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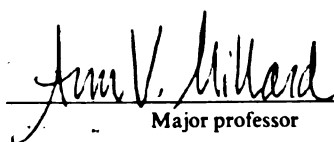
Domestic Violence among Latino Families in Detroit,
with a Focus on Spouse Inequality in Education and
Income and the Wives' Strategies to Avoid Violence

presented by

Nomlindelo E. Mfenyana

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Master's degree in Anthropology


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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG LATINO FAMILIES IN DETROIT, WITH A FOCUS ON
SPOUSE INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION AND INCOME AND THE WIVES' STRATEGIES TO
AVOID VIOLENCE

By

Nomlindelo E. Mfenyana

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ABSTRACT

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG LATINO FAMILIES IN DETROIT, WITH A FOCUS ON SPOUSE INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION AND INCOME AND WIVES' STRATEGIES TO AVOID VIOLENCE

By

Nomlindelo Mfenyana

This study is about domestic violence between Latino spouses of Mexican descent in Detroit. It focuses on the relationship between domestic violence and higher education and income of wives compared to husbands, as well as strategies devised by wives to avoid violence. It is a qualitative study that analyzes responses from twenty-seven women who were part of 165 respondents interviewed by means of open and closed ended questionnaires. Of twenty-seven women selected, nine were involved in domestic violence and eighteen were not. Findings indicated that education was not related to domestic violence, but became a problem only when it resulted in wives earning more than their husbands. The results suggested that wives having higher incomes than their husbands could be related to domestic violence. It emerged that all women used multiple strategies to avoid domestic violence. There were also indications that a power struggle between spouses was related to domestic violence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank God for giving me the opportunity to come to the United States and for giving me the strength and perseverance to complete this work. I am grateful to The Kellogg Foundation for awarding me the scholarship that enabled me to accomplish my goal. My Committee Chair, Dr. Ann Millard, was not only the best adviser a student could possibly have, but was also an untiring cheerleader at a time when I needed cheering most. She opened her house and her heart to a complete stranger; words cannot express how much her kindness is appreciated. With her assistance, I was able to get the data for this work and to finish this study.

I also thank each of my committee members. Dr. Merry Morash helped me with the data used in this study and suggested that I register for a course called Domestic Violence: An International Perspective, which was extremely valuable and useful in enriching this study. Dr. Bill Derman and Dr. Joe Chartkoff both provided effective comments and kind support. I thank them all for their hard work.

To friends and relatives, the Mpumlwana family, Thoko and Malusi, for unfailing support and for caring for our children when we needed help. Their kindness and help will never be forgotten or taken for granted. Deepest appreciation also goes to the network of all the friends for support and encouragement in ways too numerous to mention. To the Ntlabati family, especially Nakazi, our problems were never too

heavy when shared. I thank them for their love, understanding and unfailing support to our children.

And last but not least, thanks to my husband Khaya and to my children Phumlani, Nelisa, Thembela, and Khusela. Because of them, and with them I have completed this work. Khaya's help and support was always there when I needed strength to carry on. Phumlani's computer skills helped me to finish this work; words cannot express my gratitude. To all my children, you are unique blessings in my life, for which I thank God everyday; your smiles were all I needed to cheer me up.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the women's movements of the early 1960s, domestic violence has continued to gain attention in the United States. The increase in awareness has led to a variety of services and legislation aimed at alleviating the problem. The feminist perspective views domestic violence as a reflection of the male-dominated society. According to the feminist view, as long as the structure of the society continues to oppress and devalue women economically and socially, violence against women will remain prevalent. Prevention through education and laws that protect the rights of women cannot be effective if the structure of the society remains unchanged. Both men and women are often strong believers in traditional sex roles; for example, women often express their dependency on men for financial support. The social structure reinforces dependency by promoting unequal access to rewards. It should be noted that most of the information reported about domestic violence comes from women who have sought assistance from shelters, counselors and other formal sources of assistance. There are, therefore, likely to be a great number of women who have escaped from abusive relationships through their own efforts or with assistance of informal sources of support. With these concerns in

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mind, the present study includes a focus on the strategies of women to avoid domestic violence.

Domestic violence in this study is defined as physical abuse that involves delivering a blow or using a gun, a knife, or any other weapon against the wife or cohabiting partner by the husband or partner. This study explores the following factors in relation to domestic violence:

- a) wife's level of education in relation to that of her husband.
- b) the wife's income compared to that of her husband.
- c) the strategies devised by the wife to avoid violence in the household, including the factors contributing to a decrease in the extent of violence.

Education is investigated in this study because it has some important functions in the society. It can be argued that education has counteracted the inequalities of the society by maintaining a standard to determine rewards to be allocated to a person. The ability of a person to perform a task is largely determined by the skills obtained through education. Education has created greater social and economic equality and has facilitated upward mobility, irrespective of gender. Therefore, there is a direct link between education and the possibility of a better income. Feminist theory maintains that before the Second World War, women had a limited choice in educational qualification, were paid less than men, and were denied the right to wage labor because of being associated with household work. It could be argued that education served as an agency of social control to legitimize the existing class structure rather than promoting social

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change. The women's movement that started in the early 1960s brought changes that resulted in women's rights being protected by law. The women's movement was instrumental in making it possible for income to be determined by a person's level of education rather than by gender or class. To the extent that a higher level of education results in higher income, it could be argued that employers view educational achievement as an indication of individual capability. The income variable also involves the question of power, which, according to the feminist perspective of the male-dominated society, is associated with men. There have been allegations that men do not accept equality with women because they regard it as a demotion of their ascribed statuses. Stress theory maintains that domestic violence is linked to stress, and low income has been indicated as one of the stressors.

The issue of a power struggle between husband and wife is therefore linked to domestic violence. This is associated with stratification in the society in which men are regarded as superior to women. The neoclassical perspective portrays a democratic system in which individuals compete in a free market on the basis of their individual capabilities and are rewarded according to criteria determined by measurements of performance. Such a view contrasts with the feminist view of male authority.

Domestic violence is a worldwide problem, occurring in both more developed and less developed countries. Accounts have been presented by writers from many countries. Freedman (1985) states that in Canada, one of ten women in marriage relationships is beaten by her husband.

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Bowker (1983) says that cases of domestic violence in the United States exceeded one million from 1973 through 1975. Most divorce cases in the United States result from spousal abuse (Hirsch 1981). The problem must be addressed because the domestic unit is responsible for the primary socialization of children. The social learning theory paradigm suggests that the result of unchecked domestic violence will be an aggressive society because children imitate the behavior of adults. According to Bowker (1983), women in abusive relationships are reluctant to seek help from the police because the police are not trained or competent in handling such cases.

This study aims to contribute to the understanding of domestic violence by analyzing information from semi-structured interviews with Latinos in a major urban center in the United States.

I have been intrigued by the problem of domestic violence, especially the question of why human beings would want to inflict pain on others, especially on those with whom they are emotionally involved. In trying to trace the origin of this behavior, I have based my argument on the nonhuman primates, which share a common ancestor with hominids. It is my belief that if the problem of domestic violence were genetically inherited, there would be traceable signs in some of the nonhuman primates, for example, the chimpanzees, which share a common ancestor with humans. Studies of chimpanzees, however, have noted no aggressive behavior between males and females (Zihlman 1981).

The problem of domestic violence has often been ignored or denied. Bannon (1976) points out that the existence of domestic violence was denied because it was regarded as a private matter, even

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by the victims themselves. The present study agrees with Bannon that one strategy to deal with domestic violence is to make it a public matter, write about it, make people know it exists.

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CHAPTER 2
STUDIES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AND AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY PARTICIPANTS

This chapter presents a review of previous research on domestic violence pertaining to the variables in this study: education of the wife in relation to that of the husband; income of the wife in relation to that of the husband; and the strategies devised to bring about positive changes in abusive behavior. Background material includes: definitions of domestic violence; feminist perspectives; and stress theory. The chapter also presents an overview of the community in which the study was conducted and the specific orientation towards the target population.

Definition of Domestic Violence

Campbell (1992) distinguishes between wife battering and wife beating. To her, battering is an act that is directed towards women and is characterized by ongoing, severe forms of violence, whereas wife beating occurs occasionally and is a mild form of violence. Schattmaier (1987) defines domestic violence as physical attacks, threats of physical attacks, and psychological attacks, such as humiliating remarks by a man to dominate or control a woman with whom he is or has been in an intimate relationship. Hampton and Coner-

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Edwards (1993) define domestic violence as a behavior pattern that occurs in physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic forms developed to perpetuate intimidation, power, and control of the abusing spouse over the abused spouse.

Feminist Perspectives on Domestic Violence

Feminists view domestic violence as a reflection of a male-dominated society (McKee 1982; Lateef 1982). An investigation of the collapse of development projects in Mexico and India because of the reluctance of women to participate revealed that such projects were empowering women, which was a threat to their husbands who retaliated by beating them (Heise et al. 1994). Violence against women is said to be rooted in social institutions that perpetuate hierarchical gender relations through socialization and socioeconomic inequality (Heise et al. 1994; Ramos 1969).

Dobash and Dobash (1979) see domestic violence as related to patriarchal domination. The patriarchal order of the society legitimizes male superiority by promoting inequalities between men and women. The society has embraced male superiority in material ways; for example, men earn more than women irrespective of experience or educational qualification (Straus 1980; Stets 1988; Viano 1992). Men who own resources are able to exercise control over women, and those who do not, use physical violence to maintain their positions (Banks 1990; Straus 1980). According to Straus, men cannot accept equality of power with women, and this is said to contribute to domestic violence.

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Stress Theory

Stress theory points towards stress as being related to domestic violence (Craig 1990; Cox 1990; Stets 1988; Straus 1980). Low income as well as unemployment lead to the inability of the husband to perform his male role, such as providing for the material needs of the family, and this results in stress. Straus and Smith (1990) have pointed out that the 1985 National Family Violence Resurvey showed that the rate of abuse among Latino couples was fifty-four percent higher than that among Anglo couples. The census report of 1989 showed that the average Anglo family's annual income was \$30,600 compared to \$13,800 for a first generation Latino family (Chapa and Valencia 1993). Pandian (1985) has stated that the rate of alcohol consumption is high among the Latinos in the United States. Some writers regard drinking as a means of building self-esteem by providing psychological relief from stress (Cox 1990; McClelland and Davis 1972).

Previous Research on Domestic Violence

In this section previous research that involves domestic violence is reviewed, to look at what this behavior is attributed to in these studies. Also the information pertaining to the strategies for avoiding violence is explored.

Lateef (1992) did a qualitative study among Indo-Fijians on wife abuse in 1983 and 1987. The aim of the study was to investigate the

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reasons for, the context of, and the nature of violence imposed on Indo-Fijian wives by their husbands. The findings based on case studies revealed that physical violence was used by husbands as a means of exerting power and control over their wives.

Dutton's (1995, 1988) studies of domestic violence are based on case histories of the victims as well as of the abusers, who were in psychotherapy. The study involved adult males, comprised of groups of men who were: happily married; maritally conflicted but not violent to their wives; men who had an assaultive behavior relating to their wives as well as to other people. The experimental group were men who assaulted their wives but were not involved in violence outside marriage. The wife assaulters as well as the assaultive group were men who had been referred for treatment to the Assaultive Husbands Project by the Vancouver Family Court or other institutions; they participated voluntarily in the study. The happily married group participated voluntarily in the studies following advertisements in local newspapers. The objective of this research was to find out why men assault their wives. A salient finding was that all respondents were either abused as children or grew up in families where the parents were involved in fights. According to Dutton, violence was a psychological factor that was related to powerlessness during childhood. The power that these men did not have during childhood, they later tried to exert on their wives. He emphasized the quest for power and control by referring to people such as O. J. Simpson who "treated their wives like possessions that had to be controlled." According to Dutton, when men feel they are losing that power they

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A study by McKee (1992) in 1975 to 1976, in Las Flores, Ecuador, asserts that domestic violence culminates from feelings of subordination of men by women. The data were based on eleven cases, randomly selected from a sample of fifty-two families. The customary pattern of land inheritance led to men's feelings of subordination; by custom, women inherit a portion of land from their parents on marriage in this society, but the inheritance of property by males might be postponed until the death of the man's parents. Therefore, the newly married couple depended on the land owned by the wife for subsistence. According to McKee, male superiority was strongly supported in this society, and economic resources, such as the control of property, were means of establishing dominance. Therefore, the conflict between the two institutions of male dominance and female inheritance of property are seen as promoting domestic violence. Women are allowed to inherit property, which is a resource that is associated with power. Therefore, men use domestic violence to restore their status that has been diminished by the land inheritance custom that makes women, at least in the early years of marriage, owner of the main resources that support household.

