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BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: THE STRENGTH OF ADULT DAUGHTERS IN ABUSIVE MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract

Intimate partner violence (IPV) and its impact on children are pressing issues that necessitate comprehensive examination. This study delves into the co-occurrence of IPV and child exposure to violence, emphasizing the importance of understanding this intersection for future research and intervention efforts. With millions of children exposed to violence annually, it is crucial to address this multifaceted problem.

Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a multifaceted problem that often co-occurs alongside violence against children within affected households (Namy et al., 2017). Approximately 3.3 million to 17.8 million children are exposed to violence in the U.S. annually (Hines, 2015). Given the co-occurrence of IPV and child exposure to violence, studying this intersection is critical for future research and programmatic interventions about violence in the household (Namy et al., 2017). A significant body of research exists that looks at the repercussions of childhood exposure to domestic violence (see Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2003). A growing research archive also exists on childhood resilience in response to violence exposure (Anderson & Danis, 2006; Hines, 2015). However, missing from the conversation are child witnesses‟ testaments on the drivers of their step/fathers‟ power and dominance of their mothers.

While Jewkes (2002) underscores a connection between power, gender identity, and intimate partner violence (IPV), the actual intersection of these factors is seldom observed in the private sphere (i.e., the home). Child witnesses‟ testimonies, then, offer an opportunity to understand violence from an insider‟s perspective. The current study aims to elucidate the intersectionality of power axes within IPV from the viewpoint of adult daughters of abused women. The primary means of data collection and analysis for this inquiry is the grounded theory method that aims to identify complex and hidden psychosocial processes (Mertens, 2010, p. 294). To understand the connection between gender and power, Quijano‟s (1992, 2000) notion of the coloniality of power

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in contemporary American society, alongside Butler‟s (1990) concept of performativity vis-à-vis gender, serves as the theoretical foundation. The research question for the current study asks: How do adult daughters remember the intersection of power, gender identity, and IPV in their childhood homes?

Literature Review: Power, Gender, and IPV

Intimate partner violence (IPV) remains the most pervasive form of violence against women (VAW) globally. In 2010, 30% of women experienced physical and/or sexual IPV (Devries et al., 2013). The United Nations‟ World Health Organization (WHO) also estimates that approximately one in three women worldwide are victims of either physical and/or sexual abuse by an intimate partner. In the United States, nearly one in ten women are raped by an intimate partner, while approximately 17% experienced sexual violence other than rape (Breiding, Chen, & Black, 2014). Furthermore, the United Nations‟ Secretary-General estimates that an intimate partner kills one-third of women murdered in the U.S. annually.

Although the United Nations‟ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) strengthened efforts to eradicate IPV in 2010, the social problem‟s pervasiveness points to a wicked problem that calls for more than treaties.

Coloniality of Power and IPV

Kelly and Johnson (2008) define Coercive Controlling Violence (CCV) as patterns of "emotionally abusive intimidation, coercion, and control, coupled with physical violence against partners" (p. 478). With CCV, the endgame is power and control over another human being, which implies that violence is deliberate. Situational Couple Violence (SCV), as Kelly and Johnson (2008) add, is a “type of partner violence that does not have its basis in the dynamic of power and control” (p. 479). With SCV, violence is the byproduct of a disagreement or separation, as is the case with Separation-Engendered Violence (Kelly & Johnson, 2008). As such, SCV is reflexive. Kelly and Johnson's (2008) differentiation of IPV types illuminates the issue's multidimensionality and why it is so challenging to address it fully.

If SCV is reflexive, then precautionary policies may resemble Philip K. Dick‟s pre-crime, a crime yet to occur but predicted to happen. In comparison, CCV is straightforward because it is an expression of powerfulness or fear of powerlessness and dominance, typically by men. However, as Jewkes (2002) notes, powerfulness and dominance are often paradoxically rooted in “male vulnerability stemming from social expectations of manhood that are unattainable” (p. 1424). This implies that punitive policies should also consider restorative efforts to create healthy conceptions of manhood. Kelly and Johnson‟s (2008) CCV and SCV offer two distinct views of power vis-à-vis IPV, yet these concepts do not help us define power.

