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Feminist Reflexive Interviewing: Researching Violence against Women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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Abstract

For several decades, feminists have challenged approaches to generating knowledge within traditional social science research. Since the 1980s, feminist work on methodology and epistemology represents a significant contribution to the de-privileging of rationality and objectivity as the cornerstone to the study of social phenomena. Consequently, the idea of the detached, unbiased researcher has come under scrutiny, and it is now widely accepted that researchers bring their experiences and positionalities to bear on the research process. The process of conducting in-depth qualitative interviews typically facilitates an exploration of participants' understandings of reality and the situated meanings produced during this interaction. In this paper, I reflect on the process of applying feminist methodological approaches, particularly reflexivity, to data collected through in-depth interviews. The current work is based on interviews with Vincentian women and men on intimate partner violence (IPV) against women. Feminist researchers have long been concerned with generating reflexive knowledge; making visible the power dynamics and reducing the power differentials between researchers and research participants; the insider/outsider relationship; and the significance of gendered relations of power as a feature of social life. In other words, it is essential to consider our own biographies and biases even as we seek to make claims about the lives of those we study. These concerns guide my discussion of the in-depth interview method as a tool for conducting feminist research on violence against women in the Caribbean.

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Introduction

Over the past several decades, feminist methodologies have challenged the orthodoxy of traditional social science research in which the principles of rationality and objectivity are privileged and applied to the study of social phenomena. Consequently, the idea of the detached, unbiased researcher has come under scrutiny and it is now widely accepted that researchers bring their experiences and positionalities to bear on the research process. As a method of inquiry, qualitative research privileges those representations of reality included in texts, images, as well as verbal accounts. This article forms part of a broader effort to critically explore those knowledge creation enterprises in which feminists in the Caribbean have been engaged. Given the commitment among regional feminists to generating reflexive knowledge, there has been insufficient reflection on the extent to which this is achievable. This article represents my experience of using one-one-one in-depth qualitative interviews as a Caribbean feminist reflexive resource. I examine how this method of inquiry typically facilitates an exploration of participants' understandings of reality and the situated meanings produced during the interaction.

The studies to which I will refer can be understood as constituting three main categories: Caribbean feminist research (on gender and sexuality), research on Caribbean women, and research on Caribbean women and men from the perspective of gender. The first category comprises those empirical works which are explicitly (Caribbean) feminist in their orientation. Caribbean feminism exists at the intersections of struggles against colonialist, neo-colonial, racist, sexist, hetero-patriarchal, classist, and other discriminatory institutions and practices. Caribbean feminists¹ are particularly concerned about how these systems overdetermine the experiences of women, and more broadly speaking, how they can be contested in order to create more just societies.² It is a feminism birthed out of the socio-historical, political and cultural realities of the Caribbean, and while it has always been influenced by several global feminist movements and perspectives, it cannot be reduced to that which is an offshoot of Northern feminisms. The second category is best exemplified by the Women in the Caribbean Project (WICP) (Massiah 1986; Senior 1991) in which research on women in the region, for the first time, was approached from women's perspectives. WICP researchers never articulated an explicit feminist perspective at the time of the study. However, this research has since been acclaimed as a seminal contribution to Caribbean feminist knowledge production, given the landmark recovery work done to address women's multiple realities in the region. In addition, a number of studies have emerged which use gender to explain a range of social phenomena. Both Tracy Robinson (2011) and Tonya Haynes (2012) refer to postfeminist renderings of the concept 'gender', which is evident in academic and public discourses. The concept is often mobilised in sociological research on masculinity, studies of the family, policy studies for gender bureaus and various international agencies, and socio-medical studies on HIV and other health issues, without any reference to feminist theorising on gender as an analytical tool. In this article, I briefly consider how methodological issues are addressed in these studies before presenting personal insights from my own experience of applying feminist

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methodological approaches to the study of intimate partner violence (IPV) against Vincentian women. The analysis for this article focuses on the interview experience.

The choice of in-depth interviews was based on my interest in understanding the meanings individuals attach to their experiences of violence and the ways in which the accounts of violence are sites in which gender is produced. Talk is a fundamental human activity that is systematised in research (DeVault and Gross 2007). However, in-depth interviews are not to be confused with everyday conversation. As a qualitative resource, in-depth interviews combine structure and flexibility in order to generate meanings from the perspectives of respondents (Legard, Keegan and Ward 2007). Topics to be covered are usually predetermined by the researcher; however, the stories which emerge are shaped by the interests of both the interviewee and the interviewer. These roles may shift over the course of the interview as participants seek to elicit information and ideas during the interaction. Feminist interviewing emphasises reciprocity and aims to be more reflexive and interactive, in order to avoid a hierarchical approach to research (Oakley 1993; Legard, Keegan and Ward 2007). In relation to the current work, participants were asked about their living arrangements, image of self, image of their partner, ideas about womanhood and manhood, their partners' ideas about womanhood and manhood, social networks, family network and routine, assessment of relationships, history of family violence, and violence in relationships. In this article, emphasis is placed on the co-construction of meaning during the interviews.

Feminist methodologies and Caribbean feminist/gender research

In its infancy, feminist methodologies challenged the orthodoxy of traditional positivist social science in which the natural science principle of objectivity and Western philosophy's preoccupation with rationality were applied to the study of human relations (Anderson 1995; Cook and Fonow 1986; Harding 1987 and 1991; Kirsch 1999). In this early period, feminists critiqued traditional social science, while also reflecting on sources and potentials of knowledge. It is worth noting that methodology specifies "how social investigation should be approached" (Ramazanoglu with Holland 2002, 11), or, as Harding (1987) suggests, it is both the theories and analyses of how research should proceed. It is the overall conception of the project and provides the rationale for applying particular techniques of investigation and analysis (Klein 1983). In other words, it is terrain where philosophy meets action (Sprague 2005); where questions of epistemology and method intersect (Jaggar 2008). The role of the researcher figures more prominently in Gloria Wekker's definition of methodology. For her, methodology "provides information about the various ways in which one locates oneself—psychologically, socially, linguistically, geographically, epistemologically, sexually—to be exposed to experience in culture" (Wekker 2006, 4). If we accept the commitment of contemporary practitioners to analysing the social relations of the research process, it becomes necessary to reflect on the manner in which our own positionalities determine the decisions taken in any research enterprise (Best 2003; Oakley 2000; Skinner, Hester and Malos 2005). Moreover, the process of documenting, analysing and (re)presenting the lives of others involves acknowledging our own social location as researchers and how this affects the kind of knowledge we produce.