A study similar to the present study was done by William J. Hauser (1982). His sample consisted of one hundred (100) female college students at the University of Akron, Ohio, who were either married, widowed, or divorced. The data were collected in 1978, through negotiations with faculty members to allow members of their classes to participate in the study. Questionnaires were then distributed to

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those who met the criteria. To test his hypothesis about a relationship between domestic violence and resources, he looked at education, income, and occupation of the respondents in relation to their spouses. The analysis examined the conditions in which conditions physical violence was most likely to occur, focussing on the relationship between physical violence and relative control over resources. The results revealed that in households in which the wife had a higher salary; higher level of education; and a better job than the husband, there was more violence. It was also shown that in households in which the husband had a higher level of education, there was less violence. This was a quantitative study, and the sample was chosen from university women; it is not, therefore, representative of the wider population.

Wilt and Bannon (1977) investigated the circumstances leading to assault between husband and wife in Detroit. The economic problem was found to be a contributory factor in 19 households. Insufficient financial means led to resentments between husband and wife, with some women accusing their spouses of incompetence because they were unable to meet the needs of the family.

Holtaling and Sugarman (1990), analyzed data from the National Family Violence study that was collected by Straus et al. in 1980. The data was from a cluster sample of 2,143 families in which one adult family member was interviewed. A total of 960 men and 1183 women were interviewed, but Holtaling and Sugarman focused on female respondents only. Their aim was to detect the factors that put women at high risk of being assaulted by their spouses. They found that women in the low

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socioeconomic status were at higher risk of being assaulted than those in well-to-do households.

Mitchell's (1992) study in Wapeland, New Guinea, investigated why there was no domestic violence among the Wape. The data were collected during an eighteen-month field trip in 1970 to 1972 and brief visits in 1982 and 1989. Data included relevant court records reviewed during these visits. The results showed that women who experience abuse by their husbands commit suicide, and this act stigmatizes the husband's family. The Wape also believe that the ancestors disapprove of domestic violence. Therefore, the fear of the supernatural enabled them to control their anger. In addition, the Catholic and Protestant missionaries are regarded as having promoted harmony in Wape households by regarding abusive bad behavior as unChristian. Finally, the government laws against domestic violence helped prevent abusive behavior. Thus, according to Mitchell, fear of stigma, the supernatural powers of the ancestors, religion, and law combine in preventing domestic violence in Wape society.

Craddock (1980) did a study in Australia to test Tallman's hypothesis that the person who has authority is the person who is more likely to make decisions in the household. This study involved forty-two couples; the procedure was to assess the couples before and after marriage for a period of six months. Each couple was given a problem to solve and required to reach a joint decision of how they would come to a satisfactory solution to the problem. The discussion was tape recorded; nobody else was present during the session. The results showed that authority depended on the problem being solved and the

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values possessed by each couple. Issues such as job transfers mainly favored the man's decision, whereas issues that involved decisions about child discipline and religion depended on whether the couple had common values. In cases in which they had different values, centralized authority inhibited reasoning, whereas for couples who had common values, centralized authority facilitated reasoning. In cases involving financial management, the wives were either suppressed by their husbands or deferred to them. This study is limited, however, because the couples were aware that the problems were not real. Different results could be anticipated if the problems were genuine.

An Overview of the Detroit Community

Detroit, Michigan, has a total population of about 4 million, of which the majority is black (Darden et al. 1987; Sinclair and Thompson 1977). The Latinos in Detroit consist of people of Mexican descent, who are the largest group, people of Puerto Rican descent, and people of Cuban descent (Lebeaux 1973). Detroit has some of renowned industries, such as the automobile industry, in addition to trading centers. The prospect of job opportunities attracted immigrants from all over the United States (Darden et al. 1987).

The society is stratified by both race and class. Place of residence depends on both factors; for example, Dearborn, Ferndale, and Hazel Park in the 1940s were white suburbs, and this was reinforced by the Detroit Housing Commission as well as the Federal Housing Administration (Darden et al. 1987). A large number of Mexican Americans are in areas that are adjacent to the business center, such

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as West Bagley Street. Most of the poor people stay in this area because most of the houses are not in good condition and so the rent is low (Sinclair and Thompson 1977). The Latinos have encountered problems related to staying in these areas because, according to Gonzales (1990), some insurance companies charge more for areas that are designated as undesirable. In addition, according to Gonzales, prices of items in supermarkets in these areas are higher than in affluent neighborhoods. According to Harrison and Kennedy (1994), Latinos are at high risk of substance abuse because of the misfortunes they are faced with. Julian and McKenry (1993) have implicated alcohol as a cause of domestic violence in 60 to 85 percent of reported cases in the United States. In Detroit, the mayor is black, and therefore one might expect an improvement in the social conditions of the minority groups but it is not the case. Sinclair and Thompson (1977) state that the ultimate control of power is the state, and local forces can do nothing about it.

Orientation to the Target Population

The population of Mexican Americans in the United States totalled about 12.6 million in 1989 (Vigil 1984). The geographical distribution of the Latinos in the United States is skewed toward the southwestern states, an area once part of Mexico. Many Latinos from the Southwest did not have job skills, and the majority could not speak English, making it very difficult for them to be employable (Gonzales 1990).

Latinos have the lower levels of educational attainment than other groups, such as Blacks and whites, in the United States (Saldana

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1994). In 1989, for example, in the 18-to-24 age group, 82.1 percent of whites had completed high school, 78.1 percent of African Americans had completed high school, and just 55.9 percent of Hispanics had completed high school (Milk 1994). Undereducation has a major impact on unemployment and is the reason for the concentration of unskilled labor in low-paying jobs. Lower income and the inability to meet the needs of the family contribute to higher rates of domestic violence. Some writers have pointed out that the school dropout rate is high among Latinos (Milk 1994; Saldana 1994). In addition, performance at school is often poor because of lack of interest. According to Gonzales (1990), Latino children receive less praise than Anglo children because there are few Latino teachers on school staffs. English language incompetency affects them because the instructions are given in English, and Spanish is not taught (Lamb 1970; Chapa and Valencia 1993). The low socioeconomic status of their parents affects the children's school performance because they live in overcrowded conditions with no place to study. In America, a place of residence defines which school a child should go to, and in most cases, the schools serving areas in which minority groups live are poorly financed and staffed by unqualified teachers (Jenks et al. 1972; Reyes and Valencia 1993; Chapa and Valencia 1993).

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CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter explains how the data were collected, how the respondents were obtained, how the interviews were conducted, and how the data were analyzed.

Data Collection Procedures

The principal investigator responsible for the collection of data was Dr. Merry Morash, chair and professor in the School of Criminal Justice. The co-investigator was Dr. Anna Santiago, who, previous to becoming a professor, was a social worker responsible for counseling battered women and their children in the late 1970s. Ten bilingual interviewers were selected from the Latino community in Detroit. These interviewers were received intensive training by the investigators. The investigators were assisted by their colleagues as well as by graduate and undergraduate students.

The Sample

The sample consists of Latinos residing in the Detroit metropolitan area; Latinos includes people from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, as well as other Spanish-speaking areas. The sample was selected from the telephone directory of this area and supplemented with information from local community listings, such as church directories. The

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eligibility criteria was the presence of a married or a cohabiting couple in the household; screening was done to determine these factors. This sample was ideal because one of the objectives of the study was to compare levels of violence between different Latino ethnic and socioeconomic groupings. To avoid bias, because not all Latinos have access to phones and some have unlisted numbers, the investigators made inquiries among participants about other people who might be interested in participating in the study; in this way, they managed to include some who did not have phones or who had unlisted numbers. The interviewers eventually interviewed 165 adult female respondents from this sample.

Data Gathering

The data were collected in the winter of 1991 by bilingual interviewers from Detroit. The interviewers were supervised by the field supervisors, and their activities were monitored during the entire phase of data collection. The co-investigators made bi-weekly visits to the field supervisor and the interviewing team. Each interviewer was assigned to interview about 40 households. Daily activities of the interviewers were monitored by means of their logs. They submitted completed interviews weekly to the supervisor, who made a thorough check of them. In addition, the field supervisor could be contacted at any times should problems arise in the interview. The interviewers were instructed to abandon the interview if there was any objection from the spouse.

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The Instrument

A questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions was used for collecting data. The questions were constructed in both English and Spanish. The interview questions were constructed in such a way that issues related to gender role expectations, national origin, and level of acculturation, as well as background information pertaining to witnessing or experiencing violence in childhood, were covered. Issues about stress related to family violence were covered in questions directed at the employment status of the respondent as well as that of the spouse. The instruments were pretested during September and October 1991 on Latina women who were shelter clients in the Detroit area.

The Present Study

In this study, a qualitative paradigm was chosen in order to focus on understanding the relationship between relative education and relative income of husbands compared to their wives as factors in violence and to investigate the strategies to avoid violence. I found the Latino data ideal for my own study because, as a minority group in the United States, they are subject to problems similar to those of minority groups elsewhere. Therefore, the findings will not apply not just to the United States but to other countries as well. Policy makers will be able to use this information to address interests of other groups. Minority groups, such as the Latinos and women, will benefit because some of the issues that affect them will be clarified and addressed. These groups are not usually represented when policies

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that affect them are made; therefore, this will be one of the ways of sending the message across. The study will lay a foundation for further research by those scholars interested in this field.

My study focused only on Latinos of Mexican descent with a sample of 27 of the 165 respondents interviewed. I analyzed forty cases on the first disk of the interview material and selected only the respondents of Mexican descent. From the group of respondents of Mexican descent, I selected all violent cases, of which there were nine. No violence was involved in the remaining 31 cases. Of the 31 nonviolent cases, I selected 18 for comparison with the violent cases. The issues covered were those pertaining to the level of education of the wife in relation to that of her husband; the income of the wife compared to that of her husband; and, the strategies devised by the wife to avoid violence, including factors contributing to a decrease in violence in the household. Educational level is important because salary as well as employment opportunities are related to the level of education (Hauser 1982).

Ethical Issues

Dr. Morash had submitted her study to Michigan State University for human subjects review. I also submitted my part of the study to Michigan State for human subjects review. The guidelines pertaining to the requirements were adhered to at all times. The data were kept in a safe place that was not accessible to other people. Pseudonyms were used for the respondents to avoid identification. As part of confidentiality, the real identities of the respondents were not known to me because I was not involved in the collection of data.

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Data Analysis

The analysis is divided into three parts: the level of education of the wife in relation to that of her husband; the income of the wife compared to that of her husband; and the strategies devised by the wife to avoid violence including factors that contributed to a decrease in violence in the household. Therefore, partial transcripts were analyzed to limit the information available about each respondent and focus on the variables being investigated. To accomplish this, responses to open-ended questions to characterize women's statements were reviewed. In this way, women's statements to open-ended questions were able to yield a more complex analysis, which provided a basis for hypothesizing causes of domestic violence. In addition to open-ended questions, some information came from quantitative questions. One aim is to find out whether women who are more educated and are earning more than their husbands are more likely to be abused than those who are less educated and earning less than their husbands. The results are then compared and contrasted with those households in which violence was not experienced.

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CHAPTER 4

REPORTING OF CASES AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data reporting is based on twenty-seven cases among Latinos of Mexican origin in the Detroit metropolitan area. Domestic violence was experienced in 9 households of 27 cases analyzed. In this chapter, data pertaining to the 9 cases of domestic violence and 18 of nonviolent households is reported and analyzed. Variables used to analyze the data are: the level of education of women in relation to their husbands; the income of women in comparison to that of their husbands; and, the strategies devised by women to avoid violence, including the factors that have contributed in bringing about positive changes in the households. Two tables, one on violent and the other on nonviolent cases, supplement the narratives. Findings from violent and nonviolent households are compared and contrasted.

