



Border Patrol's Not-So-Secret: the Normalized Abuse of Migrant Women on the U.S.-Mexico Border

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In 1995, Human Rights Watch published a report in which it claimed that "U.S. Border Patrol agents [were] committing serious human rights violations, including unjustified shootings, rape, and beatings, while enjoying virtual impunity for their actions" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). The report also claimed that the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) would not punish its agents who violated policies and the law because the INS "procedures for receipt and review of complaints alleging violations [were] wholly inadequate."

At the time this report was published, the INS was an agency under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice. Since the attacks of September 11, in an attempt to better secure the nation's borders and prevent further terrorist attacks, the Bush Administration dissolved and divided the INS into three new entities: US CIS (Citizenship and Immigration Services), US CBP (Customs and Border Protection), and US ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement). All of these are currently under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security, or DHS, which was created in place of the INS with greater authority (USCIS, n.d.). CBP, the parent entity of the Border Patrol, is the "largest and most complex component" of the DHS whose priority mission is to "keep terrorists and their weapons out of the U.S. [and to secure] the border and [facilitate] lawful international trade and travel while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws and regulations, including immigration and drug

laws" (CBP, n.d.). The Border Patrol, in turn, seeks candidates who are "interested in preventing terrorists and terrorist weapons from entering the United States; detecting and preventing the smuggling and unlawful entry of undocumented aliens into the United States; and apprehending those people found to be in violation of the immigration laws" (CBP, n.d.). As a result, as these agents patrol the border with Mexico keeping drugs, terrorists, and "illegal aliens" from entering the country in the name of national security and the protection of "Americans," the Border Patrol has become extremely powerful and overwhelmingly militarized.

Historically, the Border Patrol:

Was created by the Immigration Act of 1924, a law better known for setting restrictive quotas for Asian and European immigrants. The official mission of the Border Patrol was simply to exclude 'illegal aliens' [...] [which] marked the beginning of the... regular use of a federal police force to enforce legal residence criteria... and thus better controlling... and [regulating] the flow of Mexican undocumented immigrants into the country. (Dunn, 1996: 12)

As the decades have passed, the border's militarization has become increasingly evident. While border agents' duties and influence have evolved in several directions, the level of militarization has only intensified. Those in charge of protecting the border have relied on increasing levels of militarization: today drones are currently patrolling alongside Border Patrol agents (Coyne and Hall, 2013). Furthermore, as perspectives on security were transformed since the attacks of September 11, new measures have been put in place to protect "national security." One of these new measures has been to increase in the number of agents -- over 100% between 2004-2011, from 9,000 agents to 21,000. (AFSC, 2013; Border Action Network, 2008). These particular examples serve to demonstrate how militarized the border with Mexico has become. It is fair to say, then, that the border has transcended Gloria Anzaldúa's "contact zone;" instead, the U.S.-Mexico border has become, more accurately, "a war zone" (Dunn, 1996: 88).

It is in this war zone where "rape has become so prevalent that... some women consider it 'the price you pay for crossing the border,'" where "between 80 and 90 percent of migrant women have suffered sexual violence" (Ruiz Marujo, 2009: 31); and where thousands have died or suffered terrible abuse at the hands of U.S. Border Patrol agents and other law enforcement officers. It is in this war zone where Agents Larry Selders, Michael Elmer and Luis Santiago Estevez—in separate, non-related events—abused their power, violated the rights of both undocumented immigrants and of U.S. citizens, and were acquitted of any crime. It is in this same war zone where Juanita Gómez, Luz Lopez, Edilma Cadilla, Rosa Maria Norma Contreras, Haime Flores and Maria Rodriguez—as well as an unknown number of women (regardless of citizenship or ethnicity) who have been successfully silenced— were abused and denied their human and civil rights. Although many activists, scholars, law-enforcers, migrants, and human rights groups have brought such problems to light, there is a clear gap between the sexualized violence that continues to threaten the lives of migrants who cross the border with Mexico and "the literature and our knowledge in this area" (K. Staudt, personal communication, April 30, 2013). Academic literature has long pointed to the oppressive nature of patriarchy, yet the problem still persists. Given the sheer number of Border Patrol agents currently deployed, and the impunity and frequency with which they are known to commit abuses, there must be vast numbers of cases of sexualized violence against migrant women. (AFSC, 2013). In light of this under-researched issue, this article argues that the sexualized violence of migrant women perpetrated by Border Patrol agents is a direct result of the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border, normalized through the socialization and apparent legal impunity of the agents, and abetted by the organized silencing of the survivors.

