FQS FORUM: QUALITATIVE SOCIAL RESEARCH SOZIALFORSCHUNG

Volume 14, No. 1, Art. 5
January 2013

Redefining Family: Transnational Girls Narrate Experiences of Parental Migration, Detention, and Deportation

Rachel M. Hershberg & M. Brinton Lykes

Key words: girls; family; migration; deportation; transnationalism; narrative inquiry

Abstract: This exploratory narrative inquiry examines the lives of four Central American females with one or more U.S.-based undocumented migrant parents. Each participant is between 10 and 16 years old and is part of a transnational family living between the U.S. and Central America. Their narratives provide a window into transnational girls' experiences at the intersections of gender, ethnicity, family role, and legal status. Specifically, through thematic narrative analysis we learn about each girl's position in her transnational family, her encounters with U.S. immigration and deportation systems, and her experiences with domestic abuse or male desertion. Based on findings, this study urges social scientists and educators to attend to girls' transnational family experiences, including how they contest and make meaning of their own or their relatives' migrations and returns and the gendering of familial and migration processes.

Table of Contents

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/
Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research (ISSN 1438-5627)

1. Introduction

Migration processes for the over 200 million individuals "on the move" globally are increasingly complicated, with important implications for children and youth, both those who migrate and those who remain in countries of origin (BHATIA & RAM, 2009; UNITED NATIONS, 2011). Many are involved in transnational (i.e., cross-border) networks, maintaining ties to homelands while integrating into receiving countries (LEVITT & JAWORSKY, 2007). While anthropologists and sociologists in the U.S. and Europe have been exploring these ties for several decades (e.g., PORTES & RUMBAUT, 2001; GLICK SCHILLER, BASCH & SZANTON-BLANC, 1995; BRYCESON & VUORELA, 2003, among others), only recently have psychologists and educational researchers initiated studies on transnational connections for migrant youth and families and how socio-political systems of immigration and deportation may impact these connections. In light of research with transnational families and communities, scholars across disciplines suggest that social scientists need to rethink theories of assimilation and biculturalism, as well as the methods they utilize to engage in research with transnational communities, based on families' transnational locations, the cross-border relationships in which they are engaged, and dynamic conceptions of home and belonging as articulated by migrants in the 21st century (LEVITT, 2001; BHATIA 2007; CHAITIN, LINSTROTH & HILLER, 2009; KÜVER, 2009; AMELINA, 2010; BRABECK, LYKES & HERSHBERG, 2011; LEE & PACINI-KETCHABAW, 2011). Despite current shifts in different disciplines to focus more on transnational processes for youth and families and to conduct research in transnational spaces or in the multiple countries to which transnational family members are attached (AMELINA, 2010), girls' voices remain largely absent from this work (TRASK, 2010). [1]

The study we present in this article sought to explore how research with transnational and migrant families can learn from girls' experiences in dynamic and conflictual contexts. Four Central American female youth between the ages of 10 and 16 narrate their lives as part of transnational families, with one or more U.S.-based non-citizen parents (Section 3). From their stories and the analysis thereof (Section 4), we learn how they negotiate the unique positions they occupy in transnational families and gain insight into how domestic abuse or male desertion challenge girls and women in Central America and in the U.S. (Section 5). We also explore shared and distinctive family experiences which were identified despite the small size of the sample, emphasizing how each girl possesses unique resources with which she confronts familial and sociopolitical challenges (Section 6). We argue that social scientists, educators, and policymakers concerned about migration have much to learn from how girls in

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

transnational families contest and make meaning of their own or their relatives' experiences within the current U.S. sociopolitical environment (Section 7). Our research also suggests that girls' voices and lived experiences can help reframe current understanding of the effects of immigration and deportation systems on families in the U.S. and internationally, and identifies several implications for future research and theorizing about the civic participation and engagement of youth whose parents are undocumented migrants (Section 8). [2]

2. Globalizing Systems

2.1 Transnational theory

Researchers describe transnational identity and transnational processes as anchored in and transcending multiple countries (LEVITT, 2001). They also posit that transnational processes involve and affect family members who remain in the home country as much as, if not more than, those who have migrated (McKENZIE & MENJÍVAR, 2011). This is in part because processes such as cross-border communication and the sending of remittances from host to origin countries are built on networks of interpersonal relations that connect family and community members across borders (LEVITT & JAWORSKY, 2007). Thus, the livelihood, health, and happiness of family members who remain in origin countries are often dependent on the experiences of their relatives abroad (BRABECK et al., 2011). Leah SCHMALZBAUER (2004) describes transnationalism as a "family project" wherein relatives' motivations for and investments in migrating north are based largely on a combination of the health, education, and/or monetary needs of the family members who remain in origin countries. ANDRADE-EEEKHOFF and SILVA-AVALOS (2003) found that Central American migrants to the United States "transnationalize[d]" as a means of finding work that paid a living wage to support family back home. While these studies focus on migrants' and their families' socioeconomic motivations for migrating, they extend and complement earlier work which documented that the large number of Central Americans fleeing war and state-sponsored violence often sought refuge and political asylum in the United States (e.g., HAMILTON & CHINCHILLA, 1991; HILLER, LINSTROTH & AYALA VELA, 2009). Recent research has additionally shown that experiences of war and violence are antecedents to ongoing conditions of poverty and unemployment in countries such as Guatemala and El Salvador, which have impelled current migrations to the U.S. (DAVIS, 2007; BRABECK et al., 2011). Moreover, research over the last several decades on the economic impact of migration has found that remittances from migrants in the U.S. are keeping impoverished countries' economies afloat (AGUNIAS, 2006). [3]