Violent Households

Although domestic violence includes both physical and verbal attacks, in this paper I concentrate on physical violence only, that is, delivering a blow or using a gun, a knife, or other weapon against the wife. This criteria was met by 9 of the 27 cases analyzed. Each case is reported in the following pattern: the key factors related to domestic violence between husband and wife; the data as reported by

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the respondent pertaining to the variables under investigation; and a summary of the wife's version of what she considers to lead to violence.

Case 1 (ID #500)

In this case, there is a power struggle between the husband and the wife related to the principles of male superiority and gender division of roles. The strategies devised to maintain these principles in the face of education of women as well as their entry in the labor market are also demonstrated.

Sarah is about 39 years old, and her husband is 40. They have two children, one nine years old and the other's age not stated. These are the only people in this household. The husband has been in the United States for 20 years; how long Sarah has been in the United States is unknown. Sarah is a college graduate and the husband a high school graduate. They are both fully employed. The husband is a "pump operator" in two garages. The husband feels he is treated with dignity on the job and is satisfied with his salary considering his ability. He feels, however, that his boss has too much power over his life. Sarah holds a management job and has been in the same job for ten years. She provides more than half of the household income. Both spouses are members of the Catholic Church.

Fights between Sarah and her husband started after two years of marriage, when she could not get the things she wanted. In her words, "Because of the economy, you cannot make it, even though we don't live in Troy or Bloomfield Hills." Sarah described her husband as, "a male



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chauvinist pig," because he expected her to do everything in the house even though she was working long hours in her job. He would drink and stay out all night, and if she questioned him, he would respond by hitting her. She stated that she tried to be home for her husband and children and also to have his dinner on the table, but it was hard to do that after working long hours. She elaborated that when she was on maternity leave, the situation got worse; in her words, "He wanted to show that he was macho, it was like he owned me." She said that she was once separated from her husband and got together with him again after one and a half years.

On a question about the reaction of her parents towards the abusive relationship, she admitted that her parents did not like her husband, but they did not interfere in their marriage because, according to her, they knew that the situation would improve. Sarah stated that according to Mexican culture, an ideal husband is supposed to be hard working and provide for the needs of the family. In addition, he is accorded the power to tell everyone in his household what to do. On the other hand, an ideal wife in Sarah's words is, " A slave, housewife, to have his dinner on the table, does not work, and has 50 million kids."

Sarah thinks that the reason that fights were more frequent when she was on maternity leave was that she was at home all the time. When she went back to work, things improved because according to her, " I am the agitator, I was not there to nag him." She also attributed changes in abusive behavior to the fact that they were growing older and therefore more understanding. She explained that her husband's

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expectations about her role as a wife have changed. He now shares in household chores such as preparation of meals and disciplining children. "He is so good to me now; separation gave him some time to think. He found that living in America is not like living in Mexico. He does not want me barefoot and pregnant; [he said] that eating beans and rice is not a life." Sarah now takes part in decisions that involve the family; for example, she decides who should do particular chores in the household. She shops for groceries, pays the family bills, and drives the family car as much as her husband does. According to her, times change and people also change. She maintains, however, that it is very important to keep Mexican tradition and is very proud of being Mexican. Both English and Spanish are spoken in the household, and they still maintain contact with relatives in Mexico.

In this household, Sarah was a college graduate and her husband was a high school graduate. Although both were fully employed, more than half of the household income was from the Sarah's job. Even so, Sarah's husband was satisfied with his salary considering his ability. Sarah attributed the lessening of the abuse she had experienced to several factors. One was her work. She reported that the abuse was worse when she was on maternity leave because she was home all the time. Separating from her husband, Sarah said, helped because it gave him time to think. In addition, she attributed changes to the fact that they were both growing older and therefore more understanding towards each other. She also stated that her husband's expectations

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about her role as a wife had changed; he now shares in household chores such as preparation of meals and disciplining children.

According to this data, it seems that the husband was not able to fulfill culturally prescribed roles, and therefore, not able to uphold the principle of male superiority in the view of the wife. The wife was highly educated and earning more; this was part of what led to the power struggle and to spousal abuse.

Case 2 (ID #164)

This is a case in which different gender role expectations led to strife. The presence of the extended family as an additional factor in maintaining such ideas is also shown.

Thelma is 42 years old and her husband 51. They have 4 children who live with them. The ages of three of their children are 17, 15, and 10; the age of the fourth child was not stated. There are 6 people in the household, including the respondent. Thelma's husband has an eighth-grade education, and he is fully employed at a automobile factory. He feels that the pay is not enough, considering his ability, that his boss has too much power over his life, and that he is not treated with dignity at work. Thelma has had "some college" and is fully employed at "some clerical job." More than half of the income in this household is from Thelma's job. Thelma and her husband are both members of the Catholic Church.

Thelma had experienced violence at home in the past. Her parents had verbal as well as physical fights because her father was very jealous. Her mother was also very strict with her children and did not

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give them time to play with their friends but encouraged them to attend school and do home chores. Thelma stated that she was hit twice by her mother. To resolve these fights, her mom bought her presents, including a dress in one instance. One of these episodes was very serious because her mother had used a metal wire, which bruised her arms and legs. "The school called her, and my mom never hit me again. I am thankful my mom did it to discipline me because look at how happy and successful I am now. I wouldn't call her abusive, rather strict."

Fights in this household started near the beginning of their marriage. Thelma had a baby at the time and had just moved to the United States to join her husband, who was staying with his grandmother. Thelma at some stage decided to hit back at her husband, as demonstrated by the grandmother's plea: "Don't hit my grandson, please don't do that." According to Thelma, the fights were mostly triggered by "his laziness and unwillingness to change." She wanted her husband to go back to school, but all he did was watch television. Thelma is a very active person, and her husband hates that as he wants her to stay at home and watch television as well. "When I leave the house, it causes more fights. He tells me I waste time and I should be home, but I say we were not going anywhere anyway. The way my husband thinks is very different than the way I think. Tomorrow is not important to him, but it is for me and my kids. My husband has no desire to change the way things are. He is not motivated to make things better the way I am." Thelma also stated that saying "inappropriate things" to the other person contributes to fights. "For

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instance, I asked him to put a battery in the car. He refused to do it. I got angry and said things I shouldn't have."

Thelma stated that according to the Mexican culture, an ideal husband should be the one who provides for the needs of the whole family. According to her, her husband does not meet these expectations. "He is working, but just because you work doesn't mean that he's responsible. He doesn't try." On the other hand, an ideal wife should "be home, raising kids, pursuing dreams, behaving properly, being a wife, mother, domestic engineer." Thelma said that she was trying to meet these expectations. "As a working mother and wife, I try the best I can to be supportive of my family. I try to do best with kids, try to teach them moral behavior, try the best I can to lead them best way. At first, I wanted to have the choice to work, but then in the USA, I realized I had to work. I wish I could give 100% at home but I can't, working 12 hours per day."

At the time of the interview, Thelma explained that there had been positive changes in the household. She attributed these changes to the fact that her husband's grandmother had moved out of the house, and also her strategies to shut her mouth and get out of the house as often as she could. "We talk and communicate now; too many people were living in our house. When his grandmother moved out, it was better." Mexican culture is maintained in the household, as shown by the use of Spanish, and Thelma is very proud of being Mexican. The family also maintains contact with the husband's relatives living outside Detroit.

Thelma was a college graduate and her husband's level of education was eighth grade. They were both fully employed, Thelma was doing



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clerical work and her husband working at a car factory. More than half of the household income was from Thelma; her husband felt that his salary was inadequate considering his ability. Thelma wanted her husband to go back to school, but according to her, he was lazy and the future was not important to him. At the time of the interview, conditions had improved in this household, and Thelma attributed this to the fact that the grandmother who had been staying with them had out. She also stated that she has devised a strategy of shutting her mouth and getting out of the house as often as possible. They also resolve some of the problems by talking, and according to her, communication helps.

In this household, Thelma seems to be blaming her husband's grandmother for interfering in their disputes and herself for saying things that she should not have said to her husband.

Case 3 (ID #305)

This case illustrates the gender division of roles and male superiority in the household. It also brings up the problem of interference by relatives, which seems to aggravate misunderstanding between husband and wife.

Dorah was 39 years old, her husband 42 and they had three children. The oldest got married in March 1992 and was no longer staying with them. The remaining two children were 13 and 12 years old. There were, therefore, four people in this household. The husband had been in the United States for 25 years. They were both members of the Catholic Church, and neither had any formal schooling. The husband was fully

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employed as a "cement finisher." Dorah was a "field outreach technician," a job that involved taking blood pressure and checking urine for "sugar diabetes." She had been employed in other jobs since 1983. Less than half of the family income was from the wife.

Dorah had experienced violence when she was growing up. Her parents were involved in both physical and verbal fights because they both drank alcohol. She elaborated that her mother was very jealous and her father was actually her stepfather. During these fights, she was sometimes hit by the stepfather when trying to stop him from hitting her mother. Sometimes her "stepdad" would yell at her and she would go to bed crying.

The fights between Dorah and her husband started early in their marriage. Dorah described the financial state at that time as having been a "shaky one" in the household. They disagreed about money and payment of bills. "It was hard to please him because he would always be counting the money." Other fights, according to Dorah, were caused by the interference of family members. The most serious fight was when Dorah had a knife and initially wanted to kill him, but then decided to back off because, according to her, "It was not worth it." Dorah stated that her husband wanted ". . . to be the head of the home. He does not want me to be me. No 50-50 percent, no 75-25 percent." Another fight was triggered by what he said to her in front of his family. "I was making a Mexican dish that I had done alone before. He said, "Don't let her do it because she does not know how to do this."

An ideal husband, according to Dorah, should be the sole supporter of the family, a person who takes time to watch and play with his

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children. She described her husband as a person who "does not spend enough time with his children." The ideal wife, according to her, is "the slave of the husband, a mother; she should be there for the children. . . . I am a lousy homemaker and I guess wife too. I try to be a friend to my children."

Positive changes started when Dorah's oldest daughter turned 10 years of age. Communication improved as they began to listen to each other's problems. "He is more understanding. . . . I don't tell him certain things that might get him upset after a day at work." She elaborated that her husband began to know her, not what his family told him about her. "Over the years, I would tell him that I am not going to kiss his family's butt." She also motivated her husband by saying that they were going to make it because "God does not tighten the rope to choke them." Dorah maintains that it is very important to keep tradition and is very proud of being Mexican. Most of her friends are Mexican, and she also maintains contact with relatives outside Detroit. They speak both English and Spanish in the household; the neighborhood is primarily non-Latino.

Dorah and her husband had no formal education, and less than half of the household income was from Dorah. She was employed as a field outreach technician and her husband was working as a cement finisher. Dorah said that there were improvements in the household, abuse had decreased. This she attributed to communication, listening to each other's problems, and avoiding interference by the husband's family members. She also elaborated that she told her husband that she was not going to let his family interfere in their marriage. Another

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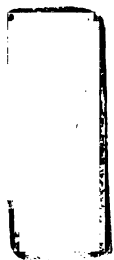
strategy she used was not to tell her husband things that might upset him, especially after a day at work. She also consoled her husband by pointing out that whatever problems they encounter, God was always there for them and they were going to make it.

Dorah blames the family and herself for the fights in the household. According to her, the husband's family had an influence over her husband; he listened to them rather than to her. She also described herself as a "lousy homemaker" and "lousy wife," which is an indication that she sees herself as not being competent in performing her roles.

Case 4 (ID #280)

This case deals with gender role expectations and the poor economic situation related to unemployment of the husband.

Harriet and her husband were both 37 years old and had been married for 20 years. They had four children, two of whom were living with them, but information about their ages was not available. There were, therefore, four people in the household, including the respondent. The husband had been in the United States for 25 years, but Harriet's duration of stay in the United States was not stated. Harriet was a four-year college graduate, and her husband's level of education was eighth grade. They were both fully employed. The husband was an airplane caterer. The husband felt that the pay he got was not enough considering his ability, though he was treated with dignity in the job. Harriet's income was more than her husband's but information



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about her job is not available. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

Harriet stated that fights in this household started early in their marriage. According to her, the first five years of their marriage were the most difficult financially, because they had very little, not even a place of their own. They had relocated from Texas; her husband could not speak English; and neither of them could find a job.