Militarization is, essentially, the root of the problem. To residents, historians, and individuals familiar with the U.S.-Mexico border and its history, the culture of militarization and of military presence is neither new nor particularly uncommon. Timothy Dunn, who has studied the historical presence and the effects of militarization on the border, as well as the gradual evolution of U.S. immigration policies and their transformation of the region, analyzes low-intensity conflict (LIC) in the borderlands. His particular focus is

the shift of militarization over the decades to analyze what has developed into today's region where "widespread human rights violations [are] committed by military and security forces, key elements of which have often been trained and advised by U.S. military, security, and intelligence personnel" (Dunn, 1996: 4). But, what is "militarization"? How does one begin to analyze it, its repercussions, and its effects? Where does "national security" and defense against terrorism come into play? What about discussions of related phenomena, including sexualized violence, rape during war, oppression, patriarchy, violence against women, soldiering, national security, and the privileging of masculinity?

Dunn argues that militarization "in its broadest sense refers to the use of military rhetoric and ideology, as well as military tactics, strategy, technology, equipment, and forces" (1996: 3). Militarization using this definition is exemplified through the creation of the different operations aimed at limiting and regulating immigration: Operation Gatekeeper, Operation Hold the Line, Operation Streamline, and Operation Jump Start, among others. Specifically, Operation Jumpstart has been the most militarized of these operations as it deployed "6,000 national guard members to border states" (Smith, 2006) who, after a period of training, would lawfully be allowed to arrest and criminalize immigrants along with the Border Patrol. If the U.S. Department of the Army declared that "military forces... are trained to engage in combat with the goal of destroying an external enemy deemed a threat to the rights of domestic citizens" (Coyne and Hall, 2013: 486) then—as activists and organizations believe (Dunn, 1996: 4, 88, Falcon, 2001: 43, Michalowski, 2007: 66)—those engaged in combat cannot be expected to support, understand, or respect civil rights: "National Guard troops... are trained to kill, and are not properly trained in civilian affairs, particularly those related to the unique border region" (Border Action Network, 2008: 14, 28). Therefore, in order to theorize about the perpetuation of sexualized violence against migrant women as a result of increasing border militarization, the militarist ideologies that are brought upon soldiers during training must first be considered. As critics of Operation Jump Start have argued, "in the intersection of border security and the rapid hiring of agents, standards for screening, training, and supervising agents may have been relaxed, which [is what] led to the rash of high profile cases involving sexual misconduct by Border Patrol agents between 1993 and 2000" (Ochoa O'Leary, 2009: 90), meaning that in a rapid attempt at punishing immigrants and upholding the law, border security and policy-makers have themselves set the stage for soldiers' violations of human and civil rights.

Although the discourse and literature presented demonstrate the role of militarization in perpetuating human rights violations and the failure of soldiers to uphold civil rights, there are ideologies embedded in society that promote these violations. This issue needs to be addressed in order to further understand the links between militarization and the normalization of violence against women, a major cause of the normalization of sexualized violence against migrant women perpetrated by U.S. Border Patrol agents in the borderlands. Three key terms in the understanding these links are: masculinity, militarism, and violence as a result of masculinity.

Cynthia Enloe states that while "militarism is an ideology [,] militarization... is a sociopolitical process [...] by which the roots of militarism are driven deep down into the soil of a society" (2004: 219-20). Militarization, adds Enloe, is also propelled by the belief that masculinized violence is natural (2004: 225). By militarizing, the state is normalizing violence. As a result, by living in a society or culture that is engaged in a state of war, human rights violations are bound to take place because violence is normalized.