Quijano‟s (1992, 2000) coloniality of power thesis in the Americas offers a critical dimension to CCV and SCV. Per Quijano (1992, 2000), coloniality is a system of oppression that can be operationalized as a colonial matrix of power, i.e., a “complex structure of management and control composed of domains, levels, and flows” (Mignolo, 2018, p. 142; see also Mignolo, 2011, pp. 8-21; Quijano, 2000). Grosfoguel (2011) describes the coloniality of power through the perspective of an Indigenous woman. Accordingly, from her position in the Americas, at the moment of colonization, a European-capitalist-militant-Christian-Patriarchal-white-heterosexual male arrived and immediately baptized “in time and space several entangled global hierarchies” (pp. 7-8).

So, in the Americas – and, arguably, in the post-colonial world – Quijano (1992, 2000) argues that oppression and dehumanization manifest in the intersection of ethnic/racial, economic, political, sexual, gendered, religious, epistemic, linguistic, aesthetic, media, age, ecological, and spatial dimensions (see Dussel, 1993, 1995; Freire, 1968/2005; Grosfoguel, 2011; Mignolo, 2011, 2018; Oyěwùmí, 1997, 2002; Lugones, 2007; Quijano, 2000, 2007). Germane to this discussion, it is useful to acknowledge that in the colonial world: (a) ethnic/racial

structures support white supremacy, (b) gender structures support the idea that European men are rational actors and women are insensible objects, (c) systems of sexuality police and enforce heterosexism, (d) systems of economic oppression support the division of salaried labor for the colonizer and servitude to the colonized, and (e) systems of cultural oppression and erasure support European traditions over non-European beliefs (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Coloniality of Power/Modern Regulatory Frame**		
Colonial normal order – normative regulatory frames	Logic	Gender
Race structures that sanction white supremacy Gender structures that view men as rational actors and women as insensible objects Systems of sexuality that favor heterosexism Systems of economic oppression on behalf of a capitalist structure Systems of cultural oppression and erasure that uphold Western values and silence non-Western beliefs.	X believes, or needs, Y to be less than X. X creates and implements constraints, or norms, that force Y to perform as less than X. Since Y performs as less than X, it is a matter-of-fact that Y is less than X. X can justify oppression since Y is less than X.	Man believes, or needs, Woman to be less than Man. Man creates and implements constraints, or norms, that force Woman to perform as less than Man. Since Woman performs as less than Man, it is a matter-of-fact that Woman is less than Man. Man can justify oppression since Woman is less than Man.
*Santis (2018)		

If Quijano is correct, power is built into modern conceptions of race, gender, sex, labor, and culture. In turn, this structure (Table 1) establishes de facto power differentials in relationships. These differentials, as in colonial times, moderate oppression. Regarding VAW, scholars have identified connections between colonial structures and oppression. For example, as García-Del Moral (2018) argues, the "murders of Indigenous women in Canada constitute *racialized* gendered violence rooted in the ongoing material and discursive effects of colonial power relations" (p. 929). Or, as Trapedo Sims (2020) observes, many women incarcerated in Hawaii share memories of trauma rooted in dispossession, poverty, and violence – a kind of violence that is "part of Indigenous dispossession under a settler colonial regime that is an ongoing form of domination" (p. 203). Or, as Patil (2013) argues, the "notion that a husband had natural authority over his wife and children … was often used to argue that a colonial power had natural authority over dependent peoples" (p. 848). Conclusively, IPV (whether it is CCV or SCV) always intersects normative power differentials (for additional conversations, see Rice et al., 2020).

Performativity and IPV

Considering Quijano"s (1992, 2000) axes of power, the early feminist idea that IPV is a result of gender systems of power (and that men are the perpetrators and women are the victims of violence) is a salient explanation of the relationship between power, gender, and IPV (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Walker, 1978), albeit unidimensional and unidirectional (its focus is only on the gender axis). Since its lack of intersectionality limits this view (see

Crenshaw, 1991), McPhail, Busch, Kulkarni, and Rice (2007) comment that feminists of color, international feminists, and lesbian feminists, bridge this gap insofar as their work "acknowledges the importance of looking at the intersections between gender and other systems of oppression, such as race, class, national origin, sexual orientation, age, and disability" (p. 819). Therefore, a postcolonial feminist view of IPV should consider the intersection of the fundamental axes of colonial power: 1) social hierarchies/classifications (e.g., race, gender, sexuality), 2) cultural systems that revolve around Eurocentric economic and cultural beliefs (e.g., capitalist economic systems, neoliberalism, and positivism), and 3) systems of knowledge that establish the body/non-body ontological and epistemological assumptions that position European men as the inheritors of Truth (reason) and humanity (humanness proper).