"Unemployment, financial difficulties, housing problems, we didn't have a place of our own. He didn't speak English. It was a terrible time." Their friends tried to help them find jobs, but it was difficult because they had no skills. This situation resulted in anger in both of them, which neither was able to verbalize. Harriet said that she was the one who started the fights out of frustration. "The first time we fought I was devastated; I never thought I could get so angry. I slapped him and to my surprise he slapped me back." She went on to state that in this particular episode they fought like two men. It was a violent fight and stopped when they were both physically exhausted. According to Harriet, an ideal husband should be responsible for the financial support of the family and an ideal wife for the domestic chores and keeping the family Mexican-oriented. She stated that if her husband tried hard enough he could find a job. She believed that her husband was obliged to support her.

At the time of the interview, there were positive changes in this household in that the violent behavior had stopped. "It all stopped, the physical and verbal fights. We've been married for almost 20 years. We've come a long way." This she attributed to employment,

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advice, and therapy. They got advice from their clergy and they also got into therapy where they got a lot of material on marriage to read. They were then able to be partners in their marriage. When Harriet got a job, her husband initially thought that she could cope with the household chores together with being employed, but he soon realized that she could not. He then started helping with household duties. She stated, "It was difficult to be 100 percent mother, wife, and be employed." Harriet has also stated that in all their arguments she is the one who always gets her way.

Harriet had experienced violence when she was growing up. Her parents were involved in violent fights about women, alcohol, and drugs. According to Harriet, these fights were never resolved, but her parents would make up the following day as if nothing had happened. Harriet was very proud of being Mexican, this was demonstrated by speaking Spanish in the household. She also stated that it was very important to maintain Mexican tradition.

Harriet was a college graduate, whereas her husband's level of education was eighth grade. She was also earning more than her husband, and her husband felt that the salary he was given was not enough considering his ability. The husband was an airplane caterer, but Harriet's type of job has not been stated. Harriet stated that decrease in violence was experienced when her husband was employed. She also attributed change to advice from their clergy and to therapy where they got reading material on marriage.

In this household, Harriet blamed the poor economic situation and herself for domestic violence. She stated that unemployment of her

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husband frustrated her, and according to her, it was the role of the husband to support her.

Case 5 (ID #255)

This case deals with a poor economic situation despite the fact that both husband and wife are employed. The inability to meet the basic needs of the family culminates into stress which leads to fights.

Barbara's age has not been stated in the data, but her husband was 30 years old, and they had two young children. There were seven people in the household, including the respondent, but it was not clear what relation they were to the couple. The husband had been in the United States for 20 years, but no information was noted about the wife. Her husband left Mexico for the United States because he did not have a good job there. The level of education of the husband has been stated as "some high school" and hers as seventh grade. They were both fully employed. The husband was a construction laborer. He felt that the salary he was given was enough considering his ability, but admitted that he was not treated with dignity on the job and also that his boss had too much power over his life. Barbara was employed at a school preparing food and had been in this job for one year. Less than half income in the household was from Barbara's job. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

An ideal husband, according to Barbara, is supposed to be hardworking, responsible, and fulfill family obligations. The ideal wife should stay at home and fulfill her obligations to the family.

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Barbara experienced violence at her home when she was growing up. Her parents fought and sometimes stopped talking to each other for days. When the children had done something wrong, her father put the blame on her mother. There were also financial problems, and in addition, her father was cheating on her mother.

Violence in Barbara's household started at the beginning of their marriage, to such a degree that at some stage her parents commented that they should not have married. Barbara stated that economic pressure makes people to act in a way they would not normally act. "Cuando se esta soltera se piensa mas bien, se idealiza el matrimonio pero cuando se vive la realidad es muy duro." (When one is single, one idealizes marriage, but when one hits reality, it is very hard). Barbara sees financial security in the household as very important for the future of the children. On the other hand, she said her husband does not care and does not show any responsibility for the welfare of the children. Her husband does not worry about anything; he says that money comes and goes. According to Barbara, the majority of bad things happened when her husband was drunk. He would go to parties without telling her and expect her not to be upset when he came back.

Barbara stated that she once left her husband and stayed with her grandmother because she wanted a divorce. Her husband got there and took their child by force for the whole day. He told her that if he called the police, she would never see the child again. She then went back and stayed with him, "Soportar la vida que llevo, sin estar de acuerdo con ella." (To put up with the life I have, without agreeing to it). At the time of the interview, there was no improvement in the



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violent behavior in this household. Barbara stated, "Ese problema es muy dificil porque la mayoria de las veces una acepta las cosas aun cuando tu no estes de acuerdo, por evitar problemas." (That problem is very difficult because the majority of times one accepts things, even when you do not agree, in order to avoid conflict).

In this household the wife's level of education has been stated as seventh grade and that of the husband as "some high school." The wife was contributing less than half income in the household, and the husband, though his salary was more than his wife's, felt that it was not enough considering his ability. The husband was employed at a construction firm and the wife in a school preparing food. Barbara escaped abuse once by going to stay with her grandmother, but she had to go back to her husband when he took their child and threatened her that if she called the police, she would never see the child again. She went on to say that she simply accepts things as they are, though she is not happy about them, just to avoid violence.

Barbara blames alcohol for the behavior of her husband and blames herself for wanting things she knew they could not afford. She also put the blame for their poor financial state on the number of people in the household, which she said was seven, including herself.

Case 6 (ID #552)

In this household, there was a power struggle related to the fact that the husband was unemployed and the wife was employed. A change in gender roles between the husband and wife was accompanied by domestic violence.

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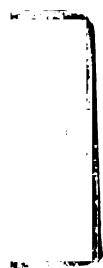
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Mikie was 37 years old and her husband was 39. They had three children, the oldest of whom was 12 years old, making five people in the household, including the respondent. The husband had been in the United States for 25 years, but no information was noted about the wife. Mikie was a high school graduate and her husband's level of education has been described as "some high school." They were both fully employed. Mikie was employed as a secretary at General Motors lien department, and more than half of the family income was from her job. Her husband was employed as a bartender at Wendy's. The husband felt that his salary was inadequate considering his ability, though he strongly agreed that he was treated with dignity on the job. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

An ideal husband, according to Mikie, is supposed to have high expectations and be supportive of his children's achievement. An ideal wife, on the other hand, should stay at home and watch the children all the time. She does not remember any violence at her home when she was growing up. In the household, both English and Spanish are spoken. Mikie felt that it was very important to maintain tradition and was also very proud of being Mexican.

Mikie stated that when violence started in her household the financial situation was bad because her husband was not employed. He is has epilepsy, and it was difficult for him to get a job, so she was the only one who was employed. Mikie stated that the fights would start over petty things, such as who should own the dogs in the household. Her husband once confessed that he was jealous of their older son. In one of these episodes, her husband went out to drink and



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when he came back they argued even more; he then threw a plastic basket at her.

At the time of the interview, the situation in this household had improved in that there were no fights anymore. Mikie attributed this to the employment of her husband. She stated that her husband is very helpful now; he cooks and helps with kids. The only thing that upsets him is the fact that he cannot drive the family car because he has epilepsy. The changes, according to Mikie, were first experienced four years ago. Now that he has a job, Mikie's husband does not want her to work. She stated that, "He got used to me being at home because I was laid off from work." A strategy devised by the wife to avoid conflict in the household is to discuss things together because, according to her, it is of no use to fight because they have responsibilities. In addition, to discussions she said, "If there is a subject that bothers him, I'll skip it and figure it out for myself."

In this household, the wife states that she was a high school graduate and she has described her husband's level of education as "some high school." She was employed as a secretary at General Motors, while her husband was a bartender at Wendy's. The wife was earning more than the husband, and according to her, her husband felt that the salary he got was not enough considering his abilities. The wife stated that what contributed to lessening of fights in the household was the employment of her husband; initially she was the only one who was employed. When her husband got a job, fights stopped but he wanted the wife to stop working. She said that discussing things together

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helped. In addition, she avoids violence by not bringing up things she knows would upset her husband.

Mikie attributed domestic violence to the unemployment of her husband and to the fact that he felt that she was giving more attention to their eldest son than to him. Therefore, domestic violence was a way of getting attention from the wife. It has also been noted that when the husband was employed, he wanted the wife to stop working.

Case 7 (ID #461)

This case illustrates domination of women by men and how the existing status quo could be perpetuated by relatives.

Cindy was 28 years old and her husband was 34. They had 5 children, the oldest of whom was 10 years old. There were seven people in the household, including the respondent. The husband had been in the United States for 20 years. The level of education for both of them was 7th grade. They were both fully employed. The wife was working at a clothes factory, and less than half of the household income was from her job. The husband was working at a construction company, and he felt that the pay he got was inadequate considering his ability and that his boss had too much power over his life. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

Cindy considered an ideal husband to be one who treats his wife well, is hard working, and takes care of his children. An ideal wife, according to her, should be hardworking, a good wife, and patient with the kids. She never witnessed violence at her home when she was

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growing up because she did not have a father. She is very proud of being Mexican and also feels that it is very important to maintain tradition. They speak Spanish in the household, and the majority of her friends are Mexican.

Fights in this household did not start at the beginning but during the course of the marriage. The first time they were involved in a fight, her husband was drunk and Cindy's sister told him things that were not true. During this episode, he had a knife and wanted to kill Cindy and her mother. She explained, "Me golpio, me avento al piso y me pego mucho, llore." (He hit me and threw me to the floor and hit a lot. I cried). They were separated after this episode, and she stayed with her mother. Her relatives were very happy when they were separating, but they got back together again after a short time. They went for counseling, and her husband stopped drinking for two months, but after that things became the same as before. She said that sometimes her husband would get drunk and demand food that sometimes they did not have and fighting would ensue. Describing another episode, she said, "Estabamos viendo una pelicula con las ninas y luego no quiso verla, me cogio y me golpio. (We were watching a movie with my daughters and then he did not want to see it, he grabbed and hit me). The reason was he did not like the movie they were watching. A friend of her husband's helped her by stopping him from continuing to hit her; she did not hit back.

At the time of the interview, the situation in this household was still grave, because her husband had not changed. Cindy stated that her husband did not want her to participate in decisions and that

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everything was resolved his own way; this frustrates her. In addition, he does not want the children to make noise and punishes them for doing so. "Le molestaba que los niños jugaran, gritaran, etc." (It bothered him that the kids played and screamed, etc.). Cindy explained that she was not sure what actually bothered her husband about her, but she was aware that his family never loved her. She stated that she tries to avoid being beaten by trying to keep him happy and avoiding doing things he does not like. She always asks for forgiveness because she does not want to be beaten in front of the children. What she would like to do to improve the state of her marriage is for her husband to go for counseling to stop drinking. She admits, however, that the situation is not as bad as it used to be, because her husband no longer expects supper on the table like he used to. "He has mellowed with age."

In this household, both spouses' level of education was seventh grade. The husband was working at a construction company and was earning more than the wife. She stated, however, that her husband felt that his salary was not enough considering his ability. Cindy stated that although the situation in her house was still not good, abuse has decreased slightly; this she attributed to getting older. Counseling also helped for two months but then her husband stopped going to appointments. She also avoids being beaten by trying to keep him happy and avoiding doing things he does not like. Sometimes she asks her husband to forgive her because, according to her, she does not want her husband to beat her in front of the children. She also lets her

husband make all the decisions in the household and does not participate at all.

Cindy blames alcohol for violence in the household; she says that in all the instances in which she was assaulted, her husband was drunk. She also blamed interference of other people in their affairs; for example, her sister told her husband things she was not supposed to have said, which resulted in her and her mother being nearly killed. She also blamed the husband's relatives because, she said, they never liked her and that could be related to the attitude of her husband towards her.

Case 8 (ID #76)

This case shows how stress brought about by unemployment affected the behavior of the husband and how stress was managed by the husband.

Sakie was 30 years old and her husband was 37. They had one child, whose age has not been stated. There is no information about the number of people in the household or how long they have been in the United States. Neither spouse had formal education. Sakie was not employed, but her husband was working at a factory. They were not members of any Church.