The debate about whether there exists a distinctive feminist methodology was the subject of several books and journal articles throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Cancian 1992; Cook and Fonow 1986; Klein 1983; Harding 1987 and 1991; Oakley 1993 and 2000). It should be noted that there is no unified feminist methodology as feminists make claims from a range of ontological and epistemological locations. A fundamental aim within feminist methodological activities is to assess the strategies used for generating knowledge to determine their suitability for feminist research (Jaggar 2008). Notwithstanding these variations and the 1980s–1990s debates, there emerged some consensus on the key characteristics of feminist research. In general, there is a shared commitment to reconfigure current manifestations of gender inequality; reflexivity; consciousness-raising as a specific methodological tool, as well as a way of seeing; voicing women’s subjective experiences; ethical research practice; and the empowerment of women and the transformation of patriarchal relations (*see* Cook and Fonow 1986 and Jaggar 2008).

Regardless of the choice of methods, these principles feature across different feminist research projects. In addition, Skinner, Hester and Malos (2005, 18) note that these characteristics are not “solely the domain of feminist researchers [but] feminists have fundamentally influenced their use.” In this regard Kirsch (1999, 6-7) adds that

many feminist principles of research overlap, to some extent, principles central to new ethnographic, critical, and hermeneutic approaches to research . . . What distinguishes feminist research from other traditions of inquiry, then, is its deliberate focus on gender combined with an emphasis on emancipatory goals.

In researching violence against women in the Caribbean, I found the focus on gender, central to feminist methodologies, to be of particular import. These broad feminist principles informed my approach to the study of violence by providing a useful guide for conducting ethical fieldwork. Of course, the vagaries of fieldwork limit the extent to which some of these goals might be achieved. Take, for instance, the possibility of engaging in meaningful reciprocal consciousness-raising during an in-depth interview. This is virtually unattainable in a single sitting. However, Cook and Fonow (1986) submit that we should not judge “how feminist” a study is by counting how many of these principles are evident in the work. Instead, it is important to demonstrate how epistemological concerns are related to the research design, methods and analysis (Cook and Fonow 1989).

There are certain limits placed on authors who seek to present their empirical research in the form of peer-reviewed research articles and book chapters. In these fora, discussions of methodology are often reduced to descriptive narratives in which researchers report on the procedures undertaken during the data collection and analysis phase of their project, with less focus on how their choices shape the knowledge produced. In papers published about sexual violence in intimate relationships (2011), and narratives produced about gender (2012), I too presented procedures undertaken in the data collection and analysis stage, with very little discussion about the dynamics which influenced the choices made throughout the research process. Indeed, scholars are often constrained by word limits when publishing their work, as peer-reviewed papers and research reports are usually

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produced to reflect the strict guidelines of those who commission these studies. It is also important to note that some of the earlier empirical studies of women in the Caribbean predated critical developments in feminist methodologies, especially if we consider that it was around about the 1980s–1990s that reflexivity became a crucial site of engagement for feminist social scientists. Within the region, there is now an emerging body of work which critically considers methodological issues from a range of disciplinary locations.³

Lucille Mathurin Mair's (2006, 235) path-breaking historical study of women in Jamaica ruptured the "orthodox historiography, which has been largely masculine and white". Mathurin Mair is described by Beckles and Shepherd as starting the process of writing Caribbean women into history. From a methodological standpoint, Mathurin Mair "decodes" the archival texts (Beckles and Shepherd 2006, xv) to uncover a range of gendered relations within which women were engaged between 1655 and 1844, and in so doing her work has become an important turning point in feminist historiography in the region. This work extends beyond writing women into history. From these records, Mathurin Mair interrogates how women were implicated in various relations of power under the systems of slavery, racism and colonialism, and how agency and resistance were indeed enacted as women navigated these processes. Shepherd (2002) identifies Mathurin Mair's pioneering work and the 1970s as key moments in which we begin to see women's lived experiences featured in the histories of the Caribbean. Through a range of archival research, oral history interviews and document analysis, the cultural and social history of women and gender in the Caribbean has been produced by a number of historians and sociologists, including Hilary Beckles (1989, 1999, and 2013), Patricia Mohammed (2002), Verene Shepherd (2002), Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton and Barbara Bailey (1995), Rhoda Reddock (1994) and Barbara Bush (1990). Mathurin Mair's historical method and focus serve as an important point of departure for those who succeeded her in the area of Caribbean historiography.

Similarly, the seminal study on Caribbean women, undertaken by the researchers of the Women in the Caribbean Project (WICP) some three and a half decades ago, represents, to date, the most comprehensive empirical data source on the myriad realities of women in the Commonwealth Caribbean. The empirical research generated from this study was eventually published in a two-volume special issue of the journal *Social and Economic Studies*, and the findings and analysis of the WICP also formed the basis of Olive Senior's *Working Miracles: Women's Lives in the English-Speaking Caribbean*. The main aim of the project, according to Joycelin Massiah (1986), was to examine the subjective meanings of women's social realities and to analyse how women's roles are affected by social change. Senior (1991, 1) describes the WICP as "the first to attempt woman-centred research, i.e. to involve women in defining their own reality." A mixed method approach generated substantial data on women in the following areas: work and women's dual roles, economic management of households, leadership and decision-making, sex-role identity and self-perception, and relationships with men (Anderson 1986). Both women and men were interviewed in the process of constructing knowledge about women's lives, although most of the interviewees were women. Particular reference is made to the collection of the detailed life-histories of 38 women. In-depth interviews were conducted with Jamaican women to analyse their kinship and friendship network; with Barbadian women experiencing poverty to determine their survival

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strategies; with rural women in Guyana; and with women from the Eastern Caribbean who were successful in their public lives. Massiah's overview of the project provided important explanations of the motives underpinning the choices made throughout the research process, whereas Senior provided a cursory glance at the study methodology. Massiah was careful to contextualise the overall research by providing in-depth justification for decisions taken at various stages of the project. Although it can be argued that there was little reflexive engagement in the presentation of the study methodology, it is worth reiterating that feminist scholarship on positioning the self in the research process did not emerge until the late 1980s and early 1990s.

