES study claimed they did not receive information about other contraceptive options, or about the (ir)reversibility of tubal ligations. Furthermore, 40% of sterilized women indicated that they had not signed authorizations of consent for the procedure. The survey found that incidences of abuse were highest among the most marginalized women in Mexican society, particularly poor, rural and indigenous women (de Barbieri 1993; Elu 1993; Figueroa 1996a; IRAW 1999; Szasz and Figueroa 1997).¹⁴⁰

Likewise, according to Juan Guillermo Figueroa, at *El Colegio de México's* CEDDU, a Mexican national survey conducted in 1992, showed that bilateral tubal ligations were 'chosen' 45% of the time by women attending family planning clinics. Strong criticism of state-sponsored programs emerged, however, since there was little evidence to suggest that sterilization was demanded or desired by Mexican women. It was widely argued that there

¹⁴⁰ Forced sterilization of indigenous women occurs, particularly in Chiapas where political struggle between the Mexican state and the revolutionary Zapatista movement prevails, and poverty among indigenous people is rampant. Incidences of non-consensual sterilization have become so frequent that many indigenous women refuse medical treatment in hospitals and clinics. Instead, many women are choosing to give birth at home, under more precarious conditions, rather than risk the possibility of forced sterilization. The targeted sterilization of indigenous peoples can only be understood as cultural genocide (Cardenas and Garza 1994; Elu 1993).

was an inherent contradiction between the state's commitment to uphold the right to health and freedom in decision making about reproduction, and government institutions which frequently violated these reproductive rights by sterilizing women without informed consent. This contradiction exposes the coercive power relations which surround the decisions to undergo sterilization. It demonstrates that choices are not always made freely, but rather reflect government policy and the unequal power relations between doctors and patients. When advised to undergo 'treatment', without full disclosure or information about the procedure, most women are reluctant to challenge authority (Personal communications with Juan Guillermo Figueroa, Mexico City, May 1997; Figueroa 1996a).

Furthermore, many women are persuaded to undergo sterilization immediately after childbirth, a miscarriage or abortion (Primary interviews 1997; Haws *et al.* 1992; Figueroa 1996a; Szasz and Figueroa 1997). During this period of stress and trauma, women are often emotionally and physically exhausted, and vulnerable to 'expert' advice and, therefore, impulsive decisions about sterilization should not be undertaken. Under such circumstances, many women are neither offered complete information, nor the necessary time, to absorb the implications of such a serious decision.

Choosing sterilization can have serious repercussions for women, their spouses and their families. In particular, sterilization has been linked to marital instability. Since marriage is a cultural construct which demands the production of children as a visible commitment to the relationship, sterilization can limit the opportunities for future relationships for women who experience marital separation, divorce, widowhood or abandonment. Furthermore, the ENFES (1987) reported that 24.7% of sterilized women claimed some associated long-term

health problems. Women need to be informed about the possibility of health related consequences. In 4.7% of cases, increases in personal and family problems were reported following sterilization. Almost 10% of women indicated that their husbands were unhappy with the sterilization. While there is a high rate of regret, 86.2% of the women surveyed stated that, given the choice, they would again choose sterilization (de Barbieri 1993: 90). Since sterilization is already a reality for these women, perhaps these statements are attempts to rationalize what cannot be undone.

Sterilization in the Mexican borderlands mirrors the patterns which occur throughout Mexico, and many of the women participants had been prematurely sterilized. Eight of the 15 Sonoran women had undergone tubal ligations, and all of the operations had been performed prior to the women's twenty-fifth birthday. In only one case, however, was the operation advised for health reasons. Mari (Mex) explains:

The doctors and my family, they all told me to have the operation. They were worried because of my heart. It was not advisable to have any more children. Even though it was probably the right decision ... I have some regrets because of my second marriage. I have no children with my second husband, I would have liked to have at least one child for him ... especially since he has no children of his own, only mine. But he treats them like they were his own ... but it would have been nice.

For each of the other seven women, a tubal ligation was advised by a doctor. Often this advice was disguised as a medical imperative, as Lupita (Mex) describes: "It happened when my last baby was born, that is when they did it. I was 23. I suffer from chronic haemorrhoids and they were very painful. The doctor told me that if I had the operation, that this would be a good way to control them ... But I still have them, so it didn't work." The timing of the operation suggests that Lupita was not fully capable of making an informed choice about

sterilization. While haemorrhoids are commonly associated with pregnancy, the timing of the ‘decision’ to be sterilized reflects the unequal power relationship between doctor and patient, rather than an exercise of reproductive choice.

The emphasis on limiting women’s fertility and advancing population control policies seems evident since the sterilization of these women occurred very early in their reproductive lives. The population industry asserts that the earlier a woman begins to conceive, the more children she is physically capable of bring forth. Consequently, arresting women’s reproduction is a necessary component of population control. This was clearly the case when the doctor advised Marta Emelda to have a tubal ligation at the same time as her caesarian section. Marta Emelda (Mex) laments:

When my last son was born, during the caesarian section, they did the tubal ligation at the same time. I was only 17 years old then, but I already had two children. The doctor decided that I should have the operation because **he said** [Marta Emelda’s emphasis] I did not want any more children. I was in the hospital having the caesarian already ... so he told me this would be the best time to do it. I have regrets though. Also, I want to know what exactly they did because I have heard that tubal ligations at such an early age can create problems in the future. But, I heard that they can rejoin things if they only cut the tubes apart and took a section out. I do not know if it worked, I do not know if they did the right thing. I don’t really know why they did that to me?

Six of the Sonoran women had not undergone the sterilization process, although each admitted that it had been suggested to them. The ability of these women to resist the power of the medical establishment by rejecting sterilization, demonstrates an exercise of agency. Maria Teresa (Mex) affirms: “The doctors have told me that it is not a difficult thing. But, I do not want it now. Also, my husband does not want me to have it. With all the health problems that our children have, what if God takes one away from us? With the operation we won’t be able to replace them — and we will be alone.”

Furthermore, since women still conceive once menopause has begun (i.e., during perimenopause), even mature women have been targeted for sterilization. María Elena (Mex) contends:

The doctors keep telling me that I need the operation, but I am now in menopause ... so, I don't think that there is any need. I believe that all children are gifts from God, and they must be accepted willingly. Also, I have great fear about such an operation because one of the most important things in monitoring my body and health is the regularity of my cycle, the flows and pain. If I had the operation, I would lose control over this, so I am glad that I never did.

The loss of control over their bodies is a significant issue for many women, as María Elena's testimony illustrates. The unequal power relationship between doctors and women patients in advocating invasive sterilizations, can lead to a loss of control over women's bodies and their reproductive lives.

Concerns about female sterilization have not been as vehement in the US as they have been in Mexico since population control is not an objective of family planning in the US. This different emphasis limits the availability of information regarding female sterilization in the US. To compare the conditions between the US and Mexico, such information is needed.

Recent evidence estimates that between 1994 and 1996, more than two million women underwent surgical sterilization in the US, at an average annual rate of 11.5 per 1,000 women (Mac Kay 2001). Of these sterilizations, half were performed postpartum, while the other half were unrelated to the timing of pregnancy or interval sterilizations. While all of the postpartum sterilizations were conducted while the women were inpatients in the hospital setting, only 4% of interval sterilizations were inpatient procedures. While some information

on age demographics was collected, there was no analysis of race, ethnicity, social or economic status and, therefore, it is impossible to draw conclusions concerning these factors. Mac Kay (2001) notes, however, that postpartum sterilization rates were higher than interval sterilization rates among women between the ages of 20 and 29, while interval sterilization procedures were more common than postpartum procedures among women between the ages of 35 and 49. Moreover, sterilization rates were significantly higher in the southern US.

In this study, sterilization was less common among the women who lived in Arizona, and only four of the US participants had undergone tubal ligation procedures. Two of these women had the operation before migrating to the US, while the other two women underwent sterilization after migrating. Three of the women attributed their decisions to the advice of their doctors. Guadalupe (US) contends:

Five years ago, when my last daughter was born ... the doctor told me I had to have the operation. I was 23 years old at the time and I had five children. So, he told me that I should have the operation because I could not stop having babies. He said it was because I was too fertile ... No, I have no regrets.... Well, yes I do. I only had girls, you see, I would have liked a boy.

In contrast, Ramona asserted that the decision to have the operation was hers. While she had the operation in Mexico at the age of 23, she stated that she was not pressured into the decision and that it was her choice. Ramona (US) reflects:

Well, first I made up my mind, and then my husband and I talked about it. So, I made the decision and then I let him think that he had a say in it. But my husband is no fool, he said to me: 'why are we even discussing this, I know that you have already decided?'. So, I had the operation. That was 17 years ago, just after the birth of my son. We felt that the family was complete ... We had two girls and a boy. I was 23 at the time. No one advised me, my husband and I just decided that three children were enough. No, no one advised ... but, I did not want any more children. I saw how my mother struggle with nine children and I did not want that for myself ... I was the oldest daughter and I had to work very hard

and I did not want all that foolishness in my family. I have no regrets because life is hard enough without exposing us to the problems of more children.

Regrets are, nonetheless, often attributed to premature or early sterilizations. The loss of power over reproductive decision-making is often part of this regret. Pilar (Mex) explains: “Yes, I might consider having the operation. The doctors have advised me to do it because I can still have more children ... But I have not decided yet. I want to keep my options open, but I may do it later.” Likewise, Leonela (US) contends: “It is not something that is necessary. Women have it done and then they regret it. Something inside them changes, not in the body, but in their heart, the person changes. So ... no, I would never have that operation. Besides, I take the injections and they are working for me.”

Furthermore, a recent study of Ambos Nogales (Duong and Sun 1995) found that on both sides of the border, female sterilization was opposed by men. They contended that their sexual relationships would change, if their wives were to undergo sterilization. Many men feel that their masculinity is threatened if their partners can no longer bear children. Likewise, a woman’s inability to conceive, often carries the stigma of ‘incompleteness’ or the view that she is ‘no longer a whole woman’.

Cultural constructs also cause many men to refuse vasectomies. Many men imagine that a vasectomy will negatively affect their sexual performance and, therefore, their masculinity.¹⁴¹ Vasectomies in the borderlands are extremely infrequent. Only six of the 30 women

¹⁴¹ This gendered bias is reflected in male and female sterilization. In Mexico, for example, the females rate of bilateral tubal ligation is more than 35%, whereas the rate of male vasectomies is just 1.5% (De Barbieri 1993). Similar statistics were unavailable for the US, however, in 1983, figures showed that approximately 10 million men had been sterilized in the US since 1969 (www.encyclopedia.com/articles/13366.html).

participants believed that their partners would undergo a vasectomy. While Leonela believes that women should not be sterilized, she contends that her husband would agree to his sterilization. Leonela (US) affirms: "Yes, we have talked about this vasectomy. After the little one is a bit older, he said that maybe he will do it. That is what he says. But it does not matter to me because I am looking after it myself by taking the injections." In Mari's cases, however, the belief that her husband would have a vasectomy was irrelevant since she had already undergone a tubal ligation. Mari (Mex) reflects: "Yes, I think he would do it ... but it is not necessary because I had the operation before I knew him."

The remaining 24 women believed that their partners/spouses would not have a vasectomy. Their reasons, however, varied. While most of the women suggested that such an operation would negatively affect a man's sense of self, sexual prowess and *machismo*, two of the women believed that contraception, even if that meant sterilization, was a woman's responsibility.

Politics of Abortion: Women or Mothers?

International politics of reproduction has significantly influenced the debates surrounding abortion. The population control industry, although challenged by the internationalization of the anti-abortion movement, has expanded and prospered. In this environment, there has been greater support for the development and use of reproductive technologies, some of which have been proven unsafe.¹⁴² At the ICPD Cairo conference of 1994, abortion was one

¹⁴² For example, quinacrine, an anti-malarial drug, has been used to sterilize women. When the pill is inserted into the uterus, the drug burns and creates scarring of the fallopian tubes. The risks of sterilization by this method include digestive disturbances, toxic

of the most highly contested issues by both advocates for access to safe and legal abortion, and anti-abortion pro-life challengers. In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the necessity of safe and legal abortion was central to the debate concerning women's reproductive rights. Prior to the introduction of 'modern' contraceptive methods, abortion was the only means for women to control their fertility, and it was common for women to experience "3, 6, 10, [or] even 20 abortions in their lifetime" (Bere 1993: 6). Such practices were detrimental to women's health and security.

Although contraceptives can reduce the need for abortion, they do not eliminate the need completely. When modern contraceptives fail, are unavailable, or unused, abortion becomes a critical secondary method for protecting women from unwanted pregnancies. In cases of rape and incest, access to safe and legal abortion is essential, especially since the woman's rights have already been violently breached. Furthermore, poor and ineffective contraceptives have long been distributed in less developed countries, and these unethical practices often result in unwanted pregnancies (Berer 1993a; Crane 1994; Dixon-Mueller 1994b; Hartman 1997; LACWHN 1993; Pine 1993; Pine and Pollack 2000).

psychosis, nervous system disorders, hallucinations, psychotic episodes, cancer, development of abnormal lesions in the uterus, ectopic pregnancy, fetal exposure, and death. In a Mexican case, where 60 women underwent this chemical sterilization process, all of the participants experienced side effects. The use of quinacrine pellets has been banned in India, Chile and the US. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) questions its long-term safety and suggests the possibility that it is a carcinogenic.

Under continued pressure to reduce the growing population worldwide, the population industry, especially the Population Institute (PI), a United Nations non-governmental organization, is urging the FDA and the World Health Organization (WHO) to conduct further studies. As early as the 1980s quinacrine has been used in Mexico for transcervical sterilization (Liagin 1995; Conservative News Service, 5/7/99; Wall Street Journal, 10/19/98; Concerned Women for America, www.cwfa.org).