An ideal husband, according to Sakie, should provide for the needs of the family, and the ideal wife should be submissive, obedient and have many children. Sakie had no experience of violence at her home when she was growing up. She felt that it was very important to maintain tradition and was also very proud of being Mexican. They spoke Spanish in the household and most of her friends were Mexican.

Sakie explained that gambling and alcohol changed her household, from a happy home to one full of fights. She elaborated that her husband even spends the household money on these pleasures. These changes started three to four years ago, ". . .despues de que el perdio el trabajo fijo que tenia y ahora vamos de un lugar de aqui y para alla, y prontito, nos mudamos para otro lugar a ver que hay de mejorar." (. . . when he lost his job, which was stable, and now we go from one place to another. Very soon we will move to another place. We will see if things get better). She elaborated that her husband was not honest; he cheats on her and denies it. At some stage, they lived apart because of these problems. Sometimes he would promise to take her to a place but at the appointed time he would fail to turn up. She would get very angry and the fighting would then start. She said, "El es muy boca grande, dira muchas cosas, muy repelon." (He has a big mouth, he will say many things). She went on to say, "Pues que a mi me gusta que me lleve a bailar y el siempre con sus amigos." (Well, I would like him to take me dancing, but he is always with friends).

At the time of the interview, there was no improvement in this situation. Sakie attributed this to drinking and lack of understanding between her and her husband. She said, "Nunca mejor, de peor." (Never better, it gets worse and worse). She stated that she has changed; she listens and is more creative now, but her husband has not changed. Because she wants her marriage to stay intact, however, she has decided not to tell her husband anything that might get him upset and thus lead to violence.

In this household, neither Sakie nor her husband had any formal education. Sakie was not employed, but her husband was working at a factory temporarily. Sakie stated that because she wants her marriage to work, she has decided not to tell her husband anything that might upset him and lead to violence. She also elaborated that she has changed, but her husband has not.

Sakie blamed unemployment for the behavior of her husband. According to her, domestic violence coincided with her husband's loss of a stable job. She also blamed alcohol because her husband even spends household money for alcohol, and fights are triggered when he is confronted with these allegations.

Case 9 (ID #466)

This case illustrates domination of women by men and the strategies used to enforce male authority in the household.

Lilly was 57 years old and her husband was 66. They had four children, two of whom were grown and longer living at home. Therefore, there were four people in the household, including the respondent. Lilly had been in the United States for 39 years and her husband for 44 years. Lilly was a high school graduate, but she was not sure of the standard of education of her husband. Lilly was employed as a cook, and her husband was a retired steel worker. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

An ideal husband, according to Lilly, is a man who is considerate and loving to his wife, responsible and working for the family. On the other hand, an ideal wife, according to her, "una tonta" (is a dummy)

of the husband and should take care of the home. Lilly had experienced violence at her home when she was growing up. Her parents fought because her father was very particular about food. When he was dissatisfied with what had been prepared, he would throw his plate on the floor. Lilly explained that her mother never talked back when confronted by her dad. Lilly was very proud of being Mexican and felt that it was very important to keep tradition. They spoke Spanish in the household, and most of her friends were Mexican.

Lilly stated that fights in this household started at the beginning of their marriage; her husband was not employed at the time and she was pregnant. Her husband gambled and drank a lot at the time, and she had no one to share her frustrations with. She went on to explain that her husband is "macho"; he does not give her a chance to give an opinion, and he always has the last word. Arguing and questioning his behavior led to fights. At the time of the interview, the situation had not completely improved. Lilly stated that communication is very strained in their household because her husband is always angry. On very few occasions he asks to be forgiven. Lilly attributes his behavior to the fact that he was abused as a child. Lilly stated that there are slight changes in her household now because her husband no longer gambles or drinks and that the style of abuse has changed from physical to verbal. She attributed these changes to the fact that her husband is now old and sickly.

In this case, Lilly was a high school graduate but she does not remember the level of education of her husband. Her husband was a retired steelworker, and Lilly was still working as a cook. She stated

that fights in this household started when her husband was not employed. She said that some change in the abusive situation has occurred because her husband is now old and sickly. She does not offer her opinions in the household; her husband always has the last word.

Lilly attributed the behavior of her husband to the fact that he was abused as a child. She also blamed alcohol and gambling for domestic violence; according to her, now that her husband has stopped drinking and gambling, fights have stopped in the household.

Summary of Information about Violent Households

Eight of the nine respondents experienced domestic violence early in the marriage. Looking at the ages of the women, which range from 30 to 57 years, shows that they were young when fights started. Also they had young children when the fights started. One respondent (Dorah) pointed out that a decrease in violence in her household was experienced when her daughter was ten years old. Another respondent (Mikie) stated that when she experienced domestic violence in her household, her husband confessed that he was jealous of their older son because he was getting more attention from her. Now that the son and the couple are older, violence has decreased.

All nine respondents had similar beliefs about what they considered to be ideal roles, for example all of them regarded the husbands as being responsible for providing for the needs of family. They regarded women as being responsible for the home and not involved in working outside the home setting. The data has shown that four husbands initially did not want to participate in household chores and regarded

such activities as part of women's roles, even though their wives were employed. Related to belief in ideal roles, one woman (Thelma) expressed regret that she was not able to give 100 percent of her time to her children and the household because she was employed. All nine respondents were proud of being Mexican, and they felt that it was very important to keep tradition. Spanish was spoken in six out of nine households.

Four husbands out of nine did not allow their wives to participate in decisions in the household. Seven respondents stated that their husbands wanted to be the authority figures in the household. This is how one of the respondents (Dorah) expressed her views about her husband, "He does not want me to be me, no 50-50 percent, no 75-25 percent, he wants to be the head of the home." Another respondent (Lilly) said about her husband, "He is macho, he is always right. He always gives the last word."

The wives tend to blame outside factors for the behavior of their husbands rather than holding the husbands themselves responsible for their behavior. Four women out of nine blamed themselves for being abused. For example, Sarah stated that her bossiness triggered the violent behavior of her husband; the violence increased when she was home on maternity leave and lessened when she went back to work. Thelma pointed out that she said things that she was not supposed to have said to her husband, in addition to the blaming her husband's grandmother, who was living with them, for being a bad influence on her husband. Dorah blamed herself for not being competent in performing household chores and the husband's family for being a bad

influence on her husband, which led to domestic violence. Barbara blamed herself for being ambitious and wanting things she knew they could not afford. Other factors to which the respondents attributed the abusive behavior of the husbands included family members, alcohol, and unemployment. Cindy blamed relatives for telling her husband things that were not true and also drinking too much alcohol for changing the behavior of her husband. Lilly attributed the behavior of her husband to the fact that he was abused as a child, in addition to blaming alcohol. Sakie blamed alcohol for the abusive behavior of her husband; according to her, all the times she was abused, her husband had been drunk. Harriet and Mikie blamed their husbands' unemployment for their abuse; they pointed out that when their husbands found jobs, the abuse stopped. We should note that all of the husbands drank alcohol.

Table 1 illustrates the level of education and income of the wife relative to that of her husband and list the factors that are believed to have brought change in the abusive behavior of the husband.

Three women are more educated than their husbands, two women and their husbands have no formal education, two have the same level of education as their husbands, and one is less educated than her husband. The remaining wife was not sure about the level of education of her husband; she was a high school graduate. Four women were earning more than their husbands, three were earning less than their husbands, one was not employed, and the husband of the remaining woman had retired but she was still employed. Four women attributed a decrease in abusive behavior to the fact that their husbands were now

older; four of the women attributed it to better communication with their husbands; five devised strategies of keeping quiet, including not telling their husbands things that might upset them; three said that leaving their husbands gave their husbands time to think; two said advice, including counseling or therapy had been helpful; and two said employment of their husbands helped to lessen the fights.

Nonviolent Households

Domestic violence entails both physical and verbal fights, but in this paper only physical fights, that is, delivering a blow or using a gun, a knife, or any other weapon against the wife, are considered. Other kinds of fights that do not meet these criteria are grouped under nonviolent households. Therefore, cases that are discussed in this section involved no physical domestic violence as defined in this study.

Case 1 (ID #53)

The husband was 47 years old, and the wife was 34. There is no information about their duration of stay in the United States. They had three children, and therefore, there were five people in the household, including the respondent. The husband was employed full time as a court interpreter and was satisfied with the salary he was getting considering his ability. The wife was not employed. The level of education of the wife was given as "some high school," but no information about the level of education of the husband was noted. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

TABLE 1
VIOLENT HOUSEHOLDS

Name	Education ^a	Income ^b	Change in Violence Attributed to:
1. Sarah	More educated	More	1. Wife going back to work 2. Husband getting older 3. Husband's role expectations changed
2. Thelma	More educated	More	1. Talking and communicating 2. Grandmother moved out 3. Shuts her mouth 4. Getting out of the house often
3. Dorah	No formal schooling for either	Less	1. Getting older 2. Communicating, understanding, and listening to each other 3. Not telling him upsetting things
4. Harriet	More educated	More	1. Employment for both 2. Advice from clergy 3. Therapy on marriage
5. Barbara	Less educated	Less	1. Puts up with the situation as is 2. Leaving the house
6. Mikie	Same level for both	More	1. Employment of husband 2. Discussing things together 3. Not telling husband upsetting news
7. Cindy	7th grade for both	Less	1. Counseling 2. Keeping husband happy 3. Not doing things he does not like 4. Asks for forgiveness 5. Husband got older 6. Leaving the husband
8. Sakie	No formal education for either	Wife not employed	1. Not telling husband upsetting things 2. She is now a good listener
9. Lilly	Wife high school but not sure of husband	Wife employed, husband retired	1. Husband got old 2. Husband got sickly

Notes:

a. Education of wife in relation to that of husband.

b. Income of wife in relation to that of husband.

On a question about what she thinks an ideal husband should do, the wife said that a husband should be hardworking and should take care of his family. Asked about the alcohol intake of the husband, she pointed out that he did drink alcohol. An ideal wife to her should love and care for the husband and children. The wife had not experienced violence at her home when she was growing up, but occasionally her parents yelled at each other loudly. They maintain contact with relatives outside the U.S. The wife is proud of being Mexican, and she says it is very important to maintain tradition. They speak English in the household. On a question of how she manages to keep the household free from violence, she said that she tries to avoid the things that she knows would upset her husband. According to her, this has been very effective in preventing conflict.

In this household the, level of education of the wife has been stated as "some high school"; there is no information about the level of education of the husband. The wife was not employed, and the husband was employed as a court interpreter. The wife stated that the strategy she used to avoid violence was not to do the things she knew that the husband did not like.

Case 2 (ID #201)

The husband was 63 years old and the wife was 60. The husband had been in the U.S. for 48 years, and the wife for 38 years. They had three children, but there were only three people, including the respondent, in the household. The husband was retired, but the wife was working as a teacher's assistant with small children. The wife was

a high school graduate, and the husband's level of education was eighth grade. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

According to the wife, an ideal husband should be responsible for the family and fulfill his obligations, and the wife should be responsible for raising the children. They maintain contact with relatives outside the U.S. To her it is very important to maintain Mexican tradition, and she is very proud of being Mexican. They speak Spanish in the household. The wife had not experienced violence at her home when she was growing up. According to her, the key to avoiding violence in the household is to have love, communication, and mutual respect for each other.

In this household, the wife was more educated than her husband; she was a high school graduate, and her husband's level of education was given as eighth grade. The husband had retired, and the wife was still working as a teacher's assistant; there is no information about the salary differences when the husband was still employed. The husband drank alcohol. The wife stated that communication is a good method of avoiding violence in her household.

Case 3 (ID #142)

The husband was 36 years old and the wife was 35. The information about the duration of stay in the U.S. is missing for both. There is no information about the number of children they had, but there were three people in the household, including the respondent. They both had "some post-BA training." They were both employed full time. The wife was employed as a nursing technician, and the husband was doing office

work. There is no information about their salaries. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

On a question about what she thinks an ideal husband should be, she said, "Aunque los tiempos han cambiado pero dentro de nuestra cultura hay la expectativa de que el es el proveedor principal económicamente hablando." (Even though times have changed in our culture, there is still the expectation that he is the major provider economically). The wife, according to her, should be responsible for the home and raising the children. The wife in this case had no experience of violence at her home when she was growing up.