In *Caribbean Women at the Crossroads: The Paradox of Motherhood Among Women of Barbados, St. Lucia and Dominica*, Patricia Mohammed and Althea Perkins (1999) briefly engage feminist methodological concerns as part of the research process. They present important evidence-based analysis on the social, economic and cultural factors which contribute to and often circumscribe women's decision-making capacity. In the opening chapter of this exploratory study, the research design and methodology are outlined. Mohammed and Perkins (1999) discuss methods for data collection which included a survey administered to 375 women and oral history interviews with 23 women, all drawn from the three countries. We learn that oral history interviews were examined against the data drawn from the questionnaires. Mention is made of the significance of feminist methodological considerations in the framing of the study, and this is reflected as they complicate the category "woman" by emphasising difference and heterogeneity within this grouping. Feminist methodologies explicitly guide the theoretical framework of the study and this is illustrated as the researchers explore a number of issues affecting Caribbean women in their different communities. It is undeniable that Mathurin Mair's historical research on women and gender (and that of her successors), the WICP, and the study by Mohammed and Perkins represent significant contributions to feminist empirical studies of Caribbean societies. Since the publications of these studies, feminists and other researchers, who adopt critical methodological approaches, have successfully shown that reflexivity in research serves to further legitimise our knowledge claims.

In addition, studies which focus on gender role socialisation in the family and issues related to fatherhood provide useful evidence-based discussions of Caribbean masculinity, race and the family (Barrow 1996; Brown et al. 1997; Roopnarine et al. 1997; Davies and Thomas 2006).⁴ Apart from Barry Chevannes' (2001) *Learning to be a Man*, in which he reflects on ethnographic research conducted across five Caribbean communities, most discussions tend to focus on methods and analytical procedures. A critical approach to research is outlined in the introduction to the study by Chevannes where he identifies the social and political context of data collection and analysis. In so doing, he acknowledges his role, as coordinator of the project, in ultimately shaping the ideas produced about these communities. It is important to note that the extent to which researchers engage in a reflexive dialogue on the research process may indeed be guided by their disciplinary background. So, for instance, individuals trained in the area of anthropology or those conducting ethnographies are more likely to engage in personal reflexions on the research process.⁵

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In general, research on women in the Caribbean, Caribbean feminist research and Caribbean research which investigates the lives of women and men from the perspective of gender have addressed key methodological issues. However, while reflexive practice might inform these studies, quite often researchers do not write about such actions in their published work. There are notable exceptions in this regard. In her essay “Freelancers, Temporary Wives and Beach-Boys: Researching Sex Work in the Caribbean”, Kamala Kempadoo (2001) presents insights on how sex work is constructed by male and female sex workers and sex tourists in the Caribbean. She reminds us that the approach to data collection undertaken in any research enterprise implies both a theory and method (Kempadoo 2004). Kempadoo (2001) documents her experience with Latin American and Caribbean feminists as they conducted research in which they sought to incorporate activism and public consciousness-raising around sex work. The group was particularly concerned about reducing the hierarchies inherent in the relationship between researchers and those from whom they sought to collect data. She writes the following:

Understanding prostitutes and other sex workers to be one set of actors in the sex trade—as providers of sexual labor—yet a social group whose lives and voices had commonly been dismissed or ignored, we were emphatic from the outset of the project that the perceptions and experiences of this population needed to be center stage . . . From discussions throughout the project and at the conclusion of the fieldwork period, the positionality of the researcher was considered important to the construction of knowledge about sex work in the region. In particular, ideas and specific biases held by researchers regarding female sexual agency were areas for reflection and discussion (Kempadoo 2001, 43-45).

Kempadoo describes a process in which the emphasis was placed on producing knowledge that was locally situated, reflected cultural and national understandings of sex work, and was part of a broader set of feminist discourses and practices in the Caribbean. Likewise, David Murray (2007) tells of how the various axes of his own identity produces a specific narrative on the socio-sexual experiences of “gay-identified” Barbadian men in the tourism industry before proceeding to discuss his findings.

Similar discussions of the research process can also be found in the works of Michelle Rowley (2002) and Gloria Wekker (2006), who espouse the value of critical reflexions on our methodological choices. Wekker lays bare the extent to which she (as researcher) is implicated in and thus shapes the kind of knowledge produced about Afro-Surinamese women’s sexual culture. She invites the researcher to be accountable and reflexive with regard to “the different modalities in which the self engages with others” (Wekker 2006, 4). In reflecting on her use of the oral history interview as an ethnographic practice, Wekker describes how the knowledge produced is shaped by both the participant’s self-perception and her own involvement as interviewer. Rowley (2002, 28) emphasises “the need to bridge the gap that exists between the conceptual and operational, the experiential and material”. In other words, language functions in two important ways. Firstly, it provides the basis upon which we move between the conceptualisation and

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operationalisation of our research. Secondly, it is the medium through which experiences, ideas and feelings are (re)produced. It is not a question of the authenticity of the talk produced in interviews, but rather of how participants position themselves in that moment of co-construction which is always socially derived (Rowley 2002). These works illustrate the importance of viewing the interview as a “socially and linguistically complex situation” (Alvesson 2003, 14) in which the both the interviewer and respondent—not to be understood in clear dichotomous terms—participate in the creation of knowledge.

Researching violence against women in SVG: Positioning the personal

This article is based on research conducted as part of my doctoral study, the purpose of which was to explore the meanings individuals attach to the use and experience of violence against women in intimate heterosexual relations (DeShong 2010). Positioning the personal in the research process is now regarded as an important site for reflecting on how knowledge is produced (England 1994; Kirsch 1999; Macbeth 2001; Mauthner and Doucet 2003; Merriam et al. 2001; Wekker 2006). By positioning the personal, I refer directly to the effects of my choices as researcher, my personal values and my social location in shaping the knowledge produced about IPV against women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG). Personal reflexions afford researchers the opportunity to assess critically the implications of the knowledge claims emerging from empirical research. A researcher’s willingness to place her own actions and assumptions under scrutiny is a reminder that all knowledge is indeed political and embedded within particular relations of power. In this regard, I reflect on my role as a Vincentian woman researcher conducting feminist research on violence in SVG.