Where abortion is illegal and unsafe, women nonetheless terminate unwanted pregnancies. In such cases, there is a higher rate of maternal morbidity and mortality. Women try self-induced abortions by taking herbal remedies and abortifacient drugs, engaging in violent exercise, and causing themselves physical abuse, by inserting of wires, knives and other objects into the vagina. The most marginalized women, get grossly dangerous abortions. The rich usually have safe abortions from reputable doctors. Without legal sanction and safe environments where medical guidance can be attained, women are extremely vulnerable. An estimated 70,000 women die each year from abortion complications, and hundreds of thousands more suffer devastating long-term effects of botched abortions. Globally in 1999, one-fifth of all pregnancies ended in abortion (46 million), and over half of these took place where laws restricted access to abortion (Pine and Pollack 2000). Although illegal throughout most of Latin America, abortion is widely used to control women's fertility. Consequently, abortion must be considered a part of the family planning experience of women (Berer 1993b; de Barbieri 1993; Kissling 1993; LACWHN 1993; Pine and Pollack 2000; Szasz 1996).

The understandings of pregnancy and abortion have emerged from differing interpretive frameworks, social and cultural institutions, civil laws and gendered power structures. Accordingly, different metaphors to describe pregnancy (motherhood, miracle, gift, second chance) and abortion (murder, destruction, and sin) have emerged to influence our assumptions and decisions. Abortion is embedded in complex social, cultural, psychological, economic and political structures, and people are largely unconscious and uncritical of their interpretive filters. Consequently, in the mid 1970s, the term menstrual regulation emerged

to identify post-coital fertility regulation techniques that did not fit comfortably into the contraception-abortion dichotomy (Banwell and Paxman 1993; Jung 1993; Kissling 1993).

US Politics of Abortion: Narrowing the Options

In the US, debate over abortion has taken a very different form from the Mexican one. The ongoing struggle to make abortions legal, safe and accessible in the US, has been mired in a legal quagmire of court cases. Following the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decisions in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, however, public funding of, access to, and information about abortion has been limited throughout the US (Petchesky 1992 1985; Tone 1997). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, pro-choice and pro-life advocates have continually raised challenges in the courts. Now, almost 30 years after the 1973 decisions, a woman's right to abortion continues to be challenged by moral, ethical and legal debates throughout the US about induced abortion.

Although the Catholic Church wields much less power in the US than in Mexico, the influence of the New Right (conservatives, and Christian and religious fundamentalists) is much greater. Accordingly, a direct correlation exists between pro-life/pro-choice views and religious values. Religion is a big influence on the way politicians vote in all parties.¹⁴³ Between 1988 and 1995, for example, there was a significant decline in support for a woman's right to choose, especially among young White males.¹⁴⁴ This decrease in support

¹⁴³ See C. Fastnow *et al.*, 1999; Pomper 2001.

¹⁴⁴ Support for a woman's right to choose, regardless of the circumstances, in 1995, among young men between the ages of 15 and 19 was 24%; however, this was a significant drop from 1988 when 37% of young men supported such a decision (Boggess and Bradner 2000; Gay and Lynxwiler 1999).

reflects an increase in religiosity among White males, especially among born-again Christians. Likewise, this trend among male youth reflects the rise of conservatism across the US in general and anti-abortion conservatism in particular (Bogges and Bradner 2000; Brown *et al.* 2000; Crane 1994).

Access to safe legal abortion in the US has virtually eliminated the public health risks of clandestine abortions. The US experience suggests that comprehensive family planning programmes that include safe and legal abortion are the best means for reducing maternal mortality and morbidity. Prior to 1973, however, complications from illegal abortions accounted for approximately 17% of maternal deaths which were associated with pregnancy and child birth (Pine 1993). Nevertheless, attempts to limit funding under federal and state health care programs for abortion may force some women to return to the clandestine practices of the past.

Increasingly states are allowing hospitals, doctors and practitioners to opt-out of providing abortion services (NARAL 2001). In 1990, 83% of US counties had no clearly identified abortion provider. The trend toward providing fewer abortion services is reflected in US obstetrics and gynaecology residency programs. While nearly one quarter of all programs required training in first and second trimester abortions in 1985, only 13% required training in first semester abortions and only 7%, required second trimester training in 1991. Many doctors, moreover, view abortion procedures as uninteresting, and the poor remuneration for such procedures further reduces physicians' incentive to perform abortions (Lazarus 1997). This lack of access to abortion services is a major barrier to women's reproductive rights and choices and a threat to women's security.

Though contraception is widely available in the US, the lack of a comprehensive family planning program has increased abortion. Family planning is not associated with population control in the US since population growth is not perceived as a threat to national sovereignty and security. The annual population growth in the US is less than 1%, and the fertility rate is just two children per woman (United Nations 2000).

Mexico and the Politics of Abortion: Voluntary or Imposed Motherhood?

Between the late 1970s and the mid-1980s, Mexico witnessed a significant increase in the abortion rate. It was once thought that the provision of free contraception would result in a decline in induced abortion, but this was not initially the case (Elu 1993). When modern contraceptives were introduced and experimentally used by the majority of Mexican women, ineffective use or misuse may have resulted in higher rates of unwanted conception. By the early 1990s, when contraception use increased and became more stable, the abortion rate remained stable, indicating only a slight decline in the long-term (Singh and Sedgh 1997).¹⁴⁵

The Mexican Constitution enshrines reproductive freedoms and does not prohibit abortion. In most states, however, abortion is illegal and practised clandestinely. The Penal Code (1931), although amended several times, has left the clauses on abortion intact. Abortion doctors can face between six and eight years of imprisonment and the loss of their license, while women who undergo abortion face between six months and five years of

¹⁴⁵ In 1976, the abortion rate (per 1000 women aged 15-49) in Mexico was 21.1. This rose to 23.5 in 1986. By 1991, it declined to 22. In the borderlands, abortion rates are significantly higher — 26.9 in 1976, 25.5 in 1986 and 29.7 in 1991 — and indicate an overall upward trend (Singh and Sedgh 1997: 9).

imprisonment (IWRRAW 2000). Abortion is legal for cases of rape, risk to the woman's life, accident, fetal impairment, risk to the woman's health, insemination by donor without the consent of the woman, and for socioeconomic reasons (for women with three or more children). Though these circumstances vary from state to state only rape is a legitimate reason for abortion in all Mexican states. In a 1999 poll conducted in Mexico City, 24% of those surveyed supported voluntary abortion regardless of the circumstances, and a further 47% advocated the decriminalization of abortion under certain circumstances (Elu 1993, Lamas and Bissell 2000).¹⁴⁶

Since access to voluntary abortion remains illegal, most abortions in Mexico continue to happen in dangerous, unsafe, unclean and fear-provoking environments. Access is usually procured through social networks which link women with doctors. Links to clandestine procedures and social networks are often supported by health professionals — gynaecologists, general practitioners and midwives — who are sympathetic to women's situations, yet are unwilling to risk performing the procedure. Accordingly menstrual regulation, pregnancy interruption, pregnancy complications, and fertility regulation, have become medical euphemisms for abortion, which is broadly tolerated, although not openly accepted throughout the medical community.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, there is widespread use of misoprostol or

¹⁴⁶ The interim mayor of Mexico City, Rosario Robles, introduced a bill to the Federal District Legislative Assembly (ALDF) to add fetal impairment and risk to the woman's health to the list of exemptions to the penal code. Though was opposed by the PAN, the bill passed with support from the PRD and PRI. This amendment to the penal code suggests that Mexico is undergoing a transformation in understanding abortion, which redefines abortion as a woman's human right rather than a criminal act (Lamas and Bissell 2000).

¹⁴⁷ In 1991, more than five women per day were admitted to the General Hospital in Mexico City due to 'pregnancy complications'. Pregnancy complications in the Mexican

the 'morning after' pill as a form of 'menstrual regulation'. Clandestine abortions, however, are not a solution to unwanted pregnancies since they force women to endure much suffering, pain, and risk to life and future reproductive capabilities. Many women repeat this dangerous procedure alone and under unsafe, makeshift, unsupervised conditions because their partners have prevented their use of contraceptives, often with threat or practice of violence (Banwell and Paxman 1993; Berer 2000, 1994a, 1994b, 1993a; Elu 1993; Pine and Pollack 2000; Berer and Ravindran 1995).

Since abortion is illegal and largely clandestine, statistical evidence documenting the numbers of abortions and related deaths is difficult to calculate. To protect the doctors and health care practitioners who practice abortions, as well the women who undergo the procedures, few records are kept by clinics and hospitals. Estimates range, however, from 200,000 to as high as two million abortions performed annually (Banwell and Paxman 1993; Elu 1993; IWRAW 1999; Pine and Pollack 2000). The risks of abortion multiply in rural and disadvantaged communities where health care services are inadequate. More than 1,500 women die annually in Mexico from self-induced abortions, as a result of these conditions. Abortions and obstetric complications were historically the fifth leading cause of maternal mortality in Mexico but, by 2000, they were the fourth most frequent cause of maternal deaths (Consejo Nacional de Población, Mexico 1995; PAHO 1994; Ipas 2001).

context, refers to complication resulting from induced abortions. At the Women's Hospital in Mexico City, complications from botched abortions was the reason for women's admission in 50% of women's cases in 1991. The women are not required to report the details or reason for their admission to hospital. This has saved many lives (Elu 1993).

Recognizing that induced abortions and their complications are a significant threat to women's health, *Secretaría de Salud*, IMSS and the IMSS Solidarity Program (IMSS-Sol)¹⁴⁸ implemented a post-abortion care (PAC) long-term strategy to reduce those risks. The strategy was to integrate PAC vertically into existing hospitals and to provide training and equipment for manual vacuum aspiration. The institutionalization of the model in many hospitals has reduced maternal mortality and the costs of treatment, while enhancing the capacity of health care facilities. While abortion remains a serious public health issue, great strides have been made to reduce the health risks of clandestine abortions.

Although the legal constraints on abortion remain strong, the cultural prohibitions are even stronger. The power of the Catholic Church to shape beliefs, values and means is central to cultural understandings which forbid abortion. The historical role of the Church in providing humanitarian, educational, and health programs worldwide has increased the Church's influence over local and international policies, particularly in the areas of reproduction, contraception and abortion. As was evident in Cairo, in 1994, the Catholic Church is not merely an international 'observer', but rather an agenda setting political institution with the power to enforce a gendered apparatus that defines and constrains women's lives, reproductive rights and freedoms. As a result, virtually all the Mexican women interviewed, emphatically and openly rejected the possibility of abortion, regarding it as sin rather than a crime. The cultural dichotomies that define women as good or bad girls

¹⁴⁸ IMSS-Sol is an IMSS affiliate that provides health care services to hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and rural populations (Ipas 2001).

fuel the belief that the only reason that a woman would seek an abortion was if she were pregnant as a result of extra-marital sex or sex outside of the bonds of marriage.

While such beliefs seem irreconcilable with statistical estimates of incidents of abortion throughout Mexico, this can be explained by the interpretive lenses through which women see their lives. Although abortion is a sin, women frequently note that there are certain tricks which can be used to regulate menstruation. When facing an unexpected or unwanted pregnancy, however, women draw a distinction between such tricks and inducing an abortion. Supporting the notion that motherhood should be voluntary, the Mexican feminist movement has emphasized this concept since the 1970s. Voluntary motherhood is about women having control over their reproductive and everyday lives and, therefore, demands comprehensive sexual education at all levels, inexpensive and reliable birth control, sterilization only with informed consent, and access to safe and legal abortion as a last resort (Lamas and Bissell 2000).

In 1991, these demands were formalized by establishment of *The Front for Voluntary Motherhood and the Decriminalization of Abortion*. The Front is made up of trade unionists, student groups, feminist groups, grassroots community groups, gay and lesbian groups, academics, doctors and even religious leaders, who together struggle for the legalization of abortion. While divisions within the groups exist, there is a general agreement that abortion is a public health problem, and most groups within the Front are concerned with the reproductive rights of women.

The power of the Catholic Church in defining culture, however, has lessened the need for an active pro-life campaign because Church doctrines are ingrained within Mexican culture.

Nonetheless, Church leaders support the anti-abortion movement and proclaiming that procuring or performing an abortion will result in excommunication. The Church places costly full-page advertisements in newspapers buys television and radio air time to preach against abortion. Although abortion is legal if a woman has been raped, the Church remains steadfast on its anti-abortion stance. Some Church leaders, moreover, have been exceedingly outspoken in blaming women for incidences of rape.¹⁴⁹

Although the legal and cultural constraints on abortion are significant, the economic constraints of women's lives can be even more influential. Most women who resort to unsafe abortions are from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups. Consequently, disadvantaged women cited the economic costs of caring for another child as the predominant reason for procuring an abortion (Lamas and Bissell 2000).

Abortion on the Line

In Nogales, Sonora, proximity to the US has modified many women's social and cultural perspectives. Traditional expectations seldom reflect the everyday lives of border women. The benefits that migration to the border once promised have been replaced by insecurity. An unplanned or unwanted pregnancy, moreover, frequently exacerbates that insecurity. Many women resort to illegal abortions because the Sonoran civil code prohibits abortion, except in circumstances of rape, accidental abortion, or risk to the woman's life.¹⁵⁰ For the most

¹⁴⁹ The cardinal of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Juan Sandoval Íñiguez, recently asserted if rape is to be averted 'women have to do their part, their way of dressing is provocative; women have to be more decent and not encourage it [rape]' (*Milenio*, 17 August, 2000, cited in Lamas and Bissell 2000: 20).