The wife felt that it was very important to keep tradition and was very proud of being Mexican. They maintain contact with relatives outside the U.S., and they also speak Spanish in the household. On a question of how she manages to avoid violence in her household, she said that communication helps in preventing threatening behavior in the household.

In this household, both husband and wife had "some post-BA training." They were both employed, the husband was doing office work and the wife as a nursing technician. No information was given about their salaries. The wife considered communication to be effective in preventing violence in her household.

Case 4 (ID #443)

The ages of both husband and wife are missing for this couple, as is their duration of stay in the U.S. They had three children, but the information about the number of people in the household is also

missing. In addition, there is no information about the level of education of the couple or the employment status.

An ideal husband, according to the wife, should be a good worker and able to provide for the needs of the family. The wife should be submissive, a servant, and be protective towards the family. The wife experienced violence at her home when she was growing up. According to her, her father was an alcoholic and abused her mother both physically and verbally. According to her, these were bad fights, involving the police, hospitalization, and her mother's leaving the house.

They maintain contact with relatives outside the U.S, but the information about how proud she is of being Mexican is missing. On the question about how she maintains to keep the household free from violence, she said that both she and her husband became born again Christians in 1988. This, according to her, made them to grow mentally and spiritually, and it gave them a new understanding of themselves.

In this household, the information about the level of education of both husband and wife is missing, as is their employment status. The wife stated that joining the Pentecostal Church has been very helpful in preventing violence in the household.

Case 5 (ID #656)

The husband was 46 years old and the wife was 42. The husband had been in the U.S. for 20 years and the wife for 15 years. They had five children; therefore, there were seven people in the household. The level of education for both was given as seventh grade, and both were members of the Catholic Church. They were both employed full time at

the same factory. The wife started working when her husband had an accident at work, which led to him being disabled. Less than half of the family income is from the wife, but the husband felt that his salary was not enough considering his ability.

What the wife considers to be an ideal husband is somebody who provides for the needs of the family; an ideal wife is expected to be a housewife. The wife did not experience violence when she was growing up. They maintain contact with relatives outside the U.S, and the wife feels that it is very important to keep tradition. They speak Spanish in the household, and the wife is very proud of being Mexican. On a question about her efforts in avoiding violence, she said that when they have a problem, they talk about it and do not stop until they reach an agreement.

In this household, both husband and wife had an education level of seventh grade. They were both employed full-time in the same factory. The salary of the wife is less than that of her husband. The wife stated that talking helps in preventing violence in her household.

Case 6 (ID #586)

The husband was 60 years old and the wife 49. The husband had been in the U.S. for 49 years and the wife for 30. They had three children; there were five people in the household. The husband was a high school graduate, and the wife had "some college." They were both employed full time, the husband as a repairer of cranes at Crane Wright and the wife as a teacher's aide at an elementary school. Less than half of

the household income was from the wife's employment. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

An ideal husband, according to the wife, provides for the needs of the family, and an ideal wife should wait until children are at of school age before being employed. If this was not possible, the children should be left with relatives because nurseries are not trustworthy. The wife has no experience of physical violence from her home when she was growing up, but her parents were involved in verbal fights. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. They have an aunt and a cousin living in Lansing, but the rest of the family is in Mexico.

The wife is very proud of being Mexican and to her it is very important to keep tradition. They speak English in the household. On a question about her efforts in avoiding violence, she said that the family has to be surrounded by love. This, according to her, is achieved by communication, sharing, and understanding each other. She also said that violence is prevented by being brought up in a nonviolent home.

In this household, the wife was more educated than the husband; she had attended college, and the husband was a high school graduate. They were both employed full-time, the husband fixing cranes and the wife as a teacher's aide. The salary of the wife was less than that of her husband. The wife stated that communication was effective in her household as a means of avoiding violence, and added that when one had been brought up in a nonviolent household, violence in ones own household was less likely.

Case 7 (ID #623)

The husband was 65 years old and the wife was 70. They had been in the U.S. for 30 years. They had two children; there were four people in the household. The husband was a retired college professor and had a master's degree; the wife was a high school graduate and had worked as a saleswoman for three years. Less than half of the household income was from her. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

According to the wife, an ideal husband should be the breadwinner and provide for the needs of the household. An ideal wife should not be employed for the first five years but tend to the husband and the children. Information about past experience of violence is missing. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican, and to her it is important to keep tradition. They speak English in the household. On a question about how she manages to avoid violence in the household she said, "Everything that I could do, like completing my obligations so that there is no discord."

The wife was less educated than the husband. The husband was a retired college professor and had a master's degree. The wife was a high school graduate and had worked as a saleswoman at one stage, but her salary was less than her husband's. The wife stated that she avoids violence in her household by completing her obligations.

Case 8 (ID #459)

The husband was 39 years old and the wife was 33. The husband had been in the U.S. for 20 years while the wife had been in the U.S. for 10 years. They had six children, and there were nine people in the household, including the respondent. They were both employed full-time. The husband was working at a construction company, and he felt that his salary was not enough considering his abilities. The wife had been working at a factory for sixteen years, and less than half of the household income was from her. The husband was a high school graduate, and the wife's level of education has been given as seventh grade. There is no information about religious affiliation for either. She pointed out that her husband started drinking alcohol after the death of their baby and a 12-year-old son.

According to her, an ideal husband should be a good provider and pass the trials of parenthood. The wife should obey her husband and stay at home. The wife experienced violence when she was growing up; her parents fought because her father used to spend money on alcohol. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels it is very important to keep tradition. They speak Spanish in the household.

The wife explains that her husband left her in Mexico while he worked in the U.S. for five months a year. They could not get along very well then because, according to her, she was very jealous of his being in the U.S. They never had physical fights, but sometimes they had verbal fights. The strategy she used when she arrived in the U.S.

was to go to the Pentecostal Church with her husband. According to her, the word of God brought changes to their relationship.

In this household, the wife was less educated than her husband; her education level was seventh grade and her husband was a high school graduate. They were both employed full-time, the wife working at a factory and the husband at a construction company. The salary of the wife was less than the husband. The strategy for avoiding violence, according to the wife, was joining the Pentecostal Church.

Case 9 (ID #343)

The husband was 30 years old and the wife was 31. The wife had been in the U.S. for 11 years, but there is no information about the husband. They had two children, and there were five people in the household, including the respondent. The level of education for both of them was seventh grade. The wife was not employed, and the husband was employed part-time by a construction company. According to the wife, however, he fixes cars as well, and the yard was filled with old cars. The husband was not affiliated to any church, but the wife was a member of a Protestant church.

The wife said that an ideal husband should be employed, respectful, and friendly to his children. An ideal wife should be a housewife and be hardworking. The wife had no experience of violence at her home when she was growing up. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels that it is important to maintain tradition. They speak English in the household.

At the beginning of the marriage, according to the wife, her husband could not buy food for the family and would not sleep at home sometimes. At that time, they stayed with her mother-in-law for two years. According to her, what her husband earned went to his mother, and she was the one who decided everything. When they moved to their own place, there was a change. But she stated that they were never involved in physical fights, only verbal ones occasionally. The strategy she used to avoid violence was, "When he is speaking, I do not say anything. I wait an hour or two and then I go and speak with him."

In this household, the level of education for both husband and wife was seventh grade. The wife was not employed and the husband was working part-time at a construction company. The wife's strategy for avoiding violence is to keep quiet when her husband is speaking.

Case 10 (ID #211)

In this household, the husband was 43 years old and the wife was 40 years old. There is no information about the duration of stay in the U.S. for either of them. They had four children, and there were six people, including the respondent, in the household. The wife was a high school graduate, and the husband's level of education was given as eighth grade. They were both employed full-time. The husband was a welder and was satisfied with the salary he was getting. The wife was employed at a restaurant as a cook, and less than half of the household income was from her. They were both members of the Catholic

Church. On a question pertaining to alcohol intake, the wife noted that her husband drank alcohol.

An ideal husband, according to the wife, should provide for the needs of the family. The wife should be a housewife and not be employed outside the home. There is no information pertaining to the experience of violence by the wife when she was growing up. They maintain contact with the husband's family outside Detroit. They visit both families in Texas every two years. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels it is very important to keep tradition. They speak English in the household.

In this household, the wife stated that they never had physical fights but sometimes did have verbal fights. She said her husband is very jealous. He does not like it when she wears makeup, mini skirts, or hot pants. Sometimes they have disagreements about the children because her husband does not want the children to go out at night. According to the wife, there was nothing wrong with the children going out at night. She said, "It is the nineties." The strategies used by the wife to avoid violence include getting the children home before her husband comes home. She also stopped wearing things he did not like.

The wife was more educated than the husband; she was a high school graduate, and the husband's level of education was eighth grade. They were both employed full-time, the wife working as a cook in a restaurant and the husband as a welder. The salary of the wife was less than that of her husband. Her strategy of avoiding violence was to stop wearing the clothes her husband did not want her to wear. She

also made her children be at home by the time her husband returned from work.

Case 11 (ID #84)

In this household, both husband and wife were 34 years old. The husband had been in the U.S. for 12 years and the wife for 15 years. They had two children; there were four people in the household, including the respondent. The wife was a high school graduate, and the husband's level of education was given as seventh grade. The husband was employed, but there is no information about the type of job. The wife stated, however, that the husband felt that the salary he was getting was not enough considering his ability. The wife worked temporarily for three years after the wedding, but she is not employed now. They were both members of the Catholic Church. On a question pertaining to the intake of alcohol, she stated that her husband did drink alcohol.

According to the wife, an ideal husband should be a good role model to the kids and have some responsibility for the family. An ideal wife should be obedient, submissive, and make the children a priority. The wife had not experienced violence at her home when she was growing up, but she did have arguments with her parents when she wanted to have a boyfriend. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife was very proud of being Mexican and felt that it was very important to keep tradition. They spoke Spanish in the household.

In this household, according to the wife, they never had physical fights but had verbal ones at the beginning of the marriage. She said

that she found a telephone number and confronted her husband about it and they argued. She said her husband was a womanizer and a liar, and they once lived apart because of these problems. The wife stated that what prevented these arguments from escalating was communication. She sometimes asks her husband to calm down and they discuss their problems openly.

In this household, the wife was more educated than the husband; she was a high school graduate, and the level of education of her husband was seventh grade. The wife was not employed, but the husband was employed. The wife stated that communication was an effective method in preventing violence in the household.

Case 12 (ID #561)

The husband was 34 years old, and the wife was 29. The wife had been in the U.S. for 11 years, but the information about the duration of the period in the U.S. for the husband is missing. They had four children; the number of people in the household was given as six, including the respondent. The level of education for both husband and wife was given as eighth grade. They were both employed full-time. The husband was employed by a construction company and was satisfied with the salary he was getting. The wife was working at a cleaner, and less than half of the household income was from her. They were both members of the Catholic Church. On a question pertaining to the intake of alcohol, she stated that her husband did drink alcohol.

The wife considers an ideal husband to be one who is employed; an ideal wife stays at home and takes care of the children. The wife

experienced violence when she was growing up; her parents argued and sometimes her father hit her mother. She said that her father always cheated on her mother. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican, and she feels it is important to keep tradition. They speak Spanish in the household.

At first, the husband did not want his wife to be employed. They never had physical fights, just verbal ones at the beginning of their marriage. One time, she was arguing with her husband's sister when she suddenly slammed the door; the glass broke and cut her and the argument escalated. She said that she avoided conflict now by not talking back. She says that change has occurred because they are both mature now. The things that affected her then no longer affect her. She added that before she was less understanding now she understands her husband better.

The level of education of both husband and wife was eighth grade. They were both employed full-time, the wife at a cleaner and the husband at a construction company. The salary of the wife was less than that of her husband. She stated that being more mature helped in preventing violence in the household.

Case 13 (ID #183)

The husband was 62 years old and the wife was 64. The wife had been in the U.S. for 34 years, but there is no information about the duration of period in the U.S. for the husband. They had six children, but there were two people in the household, including the respondent. They were both high school graduates, and the husband was employed

full-time as a minister. The husband felt that the salary he was getting was not enough considering his ability. The wife was not employed. She was a member of one of the Protestant Churches, but the information is missing about the husband's religious affiliation. On a question pertaining to the intake of alcohol, she stated that her husband did not drink alcohol.