My personal assumption about violence in heterosexual unions at the beginning of the research process was that it is, for the most part, a form of violence against women perpetrated by men. This central belief was the result of my extensive readings of the empirical and theoretical work on IPV, as well as a multitude of media reports of women who had experienced serious and often fatal violence by male partners. Added to this was my own feminist politics, and these became instrumental in shaping the research questions and aims of the project. I set out to understand more about how ideas around power, privilege, and gender are so often tied to men’s violence against women and whether this was the case for a group of persons from my own country. More specifically, I wanted to understand the cultural ideas sustaining these beliefs and whether they were the same for those who experience and those who use violence.

Prior to embarking on fieldwork, I had already made choices about the theoretical orientation of the study and the kind of analytical framework to be used once data were collected. The study was guided by three central research questions:

What strategies do men and women employ in constructing their accounts of IPV? What can be gleaned from these accounts of women and men about how power is negotiated within intimate relationships? How are narratives of violence and control sites in which gendered identities are negotiated/performed/constructed by both women and men?(DeShong 2010, 19).

As a consequence of these key concerns, the study was located within feminist discursive frameworks and discourse analysis was chosen as a tool for examining the accounts produced during the interview. Elsewhere, I have discussed the suitability of discourse analysis as a feminist resource for exploring power, negotiations, dialogue, and subversion as these are enacted in speech (DeShong 2011, 2012). However, the purpose of this effort is to show how these choices guided my actions during the interviews.

Interviews

The interviews for this project were conducted over a period of about five months in 2007 and 2008. A total of 34 interviews were completed with 19 women and 15 men who were recruited from the Family Court, Family Services, a community police station and Her Majesty's Prisons. There were eight couples (current or former partners) interviewed within this group. In an attempt to secure informed consent, a description of the study was provided at the beginning of each interview. Participants were told that the information they offered would be confidential as I would not use their names nor any other details that could connect them to what we discussed. I explained the interviews would be recorded; they were informed that they could stop at any time during the interview; and I thanked respondents for agreeing to participate in the research. All participants were comfortable about continuing the interview, having been given this information at the beginning.

Because the formality involved in acquiring written consent from participants might have alienated some individuals (Miller and Bell 2005), I refrained from asking respondents to sign formal consent forms. The process of acquiring written consent could have been further complicated by the sensitive nature of the topic. The notion of "informed" consent is not without problems. Miller and Bell (2005, 65) asks, "What are participants consenting to when they agree to join a study?" That is why it was so important that participants were made aware of the range of issues that would be covered at the beginning of the interview so that they could decide whether they wished to proceed with the exercise.⁶ In addition, participants were provided with information about support networks should they require assistance in order to address the effects of violence in their lives. In most cases, persons contacted through the Family Courts and Family Services were quite *au fait* with available support systems and they constituted the majority of respondents.

Demographic data were collected at the beginning of the interview including information about age, ethnicity, level of education, marital status, religion, employment status and living arrangements; they were asked to provide the same general details about their partners. Interviews were completed within one sitting except in the case of one man who was called out to a job during the interview. However, this interview was completed one week later. Interviews lasted, on an average, between one and a half to two hours, except for the one interview that was done in two parts which lasted a total of three and a half hours. As one of the main methods of data collection in the social sciences, the in-depth interview is widely used by ethnographers, sociologists, psychologists, *inter alia*, who view personal accounts as central to the process of conducting social research. The

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appeal of the in-depth interview for feminist researchers, according to Shulamith Reinharz (1992, 19), is that it “offers researchers access to people’s ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher.” However, Gesa E. Kirsch (1999, 58) reminds us that the politics of interpretation and re-presentation is never unproblematic, so that even as we seek to include participants’ voices “researchers remain implicated in speaking for and about them.” Feminist researchers have long been concerned with generating reflexive knowledge; making visible the power dynamics and reducing the power differentials between researchers and research participants; the insider/outsider relationship; and the significance of gendered relations of power as a feature of social life. In other words, it is essential to consider our own biographies and biases even as we seek to make claims about the lives of those we study. These concerns guide my discussion of the in-depth interview method as a tool for conducting feminist research on violence against women in the Caribbean.

Though an interview schedule was used, the aim was to engage participants in a reflexive dialogue. A reflexive approach “operates with a framework that stimulates an interplay between producing interpretations and challenging them . . . It includes bridging the gap between epistemological concerns and methods” (Alvesson 2003, 14). However, I have found that discussions of reflexivity centre on the analysis rather than the collection of data and it is often difficult to determine how the feminist principle of reflexivity is achieved in the moment of the interview. Are researchers fully conscious of their ontological and epistemological purview at the time of doing the interview? And if so, how does this influence the interview dynamic? Similarly, how are the interview dynamic and research process influenced by the outlook of participants, as they narrate their world (Best 2003) of which we are only momentarily a part? These questions are taken up below as I discuss the experience of interviewing women and men about violence.

The making of violent accounts

Talking about the experience of violence in relationships is of course fraught with numerous challenges. For women who have been abused this often means returning to very traumatic experiences, a process which was quite difficult for several of the women interviewed. It was important to be able to assess and respond to participants’ reactions during the interview, to minimise the possibility for further harm. Respondents, generally, spoke at length about their feelings and experiences. The information given prompted me to probe for greater details on specific issues. In short, there was no slavish adherence to the interview schedule. There were, however, a few occasions where I intervened to steer the session in a particular direction, but for the most part, respondents were allowed to give direction to their accounts. I found that in most cases participants were willing to discuss various topics in the interviews. However, some men were less inclined to disclose details about the violence they perpetrated. This is similar to interviews conducted with men in other studies of violence against women (Dobash et al. 1998; Anderson and Umberson 2001; Boonzaier and de la Rey 2003 and 2004). With the exception of the tendency by most men to minimise their violent acts, respondents discussed topics with relative candour. This difference was even more pronounced with regard to sexual violence. Whereas several women reported that they were forced or coerced into sexual intercourse, men’s silence on sexual violence, as I have argued

elsewhere, might be regarded as strategic, deliberate and conspicuous by dint of these omissions (DeShong 2011).

Throughout the process I reflected on my position as a black, Caribbean, feminist, university-trained, former secondary school teacher, and Vincentian woman, with no experience of violent victimisation in an intimate relationship; both “insider and “outsider”. The notion of insider/outsider should not be read in clear dichotomous terms. Merriam et al. (2001) remind us that we can be regarded as both insiders and outsiders by research participants at various levels and stages of the research process. In other words, this may shift several times over the course of a single interview. They further suggest that “the reconstruing of insider/outsider status in terms of one’s positionality vis-à-vis race, class, gender, culture and other factors, offer[s] us better tools for understanding the dynamics of researching within and across one’s culture” (Merriam et al 2001, 405). In other words, it is not enough to focus on those aspects of my biography and experiences which connect me to or separate me from participants. Positionality, the power dynamics informing the research process, and the ways in which the emerging data are collected, analysed and represented are relevant points of reflexion (Merriam et al 2001). However, here, I focus exclusively on the interview exchange.