¹⁵⁰ Personal communication with Elvia Salazar Antúnez, Mexfam, February 2002

part, therefore, women continue to rely on traditional 'tricks' or seek the assistance of herbalists, traditional birth attendants, pharmacists, or other health practitioners in providing abortifacients.

Some women, however, choose to cross the line to get an abortion. Crossing the border is an option mostly for women who have proper documentation, time to travel, and the money to pay for the procedure. Many desperate women with no documentation risk illegal border crossings to obtain a safe, legal abortion in the US. Abortion services in April 1997, in Tucson, Arizona, averaged around \$250 for a first-trimester abortions and \$300 to \$400 for second-trimester procedures, a prohibitive price for most border women (Pope 1998). Nonetheless, the border remains a mediating factor in determining the incidence of abortion.

Annually, thousands of borderland women terminate unwanted pregnancies. By deciding on the timing and spacing of children and whether or not to have children, women rewrite the definitions of woman and womanhood and move beyond the confines of mother and wife (Lamas and Bissell 2000). In so doing, women are demanding autonomy and (re)conceiving their lives. In the borderlands, women enjoy greater sexual liberation. This frequently results in conception since most border women lack a clear understanding of their reproductive cycles and methods of contraception as well as the resources with which to purchase them. Without access to appropriate information and more open sexual relations, the result is unwanted pregnancies, abortions, and children.

For women, especially Latinas who are less likely to fully exercise their reproductive rights, the notions of reproductive choice and voluntary motherhood must be realizable. To forge this possibility, reproductive rights must be integrated into all ongoing feminist

debates, included those of women's autonomy, citizenship, violence, just society and human security.

Abortion remains a difficult subject about which to speak. To create a more open discussion about abortion, I did not ask women about *their* experience(s), but rather, I offered an opportunity to talk about abortion in a hypothetical situation and to refer to the experiences of women whom they knew. When provided with the hypothetical situation, only one of the Sonoran participants, admitted that if she did not want a pregnancy that she would terminate it. Clare (Mex) confesses: "I would look for a *partera* [abortionist or midwife] ... so that the baby would not come. I would take the tea or have her do something to bring on an abortion."

In contrast, six of the 15 Arizonan participants confided that they would terminate an unexpected or unwanted pregnancy. It was unclear as to why more women in the US were willing to have an abortion, although safety and legality were like to have been major influences. As Marcella (US) contends:

If I did not want a particular pregnancy, or if I found I was pregnant unexpectedly and the situation was not right, I would go to a clinic in Tucson and have an abortion. There is no need to ruin your life or the life of an unborn child, when you can take care of things before they get out of control. I know many women who have had abortions, both here in the US and in Mexico. They all went to doctors to have it done. No one had any complications. Some did have children after ... some did not ... but I don't know if that was because of the abortion, they never said, they just keep saying not now, not now.

Eighteen of the 30 women participants knew of at least one woman who had induced an abortion. Eleven of those women lived in Mexico; the other seven, in the US. Although many of the women were uncomfortable talking about abortion and claimed no knowledge of 'such things', several women assured me that abortion was a common enough occurrence that, as

Rosario (Mex) asserts: “Everyone knows someone who has had one, even if they say that they don’t”.

Those women who admitted to knowing someone who had an abortion in Mexico, clearly indicated that the woman had visited a *partera*. Frequently, the *partera* is a local midwife or traditional birth attendant, and sometimes she is also a *promotora* who is well known within the *colonia*. Consequently, while abortion remains illegal in Sonora, women continue to have access to, and obtain, abortions. Some women noted that the consequences of an abortion, however, are severe. Rosa (Mex) reflects: “I know some women who have had induced abortions. One woman I know, she went to a *partera*. But afterwards, she kept bleeding. It was very bad. She had to go to the hospital. Although she seems fine now, she never had any children after that. They never do.” Similarly, Marta Emelda (Mex) confides:

Yes. I know several women who have gone to the *partera*. But, I also know one woman who did it herself, I mean the abortion. She stuck something inside. The bleeding was very bad and it would not stop. Someone took her to the hospital. She lost the baby, but she also got a herniated uterus. She cannot have any children. She was quite young at the time, around 20. Now she says that she does not want any children. It is so sad.

Likewise, Pascal (Mex) recounts:

One woman told me that the *partera* gave her something to bring her period, but oh my God, she had excessive bleeding. She told everyone that she had fallen and that was what caused her miscarriage. She had fainting spells from the lack of blood and she was very weak from the whole ordeal. She had to go to the hospital because the bleeding would not stop and because of the fainting. She was very sick for some time. I think that there was a serious problem with her system afterwards. It must have been a problem that the doctors could not fix, because she never had any more children.

Such complications, and the negative outcomes which they invariably cause, seem to support arguments for access to safe and legal abortion in Mexico as part of both a reproductive health and a reproductive rights framework.

In the US, the seven women who admitted to knowing someone who had an abortion¹⁵¹ contended that the outcome was successful and that the women suffered no long-term complications. They maintained, however, that these were operations that were conducted in the hospital and that makes a difference for the woman's health. Maria Aide (US) relates:

I have a friend who went to Tucson to get an abortion. A doctor in the hospital there did it and she had not problems. She decided to have it because she did not want to be a teen-parent. Now she is in college. She has not had any children yet, she says that she wants to finish her education first and that there will be time for children later. I think she did the right thing. If it happened to me, and I did not want it, I would probably have an abortion too.

Gendering STDs and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

Contraception in all its forms — oral pills, IUDs, hormonal injectables and sterilization — has been traditionally championed under family planning programs. As previously stated, the so-called 'target population' of such programs has been women. The prevention of unwanted pregnancies, or the timing and spacing of children are no longer the only, or even the most important reason for use of contraception. With the pandemic spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, however, the unsoundness of conventional methods of contraception and the narrow targeting of women have become clear. Most modern contraceptive methods provide no protection from the transmission of STDs and HIV/AIDS and, therefore, must be used in conjunction with latex condoms as a prophylactic mechanism. Since the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and the control over the timing and spacing of children have been

¹⁵¹ Since abortion is safe and legally accessible in the US, it is possible for women to have one without engaging assistance from friends, relatives or the community. In this sense, it is a private issue which need not be talked about unless the woman chooses. Perhaps this is the reason that fewer women in the US knew someone who had an abortion.

the key messages in the use of contraception, most women, including those who have undergone sterilization or are (post)menopausal fail to imagine the other consequences of unprotected sex.

In the border region, these unimagined consequences are further mediated by culture, cultural constructs and cultural constraints. Mexican culture also makes the use of condoms highly unlikely on both sides of the border. As discussed above, condom use is extremely low in Mexico. When a condom is used, it is most often with commercial sex workers. Use of a condom as a prophylactic against disease within marriage, therefore, is unlikely because of its association with prostitution (Ringheim 1993; Duong and Sun 1995). Furthermore, condoms are associated with infidelity, therefore, to suggest their use is to imply promiscuity. The most frequently cited reasons for not using condoms in this study, however, were reduced sexual pleasure, high failure rates,¹⁵² and spousal conflict. Given the unequal gender power relations that govern sexual practices, contraceptive methods that rely on male cooperation and responsibility are not the most obvious choices for many women.

While health has been traditionally outside the realm of international relations theory, the economic impact and the spread of the disease across national boundaries and the threat to national sovereignty which these conditions imply, has redefined disease as an (inter)national security issue. In particular, states and international organizations¹⁵³ have focussed their

¹⁵² With proper use, condoms have a failure rate of just 2%. Furthermore, the safety and effectiveness of any contraceptives is dependent on the quality of product, the information provided to the user, the accessibility and availability of the product, price and ongoing support for its use (Ravindran and Berer 1994).

¹⁵³ Although the first International AIDS Conference was held in 1985, it was not until 1987 that the WHO initiated a Global Programme on AIDS (GPA) to channel and disseminate

attention on the impact of HIV/AIDS — transmission, economic costs, cultural phenomena, and gender relations. Under the forces of globalization, there has been an unprecedented increase in the movement of people worldwide resulting from through rapid urbanization, labour market opportunities, migration, tourism, land appropriations, displacement and force. In this environment, where the spatial dimensions of human relations are constantly changing, the transmission of HIV/AIDS has been more easily spread.

Globalization has also fuelled the forces of inequality, social exclusion, and economic vulnerability. The imposition of SAPs in the South and the shift toward fiscal accountability in the North have contributed to an unprecedented decline in the health and living standards of the poor. HIV/AIDS has had the most negative impact on communities which have experienced an ongoing decline in health care services, and consequently, where people's health is declining. Socioeconomic disadvantages, moreover, disproportionately affect ethnic minorities and women, therefore, placing these groups at greater risk of HIV/AIDS infection. Nonetheless, it was not until the mid-1990s that the World Bank began to recognize that poverty was directly related to poor health. In making this connection, the Bank acknowledged that there had been insufficient emphasis on poverty reduction and alleviation with a detrimental effect on the health of poor communities. The economic insecurity which perpetual poverty entails has led many individuals to resort to more risky behaviours such as migrant labour, drug trafficking and prostitution, which render them more vulnerable to HIV infection. With 80% of new cases of HIV/AIDS occurring in the South, it is problematic

nate multilateral aid. In 1996 UNAIDS was established jointly by WHO, Unicef, UNPFA, UNDP, UNESCO and the World Bank to replace the GPA (Lee and Zwi 1996).

that 95% of the AIDS budget is spent in the North (Lee and Zwi 1996: 364-365). The race to discover an AIDS vaccine is increasingly seen as unprofitable by international pharmaceutical companies since the epidemic continues to spread predominantly among the poor and in the South. Reflecting unequal social relations and neoliberal economic principles, by the mid-1990s several major pharmaceutical companies withdrew from the AIDS research race (Owoh 1996; Lee and Zwi 1996; Piot 2001).

In addition to socioeconomic circumstances, gender relations are an important dimension of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Recent trends document increasing numbers of women among those who have contracted HIV. These increases are linked to heterosexual transmission of the virus, particularly among the young, and where immature genital tracts make young women especially vulnerable to infection. Some researchers have referred to the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS to women as a feminization of the epidemic.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, as the burden of HIV/AIDS escalates, the burden of women to care for those infected continues to increase. For these reasons, UNAIDS, as well as other NGOs, are now emphasizing the importance of gender as a central component of all AIDS programs.¹⁵⁵

Evidence shows that women are at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS if they are sexually active, have a blood transfusion, are blood donors, use prescribed intravenous medications,

¹⁵⁴ Currently, women account for nearly half of the nearly 34 million adults living with HIV globally (UNAIDS 2000).

¹⁵⁵ For an discussion of the relationships between gender, women and HIV/AIDS, see: IWRW 1999; Langer and Lozano 1996; Leñero 1994; Piot 2001; Salgado de Snyder *et al.* 1996a, 1996b; Saunders 1997; Szasz 1996; Szasz and Figueroa 1997; UNAIDS 2000.

or are commercial sex workers.¹⁵⁶ Almost every woman falls within at least, one of these risk groups. Furthermore, women can transmit HIV to unborn children in utero, as well as through breastfeeding.¹⁵⁷ Women's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other STDs, is directly linked to the cultural contexts in which women's ability to negotiate sexual practices is circumscribed by unequal gendered power relations. Since low levels of education have been associated greater risk of HIV/AIDS contraction, ensuring the education of girls is an important measure. Cultural imperatives demand that women please their husbands and often this requires unprotected sex. Little concern is given to women's risk of unwanted pregnancies, or of contracting STDs or HIV/AIDS. Under pressure to conform to culturally prescribed traditional gender roles, many women submit unquestioningly to male authority and demands. Women's inability to negotiate safer sexual practices which prevent the transmission of infection is a significant problem in the borderlands.

As indicated above, the use of condoms was an explosive issue for the women in Ambos Nogales. This study confirmed earlier findings among border women which indicated that condoms were not included as possible methods for fertility control, or the prevention of

¹⁵⁶ In Mexico, commercial sex workers have been targeted as a high-risk group for the contraction and transmission of HIV/AIDS and, therefore, CONASIDA has emphasized the dissemination of information and testing among this group. Between 1989 and 1993, research was conducted to determine the factors related to risk and to develop educational tools (pamphlets and posters) aimed at preventing transmission for commercial sex workers. As a result of these efforts, there is a low prevalence of HIV among prostitutes in Mexico (Langer and Lozano 1996).

¹⁵⁷ It is now possible and relatively inexpensive to prevent the transmission of HIV from mothers to infants. Since because many women do not have access to prenatal or postnatal care, HIV testing, antiretroviral therapy, or safe alternatives to breastfeeding, however, more than one million infants are born with HIV annually (Piot 2001).

STDs and HIV/AIDS. Several women suggested that there would be diminished enjoyment if condoms were used as Yolanda (US) confides: “We don’t use condoms because there is more enjoyment for both of us. It feels better when nothing is there ... there is more satisfaction.”

It is problematic, however, that in this study condoms were predominantly associated with birth control, rather than protection from the risks of STDs and HIV/AIDS. All of the women interviewed explained that they did not use condoms because their partners/spouses were unwilling to do so. A common aphorism about reduced satisfaction from using condoms was also frequently cited by women on both sides of the line. Rosario (Mex) explains: “No, we do not use condoms because my husband did not like them. He used to say ‘using a condom is like eating a popsicle with the wrapper on’. So, no, we did not use them. Why, if he did not want to?”