Within the colonial regulatory frame (see Table 1), the masculine progenies of coloniality must perform gender, which bestows power upon them. Quijano (1992, 2000) insists that this power is rooted in colonial binaries that position White heterosexual men as racially, morally, and economically superior to nature and, by extension, less rational beings (i.e., women and conquered peoples). The colonial axes of power congeal over time to re-produce a matter-of-factness about the colonial normal order and the household (see Table 1). The performance of gender, in addition to other oppressive axes, is a fundamental part of this system‟s matter-offactness (Butler, 1990, p. 33).

Performance and the Family. In terms of society and the household, the colonial normal order also establishes the family as a congealing tool. Per functionalist theories of gender and work dynamics in the family, Parsons (1949) contends that a functional family is one where the husband/father specializes in market work and the wife/mother specializes in domestic work. Fundamentally, as Barnett and Hyde (2001) explain, this view of the family assumes that gender-role specialization and asymmetric mutual dependence begets stability and familial quality (p. 782). The family's functionalist perspective is a normative order, fueled by systems of oppression, to justify the wife/mother's oppression by making her dependent on the husband/father. Although contemporary family dynamics may challenge the functionalist perspective (see Barnett & Hyde, 2001, p. 784), the status quo, per Quijano (1992; 2000), empowers men to claim privileges that women should not have access to. The family's normative order requires men and women to perform accordingly; therefore, the colonial normal order (see Table 1) is contingent on men and women assuming gender-role specialization and accepting asymmetric mutual dependence. Failure to perform these roles, as Ten Brummelhuis and Lautsch (2016) note, can lead to “various negative psychological states, such as disappointment, dissatisfaction, de-motivation, and frustration” (p. 173). While women are commonly oppressed, children, as objects of the household, also fall under men‟s authority.

Current Study

For this study, the grounded theory method offers an opportunity to learn about IPV from child witness testimonies, which can elucidate how to best intervene within the household. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, childhood memories of IPV should exhibit power differentials rooted in Quijano‟s (1992; 2000) axes of power and continually performed. This study‟s grounded theory approach allows researchers the ability to examine the data and develop themes directly, “weaving in theoretical ideas and concepts without permitting them to drive or constrain the study‟s emergent findings” (Padgett, 2012, p. 32). As Padgett (2012) observes, the grounded theory method underscores data collection and inductive theory building throughout different data analysis and conceptual development stages. Charmaz (2008) affirms that this process's purpose is to understand a participant's life.

Methods

Participant Information

Participants (*N* = 68) ranged in age from 19 to 64 years old (M = 37, SD = 11.5). Fifty-one participants (75%) were European-American. Fifty-four participants (79.4%) were employed, either full-time or part-time, and 34 respondents (50%) had children. Highest levels of education included 20 (29.4%) participants who reported a graduate equivalency diploma/high school diploma, three (4.4%) had vocational/technical training, six (8.8%) had associate degrees and 39 participants (57.4%) had earned undergraduate (n = 24) or graduate degrees (n = 15). Thirty-six participants (52.9%) were married or living with a significant other at the time of the study, and 10 (14.7%) were divorced. Thirty-three (48.5%) respondents reported experiencing intimate partner violence in adulthood.

Procedure and Data Collection

After final approval by a university institutional review board, participants were recruited through local community and university newspaper advertisements (hard copy and electronic). Advertisements directed potential participants to contact the first researcher, who then discussed the study's purpose, explained the consent form, and explored each person's interest in the project. Of 120 inquiries, 111 met sampling criteria, and 19 of those declined to participate in the study. Of 92 questionnaire packets distributed, 68 completed documents were returned along with participant consent forms. Interviews were conducted in the first author's university office. A semi-structured interview of open-ended questions was used (for additional procedural and data collection information, see Anderson, 2012).