Scholarship exploring the influences of remittances on families and communities in origin countries also suggests that remittances play a significant role in sustaining familial attachments across borders. This work has noted that remittances are "the currency of transnational love ... the only means through which parental presence can cross international boundaries" (HORTON 2009, p.38) and essential to the maintenance of parent-child bonds across borders and

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

over time (ARTICO, 2003). The increased focus in migration scholarship on the socio-emotional aspects of parent-child bonds across borders is, arguably, a function of increased female migration since the 1960s (JOLLEY & REEVES, 2005). Worldwide, women now comprise 50 percent of the migrant population (UNITED NATIONS, 2011). Over the last several decades, the U.S. and other Western nations have sought female migrants from the global south as domestic or "pink collar" laborers at an increasingly high rate (MORRISON, SCHIFF & SJÖBLOM, 2008). These and other economic pressures have contributed to an increase in the number of women who migrate independently, although a significant number of women continue to follow male relatives on the journey north, as they did in the past (JOLLEY & REEVES, 2005). [4]

2.2 Feminization of migration studies

Within migration scholarship, researchers focusing on women and migration explore how mothers maintain ties with children who remain in origin countries when mothers migrate. Scholars' conceptualizations of transnational formations of mother-child relationships include descriptions of women as "transnational mothers," "other-mothers," or "middlewomen" (see HONDAGNEU-SOTELO & AVILA, 1997; PARREÑAS, 2005; DREBY, 2010). While the concept of transnational mothers refers to experiences of female migrants to the U.S. who attempt to care for their children across borders, other-mothers and middlewomen refer to the alternative caregivers who transnational mothers elect to care for their children in their absence (SCHMALZBAUER, 2004; PARREÑAS, 2005; STERNBERG & BARRY, 2011). In addition to transnational mothering, some research has focused on the varied social roles men and women fulfill in migration, resettlement, and transnational processes (HONDAGNEU-SOTELO & AVILA, 1997). In this research some use gender as an analytical construct, critically focusing on the inequalities women and men experience in the process of migration, in addition to exploring their distinct gendered experiences (HONDAGNEU-SOTELO & AVILA, 1997; PARREÑAS, 2009). Feminist intersectional analysis (see, among others, BACA ZINN & THORNTON DILL, 1996; McCALL, 2005) argues for situating migrant women and men at the intersections of multiple interlocking structures of power, based on gender, race, social class, sexualities, and disability. [5]

While the above research has focused on new forms of mothering and mother-child relationships, the experiences of young women and girls, who are both sisters and daughters within transnational families, are scarcely reported (TRASK, 2010). This is largely due to the absence of research about the effects of migration on children and youth, and specifically, those who remain in origin countries when parents migrate abroad (FASS, 2005; PESSAR, 2005). The absence of youth's, and particularly, girls' voices in migration processes, results in a partial understanding of transnational families. Lacking from this research are stories of the roles and responsibilities assumed by daughters when relatives migrate north and of new gender formations within families and communities (PESSAR, 2005). When girls are included in research, there is also limited attention to the role of interlocking systems of power on girls' experiences and

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

meaning-making in their families and in the larger contexts in which they live and develop (BURMAN, 2006; RAZACK, 2007). Similarly, much of the research and policy work that attends to girls in challenging family or community contexts focuses on interventions around "what girls will become" as opposed to focusing on girls' experiences of childhood (BURMAN, 2006). Understanding girls' experiences in the U.S. and origin countries and the meanings they make of them extends recent research that strives to clarify whether migration is beneficial or detrimental to the development of children and youth (TRASK, 2010). [6]

2.3 Scholarship with migrant girls and boys

Transnational scholarship with youth has focused on youth's transnational attachments and family relationships (SOMERVILLE, 2008). While this work has informed research on family migration and transnational processes, it has often involved only second-generation youth living in North America, excluding the nuclear families who are increasingly separated by borders (e.g., SOMERVILLE, 2008; PORTES & RUMBAUT, 2001). It has also yielded mixed findings about attachment for second-generation immigrant youth. Some transnational scholars have concluded that second-generation immigrant youth develop loose attachments to their transnational networks if they attach at all, while others argue that they do attach to parents' origin countries, which has measurable influences on their identity development (PORTES & RUMBAUT, 2001; SOMERVILLE, 2008 respectively). Others have found that youth's attachments to their or their parents' countries of origin vary based on the countries' histories and the youth's citizenship statuses (MENJÍVAR, 2002). [7]