Returning to the transcripts, I found that there was greater variation in the co-construction of stories in my interviews with men. In general, women’s responses were more expansive. This is particularly evident in the talk about the nature and consequences of men’s violence. While women offered quite detailed statements about the motives, nature and effects of violence, men were more inclined to focus on rationalising their actions with far less attention to their use of violence. In addition, I found myself having to probe and challenge men to offer more details about their actions. Reflecting on her experience as a woman interviewing men about divorce, Terry Arendell (1997, 346) found her male respondents to be “preoccupied with the maintenance, repair, and self-assertion of their identities *as men*”. Similar to Arendell, I found that men mobilised traditional gender identities and sought to impose gender hierarchies during interviews. At times, men overtly positioned me as an outsider. This was the case in my interview with Andrew, a 25-year-old black male. The following is an extract from the interview:

Int.: In terms of when you were growing up, were there any quarrels or arguments in your family?

Andrew: My father fight, beat up plenty women.

Int.: You’ve seen that?

Andrew: Yeah.

Int.: And, like, why would he do that?

Andrew: Well, woman harden [*stubborn*] I now tell you, dread [*an expression of exasperation*], and they like to tell you plenty lies.

Int.: So because of that –

Andrew: [*He laughs*] Women is not to be trusted a certain amount of the times. It’s only like when on a level. Boy, I don’t like talk to you about women because you’re a woman.

Int.: So if a man was doing the interview would you have said more?

Andrew: Yeah, it makes a difference because you are a woman. I can’t

level [*reason*] with you because you is a woman. If it was a man, because you being a woman I can't just run down [*criticise*] women because you might think that a man would run you down the same way.

Int.: The thing is that all of us are shaped by our own circumstances and because of the things I experience in my life I would think a certain way and the things that you experience might make you think a different way –

Andrew: Woman harden man. I don't like to talk one time and two times. They just don't hear.

Int.: You mean like we're stubborn?

Andrew: If I talk to you one time [*mm hmm*] that is enough time. It means after that expect a lash.

Men in the study created a number of identity constructs for me which shaped the ways in which they narrated their accounts. In the above extract, Andrew reinforces a popular assumption which implies women and men are essentially different. There is an expectation that I would be critical of his actions because I am a woman, so at this point in the narrative, Andrew assumes a defensive posture. The identity marker that appears to be most salient in shaping this portion of his account is that of gender. Men's authority to discipline women's so-called recalcitrance is stated in a rather taken-for-granted manner. Using the term "harden" [*stubborn*] to describe women, he invokes the hetero-patriarchal expectation of women's deference to men. By mobilising the grouping "woman", rather than making specific reference to his partner, Andrew positions me within a category he has determined to be subordinate. My attempt to challenge Andrew's binary and hierarchical rendering of gender is dismissed and he simply reinforces his position about women's penchant for unsettling a normative gender order. In fact, as I attempt to articulate an alternative view, he simply cuts me off and insists that it is women who provoke men into violence.

Unlike Andrew who was hesitant to account for his use of violence, most men provided rather lengthy explanations for their acts of violence. However, as part of the process of impression management in the interviews, they used a number of strategies to distance themselves from the use of violence. They avoided the use of the first person in discussion of their actions. In the making of violent accounts, from men I learn that "she was hit", "she got a hard pound" and usually when the active voice was invoked it was to describe inherently non-violent selves—"I'm not really a violent person." In my view, stories are constructed in interviews in order to create certain impressions. Apart from the fact that violence against women is loathed within public discourses on the family, the act of creating non-violent selves in interviews may also be a result of an expectation that like the counsellors and other state officials with whom they have come into contact, I too may denounce their perpetration of violence. There is, of course, an awareness among participants that their actions and words are being evaluated, and this awareness shapes how they narrate their stories of violence.

Conversely, there were four men who offered specific details about their use of violence. However, a number of qualifiers were used in their accounts. As I listened to the tapes I wondered whether these qualifiers were a result of my non-verbal reactions to the graphic nature of what was being reported. After admitting to using the flat side of a machete to strike his partner, Scott stated that “I didn’t like abuse her that much.” Roger admitted to choking his partner, but explained that this was not to kill her but to restrain her since if he really wanted, he “could fuck her up”. All this he explained while performing the actions in the interviews. Unlike most men who described their use of violence as resulting from a loss of control, Roger presented his actions as calculated and controlled to achieve a particular effect. Most of the material that I had read prior to the interview spoke about the tendency by men, in general, to minimise violence, so it was with some surprise that I listened to these four men talk about their actions. This emphasised the varied ways in which people tell their stories. The details they provided called into question my expectation that men would always be silent about their use of violence. In their words and gestures, men ranged from invoking a taken-for-granted bravado to expressing emasculation and loss of control.

It was difficult to remain unmoved during the interviews. Questioning the idea that violence was the only choice for men who had “lost” control meant that at times I ran the risk of antagonising respondents. However, most men were wont to demonstrate that they had been forced into using violence. A feminist reflexive approach encourages the researcher to challenge stereotypical assumptions about gender and power. However, should this challenge be mounted during the interview or should this be incorporated into the analysis? I would suggest that there are subtle probes that can be used in this regard. I often asked men about the possibility of using non-violent conflict-resolution tactics and whether they felt responsibility for perpetrating violence. In the interest of maintaining rapport through the use of gestures such as the nodding of the head or the use of utterances such as “I understand” and “mm hmm”, we run the risk unwittingly of endorsing men’s violence. I was conscious of this possibility and sometimes found myself walking a fine line between finding ways to get men to talk about their violence, while at the same time ensuring that my actions did not convey support for these misogynous practices. In reviewing the transcripts, I observed no verbal interjections (on my part) while these four respondents discussed their specific acts of violence. However, from the structure of their accounts and the qualifiers provided, men may have been engaging in impression management and/or responding to my nonverbal facial and bodily reactions.