Criteria for sample inclusion/exclusion. Purposive sampling criteria included adult children who met the following conditions: 1) 21 or older, 2) child witnesses to their mothers' abuse by intimate male partners, and 3) not currently living in their parents' home/childhood residence. Patterns of violence included physical, verbal, sexual, and financial. Childhood exposure was defined as being within sight or sound of the violence or witnessing the violence's aftermath (Edleson & Ellerton, 2007; Meltzer et al. 2009).

Data Analysis

After removing participant identifiers, the audio-recorded data was transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were entered into a qualitative analysis computer software, Dedoose (http://dedoose.com). Data were coded and organized by two or more researchers using a constant comparison method, a qualitative procedure that identifies and extracts significant statements or "meaningful units" from in-depth interview transcripts to be conceptualized and reconstructed in new ways (Mertens, 2010; Oktay, 2012). For the current study, axial coding focused on three critical code categories: 1) family context – participants‟ childhood upbringing including familial beliefs, attitudes, values, gender roles, birth order, and responsibility, 2) child-father relationship – participants‟ childhood views of their father-figure and changes in views as an adult, and 3) abuse triggers – participants‟ recollection of causes or factors that influenced or led to the abuser‟s actions. Selective coding was then used to identify patterns and central themes inclusive of power, gender, and IPV in the household: 1) duality of public and private personas, 2) normative order in the household, and 3) childhood roots of male control.

Results

Coercive Duality of Public and Private Personas

For many of the participants, their father figures intentionally portrayed their families as normative ones where their public personas were kind, stable, and orderly. Sarah (age 64) recalls that her father “would treat other children, right in front of us, he would give them money, or he would treat them real nice, and it was not like the way he treated us. When nobody else was around.” In Sarah's recollection, she could only witness her father‟s

kindness, without protest, knowing he would be completely different at home. This is a tension that Liza (age 48) also recalls as her father‟s public persona was kind and honorable but very different at home.

He was also a very honorable man. People trusted him. They knew if [her father] said he was gonna do something, he was gonna do it … so that‟s why I would feel so frustrated as to why they were fighting [parents], „cause I never saw that part [honorable].

The father figure determined the divide between the public and private spheres that the family occupied. To outsiders, as Mia (age 24) remembers, their family looked perfect:

I think like because our family was so good at, you know, from the outside we looked like a really ideal family. So, if my friend came over, that's what they saw, and that's what I saw of their family. So, I just kind of developed that mindset; this is just how it is.

Other participants described their father figures as “salesmen” (Lisa, age 50), being “normal” on the outside (Heather, age 37), and as “bluffing” everyone (Laura, age 32). For the young daughters, these men were akin to Dr. Jekyll and Mister Hyde:

And my stepdad wasn‟t I mean, he wasn't drunk all the time. He was a really nice guy when he wasn't drinking, but it was like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde like he would drink, and he would turn into a totally different person, and I just remember thinking like „Why is he so different when he drinks than when he's sober?‟ (Leah, age 32)

For the step/father, there was a need to separate the public from the private. For many participants, this meant a code of secrecy that required them to act according to their father figures‟ instructions.

And they [parents] couldn‟t admit there was a problem because somebody within that circle of their church friends or whatever might find out that we weren‟t perfect, and people who are Christian aren't supposed to have marital problems. So, we just perpetuated this big secret and kept them [parents] from getting help, which wasn't good, you know? It‟s not productive. (Pam, age 40)

The need to keep public-private spheres separate was manifested in “don‟t tell policies.” Sandy‟s (age 46) father figure used the threat of family disorder and the break-up of the family as a tactic to scare Sandy into silence.

I was just always told it was kind of like a „don't tell policy‟ where you don‟t let people know what‟s going on. And, of course, there was always the threat, „f people find out, they‟ll take you away from me. If they find out, you won‟t live with me anymore.‟

Failure to comply with the code of silence often resulted in punishment.