Psychological research with migrant youth is concerned with their psychosocial adjustment and the psychosocial adjustment of their families to host countries (e.g., FRABUTT, 2006; DEGNI, PÖNTINEN & MÖLSÄ, 2006; SUÁREZ-OROZCO, PIMENTEL & MARTIN, 2009), but infrequently identifies their family configurations as transnational, or the roles of immigration and deportation systems in their lives (some exceptions are DEGNI et al., 2006; SUÁREZ-OROZCO, BANG & KIM, 2010; and BRABECK et al., 2011). Within psychological scholarship, studies have explored gender differences in developmental outcomes for both first- and second-generation migrant youth. This work has demonstrated that boys in migrant families in the U.S. perform worse in school, have more freedom in home and community contexts, and more delinquency or problem behaviors than girls (SUÁREZ-OROZCO & QIN, 2006). In contrast, girls have been shown to excel academically while also taking on greater responsibilities in the home, such as cooking, cleaning, and maintaining younger siblings, while parents in the U.S. are at work (C. SUÁREZ-OROZCO & QIN, 2006). [8]

Some researchers and practitioners in the education sector have begun to identify migrant youth in schools as part of transnational networks (CHO, CHEN & SHIN, 2010). They nonetheless argue that educators often have limited knowledge about whether their students are part of transnational family relationships and if and how these relationships may impact a youth's learning

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

experiences in and outside of the home (CHO et al., 2010; HAMANN & ZÚÑIGA, 2011). It is also well documented that schools cannot educate or serve children without taking their family makeups into consideration, even if these families are spread across two different nations (GONZALEZ-MENA, 2008, p.192). When teachers do not adequately understand students' transnational family configurations, the students' families cannot fully and actively participate in their children's education (CHO et al., 2010). [9]

While recent educational, psychological, and transnational research with migrant youth has explored aspects of their learning contexts (i.e., CHO et al., 2010), scholars within these disciplines have paid scant attention to the structural constraints or advantages to migrant youth as a result of the family's legal status and the sociopolitical realities in which they are living (MAZZUCATO & SCHANS, 2011). To encourage attention to these forces and their effects on migrants, we present a brief description of the sociopolitical climate in the U.S. below and then explore how it may impact migrant youth. [10]

2.4 Contexts of "illegality" and influences on families

The Latino/a population in the U.S. has grown from 35.3 million to 50.5 million over the last decade (U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2011). U.S. and foreign-born Latinos now comprise 16 percent of the U.S. population (U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2011). Among non-citizen Latino/a adults residing in the U.S. today, approximately 55 percent are undocumented migrants. Central Americans make up 11 percent of the undocumented Latino/a population (PASSEL & COHEN, 2009). The U.S. detention and deportation systems force many of the undocumented into "the shadows," silencing their personal stories (BRABECK & XU, 2010; LYKES, HERSHBERG & BRABECK, 2011). Statistically, between 1997 and 2007, over 9 million individuals, including thousands of undocumented Central American migrants who did not have criminal records at the time, were removed from the United States (KANSTROOM & ROSENBLOOM, 2009). Many were detained during work-site or home raids, experiences which have been shown to traumatize those who are detained as well as the family members from whom they are separated during the raids (CHAUDRY et al., 2010). Despite their vulnerability in response to increasingly restrictive and punitive immigration policies, limited paths to citizenship, and scant economic opportunities (KANSTROOM, 2007; THRONSON, 2010), the Pew Hispanic Center confirms that the number of undocumented migrants living in the U.S. has increased significantly over the last decade, although it has remained constant since 2010 (PASSEL & COHEN, 2009; IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER, 2011). It has also been recorded that the number of mixed-status families, which include at least one undocumented migrant and at least one U.S. citizen child, is on the rise (FIX & ZIMMERMAN, 1999). Best estimates suggest that 9 million individuals are part of these families, and children within these families make up 6.8 percent of youth in U.S. schools (PASSEL & COHEN, 2009). Of these children, approximately 73 percent are U.S. citizens (PASSEL & COHEN, 2009). In addition to children of undocumented parents there are over 2 million undocumented youth in the U.S. who migrated with parents during childhood or by themselves (GONZALEZ, 2011;

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

CHAVEZ & MENJÍVAR, 2010). Research suggests that these youth confront confusing and contradictory laws in the U.S. which, for example, allow them to attend elementary and high school only to experience limited opportunities as they approach adolescence and learn they cannot legally work, drive in most states, or receive financial aid (which often precludes them from attending U.S. colleges) (GONAZLEZ, 2011; CHAVEZ & MENJÍVAR, 2010). These undocumented youth and their families are increasingly vulnerable to psychosocial distress as a result of U.S. deportation policies and practices and restrictive immigration policies (see SUÁREZ-OROZCO, YOSHIKAWA, TERANISHI & SUÁREZ-OROZCO, 2011; BRABECK & XU, 2010). [11]

3. Collecting Data From Transnational Girls in the Human Rights of Migrants Project (HRMP)

The research we report in this article explored the experiences of a small number of girls who are members of transnational families and directly affected by the U.S. sociopolitical systems of immigration and deportation. We conducted this research in response to calls for more multi-sited research and data collection in different nations that can help explain and respond to the lived experiences of youth and other transnational family members living in and outside of the U.S. (AMELINA, 2010; MAZZUCATO & SCHANS, 2011). In light of the developing literature on women and migration and the importance of more intersectional analyses when conducting research with girls (BURMAN, 2006), and particularly girls in migrant families, four female participants ranging from ages 10-16 were intentionally selected from the first phase of a larger transnational Participatory and Action Research (PAR) project, the Human Rights of Migrants: Transnational and Mixed-Status Families Project, heretofore referred to as the HRMP[1]. [12]

