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
Challenges to translate my arguments about broader, structural context into 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...


- 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.