In turn, masculinity, according to R.W. Connell, only exists in contrast to femininity (Connell, 1995:68). Gender, like masculinity and femininity, isn't something people *are*, rather something people *do* (Connell, 1995: 71). People *do* gender. The power relations, then, appear when patriarchy has been the model for society: women are subordinated and men are dominant. Patriarchy declares domination. It is easy to understand, then, how hegemonic masculinity comes to play a role in everyday lives: by masculinity being hegemonic, it "claims and sustains" a leading position in social life (Connell, 1995: 77). In rape, men are on top. In patriarchy, masculine men are at the top of the hierarchy, but even the lesser-masculine male, or gay males, are higher than women. According to Kokopeli and Lakey, "rape is not so much a sexual act as an act of violence expressed in a sexual way. The rapist's mind-set -- that violence and sexuality can go together -- is actually a product of a patriarchal conditioning" (1995). It's easy to see its inter-relatedness: patriarchy establishes masculinity, masculinity establishes dominance, dominance justifies violence as a method of domination and therefore normalizes it, and rape is that particular form of violence that dominates in the militaristic sphere. In literature, rape has been demonstrated to be about power:

"thus, rape and war have been shown, at a macro level, to be correlated" (Zurbriggen, 2010: 538). Rape is a weapon of war. Studying rape as a weapon of war and its correlation to war eases the conversation into the cultural aspects of rape: the socialization of militarization and the militarization of rape. If gender is something we do, then gender is something that is learned. The learning process of individuals, it has been proven, is a lifetime process that begins at childhood. This is how—through exposure in the home, at school, within society, in age phases, institutions, religion, and the environment at-large—individuals learn how to behave. The way people act, then, is a reflection of that process, and in understanding why people, in this case Border Patrol agents sexually abusing migrant women, act a certain way, it is important to study the process of socialization.

Socialization of Agents

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, socialization is the process "whereby an individual learns to adjust to a group (or society) and behave in a manner approved by the group (or society). According to social scientists, socialization essentially represents the whole process of learning throughout the life course and is a central influence on the behavior, beliefs, and actions of adults as well as of children (2013)."

If "our attitudes are the product of our history and our culture" (Flanagan, 1999: 2), then socialization is a reflection of the culture. But whose culture? Border Patrol culture? Law-enforcement culture? Military culture? "American" culture? Broadly speaking, the socialization theory offers an explanation for the massive misogynist, masculine, and violent culture that exists, is learned, and is—by definition—of militarist ideology. This is, of course, inclusive of rape.

In studying the correlation between rape and war, both a result of hegemonic masculinity, Zurbriggen argues that the socialization process in military academies and in basic training are "accurately" masculine (2010: 542). Zurbriggen also claims that the socialization process of understanding power and obeying orders comes from a highly masculinized, hierarchical structure (2010: 542-3). Through understanding the socialization process of soldiers and hierarchical, masculine structures, the internalization of violence becomes clear as soldiers are prepared to objectify, injure, and kill an enemy that must be below them—the enemy must be dehumanized in order to be killed. Often, this dehumanization will include feminization (2010: 543).

The socialization process of soldiers is important in understanding the socialization of border patrol agents on the highly militarized U.S.-Mexico border. Can the border with Mexico be seen as "military" enough to exemplify this socialization process of soldiers on agents who are not real soldiers? Sylvanna Falcon answers this question by moving beyond agent-training techniques and practices—her research involves uncovering that the hiring process of the (former) INS involves "the recruitment of former military" and that "San Diego's INS is among the most successful in hiring former military" (2001: 43). Her concern goes back to the socialization of the military: "they are not routinely trained in civil and human rights standards" (2001:43). By tying in Zurbriggen's argument, it is easy to see how increasing the militarization of a group (Border Patrol agents on the border) as well as adding and merging with them former military who are not trained in civil and human rights standards, the socialization and understanding of the "enemy," the former "illegal alien" who has—since September 11— become the "terrorist" invading the U.S. through the southwestern border, Border Patrol agents are likely to internalize and therefore normalize abuse; in their eyes, "violence is not just acceptable... it is actually preferable" (Zurbriggen, 2010: 543). [MJ4]

