



Country Conditions: Gender-based Violence

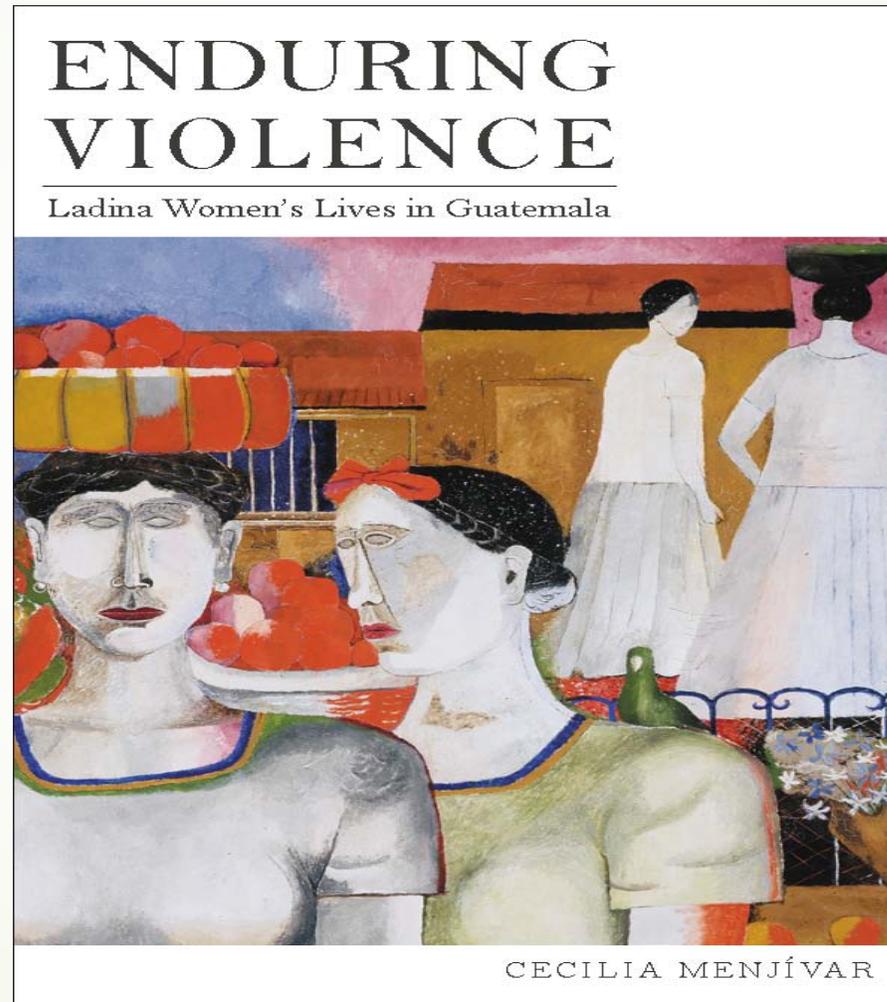
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The Role of Social Science Research in Legal Practitioners' Work

- Contributions from (my) research to the work of claimants' attorneys
 - Provide affidavits, mostly written declarations
- Challenges in conveying social science research
- Contributions of the work of claimants' attorneys on my own research
 - Country conditions declarations' influence on my research

My research starting point: Enduring Violence





Additional sources

- ▶ Reports from Central America (from my work annotating the sociological research from and on Central America for the Library of Congress)
- ▶ International organizations reports, such as the UN
- ▶ UNHCR Report, Women on the Run**



Broader Context Women Leave: Multiple Forms of Violence

- ▶ Structural violence: profound inequalities that have left the majority of people poor, uneducated, malnourished, without access to basic rights and services, with particular gendered effects
- ▶ Symbolic violence in the form of racism, profound gender inequalities, self-blame, everyday humiliations and internalization of inequalities
- ▶ Various Forms of Gender-based violence
- ▶ Institutional violence—profound inequalities seep through and disadvantage women in institutions—schools, justice system



My main points

- ▶ Attention to this broader context of violence
 - ▶ Violence not attributable only to individual actions intended to cause harm
 - ▶ Suffering that women *habitually* experience: indignities, self-recrimination, fear, & physical assaults that piles up & can culminate in their deaths
 - ▶ Institutions, such as justice system & police, are part of this context—thus, often ineffective, unable, unwilling to protect women
 - ▶ Government (states) failures to protect women
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Research and evidence--challenges

- ▶ Challenges to translate my arguments about broader, structural context into an arguments that are often formulated (and better understood) at the individual level
 - ▶ I focus on broader context of violence and its normalization
 - ▶ I stay away from cultural explanations or the often used machismo culture
- ▶ Instead, I emphasize societal views, normalization, structures, and institutions
- ▶ **Additional challenge—large number of cases, not enough time/resources—set limits (gender-based violence against women in relationships and only pro bono)



Contributions of my work on country conditions to my research

- ▶ With Shannon Drysdale Walsh, we have written...
- ▶ "The Architecture of Femicide: The State, Inequalities, and Everyday Gender Violence in Honduras." *Latin American Research Review* (2017)
- ▶ "What Guarantees Do We Have?" Legal Tolls and Persistent Impunity for Femicide in Guatemala." *Latin American Politics and Society* (2016)
- ▶ "Socio-Legal Determinants of Impunity for Violence against Women in Guatemala." *Laws* (2016)
- ▶ "Impunity and Multisided Violence in the Lives of Latin American Women: El Salvador in Comparative Perspective." *Current Sociology* (2016)
- ▶ *Writings focus on failures of the governments (turning the other way, ignoring, etc.) but also highlight other factors, such as other anti-women laws, attitudes of police, etc.*