3.1 Human Rights of Migrants Project

The HRMP is one iteration of an ongoing collaboration between Boston College (BC) social science, education, and law professors and students, and Central American immigrant community organizations in the northeastern U.S. (see POST-DEPORTATION HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT, 2011 for more information) and in Central America. This PAR initiative seeks to develop human rights research and advocacy skills among community members within the United States and in Guatemala while systematically documenting the effects of detention and deportation on transnational mixed-status families. The research produced by the HRMP contributes to more comprehensive understandings of the lives of mixed-status families in the U.S., and to improving services available to them and their children. The project has also included educational and

1 This project is an iterative participatory and action research process that has evolved over its five-year history, including in its name. Research published earlier from this project refers to it as the Post-Deportation Human Rights Project (PDHRP) (see BRABECK et al., 2011; PDHRP, 2011). Many participants and collaborators suggested a new name that better reflected participants' diversity, including their current presence within the U.S., as deportees in countries of origin, and/or as family members of migrants. The new name for the overall project is: Migration and Human Rights Project (MHRP) whereas the U.S.-based initiative is now called Human Rights of Migrants: Transnational and Mixed-Status Families Project (for more information, see, MIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT, 2012).

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

advocacy initiatives between BC students and academics and partner immigrant community organizations, such as over a dozen collaborative community-university meetings and "Know Your Rights Workshops" over the past four years. [13]

In the first phase of the HRMP, Boston College students and professors collaborated with community organizations to explore mixed-status families' experiences in the U.S. and the resources undocumented migrant parents leveraged to access services for their children. Semi-structured interviews were designed collaboratively by academics from Boston College and members of community organizations. Interviews were initially conducted in Spanish with 21 Central American adults and in Spanish or English (depending on their child's language preference) with six of their children. Interviewees were recommended by their community organizations for participation because of their 1. having the ability to strengthen the organization's leadership and organizing potential; 2. having been directly or indirectly affected by detention or deportation; and 3. having children between the ages of 5 and 16 who were living with them in the U.S. (see BRABECK et al., 2011 for more information on interview procedure). [14]

While most of the families selected for participation had children between ages 5 and 16, very few consented to have their children interviewed about migration and/or deportation. A total of six children based in the U.S. were interviewed in the first phase of the PAR process. While only six children were interviewed in the U.S., their interviews yielded valuable information on the experiences of children in mixed-status families and on their transnational ties. Analyses of interviews generated questions about the transnational dimensions of migration and deportation for children and parents in participant families. To explore these questions, HRMP researchers, including the two co-authors, conducted field research in Zacualpa, El Quiché, Guatemala in summer of 2008, including approximately 100 interviews with adult and youth relatives of migrants in the U.S. There is now an office and ongoing PAR projects that anchor the Guatemala Human Rights and Migration Project (MIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT, 2012). [15]

3.2 Research with transnational girls

From the U.S.-based and Guatemala-based data collection that occurred during phase one of the HRMP PAR process, four interviews with girls were selected to explore further the intersectionality of gender, racism, family role, and undocumented status in their narratives. The authors aimed to contribute to research in psychology and migration studies that often lacks critical analyses and attention to girls' and women's agency in their family relationships and life experiences (McKANDERS, 2010; BURMAN, 2006). The interviews with girls were selected for the analyses in this study when the HRMP was in its initial phase of data collection and had only limited young female participation in the U.S. and in Guatemala. Thus, these girls' interviews were selected because they were the few participants who were between middle childhood and adolescence who provided narratives about their and their parents' encounters with the U.S.

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

immigration and deportation systems, and about their transnational family configurations. Additionally, the first author interviewed or co-interviewed each of the four participants, providing another level of insight into the process of selecting the sample for the intersectional analysis. [16]

3.3 Sample

Interviews with four girls between ages 10 and 16 were selected for participation in the study. They include Julia and Kate in Guatemala, and Sara and Teresa in the U.S. In keeping with BC Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol and to protect the identities of the participants, in the above sections and in the narratives presented below, we refer to participants and their relatives, as well as the names of schools, with pseudonyms. We similarly elected to leave out the particular cities in the northeastern U.S. where U.S.-based girls were living at the time of the interview as well as the specific villages in the municipality of Zacualpa where Guatemala-based participants live. While we do refer to the municipality of Zacualpa, we decided that this was appropriate as approximately 40,000 individuals live in Zacualpa, suggesting that the identities of participants are sufficiently protected with the pseudonyms included here. [17]

We selected these particular interviews as all four girls provided narratives about their transnational families, including stories relating to their cross-border relationships and about their relatives' experiences of the socioeconomic and sociopolitical conditions in the U.S. Because these girls were similar in age, there were opportunities for highlighting certain themes that applied to all of the girls in this sample after analyzing narratives individually. Additionally, 16-year old, Guatemala-based Julia assisted her older sister, Roxana, in the caregiving of three younger siblings while their mother was working the U.S. Her narrative, thus, gave us insight into experiences of "other mothering" often discussed, but rarely captured directly in transnational scholarship with girls. [18]