According to the wife, an ideal husband should be a hard worker, able to provide for the needs of the family. An ideal wife should not be strong and should be responsible for the children. The wife had not experienced violence at her home when she was growing up. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels that it is important to maintain tradition. They speak English in the household.

In this household, there was no physical violence, but sometimes they did have verbal fights. According to the wife, being mature does reduce the intensity of misunderstandings in the household.

In this household, both husband and the wife were high school graduates. The wife was not employed, and the husband was a minister. The wife stated that being mature helps to reduce misunderstanding that could lead to violence in the household.

Case 14 (ID #151)

In this household, the husband was 28 years old; information about the age of the wife is missing. The information about the duration of the stay in U.S. for both of them is missing. They had two children; there were four people in the household, including the respondent.

They were both high school graduates and were both employed full-time. The husband was working as a carpenter. The wife was working for a financial services company, and less than half of the household income was from her job. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

What the wife considers to be an ideal husband is a man who is able to support and take care of the family. An ideal wife should perform the household duties, not be employed, and never talk back. The wife had not experienced violence at her home when she was growing up. Her parents had verbal fights because her stepfather sometimes slept out, but there were no physical fights. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels it is very important to keep tradition. They speak English in the household. According to the wife, communication helps in preventing violence in the household.

In this household, both husband and wife were high school graduates. They were both employed, the wife working at a financial services company and the husband working as a carpenter. The salary of the wife was less than that of her husband. According to the wife, the strategy for avoiding violence was communication.

Case 15 (ID #497)

The husband was 40 years old and the wife 36. The information is missing about the duration of period in the U.S. for the wife; for the husband it was given as five years. They had two children; there were six people in the household. The husband had some post-BA training, and the wife had an advanced degree. They were both employed full-

time. The husband was working as a social worker and held an assistant manager's position. The wife was a university administrator. There is no information about the salary of the wife versus that of her husband. They were both members of the Catholic Church. On a question pertaining to the intake of alcohol, the wife stated that her husband did drink alcohol.

The wife considers an ideal husband to be man who works hard, is devoted to the family, and provides for their needs. An ideal wife, on the other hand, should be a good homemaker and should be devoted to the family. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican; she feels it is somewhat important to keep tradition. They speak English in the household. The wife stated that they had a good loving relationship and that when they had disagreements, they usually compromised.

In this household, the husband had "some post-BA training" and the wife had an "advanced degree." They were both employed full-time, the wife as a university administrator and the husband as an assistant manager in social work. The information about their salaries was not available. According to the wife, compromise is effective in preventing violence in her household.

Case 16 (ID #376)

In this household, both husband and wife were 58 years old. The information about the duration of stay in the U.S. is missing for both of them. They had two children; there were four people in the household, including the respondent. They were both high school

graduates and were both employed full-time. The husband had two jobs: representative for AT&T and salesman at Sears. The husband felt that the salary he was getting was inadequate considering his ability. The wife has been doing child care for five years. Less than half of the household income was from the wife. They were both members of the Catholic Church.

The wife considers an ideal husband as a man who is employed and does things and spends time with his family. An ideal wife, according to her, should not be employed but should stay at home and care for the children. The wife had experienced violence at her home; her parents were involved in physical fights. Her father died when, in a drunken stupor, he fell out of a moving car and broke his neck. They maintain contact with the relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels it is very important to keep tradition. They speak both English and Spanish at home. According to her, the way she avoids violence in the household is to talk when they have a problem until they reach an agreement.

In this household, both husband and wife were high school graduates. They were both employed, the wife in child care and the husband as a representative for AT&T and as a salesman at Sears. The salary of the wife was less than that of her husband. According to the wife, communication was effective in preventing violence.

Case 17 (ID #624)

In this household, the husband was 61 years old and the wife was 59 years old. The information is missing about the duration of period in

the U.S. for both. They had three children; there were five people in the household. The level of education for both of them was seventh grade. They were both employed full-time, the husband at a factory and the wife at General Motors as a machine operator felt. The husband felt that his salary was adequate; less than half the household income was from the wife's job. They were members of the Catholic Church.

The wife considers an ideal husband to be hardworking, good, and honest. An ideal wife, according to her, should not be employed outside the home, should be a good mother, and should be honest. The wife had no experience of violence at her home when she was growing up. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican and feels that it is very important to keep tradition. They spoke both English and Spanish in the household. Information is missing about avoiding violence in the household, but she states that fights are prevented by being close to each other.

The level of education for both husband and wife has been given as seventh grade. They were both employed, the wife as a machine operator and the husband at a factory. The salary of the wife was less than that of her husband. According to the wife, being close to each other helps to prevent violence.

Case 18 (ID #508)

In this household, information about the ages of both husband and wife is missing. The husband had been in the U.S. for 20 years and the wife for 26 six years. They had six children; the number of people in the household was eight, including the respondent. The level of

education for both of them was given as seventh grade. They were both employed full-time. The husband was employed by a construction company, but there is no information about how he felt about his salary. The wife was working at a factory, and less than half of the household income was from her job. There is no information about the religious affiliation of the husband, but the wife was a Catholic. On a question pertaining to the intake of alcohol, the wife noted that her husband did drink alcohol.

The ideal husband, according to the wife, should be a hard worker and should cooperate with the family. An ideal wife should be responsible and active in the household. The wife did not experience violence at her home when she was growing up. They maintain contact with relatives outside Detroit. The wife is very proud of being Mexican, and she feels that it is very important to keep tradition. They speak Spanish in the household. The wife stated that they are not involved in physical violence in the household, but sometimes they do have verbal fights. According to her, her husband drinks too much, and arguments start when he is prohibited from drinking. On a question about how she tries to avoid the verbal arguments leading to physical fights, she said that she went for counseling.

The level of education for both husband and wife has been given as seventh grade. They were both employed, the wife at a factory and the husband by a construction company. The wife stated that counseling helped in avoiding violence in her household.

Summary of Information about Nonviolent Households

Among the nonviolent households, all the respondents had similar views about what they considered to be ideal roles for husbands and wives. They regarded the role of providing for the needs of the household as the husband's task. Doing household chores was regarded as the wife's task. All the respondents were proud of being Mexican and felt that it was important to keep tradition. Six respondents out of eighteen stated that Spanish was spoken in their households. The information pertaining to alcohol intake showed that of eighteen husbands, eight drank alcohol, one did not, and information was missing for nine husbands.

Table 2 illustrates the cases together with the variables under investigation, which are the level of education of the wife in relation to that of her husband, the income of the wife compared to that of her husband, and the factors to which the wives attribute lack of domestic violence in the household.

The results show that all the husbands were employed; four of the women were not employed; and, there was no information about the employment status of one wife. Ten women had salaries lower than those of their husbands; there was no information about three women; and one's husband had retired. No wife was earning more than her husband. Four women were more educated than their husbands; ten had the same level of education as their husbands; two were less educated than their husbands; and, there was no information about two women. Information pertaining to how violence was avoided showed that eight

women attributed it to communication; two to avoiding doing things that their husbands did not like; two to joining the Pentecostal Churches; two to keeping quiet; one to counseling; and two to being mature.

TABLE 2

NON VIOLENT HOUSEHOLDS

Case #	Education ^a	Income ^b	Strategies to avoid violence
1. 53	no information about husband	wife not employed	1. not doing things that upset husband
2. 201	more education	husband retired	1. communication
3. 142	both post BA	no information	1. communication
4. 443	no information for either	no information for either	1. joining Pentecostal church
5. 656	both 7th grade	less	1. talking about the problem
6. 586	more education	less	1. communication 2. being brought up in a nonviolent home
7. 623	less education	less	1. completing obligations
8. 459	less education	less	1. joining Pentecostal Church
9. 343	both 7th grade	wife not employed	1. Keeping quiet
10. 211	more education	less	1. stopped wearing clothes the husband did not like. 2. told children to be home before their father returns from work.
11. 84	more education husband	wife not employed	1. communication
12. 561	both 8th grade	less	1. getting older 2. not talking back
13. 183	both high school	wife not employed	1. getting older
14. 151	both high school	less	1. communication
15. 497	both post BA	no information	1. compromise
16. 497	both high school	less	1. communication
17. 624	both 7th grade	less	1. being close to each other
18. 508	both 7th grade	less	1. counseling

Notes: a. Education of wife in relation to that of husband.
b. Income of wife in relation to that of husband

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, the twenty-seven cases analyzed are compared and contrasted and then discussed. Discussion and conclusions are in relation to the factors being investigated: the level of education of women in relation to that of their husbands; the income of the wives in comparison to that of their husbands; and, the strategies devised by wives to avoid violence, including the factors to which they attribute decreases in violence in the households. These cases include nine households that were involved in domestic violence and eighteen households that were not involved in domestic violence.

Comparison of Violent and Nonviolent Cases

The issues to be compared and contrasted are those pertaining to the level of education of women in relation to their husbands; the income of women in comparison to that of their husbands; and the strategies devised by women to avoid violence, including factors that have contributed to bringing about positive changes in the households.

Education differential, with the wife having more education than the husband, was not stated by the respondents as having contributed to domestic violence. The data show that among the nine violent households, three women were more educated than their husbands, and

four had the same level of education as their husbands. Among the eighteen nonviolent households, four women were more educated than their husbands, and ten had the same equal level of education as their husbands. In both violent and nonviolent households, therefore, the wives tend to have equal and more education than their husbands. Education as a contributory factor to violence is not supported by these findings; among the nonviolent households, a large number of women were educated and yet their husbands did not abuse them. Among the violent households, wives who were less educated than their husbands were also abused. Thus, the idea that women with more education than their husbands are more likely to be abused is not supported by this study.

It should be noted, however, that the overall level of education in the household was related to violence. Of the couples in violent household, only two women were college graduates and none of the men had college degrees. Among the nonviolent households, two couples were college graduates, and one husband had a master's degree. The overall level of education in violent households was less than nonviolent households.

In violent households, four women out of nine had incomes greater than those of their husbands, three less than their husbands, and in the remaining two cases, one woman was not employed and the other's husband was retired. The information available does not clarify the status of the retired husband, whether he has retirement income and how his salary compared to that of his wife when he was still employed. In nonviolent households, there was no wife who had a higher

income than her husband. Four were not employed, ten had lower incomes than their husbands, one's husband was retired, and there was no information for three women. Looking at the income status of both groups indicates that there might be a relationship between income and violence. Wives with more income than their husbands seem to be more exposed to violence than those who earn less. Among the violent households, three women earn less than their husbands and one is not employed, but all are abused by their husbands. Therefore, attributing violence to salaries of wives that are higher than those of their husbands does not explain why it occurred in these four cases.

Looking at the levels of education and income shows that among the violent households, four women had more income than their husbands, three were more educated than their husbands, and a fourth had the same level of education as her husband. Among the nonviolent households, no wife had a higher income than her husband; even the women who were more educated than their husbands were earning less. Therefore, education in itself does not seem to be a problem but becomes a problem when it leads to the wife's earning more than her husband.

Questions about what brought change in the household, including the strategies devised by women to avoid violence, elicited many factors. Each woman used more than one strategy to avoid violence. Among the violent households, three women attributed decrease in abuse to improved communication between them and their husbands. For example, they stated that they engaged in discussions with their husbands when they had problems until they came up with a solution. Among the

nonviolent households, eight women also stated that communication helped in preventing violence in the household. Thus, 11 women out of 27 recognized communication in the form of discussion as a helpful means of avoiding violence.

The strategy of keeping quiet and not telling their husbands things that would upset them was used by 7 women out of the 27, 5 from violent and 2 from nonviolent households. One respondent from a violent household, Thelma, said that in addition to discussions with her husband, she also decided to "shut her mouth," that is, not answering back when there were arguments with her husband. Dorah and Mikie said that they did not tell their husbands things that would upset them.

Advice, counseling, or therapy was the method of choice for two women among the violent households. Among the nonviolent households, one attributed nonviolence in her household to this measure. She stated that she used to be engaged in verbal fights with her husband, and this method was used to prevent them. Thus, 3 women out of 27 recommended this method. As was the case with the other methods, it was also used in combination with the others. Among violent households, Cindy was one of the women who used this method; she stated that her husband stopped abusing her for two months when they were still on therapy. Thereafter, he stopped going to the appointments and started abusing her again.