In further exploring the reasons for non-use of condoms, I found that several women feared asking their husbands to use a condom because of the infidelity which its use suggested. Maria Aide (US) explains:

I do not use condoms because most people do not think that it feels the same. There is a discomfort for men, and it can also give women a rash. It is a difficult thing to talk about with a partner. Women are often willing to use them, but if the guy is not willing ... it is not the time to get into a fight or argument ... I mean when you are about to have sex. Also, if you ask a man to use a condom, they usually say: ‘you don’t love me’, or ‘you don’t trust me ... because if you did, you would not ask me to use a condom’. So, to prove our love and trust, I guess we just give in. It can be dangerous for women not to give in to men ... because men can get very violent and angry.

Some women confirmed that when they had suggested the use of condoms, their husbands had become enraged and violent. The fear of reprisal and violence, therefore, forces many

women into silence. Women's inability to negotiate safer sexual practices predominate in the borderlands.

In addition, some border women suggested that high failure rates of condoms lead people not to use them.¹⁵⁸ Guadalupe (US) explains: "I did not use them [condoms] because sometimes they are flawed, so, they are not reliable. Now I have had the operation, so I no longer need them." Likewise, Julia (US) confides: "I have not used condoms because I don't trust them. They seem ugly and unnatural to me."

In a culture, moreover, that defines women as either 'good' or 'bad girls', so-called 'bad girls' have been inappropriately blamed for the spread of HIV/AIDS. This gendered construct was clearly apparent in this study when questions about STD and HIV/AIDS were posed. María Elena (Mex) asserts: "There are many bad diseases and infections, and there is AIDS ... but, that is if you have relationships with other men, only bad women do that ... but, I only have relations with my husband." Yolanda (US) confirms: There is AIDS and venereal diseases and other infections — AIDS is a very real threat with these men who are so ... you know ... promiscuous, and who use prostitutes ... especially the ones who travel to work [migrate] ... they do not think about the consequences."

Unequal gendered relations coupled with gendered cultural constructs make institutionalized education alone an inadequate approach for preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

¹⁵⁸ When used correctly, condoms have proven to be 86% to 98% effective in the prevention of pregnancy (Planned Parenthood, www.plannedparenthood.org). Since condoms are classified as medical devices, they are regulated by the FDA and undergo rigorous testing. US manufactured condoms in the United States indicate that condom breakage rates in the US are less than 2% (www.thedailyapple.com/target/cs/article/). Internalization of perceived high failure rates, however, may be a way of rationalizing non-use of condoms for many women.

Formal education must be supplemented by community outreach programs which meet the special needs of women and youth. The risk of contracting STDs/HIV/AIDS, even when engaging in heterosexual¹⁵⁹ intercourse with their partners, must be exposed. Women and youths must be supported in implementing preventive measures and negotiate safe sexual practices. The transformation of gendered power relations, however, remains central to effectively controlling the AIDS epidemic and limiting women's risks of infection.

In Arizona, schools are not required by law to provide STD/HIV/AIDS education. If such a course is offered, however, the Arizona Department of Education demands that it is "age-appropriate, medically accurate and promotes abstinence". Furthermore, schools are prohibited from including instruction that "[p]ortrays homosexuality as a positive alternative lifestyle" or "[s]uggests that some methods of sex are safe methods of homosexual sex" (NARAL 2001). In Nogales, Arizona, however, a course in human sexuality has been in place since 1995. This addition to the high school curriculum was an attempt to reduce the

¹⁵⁹ Male bisexual practices have been an important entry gate for the transmission of HIV/AIDS among females. While there are not prevalent studies on bisexuality among Mexican males, Salgado de Snyder *et al.* (1996b) suggest that male bisexuality is more prevalent in Mexico than in other countries such as the US. They contend that approximately one-half of the male homosexual population in Mexico engage in heterosexual relations as well. Other studies (Bronfman 1993; Bronfman and Moreno 1996) which focus on Mexican migrants, similarly suggest that bisexual practices are common among migrant males in the US who have travelled without their partners. These men, however, perceive themselves as heterosexuals so long as they are the dominant partner and the penetrator. Such behaviour places many Mexican women at great risk of infection. In 1994, Mexico ranked third in the western hemisphere, and 11th world-wide in 1993, in the number of reported HIV/AIDS cases (Zolezzi, *et al.* 1995 cited by IWRAP 1999). In the US borderlands, homosexual practices have been isolated as the major source, 68%, of HIV/AIDS transmission among the Mexican-born population (de la Garza *et al.* 1998). For a further discussion of homosexuality and the construction of masculinity in Mexico, see Prieur (1996) and Hardin (2002).

high incidence of pregnancy in high schools rather than ensuring that youth practise safe sex to prevent the transmission of STDs/HIV/AIDS.¹⁶⁰ Quickly, however, the course focussed on protecting teenagers from the unwanted repercussions of sexual activities — including unwanted pregnancies, abortions, STDs, and HIV/AIDS — in addition to the provision of information about human physical and psychological processes. Importantly, there has been an attempt to integrate gender issues into the course on human sexuality.

A similar program, however, is not offered in Nogales, Sonora, or elsewhere in Mexico. In the 1995-2000 Program for Educational Development, which addresses the national curriculum, sex education was conspicuously absent due to vigorous campaigns by cultural conservatives and Church leaders to ensure that sex education remains a private/family matter. Where sex education is offered, moreover, it is taught within a biomedical framework, which means that students are not adequately apprised of the psycho-social aspects of sexuality (IWRAW 1999).

Likewise, cultural and religious constraints circumscribe the possibility of open discussions about sexual practices, consequently, knowledge about sex and STDs/HIV/AIDS varies greatly between men and women. The absence of culturally sensitive prevention programs

¹⁶⁰ In 1994, the year prior to institution of the course on human sexuality, 127 girls between the ages of 15 and 19 or 6% of Nogales, Arizona's population of 2,300 teenage girls became pregnant. Nonetheless there was strong community resistance to implementing sex education in the schools. As might be expected in a predominantly Mexican-Catholic cultural setting, many parents argued that sex education was a private/family matter not to be discussed publicly in the school system. Other parents contended that sex education would promote sexual activity, if not promiscuity. Many parents do not have sufficient knowledge or access to information about sexuality and STDs/HIV/AIDS and, therefore, the teaching of human sexuality to youth is important for the disseminating accurate knowledge (Duong and Sun 1995).

has resulted in continued misperceptions about the transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS in the borderlands. In a recent Texas border study (Garza *et al.* 1998), for example, 43% of *colonia* residents identified the use of soap and hot water as protective measure against the transmission of HIV/AIDS. Indeed the present study, 11 of the 15 Sonoran women participants believed that infections were due uncleanness. Eleven women suspected that cleanliness would prevent infection. The majority of women on both sides fo the border seemed unaware that HIV was the infectious agent responsible for the transmission of AIDS.

In the Texas study, 41% of those interviewed associated HIV/AIDS with promiscuity. They believed that greater sexually active correlated with higher risk of exposure. Having multiple partners and failing to practice safe sex elevates the risk of contracting HIV. In the present study, those interviewed generally believed that they were not at risk of infection. Accordingly, 28 participants explained that they did not use condoms because they were unnecessary. Monogamy, cleanliness, trust, and mutual respect were commonly given as the reasons for not using condoms. While current monogamous practices reduce the risk of exposure, previous sexual relations are often discounted in conceptualizations of safety. Furthermore, in any relationship, one can only discern one's own sexual fidelity not that of their partners. Nonetheless, Pascal (Mex) confides: "We do not use condoms because my husband does not like to use them ... and since we have a monogamous relationship, there is no need to worry." Likewise, Ramona (US) asserts: "We just never did use condoms and now it is not necessary [she has undergone a tubal ligation sterilization]. We have always been very clean, and have mutual respect for each another. And, there is no one else." This reasoning suggests that many of the women are aware that they could be at risk of infection

from sexual relations, however, they are unable or unwilling to negotiate safer sexual practices.

Only two women in this study, one who lived in Arizona and the other in Sonora, affirmed their use of condoms. Just one woman, however, linked condom use with the prevention of and protection from STDs and HIV/AIDS. Andrea asserts that she consistently uses condoms, even though she is using a hormone injection for contraception. Andrea (US) attests: "I get a shot every month so that I don't get pregnant, but I always use condoms, except when I want to have a baby. Then I don't use anything. I know about STDs and AIDS, and I am really afraid of them."

Without good knowledge about risks of STDs and HIV/AIDS and the preventive measures, many border women continue to misconstrue their immunity based on their own fidelity and constructions of the 'good' wife. The Catholic Church is significant in maintaining such gendered social constructs as well as the patriarchal culture. Accordingly, the Church continues to wield much power over the everyday lives of border women. This power was recently used, for example, in an attempt to have a label added to condom packages which warns that "use of this product is harmful to health". In the Philippines and in South Africa, in contrast, theologians and Catholic bishops have condoned the moral use of condoms to prevent the transmission of HIV¹⁶¹ (IWRAP 1999). These two examples, demonstrate a vast divergence in interpretation of Church doctrine.

¹⁶¹ The Church upholds abstinence during periods of ovulation and warns that condoms should not be used as contraceptives.

In Mexico, condom use is not promoted by the *Secretaría de Salud* or by private family planning organizations like Mexfam and FEMAP.¹⁶² The failure to promote condom use and other barrier methods is linked to the prevailing norms regarding the social construction of gender roles and control over female sexuality. Furthermore, a distinct gendered bias exists against women who carry or use condoms. This view reflects the ‘good girl/bad girl’ dichotomy of *marianismo*.

Power and policy conflicts are also evident between *Secretaría de Salud* and *Consejo Nacional de Lucha contra el SIDA* — the Mexican National Council for the Fight Against AIDS (CONASIDA). Such struggles have inhibited the dissemination of information about HIV/AIDS. There is a general lack of coordination between *Secretaría de Salud*, Department of Reproductive Health and CONASIDA, which act independently on highly interrelated issues. CONASIDA, for example, waged an intensive pro-condom use campaign which was quickly stifled by the *Secretaría de Salud* in 1995. In this environment of cultural and religious conservatism, the potential impacts of CONASIDA’s campaigns are likely to be limited. The most important limitation, however, is the ambiguity of the messages that fail to contest the religious and moral constraints of civil society that make safer sexual practices a difficult message to disseminate (Langer and Lozano 1996).¹⁶³

¹⁶² Personal correspondence with José Romero Keith, HIV/AIDS Program, PAHO, Mexico City, April 1997; Alfonso López Juárez, Director General, Mexfam, Mexico City; interview with Dra. Bañuelos, *Secretaría de Salud*, May, 1997; and, *Secretaría de Salud* 1995.

¹⁶³ Interviews with José Romero Keith, PAHO, April 1997, and Dr^a Rosário Bañuelos, *Secretaría de Salud*, May 1997.

US studies have linked the incidence of HIV/AIDS to lower socioeconomic status racial/ethnic minorities and women in the US borderlands since the 1990s (CDC 1995). Few educational tools target this primarily Spanish-speaking, newly immigrant population, where low levels of education, traditional gendered relationships, and Mexican culture predominate (de la Garza *et al.* 1998). Likewise, in the Mexican borderlands, cases of AIDS have been reported since 1988, even though HIV/AIDS data from Mexico are limited and, in many, cases under-reported.¹⁶⁴

In the borderlands and elsewhere, migration has been identified as an independent risk factor for acquiring HIV. Although it is impossible to establish a definite causal relationship between migration and AIDS, human movement seems to be a factor in the spread of infection. Research (Bronfman 1993; Lee and Zwi 1996) indicates that it is not the origin or the destination of migration, but the social disruption which characterizes certain types of migration that increase the likelihood of migrants engaging in more risky behaviours. Some forms of migration, particularly circular and labour migration, where social isolation¹⁶⁵ is high and many of the migrants are young sexually active men, can increase the risk of HIV/AIDS infection. When migrants arrive in their destinations, they are frequently confronted with a more open society, particularly with respect to sexual behaviours. Far from

¹⁶⁴ Under-reporting and delayed reporting has been cited as a significant problem in Mexico. Accordingly the extent of the epidemic is unknown. Estimates, however, indicate that the number of cases of HIV/AIDS could be between 33% and 60% higher (Bronfman 1993; Bronfman and Moreno 1996; López 2001).

¹⁶⁵ Sexual activities and the adoption of risky behaviours among migrants are strongly linked to the need for affection and their marginal social condition. Accordingly, migrants are more likely to have sex with prostitutes and other male migrants thereby increasing their vulnerability to STDs/HIV/AIDS (Bronfman 1993; Bronfman and Moreno 1996).

home, many Mexican migrants feel protected by their cultural perception that HIV/AIDS is an American disease to which they are immune. When engaging in sexual relations with non-Mexicans, therefore, some migrants indicate that they take greater precautions. Nonetheless, misinformation about HIV/AIDS is widespread and most migrants express little concern about HIV/AIDS. Younger and more sexually active migrants who have multiple partners tend to have more knowledge and show greater concern about STDs and HIV/AIDS. In addition to risky behaviours, the risk of HIV infection among low-income border and migrant communities is exacerbated by inadequate medical treatment, particularly of STDs, which increase the vulnerability to HIV infection. Access to information and treatment of STDs, however, is limited (Bronfman 1993; Bronfman and Moreno 1996; Organista *et al.* 1996; Salgado de Snyder *et al.* 1996a).

Nonetheless, accessible information about STDs and HIV/AIDS — transmission, risky behaviours, symptoms, detection, complications, and prevention — is urgently needed, especially among those most vulnerable. In the current environment of economic restraint, access to comprehensive AIDS prevention and condom distribution programs, contraceptive and abortion services, and reproductive health information has been cut in the US (Pine and Wypijewska 2000). In this study, I found that while women were aware of the possibility of some kind of infection, they were uninformed about the details and, for the most part, considered their risk minimal.