We had gone out for a walk; I was four, maybe even three. Went for a walk, and it‟s the first time I got my own bottle of Pepsi, and we lived in a duplex. When we got home, I showed the ladies on the porch my Pepsi, and Daddy said, „Don‟t tell other people our business,‟ and he took that Pepsi away and put it in the refrigerator, and it just sat there, for like a month, as a reminder not to tell anybody our business. (Kairi, age 20)

Coercive Normative Order in the Household

Father figures‟ demand for normative order in the household was a common theme. For example, Michelle (age 23) remembered that if the family did not perform cleanliness, her father was triggered. Her father's need to exhibit cleanliness was also a need to demonstrate power in the household. Since a disheveled home would indicate uncertain gender-role specialization, Michelle's father felt the need to declare his masculinity, his power, by forcing the family to clean. Consequently, the point was not to impress family but rather reaffirm gendered systems of oppression:

One of the biggest things that I think I remember what triggered my dad‟s temper tantrums is cleanliness. He‟s a big perfectionist. He‟s very anal about things being clean, I mean he folds every piece of laundry of his, everything

is tidy, all has its own place. If we were having company over, I mean we would work so hard to clean up that house for two weeks or so beforehand, and we never really understood the whole point of that, you know? Who cares? Family doesn‟t care.

Likewise, Sarah's (age 64) experience underscores a perpetual performance, a need to have control by forcing order continually, by constantly seeking perfection. Whether the family was perfect did not matter; it centered on the father‟s need to establish constraints on the family and fulfill his obsession for order.

My father, like I said, his control, the need to control. I used to, when he‟d go hunting, I‟d go with him. I just felt, when he‟d be working on the car, I‟d be there with him, but I could never do anything right for him. Never, ever, ever in my life. He was a perfectionist.

Marie‟s (age 49) account speaks to her father‟s need to have order, to follow the rules. As in Sarah‟s memory, the father‟s perceived lack of disorder is used to justify oppression, whether it existed or not.

He would come home from work, he would line us up, and we‟d get a spanking. I‟m like, „Why are you doing that?‟ „Well, I know you six kids, and you guys each got into something or did something today we don‟t know about that you deserve a spanking for.‟ So, I got my five little brothers and sisters together, and I threw the fear of God into them. I told them, „Look, we‟re gonna be perfect when you come home from school. You‟re gonna do your homework. Nobody‟s gonna eat in the living room.‟ I ticked off all the rules. „When he comes home, nobody is gonna give into him because we‟re stopping this now.‟

Like Marie's account, Becky's (age 40) memory points to the father-figure's need to establish order as if, without them, the household were incomplete or unstable. These father figures would come home and expect the domestic objects (wife/mother and dependent children) to act accordingly. Part of this performance was acknowledging the father figures‟ public efforts:

He would come back [from being abroad], and we were little kids, he would come back and be so upset because we weren‟t grateful for him coming back. You know, like, we‟re more grateful for what he brought us from the Middle East, or, you know, Japan, or wherever he‟s gone. So, and he was like that with mom, too. Like, if he didn‟t feel like she had paid him enough attention, he would just get really frustrated and angry, and blow up, and throw things, and cuss.

Rebecca‟s (age 30) memory of her father‟s jealousy reveals various dimensions of the colonial normal order. On the one hand, the father's jealousy comes from the mother's refusal to focus on him and, instead, study for school. By studying, Rebecca's mother was engaging in the public sphere to educate herself and, perhaps, become self-sufficient without the father. While Rebecca's father could be out with his friends, in the public sphere, the mother was called a "bitch," thus dehumanizing her for studying without paying attention to him in the private sphere.

There was always name-calling. I remember when she [Mother] was actually putting herself through school, that he [Father] was jealous because she would spend more time with her nose in a book than paying attention to him. And I mean, they were complete opposites. He would rather be out with his friends and partying, and there was always name-calling, and „bitch‟ was a common one.

Coercive Control Rooted in Childhood Household Disorder

Father figures from troubled homes were driven to recapture masculinity through control. Even when these men had father figures, they were not necessarily role models. Marie (age 49) states, “His mother died at a young age. He was raised by an alcoholic father. He didn‟t have role models. He didn‟t know. And he didn‟t know how to read hardly at all.” Michelle (age 29) speculates that her father's temper came from an abnormal family dynamic, "I think it was, well, they were very poor, very hard life. I think my dad was probably physically abused.” Rebecca's father also experienced a violent childhood.