Of the four girls who were interviewed in phase one of the HRMP, Teresa is the only Salvadoran youth. She and her family participated in the initial interviews conducted and facilitated by the partnership between BC students and professors, and Central American immigrant community organizations in the northeastern U.S. Teresa and her mother migrated from El Salvador to the U.S., without authorization, several years before the study took place. Teresa's narrative reflects experiences of an undocumented youth who was brought to the U.S. by an undocumented parent, only to experience the threat of ruptured relationships by U.S. immigration and deportation systems. Teresa is one of approximately two million undocumented youth in the U.S. who continuously face contradictory laws affecting their schooling, day-to-day, and family experiences in the U.S. (GONZALEZ, 2011; CHAVEZ & MENJÍVAR, 2010). [19]

Sara is the second girl whose family participated in interviews conducted in the U.S. Sara was born in the U.S. and is a U.S. citizen and, as such, she has been able to travel to her mother's origin country of Guatemala where relatives in her transnational family are based. Sara reflected on both her transnational family

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

and on experiences and confrontations with U.S. immigration and deportation systems during her interview. Sara, and the two girls who live in Guatemala, Kate and Julia, are ethnically Maya k'iche'[2]. Kate, who is 10 years old, and Julia, who is 16, were both born and live in villages of Zacualpa, Guatemala. [20]

All participants in this study, having at least one undocumented parent living in the northeastern U.S., were interviewed during U.S. or Guatemala-based data collection for the HRMP, once informed consent from parents and from them were collected. HRMP research initiatives were approved by the IRB at BC. [21]

3.4 Context

Guatemala and El Salvador border one another yet the vast majority of Salvadorans are *mestizo* (90 percent), having European and indigenous ancestry, whereas 40-60 percent of Guatemala's population is comprised of the indigenous of Guatemala, the Maya (see CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, 2012; GRANDIN, LEVENSON & OGLESBY, 2011). Maya make up approximately half of Guatemala's population despite a civil war that lasted 36 years, which the United Nations found to be genocide against the Maya (GODOY, 2002). During this war, over 100,000 mainly Mayan men, women and children were murdered, more than 600 rural villages were destroyed, and nearly a million people were displaced within and outside of Guatemala (SMITH, 2006; MELVILLE & LYKES, 1992). These displaced persons migrated to refugee camps in Mexico, the U.S., and elsewhere (SMITH, 2006; MELVILLE & LYKES, 1992). Today approximately 1.2 million Guatemalans or 10 percent of Guatemala's population are estimated to be living in the U.S., in comparison to over 1 million El Salvadorans, or 20 percent of El Salvador's population (DAVIS 2007; SMITH, 2006; TERRAZAS, 2010). [22]

3.5 Interviews with transnational girls

Once consent from parents was obtained, interviewers went through informed consent procedures with youth. Once youth consented to participate in this study, interviews were conducted following a semi-structured interview protocol (see the Appendix). Researchers and community organizations had designed the protocol together prior to the interview process, agreeing that the goal of the interview was to elicit youth's perspectives and storytelling about experiences with migration and/or deportation. We additionally aimed to get a sense of how young people in mixed-status and transnational families made meaning of their own and their families' experiences of migration and deportation. [23]

The semi-structured protocol satisfied the goals of the data collection process. The protocol was designed iteratively, in keeping with the tenets of qualitative research (MISHLER, 1986). The use of semi-structured interviews facilitated a

2 K'iche' refers to one of the 22 indigenous languages spoken in Guatemala. It is the principal indigenous language spoken in six provinces in Guatemala, including in El Quiché. Some Maya from this region identify k'iche' as an ethnic identity as well (see WOMEN OF PHOTOVOICE/ADMI & LYKES, 2000).

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

process wherein the interviewees' stories rather than the interview protocol guided the interview (RIESSMAN, 2008; MISHLER, 1986). Interviewees shared a range of experiences with the interviewers that related in different ways to their experiences of migration, detention, deportation, and living in a transnational family. [24]

Interviews were 45 – 60 minutes and typically took place in the home of the participant at a time that was convenient for parents and youth. A parent or legal guardian was always present during the interview, though not always in the specific room in which the interview was taking place. With permission from both parents and children following IRB-approved consent procedures, interviews were audio-recorded. The first author took minimal notes during interviews, and journaled after interviews to be "in the moment" of the interview (HASKELL, LINDS & IPPOLITO, 2002). The journaling process informed the thematic narrative analysis, particularly because nonverbal data that could change the meaning of the narratives presented by the interviewees were understood in the contexts in which they occurred, which was noted during the transcription and/or analysis process (RIESSMAN, 2008). [25]

4. Analyzing Narratives From Transnational Girls in the HRMP

A native Spanish speaker from Guatemala transcribed Spanish-language audio-recorded data. Before the data analysis began, the first author checked the transcription, correcting errors that were made in bold-faced font, in consultation with the second author. The first author transcribed English-language interviews. With the interview data, we elected to employ a thematic narrative analysis, drawing from the narrative analysis method laid out by RIESSMAN (2008) and the steps of thematic analysis described by BRAUN and CLARKE (2006). [26]

This combined method encourages attention to girls' voices as it relies on primarily analyzing their narratives individually, which includes keeping their stories intact, and theorizing about their experiences from within each case or participant (RIESSMAN, 2008). We chose this type of analysis to allow for each young girl's voice to be heard and lifted up, for the purposes of exploring their reflections on transnational family experiences within sociopolitical systems. Through utilizing this method, we sought to generate understandings of these girls' diverse perspectives and reflections on their family life and challenges within global power systems. It was our hope that these girls' narratives, and our analyses thereof, could contribute to the work of researchers and practitioners seeking to meet the needs of the growing population of girls who are affected by immigration and deportation systems in the U.S. and internationally (LEE & PACINI-KETCHABAW, 2011; SUÁREZ-OROZCO et al., 2011). [27]