Agent Impunity

When violence is "actually preferable" during the socialization of soldiers and Border Patrol agents, it comes as no surprise that in committing their crimes, agents will enjoy virtual impunity. The Human Rights Watch report of 1995 did more than inform the public of the human rights violations the U.S. Border Patrol agents were allegedly committing. It also made clear that the violations taking place were not isolated cases of a few "bad apples," but rather a widespread institutionalized issue of impunity where "60- 70 percent of undocumented women migrants... experience sexual abuse" (Human Rights Watch, 1995; INCITE!). The report stated that "the violations continue because abusive Border Patrol agents are not held accountable. Agents who violate agency policies and the law avoid the consequences of their actions because INS procedures for receipt and review of complaints alleging violations are wholly inadequate" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). This shows that not only is violence being justified, but that abuse by Border

Patrol agents was commonly known, and that the agency that used to be responsible for the Border Patrol was not performing its job. In regulating and running such an agency, transparency is necessary, yet in the years the INS was in charge of the Border Patrol, it boasted it received only one complaint for every 17,000 arrests (Human Rights Watch, 1995). In the Human Rights Watch report alone, three specific examples of migrant women who had been survivors of sexualized violence perpetrated by Border Patrols agents were provided.

One complaint out of every 17,000 arrested. Although multiple scholars, activists, and researchers have professed their outrage at these figures, Ochoa O'Leary dismisses the statistic on the basis that there isn't a forced systematic documentation of all individual cases (2009). Unlike police departments and the majority of other law enforcement agencies, Border Patrol is not required to document and file incidents. The CBP Inspector's Field Manual highlights this discrepancy, as well. In its 343 pages, the IFM has only one sub-section (Section 2.7) titled "Reporting Significant Incidents." It begins by advising that since "the Office of Field Operations program... is so highly visible, [it] is an obvious target of those seeking publicity" and that an officer "should anticipate national media attention and prepare to act promptly and properly in emergency situations" such as "strikes, demonstrations... threats of terrorist activities... bomb threats... assaults upon officers, and natural disasters" (Miller, 2003: 7). Otherwise, nothing appears throughout the manual on how to report or where to report undocumented immigrants found or apprehended on the border.

Besides institutional regulations that fail to deter bad behavior in agents, another factor that contributes to the impunity enjoyed by Border Patrol agents is the overall fear, lack of knowledge, and powerlessness of their victims. As Ochoa O'Leary points out, "in the case of undocumented migrants, violations of their rights remain undisclosed by the simple fact that victims are repatriated or deported and they have little or no opportunity or incentive to denounce their offenders" (2009: 91). Even if they did denounce their offenders, as both the Human Rights Watch report and the individual survivor women (those who have reported and taken their case to court) have further demonstrated, the corruption of individual agents and within the agency's system are also greatly responsible for institutionalizing official impunity:

Disciplinary actions meted out to a particular agent often depend more on that agent's relationship with his or her supervisor than on the seriousness of the abuse committed. A seven-year veteran of the Border Patrol stated, 'in about seventy percent of the offense categories, the punishments can range from verbal reprimand to dismissal. And there's certainly cronyism in how it's handled'" (Human Rights Watch, 1995).

The relationships between Border Patrol agents and officers, even if these are run by a hierarchical power, are found to establish impunity. Throughout the literature, specifically when studying the examples of survivors of sexualized violence, a common practice is that of a criminal agent committing his crime in the presence of another officer, a bystander. But, "when alleged crimes require the corroborating testimony of a fellow agent, the code of silence among law-enforcement officials is virtually unbreakable" (Light, 1996).