My dad‟s family was pretty absent. He grew up with a pretty worst-case scenario. He grew up in and out of foster homes. He tells a story of his dad getting him down on the ground and blacking both of his eyes and having to go to school like that.

Kay (age 34) tells a similar story, of a father that was neglected as a child and abandoned by his parents, and, because of this, was resentful of her mother‟s family, “knowing that she had a strong family base, that he never had anybody and was moved around so much that‟s probably what I would‟ve wanted to learn about him how all of that impacted him.”

The lack of a father figure, for these men, created a fragile sense of masculinity, which, as an adult, manifested itself through violence and attempts to recapture the colonial normal order through oppression. Laura (age 32) shared how her father figure never knew his dad. He did not have a sense of who his father was and, probably due to the number of children in the household, had to also wear a "girl's coat."

He also used to mention something about the way he grew up, something about his mom had him and several other children, and they, I guess, divorced something happened, and she married somebody else early on, and for a long-time Gene [father-figure] thought that this other man was his father. I guess the day he graduated from high school, they said, „No, actually, this is not your father this other man is your father.‟ And he mentioned several times that he was forced to wear a girl's coat in high school, and so he was always made fun of for that. I just remember those being some things that he seemed to still have quite a bit of anger too.

Discussion

The results of this study underscore the tension between intimacy and the public. The adult daughters of abused women witnessed their father figures suffer from a Jekyll/Hyde complex that pinned public reputation/persona against instability in the household. Another explanation is that the father figures‟ public selves were so disconnected from their private selves that trying to consolidate the two was like mixing oil and water. Arguably, the compulsion to establish order (or to have order) within the household was a distorted attempt to attain solace at home. Yet, the father figures‟ coercive control prevented the home from ever being a safe and normal space. Each man was lost in his public persona or at least in the public persona's code of silence and did not see the home as a vehicle to address their issues. Instead, these men would lash out, often inexplicably, and attack the family.

The performance of gender and the suppression of intimacy in the households corroborates functionalist theories of gender and work dynamics in the family. Accordingly, a functional family is an extension of the colonial normal order, fueled by gender dynamics and systems of economic oppression with important implications for performance whereby the wife/mother is dependent on the husband/father, and the husband/father is in command of the family. Throughout the recollections of abused women's daughters, the family performs according to the colonial normal order. An important performative act that comes up is that of keeping up appearances. Several women recall their father figures' need to convey normality and order. Often, this performance would also confound the young daughters. Their father figures would be completely different "men" in public versus private, a transformation from honorable and kind "men" into violent creatures. This Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde relationship underscores the tension between private emotions and public personas. In many of the homes remembered, the mother figure triggers the father figure's transformation by *failing* to perform (e.g., keeping the home tidy). The children, as dependents, are also expected to perform. In many memories, the public persona is a critical part of the father-figures' life. What this alludes to is the difficulty of identifying violence because, on the one hand, this is treated as a private issue and, more importantly, abusers may learn to perform in public as perfect "men."

In terms of society and the household, the colonial normal order establishes the family as a congealing tool, which divides public and personal or *intimate*. Per Berlant and Warner (1998), intimate publics (e.g., the household, the

family) exist outside of the public sphere. As such, sexuality is kept out of the public's eye. More importantly, if specific dimensions of sexuality are relegated to the household's intimate sphere, it is important to acknowledge whose sexuality is suppressed. When the distinction between gender/sex is blurred, a byproduct of the colonial normal order, the suppression of sex effectively casts out everything beyond heteronormativity and pushes women out. Also, suppose the distinction between gender/sex is blurred. In that case, the suppression of sexuality serves a triple purpose: 1) it helps to congeal the matter-of-factness of gender roles by pushing intimacy away from the public, 2) it offers an escape from political and economic problems, and 3) it shames the individual for the imbalance between their private and public lives.

The notion of an intimate private outside of the public sphere also speaks to the enforcement of silence, or "don't tell policies" in the household. Several participants remembered their father figures' threats against sharing their personal lives in public. The main threat was the fear of breaking apart the family. Not only is this a manipulative strategy, but on a deeper level, it also speaks to the fear of bringing intimacy into the public sphere. It speaks to the fear of losing the home base, the promised haven that distracts the men from the outside world. As young daughters, many women remembered their parents either exclaiming that other families had it worse or acted as if the father figures‟ behavior was normal. This matter-of-factness helped to obscure the father figures‟ transgressions and to normalize the violence.