During the thematic narrative analysis, each narrative was analyzed separately allowing for attention to be placed on the different dimensions of transnational family experiences and interactions with power structures in the U.S. and/or Central America, as narrated by each girl (Section 5). After we analyzed and studied each participant's narrative as its own case, some comparisons were

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

made in accordance with thematic processes more generally (BRAUN & CLARKE, 2006). Below (Section 6), we identify some of the cross-cutting themes related to the interlocking systems of oppression revealed in the girls' narratives about mixed-status and transnational family life. It was useful to examine the experiences of two youth based in Guatemala and two based in the U.S. because differences that could be related to their varying geographic locations, citizenship statuses, and other intersections of power within their families as well as their developmental trajectories could be identified and discussed towards developing a richer transnational understanding of girls' experiences. [28]

4.1 Thematic narrative analysis steps

The thematic narrative analysis procedure facilitated the exploration of transnational Central American girls' experiences in their families "in their own words," and the meanings they made of living in transnational networks within the sociopolitical climate generated by contemporary U.S. immigration and deportation policies and practices. Throughout the thematic narrative analysis process we followed several analytical steps. Coding was done in the language in which the interview had been conducted. After transcribing data and checking transcriptions, the first author segmented narratives and interview transcripts into bounded portions of text (RIESSMAN, 2008). We deleted dysfluencies, break-offs, interview utterances, and other verbal and non-verbal features of interview conversation from these excerpts that detracted from the story in the text, in line with the narrative analysis process (RIESSMAN, 2008). Ellipses in quotes presented below mark deletions from the interview transcript. We also inserted bracketed words to several narrative excerpts to add clarity to the interviewees' narratives. Narrative excerpts included in this article were translated by the first author and translated back by a second bilingual member of the HRMP to ensure faithfulness to the speakers' words. [29]

In addition to "cleaning up" the data, the interviewer's questions are not presented in the excerpts. This is because in thematic narrative analysis, the interest is not in the context or structure of the interview, though the voice of the interviewer and his or her part in the process of "meaning making" that occurs in the semi-structured interview process is recognized (RIESSMAN, 2008). Rather, the focus is on the "told," that is, the interviewees' reports of events and experiences, not on aspects of the "telling," such as the language structure (p.54). The narrative excerpts are laid out to enable the reader to hear the voice of each girl who participated in this research and shared her experiences and reflections on migration, deportation, and transnationalism with the authors of this work. [30]

Throughout the analysis, we identified salient themes in the narratives (BRAUN & CLARKE, 2006) drawing on our in-depth understandings of the sociopolitical contexts in which these youth were living, understandings of youth development in context, and the second author's several decades of experience working in Guatemala with Mayan girls and women. As part of this process, we constantly engaged in the process of reflexivity and discussions about the data because our backgrounds both differed from one another and the participants in this study,

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

and we aimed to be mindful of when our assumptions and expectations of the girls in this study were directing us away from the data itself (RUSSELL & KELLY, 2002). We believe the analysis presented in the data represent each participant's experience rather than categories or beliefs we had in advance (GOLDBLATT & ROSENBLUM, 2007). However, as thematic narrative analysis is an interpretive process, we note that the themes did not "emerge" but were in fact identified and attended to by the authors of this research (BRAUN & CLARKE, 2006). [31]

To thematically analyze the narratives of transnational girls in this study, we 1. familiarized ourselves with the data; 2. produced initial codes; 3. searched for themes; 4. reviewed themes; 5. defined and named themes; and 6. wrote up the report (see BRAUN & CLARKE, 2006 for a full description of these steps). [32]

5. Transnational Girls Redefine Family: Narratives of Cross-Border Relationships and Sociopolitical Systems

Despite all being members of transnational families and knowledgeable about the U.S. immigration, detention, and deportation systems, each girl's narrative, as presented below, has a unique focus. This is because youth construct different meanings of their experiences based on their individual characteristics and personalities and because their perceptions of the world shift through interactions with the world and over time (SPENCER, DUPREE & HARTMANN, 1997). Even though each girl is part of a cross-border family network that includes undocumented parent(s), as their narratives reveal, they have experienced different events in their lives including different risks and stressors which have affected their cognition, appraisal systems, and the meanings they make of experience (SPENCER et al., 1997). [33]

While each girl reflects on experiences in her complex family and with migration and deportation, some of the differences between girls are revealed through the stories they tell and, specifically, by the events and emotions on which they choose to focus. The narratives of these girls and the cross-cutting themes identified between and across their narratives contribute to theorizing about migrant and transnational youth in the 21st century whose family lives span borders and include often disruptive interactions with various systems of power. This is because through them we gain a fuller and more complex understanding of transnational families and the effects of immigration and deportation policies on families. These girls also reveal the diverse resources young girls bring to family experiences and confrontations with deportation systems, and other powerful experiences such as parental migration. [34]