More recently, as the abusive nature and impunity of action of Border Patrol has moved into public view due to the work and dedication of activists, human rights groups, and academics, experts have found that the number of civil rights complaints have begun to "increase substantially in recent years." In 2004, the article claims, "lawyers and individuals who had contact with the Border Patrol filed thirty-four complaints. In 2010, the most recent year for which complete data is available, sixty-five complaints were made against the agency. Between January and June 2011, eighty-one new complaint investigations were opened against Border Patrol" (Constantini, 2012). Given the sheer number of women attempting to cross the border and the suggested rates of sexual abuse, those numbers are still woefully low.

In light of the immigration reform and of the greater number of cases gaining attention, Border Patrol agent impunity is under pressure. Although impunity can be seen as an effect of the mentality of a militaristic, hegemonic masculinity-dominated, patriarchal culture that has normalized sexualized violence and sees it as "preferred," the silencing of women contributes significantly to the impunity agents enjoy. Because impunity would not be so institutionalized if it were not for the continued silencing of women, it is necessary to engage in dialogue with literature that analyzes the factors that contribute to the silencing of women, as well as the repercussions of silence on women.

Silencing of Women

Women are silenced in one of three ways: by self silencing, personal-cultural silencing, or fear-induced silencing. Self silencing refers to the survivor choosing to silence herself; cultural silencing refers to the impact that the migrant women's culture has had on her that pressures her to stay silent; and silence induced by fear is caused by external forces, usually legal intimidation, threats, and the known personal consequences of speaking up.

A woman chooses whether to stay silent or speak out against their abuse. What is important to analyze is not her "silence" or their willingness to speak, but the force behind her choice. For example, in the chapter "Women, Migration, and Sexual Violence: Lessons from Mexico's Borders," Ruiz Marrujo studies sexualized violence on both the Guatemala-Mexico and U.S.-Mexico borders, learning about abuse patterns. She discovers that the region's social, cultural, and political constraints are all hard to overcome as most institutionalize violence against women. She claims that because little attention has been paid to the individual subjects of sexualized violence, it is difficult to understand why it happens, to whom, and how to overcome it. Ruiz Marrujo, in her research, discovered that sexualized violence is so common that in "preparing for the worst, a possible sexual assault on the journey north and the additional hardship of a forced pregnancy, a woman might take birth control pills." (Ruiz Marrujo, 2009: 34). In taking birth control, the woman migrant is silencing herself by preparing for a possible rape (and pregnancy) she knows could be forced upon her. The birth control would buy her self-silence and leave no physical repercussion, allowing her to continue her journey. Although this is an example of the first type of silence, self-silence can also have its roots in a greater silence: the silence embedded on a person as a result of her culture.

If female immigrants arrive in the U.S. from Latin America, they are almost always under the influence of a patriarchal culture. Patriarchy, masculinity, militarism, and sexualized violence will have become normalized for these migrant women because it is what they know. It is what they have been raised to expect, respect, and honor. Ruiz Marrujo explains that the migrant woman, if a victim of abuse, "may even consider it 'expected' or 'usual' male conduct, 'what one can expect from a man if you are a woman'" (Ruiz Marrujo, 2009: 34). For the reason that these women migrate from- and into- a patriarchal-dominated society where "the roots of militarism are driven deep down into the soil of a society" (2004: 219-20), sexualized violence is often seen as, "the price one has to pay" for crossing without papers or in exchange for not being detained or apprehended by immigration authorities (Border Patrol) (INCITE!, n.d.). If a woman is "unaware of her civil and sexual rights [she] may not recognize an aggression as such. If she did not grow up in a society and culture that educated her about these rights, she probably will not recognize or defend them in the judicial system" (Ruiz Marrujo, 2009: 46).

Lastly, the silencing of a woman through fear and intimidation is the most common. The Human Rights Watch report claims that "victims of abuses committed by the Border Patrol fear reprisals if they attempt to file a complaint. Since many victims or witnesses are in the country illegally when subjected to abuse, they are reluctant to pursue a complaint that may call attention to their undocumented status" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Reprisals are not uncommon and can come in very different forms: stalking, threats, torture, rape, humiliation, violence, and even death. As militarism and militarization of the border expand, what hope can there be if the only ones criminalized are the immigrants? Criminalization, in turn, leads to increased fear—fear of being caught, deported, violated, denied ones rights (Staudt, 2009).