STDs and HIV/AIDS are a significant threat to women's health and frequently result in functional deterioration, infertility, chronic pain and death. The social and health care costs of contracting a STD or HIV/AIDS, therefore, are extremely high. Yet, while condoms have

been identified as the most important means of STD/HIV/AIDS prevention, their use has not been emphasized. For women who are no longer in need of family planning because they have undergone sterilization, or maternal and child health services because they are (peri or post) menopausal, there is limited access to information about STDs/HIV/AIDS, or their particular vulnerability to contracting such viruses. In addition, simple and effective HIV testing and Pap smear campaigns are not promoted either in conjunction with family planning programs or within women's health strategies.¹⁶⁶ South of the border, eight of the 15 women interviewed had *never* received a pap test. While six women had undergone a pap test, it had occurred only once in their lives. North of the line, in contrast, only one woman had never had a pap test, while the remainder had only taken the test once, especially since they viewed themselves as 'good' women. Many women revealed that they did not know that they needed a pap test. Yolandita (US) confesses:

I had one for the first time, just three days ago. I thought that only sexually promiscuous women had to have pap tests. Also, I was very afraid to have the test because they can find so many things wrong. The doctor told me that I have to have one every year. But, I told him that I would have to think about that. The test is terrible. I was very embarrassed because I have a male doctor. So, when it was happening, I did not even open my eyes. I don't know if I can do it again.

¹⁶⁶In the border region, cervical cancer is the leading cause of deaths due to cancer among women. Research links high incidence of cervical cancer to women with sexual partner who have engaged in sexual relations with multiple partners. This evidence suggests that there is a link between cervical cancer and a sexually transmitted agent, and consequently, has been included as an associated disease in the identification of women with AIDS in Mexico. Early detection of STDs and cervical cancer can be ensured through regular pap smears, however, the scarce economic resources available to women are seldom used on preventative health care or on routine gynecological examinations (Blea 1992; Díaz de Apodaca *et al.* 1990; Guernsey de Zapien 1999; Langer and Lanzo 1996; SSA 2000).

This lack of knowledge is often reinforced by the association of a pap test with a medical problem. Angelica (Mex) suggests: “Yes, I had one, but only once. It was two years ago when I had the operation [tubal ligation sterilization]. I told the doctor that I had some white discharge, so I guess they had to do the test. Later he told me that it was normal.”

Women frequently associate cultural prohibitions with pap tests and are embarrassed. As a result many women delay or refrain from having another test. Sole (US) confides: “Yes, I had a pap test two years ago ... The Mariposa clinic has been calling me to get another one, so I guess I should go. But, I hate it, it is very degrading.”

Of all the women participants, north and south of the border, only Virginia had regularly undertaken a pap test. Virginia (Mex) confidently reveals: “Yes, I have one every year. I had the last one only two days ago.” Virginia’s confidence in a yearly pap smear, however, stems from her experience with ovarian cancer. At the age of 42, she was diagnosed with cancer. It was at a very early stage, therefore, a hysterectomy was advised. Virginia links this early diagnosis with her migration to Nogales, Sonora, where she states that medical care is far better. Virginia (Mex) explains:

They found ovarian cancer, two years ago, after I had a miscarriage. The doctor told me I had to do have the hysterectomy operation. He said I was 42 and I had already had four children and that was good. It was after the migration ... I know that if this had happened before, they would not have found the problem. The doctors here are much better and they have more equipment ... even though they have even more things in the US ... I think that I was lucky to be here. I have no regrets. I was glad they just took everything out because I am still here for my children.

Conclusion

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), proclaims ‘*life, liberty and security*’ as fundamental human rights, however, fails to address reproductive rights. Nonetheless, in the borderlands and throughout the world, women’s rights to *life* are violated daily by the avoidable deaths due to pregnancy related causes, inadequate gynecological care and physical violence. In the borderlands and globally, women’s rights to *liberty* are constrained by a lack of choices, freedom of movement, access to safe contraception and safe and legal abortion. And, in the borderlands and internationally, women’s right to *security* is inhibited by the social, political and economic structures that attempt to define them as subordinate and eliminate the opportunities of choice in their everyday lives. Moreover, women’s rights to freedom from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment is violated daily by the pervasiveness and naturalization of gendered violence. The physical abuse of women is a reminder of the territorial domination of women’s bodies.

Not till the *International Conference on Human Rights* in 1968 in Teheran was human reproduction introduced into the international rights framework. When the United Nations adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women* in 1979, however, the convention was silent on the issue of violence against women. Gendered violence is evident in policies and initiatives that seek to control women’s fertility, reproductive choices and lives. While this major omission was redressed in 1993 with the ratification of the *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*, national and international population control policies, disguised as family planning

programs, continue to disregard women's human rights and perpetuate and naturalize gendered violence and insecurity.

At the 1993 preparatory meeting for the ICPD, Latin American and Caribbean NGOs endorsed a recommendation urging governments to guarantee reproductive and sexual rights as basic human rights in all countries. As part of their advisement they advocated safe legal voluntary interruption of pregnancies at health care centres. They contended that it was only through these practices that women could retain their dignity without risk to their health or their lives. They further insisted on a special human rights chapter which addresses sexual and reproductive rights which will entrench the rights of individual welfare, voluntary motherhood, freedom of sexual orientation. They contended that only by exposing and eliminating the detrimental realities of: population control policies and ideologies, imposed motherhood, coerced or persuaded sterilization, imposed heterosexuality, the commercial sex industry and sexual slavery, can reproductive and sexual freedoms be realized (LACWHN 1993).

In 1994, reproductive rights were much more benignly defined under the ICPD *Program of Action* as more than the "right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children" without "discrimination, coercion and violence." They include as well the right to "have the information and means" necessary to make such choices and to "attain the highest standard of health," defined broadly as "well-being" (UN 1994c). Again in 1995, in Beijing, at the IV World Conference on Women focussed on improving the status and lives of women by entrenching women's

human and reproductive rights within the rights framework. Nonetheless, gendered violence and insecurity remain significant forces in everyday lives of women.

Feminist discourses underscore the importance of women's sexual and reproductive rights as political issues since their denial is a means of maintaining control over women and women's bodies, perpetuating a gendered order and perpetrating gendered violence. In this sense, women's bodies are the territorial spaces in which women's political struggle are waged. While state sovereignty readily recognizes the importance of geographic territorial space, gendered violence renders women's sovereignty over their bodies illusory. A feminist transformation of human rights discourse necessarily emphasizes women's sexual and reproductive rights, situated knowledge, and experiences of gendered violence. Informed understandings of reproductive choices, and knowledge about reproduction, sexuality, contraceptives, and protection from STDs and HIV/AIDS, must be promoted through formal and informal education programmes. Such programs are essential to the transformation of the human rights framework to include women's rights.¹⁶⁷ Choice is a key element within this understanding of transformation and reproductive rights discourse. Women must have the choice to continue or to terminate a pregnancy, the choice to be or not be a mother, the

¹⁶⁷ For readings on women's sexual and reproductive rights, see Berer 2000; Bunch and Carrillo 1998; Center for Reproductive Law & Policy 1994; Cervantes 1993; Chowdhury 1994; Cook *et al.* 2000; Cook and Merali 1999; Cook 1993a, 1993b, 1991; Cook and Plata 1994; Corrêa and Reichman 1994; de Barbieri 1993; Davis 1988; Dixon-Mueller 1994a, 1994b, 1993; Elu 1993; Figueroa 1996a, 1996b, 1995; Freedman *et al.* 1995; Freedman and Stephen 1993; Grimes 1998; Harcourt 1997; Hartmann 1995; Hellsten 2000; IPPF 1996a, 1996b, 1995a, 1995c; IRAW 1999, 1998; Jacobson 1991; Kabeer 1994; LACWHN 1993; Maine *et al.* 1994; Mejía 1997; NARAL 2001; Peterson 1990; Pine and Wypijewska 2000; Quilodrán 1994; Rico *et al.* 1995; Ruiz 1994; Shiva 1994a, 1994b; Szasz and Figueroa 1997; Wallace 1994.

choice to express individual sexuality and alternative sexualities, and the choice to have safer sexual relations. If women are unable to exercise such choices freely, sexual and reproductive rights cannot be realized. If women are unable to negotiate social and sexual relations within which they are secure, women's human rights will remain illusory. It is only through an understanding of the complex realities of the everyday lives of women, and with their participation, that a substantive transformation is possible.

Even with such international affirmations of women's rights, the contradiction remains between individual rights to reproductive freedom, and the rights of states to collude with the population industry in controlling population growth and women's reproductive lives. Women's sexual reproductive rights, therefore, must be delinked from the so-called population 'problem'. Without such changes, patriarchal structures and those of the population industry will maintain control over women's bodies and lives. Women in the borderlands, however, continue to resist and struggle against these limitations and to redefine their positions and the structures which bind them.

This chapter is grounded in critical understandings of human and women's security. It builds on the theoretical critique of the UNDP (UN 1994b) which specified population growth as a crucial element in undermining international and global security. I contend that such assertions, supported by national and international members of the population industry, have perpetrated and perpetuated gendered violence. As we have seen, the targeting of women as both the cause and solution to the population 'problem', has resulted in coercive and repressive practices which violate women's human rights and render women insecure. I argued that the targeting of women by coercive population control strategies is inherently

linked to efforts to stem the flow of migrants northward, and I showed how migrant women in Ambos Nogales experience insecurity in their sexual and reproductive lives as a result.

I revisited the theoretical understandings of gendered violence, women's insecurity and women's human rights as they relate to women's reproduction and sexuality. I exposed the various patriarchal and social mechanisms of control — state, international agencies, the Church, men, and the family — which prevent women from exercising their reproductive, sexual and human rights. I exposed the patriarchal power relations of reproduction. I revisited the theoretical understandings of gendered violence, insecurity and women's rights and related these to women's reproduction and sexuality. Women's knowledge about reproduction, pregnancy and sexual relations in the borderlands was analyzed as was the impact of contraception, family planning, sterilization, and abortion on women's everyday lives. The gendering of STDs and HIV/AIDS epidemics was exposed as a cite of insecurity for border women. The possibility of delinking procreation from sexuality was also explored. Finally, I examine the reproductive rights framework as an avenue to end gendered violence and secure women's lives. My analyses of the reproductive policies, programs and practices have been layered with narratives of women's everyday struggles, quests for security, and exercise of rights.

Conclusions

Border women are exposed to multiple sites of insecurity, and any insecurity in one aspect of their lives often overflows into others. Indeed, the specificities of women's experiences of cultural, social, economic, reproductive, border, and migrant security comprise an interwoven web of security concerns, as shown for migrant women in Ambos Nogales. In the borderlands, this insecurity impinges upon the lives of *Mexicana/Mexicana-Americana* women in all their diverse and conflicting identities as women, migrants, workers, border residents, mothers and wives. Their identities are fluid and heterogeneous, constantly reshaped by social and cultural institutions that influence, condition and, at times, define the possibilities of women's experience. Since this experience is widely diverse, it requires a detailed understanding of their everyday lives in the borderlands.

As the women's stories reveal, gendered violence is the most critical aspect of their (in)security. It includes visible physical violence, which is often the focus of theories of violence, but also includes the systematic and naturalized aspects of the entire continuum of violence in women's everyday lives. In this, the state is complicit. It narrowly defines violence as physical, especially if occurring publicly. The failure of states and the international community to vigorously address gendered violence is premised on (i) the nature of the state; (ii) the state-centric disposition of the international system and

international law; (iii) the primacy of civil and political rights over economic, social and cultural ones; (iv) deference to the family as a privileged/protected social institution; and (v) the privileging of masculinity over femininity, men over women, and the public over the private sphere.

The structure of international relations reflects the asymmetries of state power — social, political and economic — which often result in frictions and violent struggles about borders. In this environment, the fear of contra colonization and the threat to US national security have driven the US to secure its borders, territories, resources, culture, and economy by implementing initiatives to ensure state sovereignty. Contra colonization, therefore, significantly influences social, political and economic policy initiatives in the US and in political spaces where it wields significant influence. The ensuing attempts to make the US border impermeable to illicit goods and migrants have led, however, to abuses of power and human rights and rendered those living in the borderlands insecure, an insecurity that is specifically gendered.

Sites of contradiction and conflict, borders are social and historical constructs that are mutable not static. Being static, state-centric definitions of the border are continually challenged by those living in its shadow. Borderlanders are constantly reconstructing their own understandings of the border according to their experiences. Their understandings frequently challenge state-centric definitions that attempt to divide families and communities. But the borderlanders resist as illustrated by their persistent unauthorized migration across the border. Transborder movements — daily crossings to work, shop and socialize — reinforce the understanding of the borderlands as interconnected spaces rather

than divided ones. In this, women too defy the border and are active agents in recreating social spaces and communities within the borderlands and across the geopolitical divide.

As revealed by the daily lives of the women in this study, gendered violence and structures inhibit the attainment of social security. The demographic challenges of overcrowded *colonias*, inadequate shelter, poverty, access to utilities and water, improper waste disposal, unhealthy conditions and poor health-care systems as well as an inhospitable and degraded environment are issues that reveal the states' incapacity for, and commitment to, securing social and human security. These are issue of concern to women since the traditional gender constructs, roles and expectations assign them responsibility for family and household issues.

Human security includes economic security, which in the borderlands, is mediated by globalization and the economic policies of the US and Mexico. Both countries, over time, have initiated diverse economic programs, including those favouring *maquiladora* capitalism along Mexico's northern border. While the *maquiladoras* have benefited the economies and businesses of both the US and Mexico, they have also resulted in economic insecurity for workers in low-wage, low-skilled and non portable jobs.