Teresa's stories, for example, focused on "interpersonal relationships and threatened ruptures." Teresa is able to articulate both the strengths and challenges she and her mother face in their familial relationships and in interactions with authority figures related to their undocumented status, transnational family configuration, and gender. In contrast, Sara emphasized "confronting unjust systems for hard working migrants," focusing particularly on the encounters her stepfather and mother have had with U.S. detention and

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

deportation systems while offering critical and sophisticated critiques of the ways in which these systems affect her life as a U.S. citizen and the lives of relatives in her mixed-status and transnational family. In her effort to offer this critique, Sara is confronting a marginalizing and forceful system in the lives of undocumented migrants and their children. "Depending on dad transnationally" describes Kate's reflections on her experiences in her transnational family, as her father had labored in the U.S. since her infancy. The relationship that Kate describes and focuses on in her narrative draws attention to the simultaneous financial gains and emotional losses experienced by youth in transnational and mixed-status families. And as Julia narrates the experiences she and her family had when her mother migrated to the U.S. and her older sister became the alternative caregiver in the family, she reflects on the phenomenon of "maternal migration and family change." Julia provides a window into the experience of other-motherhood from the perspective of a mature teenage daughter who shares some of the caregiving responsibilities her eldest sister inherited when her mother migrated to the U.S. [35]

In addition to these distinct qualities of the narratives provided by each girl, cross-cutting themes were identified that highlight shared experiences for the four girls in this study. As described in more detail below (Section 6), all girls experience both benefits and threats related to the undocumented migration of one of their parents to the U.S. Girls in the U.S., however, report experiencing more immediate benefits related to their parent(s)' decision to migrate and bring them with them (or to give birth to them in the U.S.), while also revealing that they have experienced more direct threats and deleterious impacts from immigration and deportation policies than girls in Guatemala. We discuss these cross-cutting themes further after presenting some of the results of the narrative analysis. [36]

5.1 Interpersonal relationships and threatened ruptures from within the U.S.

The first narrative presented in this section is that of 10-year old Teresa. At the time of the interview with Teresa, both she and her mother had deportation orders. Teresa explained that she believed these charges had something to do with their having crossed a river into the U.S. from Mexico three years before the interview took place. While Teresa recalled the events related to this experience and the possibility that they would be "forced" to leave the U.S. imminently, she also described many positive things about her life and day-to-day experiences. When discussing the prospect of returning to El Salvador, Teresa expressed ambivalence and reflected on the ruptures she would experience should she be deported.

> "I kind of want to stay here and I kind of want to go. Both sides. Because I don't want to leave my friends and all the things that I have here, but in El Salvador I have my family but here I have like more people I [care about the] most ... I kind of have best friends that, they like, go to my school ... I don't want to leave here because my friends and all the people I have [met] ... I kind of feel both because if I leave I'm [going to] feel sad because of my friends but if I don't leave I'm going to feel sad because of my little cousin [in El Salvador] and my [step]dad because he's here and if I'm there and he's here we are not really [going to] meet." [37]

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Above Teresa describes familial and friendship ties in the United States (stepfather and "best friends") and El Salvador (little cousin and family), illustrating her attachments to both places and the mixed emotions she feels regarding returning to El Salvador or staying in the U.S. Teresa is clearly knowledgeable about the threat she and her mother face, yet her worries seem to reflect concerns about personal relationships—a typical preoccupation of middle childhood girls in the U.S. (GIFFORD-SMITH & BROWNELL, 2003). For Teresa and her mother, as she suggests in the excerpt below, these reflections are grounded in life experiences which will either be sustained or ruptured by external processes, including deportation orders, over which she has no control. [38]

Teresa recalls when she and her mother first crossed into the U.S., and not long before the interview for this study took place, when they attempted to adjust their immigration statuses.

> "[Immigration authorities' mean] sometimes good things and sometimes bad things. Sometimes the good parts are they want to talk to [us] they actually [want to] talk ... the bad things are sometimes they tell you that you need to go or stay until that day or today or tomorrow or after tomorrow ... Well sometimes the people that work in immigration have good things for the people. Like sometimes they tell them that their cases are good, that they can stay, that they can pick up the papers [or] that they have to go ... that they can get arrested ... oh, and from my mom's work [I know] they told her that she had to go this day, [but that] they wouldn't arrest her because she was a girl and she had me, and because she had to go another day ... the people that came to her work." [39]

Teresa's narrative reveals mixed feelings but also that her understandings of and feelings about immigration authorities (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE) are based on direct and indirect encounters with individual agents. Her positive feelings are related to ICE agents' power to provide certain migrants with "papers." This contrasts with their ordering people to leave, that is, their power to deport undocumented migrants like herself and her mother. Gender figures prominently in her understanding of why her mother was not "arrested" by ICE: when they went to her workplace to inform her of her deportation order she was not immediately detained because she was a "girl" and "she had me," that is, she was a mother. While noting her observations in ICE's treatment of "people" in their offices, Teresa confronts the reality that it is often immigration authorities who determine which migrants will be detained and which will be deported. Although only ten years old, Teresa has lived experiences of and insights into the policies and practices of the deportation system in the U.S., including who has the power to detain and deport undocumented migrants, and how women and girls are sometimes treated differently than men and boys. Teresa understands that gender and motherhood contributed to the deferral of her mother's threatened workplace detention. As importantly, her socio-emotional responses to questions about returning or staying are linked to her interpersonal familial and friendship ties, and possibly, her abilities to affectively reason, and thus, manage threatening and disruptive life experiences. [40]