The documentary "Lost in Detention" presents specific cases of the dangers that immigrants suffer due to their criminalization. Those interviewed were both former and current detained immigrants. Their experiences and victimization ranged from being threatened, to harassment, and to rape. A psychologist working for a facility was also interviewed. Her position allowed her direct contact with those detained, a vehicle for learning a detainee's experience from their own perspective. To the crew of Lost in Detention, she reaffirmed the brutal human rights violations that went on inside, both against women and men, as had been described to her by the same detained immigrant patients she had been working with. The documentary proves that silence as a result of fear is a very large issue. Furthermore, the documentary also highlighted that when CBP or detention facility officers discovered that individuals had spoken out about the violations they had suffered, they made them "pay back" for speaking out by further harassing and abusing them. A Canadian woman, who remained anonymous, told Lost in Detention that she knew what staying at the facility upon detention would entail: she begged CBP to deport her back to her country instead.

The three methods by which women are silenced mean that the lack of reports of sexual abuse on the border do not accurately reflect the level of abuse occurring. Migrant women who have suffered abuse, as a result, must not stay silent, but rather be forced to appear in public. Doing so could bring an end to institutionalized violence and justice to the human perpetrators of violence. As long as silence continues to be normalized and the silencing of women ignored and forgotten, the cycle of women's oppression at the hands of a militarized Border Patrol will never end.

Case Study

In 1993, 22 year-old Juanita Gómez was reportedly raped along the U.S.-Mexico border. Human Rights Watch presented her fully investigated story in their 1995 report: Juanita and her cousin, Ana, crossed into the U.S. through a hole in the fence on their way to McDonalds to meet friends before going shopping. As they left the restaurant, Agent Larry Selders detained both women and took them inside his Blazer where he asked for their papers. After the women denied that they had any, he "propositioned them... that if one of them had sex with him he would let them both go without taking them to the Border Patrol station for processing and return to Mexico" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). When they rejected him, he instructed Ana to leave the truck and then drove off with Juanita, where he raped her. After Selders was done, he dropped Juanita off at a parking lot. Juanita reported the incident to the Mexican Consulate, which then directed her to the Nogales Police Department and the Nogales Border Patrol. At the Nogales Police Department, Juanita met up with Ana, who had already reported her kidnapped. Even after Juanita and Ana identified Selders from a photo lineup, the police didn't believe either of them and told them they were prostitutes and that if they were lying they would be jailed. Juanita and Ana were finally returned to the border after hours of Juanita's being "examined at a hospital and [providing] detectives with samples of semen and blood for their investigation" (Kumar, 2002: 194).

Socialization of Agents

The socialization of masculinity is clear in the case of Juanita. Masculinity first makes itself present in the physical characteristics of the kidnapper: she was kidnapped by a white male of authority, an officer of the Border Patrol agency whose power was clearly displayed through his Border Patrol's uniform and the official truck he drove. Power relations are also displayed in Selders' "proposal" to the women: he had enough power to keep Juanita in detention or to let her go, and sufficient freedom of action to do either without filing any reports on the matter. Through his sense of masculinity and dominant position in patriarchy's hierarchy, Selders consciously exploited Juanita's body—the body of "the Other," of an alien, of a dehumanized being—at his leisure just because he could.