In this economic environment, women workers are multiply disadvantaged by pregnancy and mothering as well as by the gendered division of labour and their structural marginalization in the formal and informal sectors. The gendered apparatus, which orders economic relations and marginalizes women, aggravates their economic insecurity. Moreover, their economic security remains illusive under the forces of economic integration and within NAFTA. While NAFTA implemented a companion agreement to "protect,

enhance and enforce basic workers' rights", the mechanisms for ensuring these rights are weak. For example, under the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation, the US and Mexico held conferences and workshops, in 1997, to raise awareness about gender issues and women's equality in the workplace. Such efforts, however, efforts fall significantly short of ensuring the end of even such invasive and discriminatory practices as pregnancy testing. In Mexico, the legal prohibition of pregnancy testing has yet to be enacted. Consequently, pregnancy testing remains a *legal* violation of women's human rights and a *legal* act of gendered violence in Mexico.

Though the gendered violence and insecurity that women experience is invisible in conventional masculinist economic paradigms and migration theories, the narratives of the women participants in the present study reveal women to be active, autonomous agents in migration. Their testimony challenges the conventional view of migrants as 'rational men'. Their experiences show that, though migration often causes insecurity, it is also a reaction to gendered violence. Women in Ambos Nogales are *pushed* by gendered violence and *pulled* by the imagined safety and opportunities offered in new spaces. Under such conditions, women assert themselves and migrate. By taking control of their lives, these women secured their own spaces to define problems, issues, actions and solutions. Their testimonies of everyday struggles, strategies for survival, and quests for security demonstrate small, yet distinct, acts of agency.

The small, yet meaningful acts of agency and empowerment undertaken by border women in this study, while not summarily emancipatory, should not be overlooked. By continuing their daily struggles against gendered violence and insecurity, engaging in daily life, telling

their stories and raising children, they engage in acts of agency and empowerment *despite* the economic, social, and political structures constraining the lives.

Women's agency is a key organizing principle in feminist discourses on sexual and reproductive rights in contrast to masculinist discourses that ignore these rights and, thereby, deny women's agency. The denial in those discourses is, however, reflected in practice. The denial of sexual and reproductive rights in practice is a means of controlling women and their bodies, maintaining a gendered order, and perpetrating gendered violence. Such violence is manifest in coercive population-control policies that wage war on women's bodies. By focussing on women, the population industry targets them as the *source* of the population problem and the *site* for its solution. Such efforts are supported by the UNDP's (1994) claim that population growth undermines international and global security. Furthermore, the targeting of women by population-control strategies is linked to stemming the flow of migrants northward. Supposedly, a reduction in population pressures dampens northward migration. However, as long as the population problem is linked to women's sexual and reproductive rights, they will not have control over their bodies, and these forms of gendered violence will continue.

Information is power, but, in the borderlands, women lack information about human reproduction, reproductive choices, sexuality, contraceptives, sterilization, abortion, STDs and HIV/AIDS. In the absence of formal and informal sex education programmes, many border women cannot make informed choices and negotiate safer sexual relations. As a result, their sexual and reproductive lives are dangerous, plagued by violence, unwanted

sexual relations, inadequate gynecological care, and avoidable deaths due to pregnancy-related causes.

Revisioning Human Security

The UNDP (UN 1994b) human security framework modified international security discourses by emphasizing people instead of territories in the concept of security and challenged violence and militarization as mechanisms for ensuring human security. In rethinking human security, however, the notion of threat remains central. Warning that threats loom large throughout the globe, the UNDP (UN 1994b: 34) cites unchecked population growth, economic disparities, excessive international migration, environmental degradation, international terrorism, and drug production and trafficking as ongoing threats to human security. This emphasis on threats reinforces traditional dichotomous categories of inclusion/exclusion, them/us, domestic/international, friend/enemy and order/disorder and, thereby, creates disunity and impedes efforts for attaining human security.

While rethinking security from a human perspective has great potential for understandings of security outside the conventional (neo)realist constructs of international relations, a simple rearticulation of newly recognized or emerging threats cannot provide a framework capable of ensuring people's security. To achieve an operational framework, human security discourses must be organized around the concept of empowerment with a feminist perspective. That would allow us to expand the concept of human security by including notions of women's (in)security in their public and *private* lives. This is critical because women's everyday experiences of (in)security remain marginal to human security discourses. For

example, though the UNDP (UN 1994b) human security framework identifies seven categories of human security — food, health, environment and economic, personal, political and community security — it fails to recognize these categories as gendered constructs. Consequently, women's experiences of gendered violence remain mostly outside of that framework.

Placing human security on the international agenda makes space for more critical security analyses and for a more comprehensive approach to reduce human suffering, promote international humanitarian principles, and enhance human rights. In revisioning the framework for human security, a feminist lens must be used to address gendered concerns. This framework is epistemologically rooted in a historical understanding of feminist critical security, which is not simply human-centred but critical of the dominant human security framework and discourses that presently ignore women's specific security concerns, especially those of gendered violence.

Use of a critical feminist framework provides a critique of the masculinist and state-centric traditions and discourses of violence, security and human rights. Through critical analysis, the state, the state system, geopolitical borders, and militarization are revealed as gendered social constructs. These constructs draw on images of the Other in an attempt to reinforce the existing order and power relations that differentiates between 'them' and 'us'. In the borderlands, that order is predicated on the processes of othering according to race, ethnicity, language, gender, and citizenship status. Othering processes are inherently violent, repressive and exclusionary and cannot be separated from the notions of power embedded

in language, practices and social institutions. This understanding draws on the critical discourses of international relations, border studies, and feminist theory.

Drawing upon these diverse discourses and listening to the women's narratives yields a comprehensive understanding. It permits us to see their experiences and multiple identities as women, migrants, workers, border residents, *Mexicanas/Mexicana Americanas*, mothers and wives and to unravel the interrelationships between theory and practice, subject and object, security and insecurity, and migration and population control. Indeed, women's narratives are a valuable source of information for and about international relations. With such evidence, the specificities of their daily experiences of insecurity and gendered violence become visible in international relations, thus strengthening the human security framework.

Through this more inclusive framework, which makes visible women's structural and situational experiences of insecurity and gendered violence, a greater understanding of human insecurity is achieved, permitting a more realistic operationalization than within masculinist frameworks, which use men's experiences as a measure of human security, an obviously false universality. Since women routinely experience security risks that have no immediate parallels for men, the inclusion of women's structural and situational experience augments the understanding of human (in)security.

New Openings

In light of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, the US is implementing more rigorous policies and intensive border controls. The Smart Border plan, announced at the binational meeting between the US and Mexican presidents in Monterrey,

Nuevo Leon, on March 22, 2002, shows that little attention will be given to human security in revamping border security. According to the joint statement by Presidents Bush and Fox, the Smart Border will facilitate “the legitimate flow of people and commerce” while filtering out “all that threatens our safety and prosperity”. Though the US Homeland Security Director Thomas J. Ridge says that “[a]mong allies and friends, you don’t have militarized borders,” the \$10.9 billion increase in spending on border security in the 2003 fiscal year indicates a further military escalation along the US-Mexican border (Treat 2002).

Given the increase in militarization along the border, human security remains an unattainable objective. The imposition of the Smart Border impinges on the lives of borderlanders. To measure the effect of this program on the lives of women, families and communities as well as on family reunification, migratory patterns and networks, access to health-care facilities, and cross-border social and work practices, will require further research.

Though the women’s narratives reveal insights into the complexity and diversity of their insecurity in Ambos Nogales, these cannot be universalized. Their narratives, however, do raise serious concerns about the prevalence and normalization of women’s insecurity and gendered violence in the borderlands. Though statistically insignificant, the findings of this small non-random sample suggest need for more extensive and systematic research using women’s experiences and situated knowledge to discover the extent of women’s insecurity and gendered violence in Ambos Nogales. Research is also needed to compare different locations along the US-Mexican border. Being geographically heterogeneous, the borderlands are impacted by several states, diverse social, economic, and political relations

and multiple levels of organization within civil society. Studies of other geopolitical borders and borderland contexts, such as those (dis)joining Mozambique and South Africa, or India and Pakistan, are also warranted. Indeed, extensive studies that investigate women's human security and its relationship to gendered violence, in all contexts, is needed within the frameworks of feminist and critical security studies.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Arizona Border Patrol Resources, 1994-2000: Evidence of Escalation in Militarization

Resource	Before Safeguard (October 1, 1994)	FY 1997	FY 1999	Mid-FY 2000
Border patrol agents	287	875	1285	1,356 with an additional 127 temporary agents to be deployed in 2000
Land border inspectors	Less than 100 statewide	N/A	188	N/A
Anti-smuggling	8	13	13	26 new agents added
Fencing	3/4 of a mile	8.4 miles	9.1 miles	9.1 miles 2 additional miles planned for Douglas in 2000
Lighting	none	2 miles of permanent high-intensity Klieg lighting; 1 mile in Nogales and 1 mile in Douglas. 3 miles of portable lighting; 2 miles at Nogales, 1 mile at Douglas.	2 miles of permanent high-intensity Klieg lighting; 1 mile in Nogales and 1 mile in Douglas. 3 miles of portable lighting; 2 miles at Nogales, 1 mile at Douglas.	An Additional 1.3 miles of permanent high-intensity Klieg lighting at Douglas to be added in 2000.
Infrared scopes	3	14	16	22
Underground sensors	448	699	967	1269
Skywatcher mobile towers	none	none	3	3

Low-light and night vision video and television cameras	5 cameras in Nogales. Allowing the monitoring of multiple locations simultaneously	5 cameras in Nogales	13 cameras in Nogales; 4 in Douglas 8 in Naco	20 cameras in Nogales; 15 cameras in Douglas and Naco
Vehicles	367	627	1127	1254
All-terrain vehicles	none	none	none	6
Aircraft	2 helicopters, 3 fixed wing aircraft	5 helicopters	6 helicopters, 1 fixed wing aircraft	6 helicopters, 2 fixed wing aircraft
Horse patrol	2 horse units	4 horse units	4 horse units	4 horse units

Source: Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 10/8/99; 12/05/00.

Appendix 2. Questionnaire about Migration and Reproductive Health¹⁶⁸

Date:
Name/Code:
Current Location:
Date of Birth:
Age:
Marital Status
Education:
Occupation/Skills:

I. Household Demographic Information

1. Type of housing unit:
2. Does your spouse live-in household? Yes _____; No _____.
3. Where does your spouse live?
4. Number of children:
Name Age Education Employment Location of work
 - i)
 - ii)
 - iii)
 - iv)
 - v)
 - vi)
5. Religion:
6. Practising religious beliefs formally: Informally:

II - Economic Conditions

7. Do you own or rent the house you live in?
8. **If you rent** the house your live in, who owns it?
Government/State
Employer
Friend/Relative
Other
9. How many people live in the house?
10. What is your position in the house where you live?
household head
wife
sister
sister-in-law
daughter

¹⁶⁸ To save space, the ample line-spacing in the field questionnaire was eliminated here.

niece
cousin
friend

III - Family History

11. Where were you born?
12. How many siblings? Brothers: Sisters:
13. What number were you in the birth order?
14. What is the highest grade level occupation/skills/craft:
Grade skill/craft/occupation

Father:

Mother:

Sibling

- i)
- ii)
- iii)
- iv)
- v)
- vi)
15. Do you come from a rural or urban centre?
16. *If rural*, In your home town does your family own land or have the right to use land? Yes _____; No _____
17. *If rural*, Was there enough land for all your family?
18. *If rural*, Is the land productive?
19. *If rural*, Production for family subsistence or market?

IV - Family Migration History

20. Did your parents migrate? Yes _____; No _____
 - i) Did your mother migrate?
To where?
Why?
 - ii) Did your father migrate?
To where?
Why?
21. At what age did you first move/migrate? _____ Age/Year: _____
22. To where did you migrate? Within Mexico:
Outside of Mexico:
23. How often do you return to your birth place?
 - i) For how long do you return?
 - ii) Why do you return?

V. Personal Migration History

24. Why did you move/migrate?
Economic gain/job?
Adventure?
To join your spouse?
Education?
Pregnancy?
To avoid / escape violence, domination or pressures from / by your father /
mother / brothers / uncle / spouse?
Access to health care?
Access to Reproductive choices-control?
Access to a possible abortion?
Other?
25. Did you move/migrate alone?
26. Why did you choose to migrate to this location?
27. Did you have the choice to migrate elsewhere? Yes _____; No _____
28. Were you married at the time? Yes _____; No _____
29. Did your marital status affect your decision to migrate?
How?
30. Are you still with the same partner? Yes _____; No _____
31. Did migration place additional stress on your marital relationship? Yes ____; No ____
32. How was this stress evident?
33. At any time has domestic violence been an issue in your marriage?
Yes _____; No _____
34. *If yes*, In what way / form has domestic violence been evident?
When?/Why?
35. Did you have children at any time when you moved/migrated? Yes ____; No ____
How many?
Name Age at time of migration Migrated with you? Stayed with whom?
- i)
ii)
iii)
iv)
v)
vi)
36. *If yes*, why were they left behind?
Difficulty of migration
to remain in school
unknown / new environment after migrating
money
other
37. *If yes* How did leaving your children behind make you feel as a mother?
38. Has migration affected your decision of when to have children or even whether to

- have children? Yes _____; No _____
39. In what way has migration affected your decision to have/not have children?
40. How and why?
41. Did you know anyone in the place of destination?
 Family
 Friend
 Employer
42. Was your migration experience more difficult because you are a woman?
 Yes _____; No _____
43. *If yes*, How did being a woman affect your migration?
44. *In general*, do you think that there are more dangers for women who migrate than men?
 Yes _____; No _____
45. *In general*, what are these dangers?
46. Did the fact that you are a woman restrict or increase your success in migrating?
47. Did you perceive that in moving or migrating that the roles or expectations about women differed?
 Yes _____; No _____
48. How did these changes affect you as a woman?
49. *For those who have Migrated to the US temporarily or permanently:*
- i) How did you cross the border?
 Mica Tarjeta verde Indocumentada Permiso temporal
 - ii) What route did you use to cross the border?
 - iii) By what means?
 - iv) How often?
 - v) Social and economic costs?