Two women among the violent households said that employment of their husbands helped in reducing fights in the household, whereas among the nonviolent households this issue was not raised by any of

the respondents. The two women who attributed lessening of violence to their husbands' having gotten employment said that when their husbands were not employed, they (the women) were employed and were abused by their husbands. When their husbands got jobs, violence stopped and one of the respondents said that her husband even wanted her to stop working. On looking at these two cases, one might be influenced to suggest that unemployment of the husband is related to domestic violence. The impression is that the husbands would prefer their wives not to be employed rather than having themselves be the ones who are not employed. A contradiction in this view is the case of Sarah, one of the respondents in the violent households. She stated that violence increased when she was on maternity leave and decreased when she went back to work. The opposite would have been expected since the husband was employed. In addition, we note that among the nine violent households, the remaining seven husbands were employed and yet abused their wives.

Age was one of the factors involved in a decrease in violence. For example, among the violent households, four women said that now that their husbands are older they no longer abuse them as before. Some women also pointed out that now that they are older things that used to upset them when they were younger do not matter anymore. Among the nonviolent households, two women who had had verbal fights in their marriages attributed change in the extent of these to the fact that their husbands were now older. In both these groups, age was not the only factor said to have brought a decrease in violence, however;

other strategies, such as keeping quiet and not telling their husbands things that might upset them, were used as well.

Among the violent households, three women said that leaving their husbands when there was some misunderstanding between them gave their husbands some time to think. These women also used other methods in addition to leaving their husbands. Among the nonviolent households, this method was not mentioned.

One last measure that was recommended by two women in nonviolent households was joining Pentecostal Churches. They said that the church enabled them to have a new understanding of life. Among the violent households, this measure was not mentioned. In both violent and nonviolent households, the majority of wives were members of the Catholic Church.

Women's' Levels of Education in Relation to those of their Husbands

There seems to be a relationship between education and income in this study, although Shamin (1992) has pointed out that women do not receive equal remuneration with their male counterparts regardless of their educational qualification. Indeed, among the nonviolent households, there were women who were more educated than their husbands but earned less. There is an indication that education is not a problem on its own but becomes related to domestic violence when it makes the wife earn more than the husband, as is apparent in the contrast between violent and nonviolent households in this study. It has also been noted that among the violent households, one of the respondents was less educated than her husband but was also subjected

to domestic violence. If education were a major factor contributing to domestic violence, she would not have been a victim since her husband was more educated than she. It could be argued that women who were more educated in violent households were subjected to domestic violence not because they were more educated than their husbands but because education enabled them to earn more than their husbands. Therefore, attention should be focused on class structure and the distributive process in which the social values are rooted to understand domestic violence. The feminist perspective maintains that the equality in status between men and women in a male-dominated society is viewed as a threat to male superiority (Makinjani 1992; Giles-Sims 1983; Hirsch 1981; Straus 1980).

Women's Incomes Compared to those of their Husbands

Women in the study almost uniformly said that the ideal role of the husband was to be the main provider of the needs of the family. They also stated that the ideal role of the wife was to be a housewife, that is, doing the home chores and looking after children. Some women in the study expressed regret that they had to work, and some complained that they are not able to perform household chores because of involvement in the labor market. Some respondents also pointed out that there was violence in their households when they were employed and their husbands were not. They also said that when their husbands got jobs, they wanted the wives to stop working outside the home and do household work instead. The data shows that there was a tendency for both husband and wife to want to follow the ideal roles. Some

women expected their husbands to contribute more than financially in the household. As one of the respondents in the nonviolent households who had a college degree stated, "Even though times have changed, in our culture there are still expectations that he is the major provider economically."

The study shows that among the violent households, five women were earning more than their husbands, and among the nonviolent households, no wife was earning more than her husband. Information about income was not available from three women in the nonviolent households, however. In light of what women stated as ideal roles for men and women, women earning more than their husbands have assumed a role that was ascribed to men. Mirande and Enriquez (1979) stated that among the Latinos, gender roles, such as men being responsible for providing for the needs of the family, were important for personal gain in status according to Mexican tradition. The respondents in this study have pointed out that it was very important to keep tradition and that they were proud of being Mexican. Therefore, for a man to retain his status, it was necessary for him to conform to the traditional norms. Domestic violence, therefore, could be attributed to a desire by men to retain the status that they feel they are losing by earning less than their wives.

Factors Contributing to Change and Strategies Devised by Women to Avoid Violence in the Household

The strategies discussed here are those that were used by more than one respondent in both violent and nonviolent households. These were:

communication between husbands and wives; getting older; keeping quiet by the wife, including not telling the husband things that might upset him; leaving the husband, which was said to give husbands time to think; advice, including counseling and therapy; employment of the husbands; and, joining the Pentecostal Church.

Feminist theory associates spousal abuse with the higher status accorded to men in society (Stets 1988; Viano 1992). Among Latinos, the term *machismo* is associated with domination of women by men (Ramos 1962; Hahner 1976; Mirande and Enriquez 1979; Stevens 1868). Some respondents in this study actually used this term to indicate that their husbands wanted to be authority figures in the household. Looking at the measures for avoiding violence in the household gives an indication that the strategies for avoiding violence seem to maintain the status quo. For example, the respondents say that discussing issues with their husbands helps them to overcome the problem of spousal abuse. The dictionary meaning of communication related to this study is interchange or imparting of opinions or information by speech. But on viewing the information given by respondents during the communication process, it seems that there is little free interchange of opinions. For example, the same women who used communication as a strategy stated that they did not tell their husbands things that might upset them. Thus, as this method was explained by the respondents, it appears that the problems in the household will be resolved in a way that will not upset the husbands.

The respondents in this study stated that an ideal wife should be quiet and submissive to the husband. Ramos (1962) has also pointed out

that among Latinos, women are expected to be submissive to their husbands and not to question their behavior. The method of keeping quiet has been stated as having been effective in preventing domestic violence by the respondents. Therefore, comparing the respondents' ideas of what they consider to be the expected behavior of an ideal wife and their use of the strategy of keeping quiet to avoid domestic violence, it seems that the hierarchical order in the society, which is male dominated, is being reinforced. Feminist theory states that male domination is embraced in social institutions that promote inequality in socialization of males and females. According to this theory, during socialization men are accorded a higher status than women. The statements of women in this study therefore show that the way of avoiding violence in these households follows this hierarchy, which is more favorable to the husbands than the wives.

Bowker (1983) mentioned an incident in which a battered woman consulted clergy for advice (unfortunately, the denomination was not noted); the clergy, he reports, advised the woman to obey her husband and try to keep him happy. According to Dobash and Dobash (1979), the biblical laws of marriage promoted inferiority of women by prescribing conjugal duties. These laws, according to these writers, stated that women should obey their husbands and that the husbands are responsible for exercising authority in the household. The scriptures therefore provided an ideology for making inferiority of women to appear sacred and a natural phenomenon. Some of the strategies for avoiding domestic violence that were used by the respondents appear to be promoting male superiority.

Some respondents in the study said that employment of their husbands caused a decrease in abusive behavior in the household. Thus, it could be argued that the husbands abused their wives as a way of relieving stress; hence, it stopped when the husbands got jobs. Unemployment has also been associated with stress (Cox 1990). Literature has revealed that alcohol is sometimes used to relieve stress (Craig 1990), which could be related to why the respondents were blaming alcohol for violence in their households. It could be argued that alcohol was a way of relieving stress, which could be related to the husbands' inability to perform ideal roles. Although the husbands in violent households all drank alcohol, the underlying cause for domestic violence could be stress, rather than the use of alcohol per se. The argument is that there are a number of men who use alcohol and do not abuse their wives, as it was the case among the nonviolent households in this study.

Age was mentioned as a factor that helped decrease violence in the household. One respondent said that things that used to upset her do not matter anymore now that she is old. This was the case with the husbands, too; things that were stressful to them when they were younger did not matter anymore now that they are old. For example, one woman pointed out that her husband confessed to having been jealous of their older son and that domestic violence in the household decreased when their son was ten years old.

The last factor mentioned by the respondents that contributed to decreasing violence was for the wives to leave their husbands. According to the wives, this gave their husbands some time to think.

It appears that the intentions of the wives were not to leave their husbands permanently, but to either give themselves some rest from abuse or to let their husbands realize that they are valuable too. Ramos (1962) has pointed out that Mexican culture places a great value on marriage; unmarried women are looked down upon. This was shown by discouraging girls from going to school when education was introduced, because it was said that they would find it hard to get husbands if they were educated (Mirande and Enriquez 1979). Gordon (1983) has noted also that the Catholic Church, to which the majority of Latinos belong, forbids divorce. Thus, women who adhere to these values may be more likely to endure abusive marriages. Some women, however, stated that they were forced to go back to their husbands because of the children and threats that their husbands would kill them.

Conclusions

Conclusions drawn from this study are based on the following three variables: education, income, and strategies used to avoid violence. In both violent and nonviolent households, wives tend to have either equal or more education than their husbands. In this study, therefore, education does not support a difference in the behavior of husbands.

Wives used many strategies to avoid violence. These include communication strategies (verbal and nonverbal), avoiding things that husbands do not like, joining Pentecostal churches, and undergoing counseling. Age was also a factor that was mentioned by several women. As the husbands grew older, less violence was experienced in these

households. The strategies used by women could be related to the feminist theory.

Dutton (1995) says that some husbands see their wives as property to be controlled. Other means used by women to avoid violence seem to support this view; for example, one of the women among the nonviolent households stated that to avoid verbal fights in her household, she stopped wearing the clothes that her husband did not like. She also told her children to return home early before her husband came back from work, although she did not see anything wrong with them going out at night. Among the violent households, one woman also stated that she stopped doing things that her husband did not like.

Although there were many strategies used by women to avoid violence, the communication variable seem to have been used by many women. When taking into consideration the view that communication entails both verbal and nonverbal means (Schaap 1982), the results show that this method was used by 18 women in the 27 cases analyzed. Three women from violent and eight from nonviolent households used verbal communication; five women from violent and two from nonviolent households used nonverbal communication. Further research is recommended to verify how valid communication is as a method of preventing violence.

Although wives in violent households tended to have more income than their husbands, no wife had a higher income than her husband among the 18 nonviolent households analyzed. This shows a possible relationship between the behavior of husbands and income. Wives with more income than their husbands experienced violence in their

households, whereas there was no violence reported in the households where husbands earned more than their wives. The conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that more income for wives in Latino families of Mexican origin contributes to violence in the household.

The results on the income variable, therefore, support the feminist theory. According to the proponents of this theory, men think they have a legitimate right to be the main providers of the needs of the households. A reversal of this situation contributes to domestic violence.

Literature has shown that men do not accept equality of power with women, and incidences of violence between men and women have been associated with such an attitude (Banks 1990; Hauser 1982). In this study, it appears that men do not accept equality of power with women. Two respondents from violent households stated that violence was greater when they were the ones who were employed. When their husbands ultimately got jobs, they wanted them (wives) to stop working. The question of ideal roles, such as for men to be responsible for providing for the needs of the family and women for the household, seem to be valued by both husbands and wives. For example, one of the respondents said that although times have changed, men are still expected to be the main providers of the needs of the family. Another woman pointed out that she expected her husband to support her because he was the man. Literature has associated domestic violence with the struggle for power, and resources are a means of gaining power. It could be argued, therefore, that income is a means of gaining power;

thus, the husbands were stressed and violent towards the wives who earned more than they did.

Although education per se does not appear to be a contributory factor to violence in this study, there seems to be a positive relationship between education and income. This is shown by the fact that among the violent households, women with more income were more educated than their husbands. Further studies should be conducted to investigate a connection between education and violence.

The income variable found in this study to be contributory to domestic violence also needs further investigation. Would the same results be obtained among groups other than Latinos. In addition, the sample here consisted only of Latinos in the Detroit area. Further investigation is required to ascertain when the same results would be obtained among Latinos in other parts of the U.S. A larger sample is also recommended because the one used here was too small to be representative of the Latinos in Detroit.

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