For others involved in the case, including the officers at the NPD responsible for filing the cousins' reports, the socialization of masculinity and militarist ideology are clearly exemplified. To begin with, Juanita and her cousin were dehumanized and oppressed by the officers complicit in the situation. The ability to dehumanize and oppress are a direct result of the creation of binaries, of the establishment of "the Other." Bell Hooks and Chandra Mohanty explain that the purpose of the dualist/binary culture that dominates is so that relationships contain strong hierarchical elements which lead to the domination of the Other, to violence, and to oppression (Hooks, 1984, Mohanty, 1984). For Patricia Hill Collins (2000), "Othering" allows the group in power to ignore oppression with the purpose of justifying male sexual exploitation, rape, or abuse. By establishing Juanita and her cousin as "the Other," the officers responsible for their oppression and sexual exploitation were able to dehumanize both women, humiliate them, disclaim their reality and experience of violence, and to justify whatever event may have happened on the basis of "they must have asked for it" because they were allegedly prostitutes. The women were also threatened that if they were found to be prostitutes and lying about the case they could be sent to jail. In theory, the duty of the police is to assure civil rights. But even though it was clear that these women's rights had been denied, the officers still rejected their rights because their militarization expected them to see them as a foreign invader who had to be eliminated. This is all part of the process of socialization of masculinity, militarism, and violence. All of the Border Patrol agents' actions were normalized, and especially those of Selder, whom the police defended once the women pressed charges. The agents' attitude demonstrates the normalization of violence: if they find the accusation, rather than the action, problematic, it can only mean that they internalize this violence as well. If violence is internalized, then there are no problems with it. If there are no problems with the internalization of violence, it will recur and continue cycle of abuse of women and their bodies.

Agent Impunity

If violence is normalized, then institutional impunity also exists. Selders' rape of Juanita exemplifies this sense of impunity. Unlike the quick investigation of Juanita, Agent Selders was "not picked up for questioning until after 6 P.M., more than three hours after Juanita reported her rape to the police. By that time, he had finished work and changed his clothes— clothing that reportedly was never searched by the police. Police reportedly seized the wrong Border Patrol vehicle, and held it for a week and a half before they realized their mistake, thereby ensuring that all meaningful evidence was destroyed" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Furthermore, while Juanita's blood and hair was tested and her body checked for semen, Selders was "not examined" as he "refused [to] provide the semen and blood samples requested by the county attorney" (Kumar, 2002: 194). Although Selders was originally charged with rape and kidnapping, the county attorney offered to drop the charges on a 'no contest' plea to " 'attempted transporting of persons for immoral purposes... while married,' which is the lowest class of felony available" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). He was sentenced to one year in jail, but was eligible for parole after six months. According to the Human Rights Watch report, "from the time he was charged with rape and kidnapping until the plea was accepted, Selders was on paid administrative leave from the Border Patrol; he resigned in August 1994" (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Not only did Selders continue to be paid during the time he was being tried for rape, but he had the luxury of resigning without damaging his record or reputation. The institutions of the Border Patrol and law enforcement shielded Selders from the more serious consequences of his actions, the very same institutions that should be responsible for protecting the more vulnerable in society.

Silencing of Women

Juanita and Ana refused to stay silent and pressed charges against Selders for his crimes. Since neither woman stayed silent (and are among the few who have not), they do not fall under any of the three categories under the "silencing of women." This is not to say, though, that the third category, the "fear-induced silencing", was not present: had they allowed fear to silence them, their story might not have had come to light. If Juanita had consented to a sexual exchange with Selders to prevent her deportation, fear of being deported would have been the proximate cause of her silence, and Juanita would have been forced to assume that the sex was "the price she had to pay" for crossing the border. After the rape, Selders told her that he wouldn't do anything else to her if she didn't say anything about the rape; he tried, once again, to bargain for her silence. At the police station, police officers attempted to silence her by threatening both Juanita and Ana with imprisonment if they were, in fact, discovered to be prostitutes. Juanita knew what they were doing, but she refused to comply: "they treated me as if I were guilty of something, not a victim," Juanita told Human Rights Watch, "it seemed like they did not ever believe me" (1995).