VIII - Production Relations

50. What have been your working experiences since you migrated?
51. How have you been able to find a job?
52. How many jobs have you held since migrating?
 None
 1 to 3
 3 to 5
 6 or more
53. Job history over the past 3 years?
Occupation	Duration of employ	Why did you leave?
Company/Location		
ii)		
iii)		
iv)		
v)		
vi)		
54. Are any of the following included as part of your pay?

- i) Medical or health care
 - ii) Disability insurance/pay
 - iii) Child Care
 - iv) Transportation
 - v) Food subsidy
 - vi) Production Bonus
 - vii) occupational/skills training
 - viii) old age pension
 - ix) family planning
 - x) attendance bonus
 - xi) literacy training
55. Was your fertility in question prior to employment? Yes _____; No _____.
56. If YES, how was this question posed?
57. Was any condition placed on your fertility as a term of your employment?
Yes _____; No _____
58. What was the condition and why?
59. How many hours per day did/do you work?
60. How much do you earn? - per day _____; hour _____; week _____;
month _____?
61. Can anyone other than yourself collect your pay?
Spouse, brother, son, uncle, brother-in-law, etc.?
62. Is this enough money for you and your family to live? Yes _____; No _____
63. Do you have another job to provide you with additional income?
Yes _____; No _____.
64. If YES, please specify

IX. Health and Economic Conditions

65. Do you and your family have access to health care or medical facilities?
Yes _____; No _____.
66. If yes, what are the qualifications of health care worker you see?
 Doctor
 Nurse
 community health care worker (*promotora*)
 other (elder/midwife)
 do not know
- ii) Where is the health care facility/doctor located?
- iii) How far do you have to travel?
- iv) What are the hours of operation of the health care facility/doctor's office?
- v) Is medical care available outside of these hours of operation? Yes ____; No ____.
- vi) Are your health care needs met through this facility/doctor? Yes ____; No ____.
- vii) If NOT, what are your unmet needs
- viii) Do you have confidence in workers at this health care facility? Yes ____ No ____
- ix) What is the approximate cost per visit?
- x) Who pays?

X. Children

67. What do your children do while you are at work?
68. Who looks after your children?

69. How do you feel leaving your children at home while you go to work?
70. Does your spouse participate in the raising of your children?
How?
71. Do you suffer from any health problems? Yes _____; No _____.
Please specify _____
72. Do your children suffer from any health problems? Yes _____; No _____.
Please specify _____
73. Do you think that these health problems are related to where and how you live?
Yes _____; No _____.
74. Why?
75. Do your children go the doctor for regular appointments? Yes ____; No _____.
i) How often?
ii) Why do they go to the doctor?
76. What do you want for your daughters' future?
77. What do you want for your sons' future?

XI. Reproduction

78. Do you understand the biology of your reproductive system? Yes ____; No ____.
79. Have you ever been pregnant unexpectedly? Yes _____; No _____.
80. Are you aware of any diseases which you can contract through sexual intercourse?
Yes _____; No _____.
81. What diseases can you contract through sexual intercourse?
82. Have you ever had a pap test ? If so, when was the last time?
83. How did you learn about pregnancy and reproduction?
84. Was this a good or bad experience? Good _____; Bad _____.
In what way was this good/bad?
85. Do you have control over the number and spacing of your children? Yes ____; No _
____.
86. Do you want more control over the number and spacing of your children?
87. Do you know how to prevent pregnancy? Yes _____; No _____.
88. How do you control your fertility?
Rhythm method
Withdrawal
hormonal injection
birth control pills
IUD
condoms
abstinence
abortion
sterilization
no method of control _____.
- i) Why don't you use condoms?

89. If you opted for sterilization,
 Why?
 How?
 When?
 Your Age at time of Sterilization?
 How many children did you have at the time
 Who Advised you to have the operation?
 Why was it advised?
 Any regrets?

Violence

90. Has the issue of birth control been a problem in your marriage?
 How?
 Has your spouse exhibited violence or anger when discussing birth control?
91. Over what issues has your husband exhibited violence?
 Use of contraceptives in general?
 Use of condoms?
 Decisions over number of children?
 Decisions over whether to have children?
 Money?
 Alcohol?
 Child Rearing Practices?
 Drugs?
92. How are decisions about the number and spacing of children which you have/will have made?
93. Who makes the decisions about the number and spacing of your children?
 You? _____ Your spouse? _____ Your employer? _____
 Your priest? _____ Your doctor? _____
 There are no decisions, children are just conceived naturally _____.
94. Would you like to have more children?
95. Under the current conditions or under what conditions might you want more children?
96. On what basis do you decided how many children to have?
 Your health _____; economics _____;
 social/family pressures _____; the desire to be a 'mother' _____;
 religious expectations _____; how many children in fact are conceived _____
97. Have the advertisements on the radio and television, by the Secretaría de Salud influence your decisions about how many children you should have?
98. Why do you want (more) children?
99. How do you see children in your life?
100. Have you talked to a doctor/health care worker about reproduction?
 Yes ____; No ____
101. Is your access to health care better now or before you migrated?

- Better now _____; Better before _____.
- i) How is health care better now?
- ii) How was it better before migration?
102. With migration have you received greater access to reproductive knowledge/choices? Yes _____; No _____.
 103. If YES, how?
 104. Have you been to a family planning clinic? Yes _____; No _____.
Name/location: _____
 105. If YES, Who did you talk to? Doctor _____; Nurse _____; health care worker (non-medical) _____; unknown _____.
 106. Was that experience helpful? Yes _____; No _____.
Why or Why not?
 107. What would you do if you did not want to have any more children - right now?
 108. What would you do if you did not want to have any more children - ever?
 109. Would you consider female sterilization? Yes _____; No _____.
 110. Would your spouse consider male sterilization? Yes _____; No _____.
 111. What would you do if you did not want a particular pregnancy?
 112. Do you know anyone who has had an abortion? Yes _____; No _____.
 113. Where did the person go to have the abortion? Mexico? US?
 114. Who performed the abortion? A doctor _____; nurse _____; Community health care worker/mid-wife _____; unknown _____.
 115. Were there any complications from the abortion? (for example: excess bleeding, convulsions, accidental sterilization)? Explain
 116. Did the woman seek further medical care as a result of these complications? Yes _____; No _____.
 117. What was the outcome?
 118. Did the woman later have any children? Yes _____; No _____.
 119. As a woman would you feel fulfilled if you had not had children?
 120. How would your life be different?
Explain.
 121. Do you think that there are too many people living in Mexico? Yes ____; No ____.
 122. Do you think that there are too many people living in the US? Yes ____; No ____.
 123. Do you think there is a need to place controls on how many children a woman has? Yes _____; No _____.
 124. Do you think that the government has a right to tell a woman how many children she can have? Yes _____; No _____.
 125. Have you ever felt pressure to have children? Yes _____; No _____.
 126. If YES, where did the pressure to have more children come from?
Your spouse____, Social/family _____, Religious guide/priest _____.
 127. Have you ever felt pressure **not** to have children? Yes _____; No _____.
 128. **If YES**, where did the influenced/pressured **not** to have more children come from?
Spouse____, Social/family _____, Health care/doctor _____, family planning centre _____, state/government _____?

XII. Sexuality

129. At what age did you first experience sex?
Why/Conditions?
130. Why did/would you enter at conjugal relationship?
131. Do you enjoy sex?
132. What is sex to you?
For Procreation only or for sexual enjoyment?
133. Do you feel pressure to be in a conjugal relationship?
Why?
134. Could you live a 'alternative lifestyle' as a single woman if you chose to?
135. Where does the pressure come from?
136. What do you think is important about being a woman?
137. What are the cultural definition/stereotypes of women?
138. In migrating did you feel sexually liberated from social/familial/religious expectations and stereotypes about women? Yes ____; No ____
139. In migrating did you feel sexually liberated from violent or dominant relationships?
140. How are things different than before you migrated?
141. Did you find in moving or migrating that you had more/new control over your sexuality and sexual practices? Yes ____; No ____
142. Have you had more than one sexual partner since migrating? Yes ____; No ____
143. Have you received gifts, food, privileges (housing, a job, health care) or money in any sexual relationship which you have had? Yes ____; No ____
144. Explain?
145. Which of the following terms do you feel most comfortable using in describing yourself?
Mexicana
American
Mexicano-Americana
Hispana
Latina
Chicana
146. Explain?

Appendix 3. Cuestionario: Migración y Salud Reproductiva¹⁶⁹

Fecha:

Nombre/Clave

Ubicacion:

Fecha de nacimiento:

Edad:

Estado Civil:

Educacion:

Ocupacion/habilidades/conocimientos:

I. Informacion demografica del hogar

1. Tipo de vivienda?
2. Vive su esposo en la casa? Si _____ No _____
3. Donde vive su esposo?
4. Numero de niños
Nombre Edad Educacion Empleo Lugar/tipo de trabajo
 - i)
 - ii)
 - iii)
 - iv)
 - v)
 - vi)
5. Religion
6. Practica su religion formal o informalmente

II. Condiciones Economicas

7. La casa es propia o rentada?
8. *Si renta la casa*, es propiedad del gobierno/estado
 - Patron
 - Conocido/pariente
 - Otro
9. Cuantas personas viven en la casa?
10. Que lugar ocupa en su casa?
 - Ama de casa
 - Esposa
 - Hermana
 - Cuñada
 - Hija

¹⁶⁹ To save space, the ample line-spacing in the field questionnaire was eliminated here.

Sobrina
Prima
Amiga

III. Historia Familiar

11. Donde nacio?
12. Cuantos hermanos(as) tiene? Hermanos _____; Hermanas _____.
13. En relacion al orden de nacimiento, que lugar ocupa usted con respecto al resto de sus hermanos(as)?
14. Educacion Ocupacion/preparacion
Padre:
Madre:
Hermanos(as):
i)
ii)
iii)
iv)
v)
vi)
15. Vienes del campo o de la ciudad?
16. *Si del campo*, En su lugar de origen, su familia tiene tierras o derechos comunales? Si _____ No _____
17. *Si del campo*, Suficiente para toda la familia?
18. *Si del campo*, Suficiente para produccion destinada para el consumo familiar?
19. *Si del campo*, Suficiente para el comercio?

IV. Historia Migratoria Familiar

20. Tus padres se han emigrado a otro lugar? Si _____ No _____
i) Su madre se ha emigrado a otro lugar.
Cual?
Porque?
ii) Su padre se ha emigrado a otro lugar.
Cual?
Porque?
21. A que edad se mudo o emigro por primera vez? Edad/año
22. A donde emigro? Dentro de Mexico
o Fuera de Mexico
23. Que tan frecuente regresa a su lugar de origen?
i) Por cuanto tiempo regresa?
ii) Porque regresa?

V. Historia migratoria personal

24. Porque emigro/mudo?
Mejoria economica/trabajo?

- Aventurar?
 Para reunirse con su pareja?
 Por educacion?
 Por embarazo?
 Para evitar el control, presion y agresividad familiar
 (padre/hermano/tio/pareja/madre)?
 Por motivos de salud?
 Por mejor atencion en control de natalidad, anticonceptivos y salud
 reproductiva?
 Para obtener un posible aborto?
 Otro motivo?
25. Se mudo o emigro por su cuenta o acompañada?
 26. Por que decidio usted emigrar o mudarse a este lugar?
 27. Tenia usted la oportunidad u opcion del lugar a donde emigrar? Si ____; No ____
 28. Ya tenia conyugue en ese entonces? Si ____ No ____
 29. Su estado civil influyo o su decision de emigrar?
 En que forma?
 30. Continuan unidos como pareja? Si ____ No ____
 31. La migracion genero stres (nerviosismo) adicional en su relacion conyugal
 Si ____ No ____
 32. De que manera se manifesto dicho stress (o nerviosismo)?
 33. Ha sido la agresividad domestica un problema en su matrimonio?
 34. **Si SI**, se ha presentado, en que forma?
 Porque?
 Cuando?
 35. Antes de emigrar por primera vez, ya tenia usted hijos? Si ____ No ____
 Cuantos?
 Nombre edad cuando migraron migraron con usted? o en su caso, con quien se
 quedaron?
 i)
 ii)
 iii)
 iv)
 v)
 vi)
 36. **Si SI**, cuando usted migro tenia hijos y los tuvo que dejar, porque los dejo en vez
 de llevarlos consigo?
 Dificultades en migracion
 para continuar con la educacion
 Lo desconocido, nuevo ambiente
 Falta de recursos economicos
 Otros motivos
 37. **Si SI**, De que manera le afecto como madre o tutor el haber dejado a sus hijos?