My anxiety about interviewing women was based mainly on the possibility that I might cause further harm to persons who are normally considered vulnerable given their exposure to violence. During the process of gaining access, a number of steps were taken to ensure that doing the interviews would in no way place women at any risk of experiencing violence. However, talking about violence can be distressing for those involved, especially for women who are the ones recalling the experiences. The formal interviewing process was suspended and the recorder turned off in a few instances when it became too difficult for some women to speak about their experiences.

Generally, interviews with women were longer, mainly because their responses were more detailed. Even though the transcripts reveal that respondents spoke at length, uninterrupted by follow-up questions in some instances, I was not a passive listener in these exchanges. Various non-lexical expressions encouraged participants to say more or to offer clarification. Through a number of probes and gestures women (like men) were sometimes encouraged to elaborate. Women were more inclined to offer details about the specific acts of violence they experienced, when compared to men providing insights into their perpetration of violence. For instance, I asked Linda about a particular attack by her former partner which caused her serious, almost fatal injuries. In a lengthy response Linda describes ending the relationship, making one of several police reports and then the attack. The following is an excerpt from the interview with Linda:

I called to the children to help me jam the door to stop him from coming in but they were so scared that everybody just froze, so he got the upper hand of us and started to push down the door. From the time he pushed down the door you hear Halimah, all I could receive is just chop like joke; left, right, centre, and all the chops coming now to my head, so actually I felt my skin in blood eh. (Linda)

This level of detail is not uncommon in women's recounting of violent events. In fact, all 19 women offered precise information about men's violence. In the interview with Linda, at times we spoke as if we had known each other for quite some time. The act of naming me as she describes this vicious attack demonstrates what Riessman (1987, 177) refers to as "an open display of the bond that is developing between interviewer and interviewee." In this regard, several participants made statements that indicated an expectation of shared knowledge between us as women. For instance, Rose was asked to describe her partner's reaction when she confronted him about intimacy with other women. She says "well you done know how man does get vex already." Likewise, Giselle responds to my question about her partner's social network by saying "you done know man already, man always get the most friends, maco friend, this friend, that friend." While Rose draws on conventional gendered beliefs about women's common experiences with men and men's tendency to act in similar ways, Giselle expresses annoyance at men's freedom to possess an extensive friendship network, a freedom not often shared by women in violent relationships. Her reference to his "maco⁷ friends" indicates that she is often under public surveillance, a theme which several women discussed in the interviews (DeShong 2013/2014). The use of the phrase "you done know man already [*you know what men are like*]" by both Giselle and Rose demonstrates how at times in these interviews I was accorded insider status on the basis of assumptions about my gendered experience and sexuality. Although Riessman agrees that such bonds during interviews are the result of supposedly shared gendered experiences, she is also careful to note that gender alone does not account for commonalities and difference.

Amy Best (2003) refers to the ways in which respondents translate their experience to ensure that their stories are heard in cases where there might be some perceived gulf between participants and the interviewer. Using her experience as a white woman

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interviewing Latina and black girls in the US about their high school prom, she demonstrates how race figures in the production of their stories. In particular, Best shows how the girls organise and reorganise their syntax to ensure that she understands them. According to Kempadoo (2001), while this outsider status offers a degree of anonymity which could make participants more inclined to tell their stories, having a complete outsider position, in relation to a particular cultural context, inhibits the researcher's ability to interpret their stories. My own experience is one in which persons used Vincentian Creole English that included local idioms, slangs and turns of phrase. This, I would argue, was the result of my audible Vincentian accent which indicated to respondents that I was a competent speaker of Vincentian Creole English. For example, Stacey, in response to my question about the number of friends her partner is known to have had, says "how he so ignorant, you hear tantie, me don't really look into him." "Ignorant" used in this context signifies "volatile"; "tantie", a term of endearment. These examples indicate that the positionality of the researcher, across a number of intersecting axes of power, does indeed shape how stories are told and how they are heard.

Sometimes women called into question the subordinate status that is so often associated with womanhood. I asked Rose about the first time that her partner used violence against her in the relationship

Int.: Could you tell me how the fight started then? What did each of you do?

Rose: It's words, words. He tell me something, and I tell he back something and he slap me, and I don't like it and we wrestle up.

Int.: So when he slapped you –

Rose: *I slap him back, yeah, I go take a slap* [participant's emphasis]?

In this exchange, Rose expresses surprise as I sought to ascertain what transpired. Reputation, an attribute usually associated with articulations of masculinity in the Caribbean, as elsewhere (*see* Peter Wilson 1969), is presented here as a salient aspect of her own identity construct. Wekker (2006) has argued that we should not assume that "reputation" is the preserve of masculine identity formation, since it is an equally important aspect of women's subjectivity, although the source of women's and men's reputation may in fact differ. Rose's swift response and inclusion of the rhetorical question conveys a sense of irritation that I would consider her reacting in any other way. Likewise, in my interview with Giselle, she explained that her partner was only able to overpower her during a violent episode because he used a weapon. These examples demonstrate the ways in which women subvert traditional gender norms in their narratives.

Power and reciprocity

Although the researcher has in mind the range of topics for which she wants to gather information and it is she who attempts to steer the discussion, the interview ought to be treated as a shared interaction. Participants offer explanations and information about their experiences and the interviewer should also provide responses to questions posed over the course of the interview. In her work on interviewing women, Ann Oakley

(1993) challenges the masculinist paradigm of the interview as a moment in which a subject—the “interviewer”—extracts information from the “object” of the interview—the participant—with the former actively avoiding offering a response to any questions raised by the latter in order to avoid introducing “bias” in research. Much feminist work has been done to demonstrate how this approach functions to objectify participants, while at the same time maintaining a hierarchical approach to research (Legard, Keegan and Ward 2007). Oakley (1993) notes that in conventional guidelines for conducting social science interviews, researchers have been advised to deflect attention away from questions raised by participants. However, in her own study of women’s transition to motherhood, she found that women asked several questions about this subject matter during the interview. Oakley suggests (1993, 48) that to regard participants as those who answer questions and interviewers as those who pose questions is “a purely exploitative attitude to interviewees as sources of data.” Though Oakley’s (1993) analysis was based on women interviewing women, her larger point about the need for reciprocity of information as a means of empowering participants and adhering to a feminist ethic of care should be considered, particularly when conducting research on sensitive issues. Since the publication of Oakley’s seminal work, feminist researchers have demonstrated that “through the judicious use of self-disclosure”, interviews are less exploitative with far greater analytical promise for the data produced (Harrison, MacGibbon and Morton 2001, 323). In situations where I was asked about my life and my experiences in interviews, I always provided a response based on my recollection at that time. However, I found that participants, both men and women, rarely posed questions to me about my personal life.