Conclusion

"As long as there continues to be a need (real or perceived) for soldiers and war, rape can never be eliminated" (Zurbriggen, 546). The particular issue on the border is the use of rape as a weapon for protection and war. Because the number of reported cases of the sexualized violence immigrant women on the U.S.-Mexico border is very limited, the issue's pertinence or the fact that it is a phenomenon that continues plaguing the border could be questioned. It is not a general but rather a particular issue that is hard to prove. For Cynthia Enloe, though, "the particular is the general, while the general is also the particular—just a lot of particulars." Simply stated, the few cases reported of sexualized violence towards women immigrants does not mean the cases are isolated, few in number, or not an issue. If there are even a few cases it means there must be a larger issue still in the dark; but there is a "general" situation of the reality that women on the border suffer. This "general" situation has its roots in the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border that serves to normalize abuses against women and people on the basis of masculinity, dominance, patriarchy, and the protection of the nation. Militarization, as this paper has demonstrated, is also responsible for dehumanizing and "othering" the immigrants who cross into the U.S., making violence an acceptable, and favored, method of control.

Academic discourse on this issue also points to the socialization of individuals and the ways in which actions and characteristics are internalized as causes of abuses. In the Border Patrol, many agents have learned to internalize violence and as a result have normalized it in the field. Socialized in the military with its code of masculinity, violence becomes normalized for those agents who patrol the borders (Dunn, 1996, Michalowski, 2007). It has become a fight for hierarchical power and for the dominant force—the

most masculine, tough, "no sissy" (Kokopelo and Lakey, 1995)— male are highest in the hierarchy. The secretive, sexualized violence that includes harassment, abuse, and rape, as Cynthia Enloe and Eileen Zurbriggen have written, is driven deep down into society, and will continue threatening the bodies and lives of migrant women crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.

Migrant women who have suffered sexualized violence — a normalized result of militarization and a product of the socialization of agents and their ability to act with impunity — have been silenced for many reasons: their culture has taught them to be silent, they believe they deserve the punishment they received or that it was "a price to pay," or they were silenced out of fear. Although the borderlands is the main region of focus of this paper, the violence is not limited to the area and continues to be normalized throughout the United States as militarization has become internalized in the wake of the events of September 11.

As the "War on Terror" and Mexico's drug war continue to pervade the daily lives of citizens, the impunity with which violations and corruption occur along the border raises questions as to what extent security dilemmas have been invented (Wibben, 2011: 6), especially when these have been used to justify the widespread exploitation and domination of undocumented women's bodies. There is a security dilemma, but it is not the dilemma of the security of the United States. It is of the migrant women who cross the U.S.-Mexico Border. Citizens, the government, activists, the international community, immigrants, and "security scholars need to learn to listen attentively and empathetically to begin to consider not only what the world looks like from another vantage point but also to realize that their ignorance is harmful" (Wibben, 2011: 113). The ignorance of angry and racist "Americans" who continue punishing immigrants and to try them as criminals will only serve to continue deeply damaging the state and its people. Their ignorance is destructive to the women immigrants who face the militarization of the Border Patrol "protectors" on their journey north: "rape prevention ties into anti-war, but if anti-war doesn't succeed, then the former won't either" (Zurbriggen, 2010: 544). Unless the border region begins to regulate its own protectors and punish their violation of authority and censures their militant culture, the abuse of vulnerable communities will continue to occur. It won't be long until more abuses begin to be uncovered, but the first step to solve the dilemma will be, as Wibben and Enloe (2004) argue, to listen, listen, and listen; to take the narratives of women who have been silenced for so long into account and understand their realities and experiences, for "there is always more than one point of view and more than one story to be told" (Wibben, 2011: 2). Through understanding the narratives of migrant woman, "we [will] not only investigate but also invent [the] order of the world" (Wibben, 2011: 2) that is dominating these abuses: the linkages between war, militarization, and patriarchy. That is not to say, though, that abuses will be eliminated. Through narrative and challenges to power that has made the security of one group dependent on the insecurity of another (Wibben, 2011: 4), we might be able to better secure women and understand that this is imperative; not only is it a reflection of war mentality, but a representation of the American society at large. Ending these crimes will be a step in ameliorating violence against women in the United States as a whole. It will, additionally, be a stepping-stone on the road to full rights and equality for women.

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