38. La emigracion ha influido en su decision sobre cuando tener hijos o la decision o no? Si _____ No _____
39. De que manera afecto la migracion su decision de tener o no tener hijos?
40. Como y porque?
41. Anteriormente ya conocia a alguien en este sitio?
Pariente
Conocido
Patron
42. Cree que su emigracion fue mas dificil por ser mujer? Si _____ No _____
43. **Si, SI** de que manera el hecho de ser mujer afecto su emigracion/cambio?
44. **En general**, para las mujeres que emigran, existen mas peligros que para los hombres?
45. **En general**, Cuales son esos peligros, ejemplos?
46. Cree que el hecho de ser mujer se restringe o incrementa el exito de la emigracion?
47. Como percibe las condiciones en las cuales vive actualmente y como afecta el rol de las mujeres en comparacion con lo mismo en el lugar donde vivias anteriormente?
48. Que fue lo que en ti ha cambiado en tu papel de mujer.
49. **Para quienes han emigrado temporal o permanentemente a los Estados Unidos.**
i) Como cruzo?
Mica tarjeta verde indocumentada Permiso temporal
ii) Por cual ruta cruzo la frontera?
iii) Por que medios?
iv) Que tan frecuente?
v) Que costo social y economico tuvo?

VIII. Relaciones de Produccion

50. Cuales han sido sus experiencias laborales desde que emigro/muso?
51. Como empleo?
52. Cuantos empleo ha tenido desde que emigro/mudo?
ninguno
de 1 a 3
de 3 a 5
6 o mas
53. Cual ha sido su historia laboral en los ultimos tres años?
Ocupacion Duracion del empleo Porque lo dejo? **lugar/ciudad** (company)
i)
ii)
iii)
iv)
v)
vi)
54. Algunas de estas prestaciones son parte de su salario?
i) Seguro medico o de salud? vii) Capacitacion
ii) Pension por desabilitacion

iii) Guarderia?	viii) Pension por jubilacion
iv) Transporte?	ix) Planificacion familiar
v) Subsidio alimenticio?	x) Bono de puntualidad
vi) Bono de Produccion	xi) Alfabetizacion
55. Se le investigoto sobre su fertilidad antes de obtener el empleo? Si No
56. Si su respuesta fue SI, como?
57. Se le impuso alguna condicion en cuanto a su fertilidad para obtener el empleo?
Si _____ No _____
58. Cual y porque?
59. Cuantas horas al dia trabaja/trabaja?
60. Y cuanto gana por dia hora semana mes?
61. Puede alguna persona aparte de usted cobrar su salario?
esposo, hermano, hijo, tio, cuñado, etc.?
62. Es es esta cantidad suficiente para vivir? Si _____ No _____
63. Tiene otras maneras de obtener dinero, aparte de ese trabajo? Si _____ No _____
64. Se es SI, por favor explique

IX Condiciones economicas y salud

65. Tiene usted y su familia acceso a servicios medicas? Si _____ No _____
66. Si la respuesta es SI, Quien esta encargado de su salud?
- Doctores
 - Enfermeras
 - Trabajador comunitario encargado de la salud
 - Promotora
 - Otro (curandero/partera)
 - No sabe
- ii) Donde se encuentra el centro de salud/doctor?
- iii) Que tan lejos tiene usted que viajar larga distancia para llegar ahi?
- iv) Que horario de consulta tiene el centro de salud o el consultorio medico?
- v) Es posible tener atencion medica fuera de horarios de servicio?
- vi) Son sus necesidades medicas atendidas adecuadamente en ese centro de salud o con dicho doctor?
- vii) Si no es asi, que necesidades no le resuelven?
- viii) Tiene usted confianza en los trabajadores del centro de salud?
Si _____ No _____
- ix) Cual es el costo aproximado por visita?
- x) Quien paga?

X. Hijos

67. Que hace(n) su(s) hijo/a(s) cuando usted esta trabajando?
68. Quien cuida de su(s) niños(as)?
69. Que siente al dejar a su(s) hijo/a(s) en casa para ir a trabajar?
70. Participa su esposo en la crianza/educacion de sus hijos?

Como?

71. Tiene usted algun problema de salud? Si _____ No _____
Especifique por favor
72. Sufren sus hijos de algun problema de salud? Si _____ No _____
Especifique por favor
73. Cree que dichos problemas de salud se relacionan con el lugar, o con las condiciones en las que vive?
74. Porque?
75. Sus hijos van regularmente al doctor? Si _____ No _____
i) Que tan frecuente?
ii) Porque va a consulta?
76. Que le gustaria para el futuro de sus hijas?
77. Que le gustaria para el futuro de sus hijos?

XI. Reproduccion

78. Entiende usted la biologia (funcionamiento) de su sistema reproductivo?
Si _____ No _____
79. Se ha embarazado alguna vez inesperadamente? Si _____ No _____
80. Sabe acerca de las enfermedades que puede contraer durante la relacion sexual?
Si _____ No _____
81. Que enfermedades puede contraer por la relacion sexual?
82. Como aprendio acerca del embarazo y la reproduccion?
83. Haz tenido un papanicolao y quando fue la ultima vez?
84. Fue esta una buena o mala experiencia?
Buena
Mala
De que manera fue buena o mala?
85. Tiene control sobre el numero de hijos y espeacear el nacimiento de estos?
Si _____ No _____
86. Quisiera tener mayor control sobre el numero de hijos y espeacear el nacimiento de estos?
87. Sabe usted como prevenir el embarazo? Si _____ No _____
88. Como controla su fertilidad?
Metodo de ritmo
Eyacuacion interrumpida
Inyeccion hormonal
Pastillas anticonceptivas l
DIU (Dispositivo Intrauterino)
Condomes
Esterilizacion
Abstinencia
Aborto
Sin metodo de control

89. Si usted opto por la esterilizacion
 - Porque?
 - Como?
 - Cuando?
 - Que edad tenia cuando la esterilizaron?
 - Cuantos hijos tenia cuando se esterilizo?
 - Quien le aconsejo para que se esterilizara?
 - Porque le aconsejaron esto?
 - Tiene alguna queja al respecto?
90. El control de la natalidad le ha causado problemas en su matrimonio
 - De que manera?
 - Se ha enojado o puesto violento su esposo cuando hablan sobre el control natal?
91. Al hablar con su esposo, con cual de estos temas se ha puesto violento?:
 - Sobre un posible aborto o embarazo interrumpido.
 - Sobre el uso de anticonceptivos en general?
 - Sobre el uso de condones o preservativos?
 - Al decidir sobre el numero de hijos?
 - Al decidir si tienen o no hijos?
 - Crianza de los hijos
 - Dinero/empleo
 - Alcohol
 - Drogas
 - Otros asuntos
92. Como le hace/haria para decidir acerca del numero y el tiempo entre el nacimiento de sus hijos?
93. Quien decide sobre el numero y el tiempo entre el nacimiento de los niños?
 - Usted?
 - Su esposo?
 - Su patron o empleador
 - Su sacerdote
 - Su doctor?
 - No hay decisiones, los niños se conciben por naturaleza.
94. Desearia tener mas hijos?
95. Actualmente le gustaria tener mas hijos o en que otras condiciones?
96. En que baso su decision acerca de cuantos hijos iba a tener?
 - Su salud
 - Economicos
 - Presiones socio-familiares
 - El deseo de "Ser Mama"
 - Expectativas religiosas
 - Los que vengan

97. Los anuncios en radio y television de la Secretaría de Salud o programas de planificacion familiar han influido sus decisiones sobre cuantos hijos debe tener?
98. Porque quiere (mas) hijos?
99. Que significan para usted los hijos en su vida?
100. Ha hablado con algun doctor, enfermera o trabajadora social sobre la reproduccion? Si _____ No _____
101. Tiene mayor acceso a la atencion medica ahora o antes de e migrar?
Mayor antes _____ Mayor ahora _____
- i) En que medida es mejor la atencion medica?
- ii) En que medida eran mejores antes de emigrar?
102. Despues de la migracion ha tenido usted mayor acceso a la informacion y opciones reproductiva? Si _____ No _____
103. Si su respuesta fue Si, de que manera?
104. Ha estado usted en alguna clinica de planificacion familiar? Si _____ No _____
105. Si su respuesta fue Si, con quien hablo?
Doctor
Enfermera
Trabajadora social
Otro
106. Le beneficio esa experiencia? Si _____ No _____
Porque?
107. Que haria si no deseara tener mas hijos por el momento?
108. Que haria si no deseara tener mas hijos definitivamente?
109. Usted ha pensado en la esterilizacion femenina? Si _____ No _____
110. Su esposo ha pensado en la esterilizacion masculina? Si _____ No _____
111. En tu caso personal, que harias con un embarazo no - deseado?
112. Conoce a alguien que haya obtenido un aborto? Si _____ No _____
113. Donde aborto dicha persona?
En Estados Unidos
En Mexico
114. Quien realizo el aborto?
Doctor
Enfermera
Promotoras de salud
Partera
Otro
115. Tuvo alguna complicacion dicho aborto? (por ejemplo: sangrado excesivo, convulsiones, esterilizacion accidental)?
Explique.
116. Dicha mujer busco atencion medica debido a alguna de estas complicaciones? Si _____ No _____
117. Cual fue el resultado?

118. Tuvo mas hijos posteriormente? Si _____ No _____
119. Si no hubieras procreado hijos, te sentirias realizada como mujer? Si _____ No _____
120. Como seria diferente tu vida?
Explique.
121. Cree que hay demasiadas personas viviendo en Mexico? Si _____ No _____
122. Cree que hay demasiadas personas viviendo en los estados unidos? Si _____ No _____
123. Cree que se necesite poner algun control sobre cuantos hijos deba tener una mujer?
124. Cree que el gobierno tiene derecho de decirle a una mujer cuantos hijos debe tener?
Si _____ No _____
125. La han presionado para que tenga hijos? Si _____ No _____
126. Si su respuesta fue Si, de donde proviene la presion para tener mas hijos?
Esposo
Medio social (amigos, conocidos)/familia
Guia religiosa/Sacerdote
127. Le han influenciado / presionado para que **no** tenga hijos? Si _____ No _____
128. **Si su respuesta fue Si**, quien(es)?
Esposo
Medio social (amigos, conocidos)/familia
Doctor/atencion medica
Centro de planeacion familiar
Guia religioso/sacerdote
Estado/gobierno

XII. Sexualidad

129. A que edad tuvo su primera relacion sexual?
Porque/ Condiciones
130. Porque estraria en una relacion conyugal?
131. Disfruta sus relaciones sexuales?
132. Cual es para usted el sentido de las relaciones sexuales? solo para procreacion o para satisfaccion sexual?
133. Se siente presionada para mantener alguna relacion conyugal?
134. Podria tener "un estilo de vida alternativo" como mujer soltera si lo deseara?
135. De donde viene la presion?
136. Que cree que sea lo importante sobre el ser mujer?
137. Cuales son los estereotipos/definiciones culturales sobre la mujer?
138. Al migrar, se sintio sexualmente liberada de expectativas o estereotipos sociales / familiares / religiosos sobre la mujer? Si _____ No _____
139. Al migrar, se sintio sexualmente liberada de relaciones violentas o dominantes?
140. Como ha cambiado su estilo de vida en comparacion a antes de haber emigrado?
141. Cree que tenga mayor control/nuevo control en su sexualidad y practicas sexuales?
142. Ha tenido mas de una pareja sexual desde que emigro? Si _____ No _____

143. Ha recibido regalos, comida, privilegios (como vivienda, trabajo, atención médica) o dinero en alguna relación sexual que haya tenido? Si _____ No _____

144. Explique.

145. Cual de los siguientes términos consideras que mejor te describe?

Mexicana

Americana

Mexico-Americana

Hispana

Latina

Chicana

146. Explique.

Appendix 4. Consent Form

Population and Migration: Issues of Non-Security and Non-Development

— The Case of Mexican Women

I understand that I am being asked to participate in a research project being conducted by Victoria Bromley, Doctoral candidate, Department of Political Science, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. I understand that the researcher has no formal or informal affiliation with the US government or the US Immigration and Naturalization Services.

The purpose of this study is to see how state and international policies shape the daily lives of women migrants in terms of reproductive health issues. Further, the purpose of the study is to see how women's migrant experiences impact reproductive health issues, practices and choices. The study also looks at the various ways in which gendered relations mediate these issues, practices, experiences and choices.

My participation in this project is voluntary and I may refuse to answer any or all questions. My participation will be strictly anonymous and my name will not be use in any public forum or publication. I understand that there are no risks or particular benefits to me as a participant in this research project.

Under these conditions, I _____, agree to participate in this research project.

Signature _____

Date: _____; Location: _____

Appendix 5. Formulário de Consentimiento

Poblacion y Migracion: Aspectos de Inseguridad y Subdesarrollo

— El Caso de las Mujeres Mexicanas

Entiendo que se me solicita la participacion en el proyecto de investigacion realizado por Victoria Bromley, en su doctorado del Departamento de Ciencias Politicas de la Universidad de Ottawa, Canada. Entiendo que la investigadora no cuenta con afiliacion formal o informal con el gobierno norteamericano o los Servicios de Inmigracion y Naturalizacion de Los Estados Unidos.

El proposito del estudio es para ver como las politicas de estado e internacionales impactan a la vida diaria de las mujeres migrantes en terminos de asuntos de salud reproductiva. Ademias, el objetivo del estudio es para ver como las experiencias de las mujeres migrantes impactan las practicas y opciones de su salud reproductiva. El estudio tambien revisa las formas en que las relaciones de genero intervienen en estos asuntos, practicas, experiencias y opciones.

Mi participacion en este proyecto es voluntario y puedo negarme a contestar cualquier o todas las preguntas. Mi participacion es estrictamente anonima y mi nombre no sera utilizado in cualquier foro publico o publicacion. Entiendo que no existe ningun riesgo o beneficio particular para mi como participante en este proyecto de investigacion.

Yo, _____ entiendo y me sujeto a estas condiciones de este proyecto de investigación.

Assinatura _____

Fecha: _____; Lugar: _____

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