Participants mainly asked me to provide clarification about a question that I had asked. I always gave an answer in situations where a direct question was posed to me, and I found that this allowed me to maintain rapport with participants. While explaining his reasons for using violence, Andrew questioned me about my experience in my own relationships and expressed shock that I had never been hit by a partner. He asked whether I had ever been slapped by an intimate partner, to which I replied “no”. He was surprised and concluded that I had not been exposed to violence because I did not “give trouble” in my relationships. Once this was established, Andrew concluded that it was because I have never done anything to warrant a violent reaction. I was in that instance positioned as a good woman to whom particular stories could be told about his use of violence. He also appeared to be protecting men in general from possible vilification as he avoided offering much detail about his actions. He assumed that if he were to speak to me about his partner as he would to a man, it would affect the way in which I view all men. This initiated an explanation that was centred on the provocation motif in which men used their accounts to blame their partners for the violence men perpetrate.

The exercise of power in the researched-researcher relationship is a key area around which discussions of methodology have focused. Even though feminist researchers encourage reciprocity as a means through which we might reduce the power differential in the “researcher-researched” relationships, a review of my interview transcripts revealed that participants had a particular impression of what their roles ought to be. This is not surprising, according to Denzin (2001, 28), given the widespread use of interviews to “affirm the importance of the speaking subject and [to] celebrate the biographical”. It thus becomes the responsibility of “the reflexive interviewer [to] deconstruct [the] uses

and abuses of the interview” (Denzin 2001, 28). Participants operated as individuals from whom information was being sought. Apart from seeking clarification on my questions, persons also sort validation for their position as is evidenced by the use of phrases such as “you know” and “you understand”. Rarely did persons ask my opinion about the different topics covered in the interview. Oakley (1993) discusses reciprocity in a context where women saw her as a possible source of information about maternal health. However, this was not my experience. This may be the result of the difference in subject matter, their knowledge of sources of possible assistance, the fact that some women had managed to end their relationships, the strategies that they had employed to change their situation and their beliefs about my purpose for being there.

So what might be made of the power differential which exists between the interviewer and the respondent in the context of the interview? Davies and Dodd (2002, 281) suggest that ethical practice in research involves “the acknowledgement and location of the researcher in the research process.” It is necessary to consider my own social and personal characteristics, participants’ feelings about being interviewed and about the interview, my feelings about participants, the quality of the interviewer/interviewee interaction, and respondents’ attempts to use the interviewer as a source of information (Cook and Fonow 1986). I benefited from my official institutional affiliation which legitimated my intention in terms of access to interview participants. This, along with a perceived notion of physical⁸ and social distance (my “outsider” status) in many instances, might explain why individuals were rather forthcoming in interviews.

Although my own family background in SVG is one in which the lines between middle and working class are often quite blurred, I was well aware that my educational achievement (which is very well known in a small society) would have meant that I was most often positioned as privileged. This is in contrast to most participants who would be categorised as working class. The composition of research participants is, in part, indicative of those groups most likely to seek state assistance to end violence, and should not be confused with the diverse groups of people who actually perpetrate and experience violence in relationships. In addition, whereas I have witnessed various forms of violence, I have never been directly exposed to intimate partner violence. Although my gender and national identity overtly shaped the making of these stories of violence, the extent to which class functioned in these interviews was less evident.

My own experience/non-experience of violence may or may not have functioned as another axis of power in the interviews. Apart from witnessing several incidents of women being physically attacked by their partners during my upbringing, my interest in this subject does not stem from any other personal experience of relationship violence. As one of the most overt manifestations of gender inequality, the implications of violence for women’s well-being is of great concern. In a personal conversation with Kamala Kempadoo, she pressed me to think more about how our experience or non-experience of what we are researching can indeed shape the research process. In the interview with Andrew, for example, once he was made aware of my “non”-experience, I was positioned as a woman who understood her place and thus the stories which emerged were in part based on this supposition. A possible omission/shortcoming of the research is the non-disclosure of this aspect of my biography. Apart from Andrew’s, I am also unaware of

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any possible assumptions that participants may have had about my own experience of intimate partner violence, and how these assumptions helped shape the outcome of interviews. The question raised by Kempadoo certainly merits further exploration.

There are a number of ways in which participants “subtly negotiate” power, according to Merriam et al. (2001, 413), as often they determine when (and sometimes where) the interview will be done, and how much information they share. Research is indeed a dialogic process, shaped by both researchers and participants (England 1994). I was completely reliant on the availability of participants and often interviews had to be rearranged. Some persons who had previously confirmed their participation withdrew at a later date. However, by characterising the research process as dialogic I do not wish to imply that the same degree of power was accessible to both participants and me. I chose the topics and questions to be addressed, but I also facilitated participants’ desire to speak to issues of importance to them and to elaborate on those areas they saw as most relevant to the various topics. In general, participants were prepared, from conversations prior to the interview, to be questioned about violence, so that, as previously stated, the overall pattern was one of participants responding to questions and statements.

Upon reflexion, it becomes apparent how, as researchers, we consciously and unconsciously orchestrate the actions that would unfold during the interview, and this occurs during the process of gaining access. Each person enters the interview with an often unstated working understanding of their anticipated roles. Even with ideas about reciprocity in mind my experience is that participants, once they had agreed to be interviewed, rarely unsettled these implied arrangements. This acquiescence, I would argue, can be explained as a result of the power dynamics within which the research process is embedded and, to a lesser extent, the participants’ desire to tell their stories.

Conclusion

There are a number of methodological and epistemic issues that must continue to concern feminists within the region. It is now widely accepted that treatment of identity relations should form part of the very work we do in producing knowledge (Riessman 1987; Arendell 1997; Kempadoo 2001; Alvesson 2003; Best 2003; Wekker 2006; Murray 2007; Jaggar 2008). My focus in this article has been to examine feminist reflexive praxis during interviews with Vincentian women and men about men’s violence in heterosexual relationships, and to consider how my subject position and that of the participants shaped the stories produced. Whereas I recognise that researchers’ experience in the interview setting varies according to the subject matter and a number of identity markers, one of the most significant findings for me with regard to the social organisation of talk is the extent to which participants performed the role of interviewee. With the exception of one respondent, whom I referred to as Andrew, and a few instances in other accounts, participants generally sought to provide answers to my questions and probes, only seeking clarification from time to time. Denzin (2001) reminds us that individuals are well aware that it is their stories that are meant to be told. The promise of engaging in feminist reflexive interviewing has to be read against how individuals understood their roles and how this awareness shaped the emergent narratives.