Many participants mentioned wanting to know more about their father figures and why violence became an outlet for them. In several interviews, the adult daughters recalled stories of troubled pasts. Part of the fatherfigures' compulsion to control their partners‟ and children's domestic lives resulted from abusive childhoods. If the family is a means to belong, a means to inherit capital, a means to learn social roles, and when this is disrupted or lacking, male children may become violent in adulthood to rectify order and control. If the family, as Berlant and Warner (1998) theorize, is an institution of social reproduction, accumulation and transfer of capital, and selfdevelopment, then a child would expect assistance fulfilling their social roles (social reproduction and selfdevelopment), would reap benefits, and would inherit capital.

However, many of the father figures mentioned they did not receive assistance growing up. They were denied capital and witnessed masculinity as violence and absence from their father figures. These unfulfilled promises may explain the compulsion to establish order in the household; they may also explain the father figures' distorted use of violence and even absence (it mirrors their father's behavior).

Limitations

This study was based on a small sample size with the possibility of selection bias concerning women‟s decision to participate in the study. This exploratory study's purposive sample came from and around a small Midwestern city (population = 100,000) in the United States. Urban adult daughters' experiences may be shaped differently by the inherent differences between rural and urban settings. The sample had limited ethnic and racial diversity and included the possibility of selection bias regarding the decision to participate in the study. Finally, data collected through in-depth interviews rely on the self-reported memories of persons who have experienced trauma. Persons who have experienced trauma may minimize their experiences as a way of coping (Enosh & Buchbinder, 2005).

Implications

Suppose Quijano (1992; 2000) is correct and power is derived from the above-mentioned axes of power and a person‟s position within them (i.e., a male derives power whereas a female does not). In that case, these dimensions explain the oppression of others at the hands of IPV perpetrators. Additionally, Rose (2015) broaches another assumption of the coloniality of power model. Rose (2015) argues that IPV against women should be

reconceptualized as both a crime against humanity and a State crime. In doing so, Rose (2015) foregrounds the severity of the issue and "the role of state and institutional police, practice and ideology in its [IPV] perpetration and perpetuation" (p. 31). Essentially, Rose's (2015) framework establishes IPV as State-sponsored mass harm against women since normative structures, institutions, policies, practices, and ideologies foment women's oppression. In other words, IPV is an extension of the coloniality of power.

As Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) report, IPV needs to be understood as a health and criminal justice issue. As it stands, Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) explain that women do not see the State (i.e., the police) as useful interventions. Moreover, when it comes to restraining orders, abusers often ignore these. Finally, these interventions are usually last-minute choices, not cautionary measures. This is not to imply that the State directly sponsors IPV, but rather that by pushing intimate issues into the household, there is a sense of relinquishing responsibility. Within the family, gender roles are played out, and power is re-produced, often through violence.

If IPV is a byproduct of the colonial normal order, then these so-called "intimate" problems are inherently public. Yet, IPV is repressed, out of the public‟s eye because it is meant to be a personal issue. This attitude also establishes the tone for the State‟s performance vis-à-vis IPV. For example, Breiding, Chen, and Black (2014) note that the Centers for Disease Control‟s (CDC) approach to IPV focuses on early prevention by promoting healthy relationship behaviors among young people. Of course, the CDC‟s IPV approach attempts to address relationships, but it might not be enough. As the experiences of adult daughters of abused women indicate, young children who may grow up witnessing violence in relationships have very little power to affect change. Consequently, intervention for adolescents may be too late.

Conclusion

Violence in the household and violence against women should be treated as social issues that require an inversion of the family within the colonial normal order, an inversion that calls for a wholehearted community approach to discuss toxic gender roles and make difficult conversations part of public rhetoric. By making the intimate a public issue, IPV can enter the mainstream as a toxic result of power's coloniality. This idea would disrupt the matter-of-factness of masculine control. Interventions to help parents, training public servants to see signs of abuse, and promulgating new family standards are a start.

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