In general, the researcher-researched relationship is characterised by a number of factors related to the subject of the interview, social context within which the interview occurs and the biographies of those involved in the research enterprise. Men, more so than women, actively reasserted heteropatriarchal narratives and gender hierarchies in the interviews. This is similar to Arendell's (1997) experience as a woman interviewer interviewing American fathers about their divorce experiences. The tendency by most men (11 out of 15) in the study to avoid naming their specific acts of violence reflects an awareness that such acts are censured within public discourses. Instead, the choice to focus on their reasons for using violence can be seen as an attempt to manage the image produced about self in the interviews. In this regard, men often stated that they were not violent persons but instead lost control. Andrew's initial reluctance to provide an explanation for his and his father's violence exemplifies, in an overt way, how men often positioned me as outsider as they narrated the stories of violence. However, for those four men who named their specific acts of violence, they were wont to demonstrate that they were justified and, sometimes, in control of their actions. Traditional gender identities were often mobilised in the interviews with men. While I was careful that my actions in interviews with men did not betray a support for their violence, and I asked men to consider whether they could have done things differently, at times I felt curtailed in my ability to challenge men about their actions in more overt ways. Challenging traditional beliefs which support unequal relations of power is a key principle of feminist reflexive interviewing. At times I felt compelled to and offered another way of thinking about women in interviews with men. However, I sometimes resisted the urge to present alternative viewpoints since I wanted to ascertain from men the cultural assumptions informing their choice to use violence. The excerpt from my interview with Andrew points to the futility associated with trying to engage in meaningful consciousness-raising among men during a one-one-one in-depth interview. It also highlights a major limitation of engaging in feminist work as a graduate student with a very limited period of time apportioned to gather interview data.

The relationships that were formed in my interviews with women highlighted the extent to which women positioned me as an insider. This construction was often based on notions of shared ideas about and experiences with men. Whereas some men engaged in heteropatriarchal renderings of gender (which often meant that I was positioned as outsider), women used a number of verbal moves that demonstrated that I was, in some ways, insider to their experiences. However, this tendency by women to offer details about violence is not reducible to gender. As those most often victimised in these circumstances, women's greater inclination to tell their stories was not surprising, in spite of the possible social fallout that could occur. Women sometimes complicated the traditional assumptions about female subjectivity in their accounts. For instance, "reputation", so often associated with masculinity, embedded the accounts provided by some women. In addition, going into the field, I assumed that perceptions about my class positioning would have featured more prominently in the co-construction of accounts, but that was not the case. Gender and nationality were among the most significant axes of identity influencing how the stories were told. A shared national identity meant that persons were less inclined to translate their experiences during the interviews. It should be noted as well that the possibilities for transformative work among women is also

limited by a project with a fieldwork life of four to six months administered by a single researcher.

The in-depth qualitative interview is among the most significant of tools used by feminist and other researchers in our quest to make sense of a range of social phenomena. Given that a major aim of feminist methodology is to encourage the production of reflexive research, adopting this approach should engender a critical reflection on how our personal interests and experiences shape the knowledge we produce. Methodological issues continue to be given serious treatment in the work produced by feminists in the region. Although my focus here has been on the creation of stories in the interview, the analysis required in producing truly reflexive research should be considered an ongoing feature at various stages of any project.

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Email Correspondence

Haynes, Tonya. 2013. Email Correspondence with Halimah DeShong. September 18. (On file with author)

Personal Conversation

Kempadoo, Kamala conversation with Halimah A. F. DeShong. 3 May 2013.

¹ Kamala Kempadoo (2001 and 2013) uses the terms Caribbean feminist and feminist Caribbeanist. However, these are not used interchangeably. She uses the term Caribbean feminist to refer to scholars who have some national ties and/or who reside in the region and do feminist work. Feminist Caribbeanists do work on the region, but do not necessarily have any national ties and do not reside in the region.

² In an email exchange, Tonya Haynes reminded me that for feminists (in the Caribbean and elsewhere), these power relations are sometimes reproduced within feminist movements. Haynes offers a fine discussion of Caribbean feminism in her forthcoming essay "Approaching Caribbean Feminist Thought", which will be published in a collection entitled *Issues in Caribbean Research on Gender, Sexuality and Feminism: Interdisciplinary Approaches*.

³ For a closer look at some of these developments, see the 2013 collection by Barbara Lalla, Nicole Roberts, Elizabeth Walcott-Hackshaw and Valerie Youssef, *Methods in Caribbean Research: Literature, Discourse, Culture* and Erin B. Taylor's edited work, *Fieldwork Identities in the Caribbean*, published in 2010.

⁴ Though not discussed here, there are a number of socio-medical studies and research reports commissioned by Caribbean governments and international development agencies in which an understanding of gender is deployed to explain a range of issues affecting Caribbean people. Themes have included Gender and HIV, Domestic Violence and Caribbean Men and Masculinity/ies. These studies fall within the realm of what Tracy Robinson (2011) and Tonya Haynes (2012) have referred to as the post-feminist deployment of gender. One notable exception is a report prepared by Kamala Kempadoo with Andy Taitt (2006) on "Gender, Sexuality and Implications for HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean". Her report is informed by feminist work on gender and sexuality which threaded throughout the discussion.

⁵ I wish to thank Kamala Kempadoo for reminding me that reflexivity in research is central to the training of the anthropologist.

⁶ It would have been naïve of me to assume that some respondents might not have felt obligated to participate given the fact that the persons who assisted with recruitment (counsellors, social workers, and senior police and prison officers) were also individuals from whom they sought help, or from whom a recommendation about their actions was being made.

⁷ When used as a verb, the term "maco" refers to the act of spying on someone. In this context, Giselle uses the term as an adjective to describe someone who intentionally spies on another.

⁸ Although I was born and raised in SVG, I had spent several years living elsewhere. Participants were told that I was in the country for a brief period to conduct the interviews as part of my programme.