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

5.2 Confronting unjust systems for hardworking U.S.-based migrants

Sara is a 13 year old U.S. citizen born to an undocumented Maya k′iche′ woman and a U.S.-based Guatemalan-born Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) who is separated from her mother but lives nearby and sees Sara regularly. Sara's narrative, like Teresa's, conveys her knowledge of and experiences with sociopolitical and transnational contexts. Sara clearly describes positive and negative aspects of her own transnational and mixed-status family configuration. Sara's trip to Guatemala included her introduction to her three half-sisters whom she described as "family," affirming "for that reason alone, they have love for you." Despite these ties, Sara reported that she felt that her three half-sisters would have preferred a visit from their mother whom they had not seen in 14 years. Her understanding of the complexities of living in a transnational family is reflected in her noting the irony and sadness of her ability to visit her half-sisters while her mother's undocumented status prevents her from traveling outside the U.S. to see her daughters. [41]

Sara's stepfather figured much more prominently than her biological father in her narrative. At the time of the interview, he was in jail and had previously been deported twice. Sara described and thoughtfully reflected on the visit she, her mother, and her little brother paid to the correctional institution where her stepfather was being held, having been arrested for an alleged crime (he was eventually acquitted) and then handed over to ICE. Sara described her own and her mother's concern that her stepfather was being unfairly held with other individuals who had already received criminal convictions. In the excerpts below, Sara discusses her perceptions of "fairness" in the immigration and criminal justice systems.

> "Yeah ... well I've seen a lot [of men in jail] but they were white, black and some Latinos, Puerto Ricans, but it wasn't the same because all of them weren't there because of immigration, so they probably have a reason to be there. It's not the same as with him [my stepfather]. He got arrested for being an immigrant—I don't think that's fair. I think that when they arrest immigrants it's not fair [because] I understand that there are gang members that come here; because of them, that's why some people have to pay because people think that all immigrants are like that. But not all immigrants are like that. I think that bad people who [have committed crimes] ... should be deported instead of people who are, like, hard workers ... I understand that they [police] are trying to do their job but some of them are kind of racist [because] my stepdad was just coming; they were all immigrants, Guatemalans; they just stopped them for no reason, just trying to do something just like that, just because of their race." [42]

In these narrative excerpts, Sara's beliefs about unjust systems and how they affect migrants, like her hard working stepfather, become clear. She describes the "criminal convictions" for which the "other" men with whom her stepfather was imprisoned are serving time, asserting that they "had a reason" to be in jail. In contrast, her stepfather was racially profiled and imprisoned because of his undocumented status and "race" as a Maya and presumed membership in the

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

migrant population in the U.S. Sara's comment about her stepfather possibly reflects her awareness of being part of a racial and ethnic minority in the U.S., and her understanding that this structural position influences the vulnerability she and her family experience. Sara may also be reflecting on the reality that many transnational family members and transnational youth suffer from experiencing discrimination and racism while trying to "re-group their identities within new homelands" and in relation to powerful forces in the U.S. and in other nations aimed at incorporating and/or homogenizing newcomer populations (CHAITIN et al., 2009). This comment may also reveal that Sara has an understanding of discrimination experienced by Mayan women and men, like her mother and stepfather, for many decades in Guatemala (see ADAMS & BASTOS, 2003, among others). [43]

Sara comments further on sociopolitical and socioeconomic contexts, this time in Guatemala, and suggests that although the United States has troubling immigration and criminal justice systems that are in need of improvement, it is nevertheless a safer place to live with more opportunities. She adds:

> "In Guatemala it's not the same because there aren't any jobs and if you don't have a job how would you have money? And have a home? There's a lot of gang members over there and [the] police doesn't really do much. When you live in the country [rural areas] there's no police around there, so I think it's harder over there. Here you have an opportunity to have a job and like ... have money and maybe ... [Opportunity ... like my mom has to] build a house and for my sisters [in Guatemala], pay for college, stuff like that." [44]

Sara narrates the family's financial opportunities due to her mother's migration north and ongoing presence in the U.S. She explains how her mother's struggles and labor in the U.S. provide for her half-sisters in Guatemala, who live in a country filled with violent gang members who act with impunity. Sara, although only 13, recognizes the threats and possibilities she and her Guatemala-based family members experience. She is aware of many details of family labor, life, and poverty, and this understanding informs her critique of the U.S. deportation system, and Guatemala's political system, as ultimately unjust. Sara reveals that she is knowledgeable about complicated realities about which U.S. girls her age may be unaware. Sara explains that she and her mother are very close to each other and "usually my mom tells me everything. We trust each other ... it's always been like this ... I'm her youngest daughter but not the youngest of all of her children." [45]

Sara's stories thicken descriptions of girls' multiple and complex family interactions, the varied ways in which different family members interface with ICE and other globalizing systems, and the interpretations and meanings they themselves make of these encounters. They suggest that she has shouldered not only a relationship as confidant to her mother in the absences of her older siblings and her mother's husband, but also worry, anger, and, yet, the power to confront injustice, in response to what she perceives as her stepfather's mistreatment. Sara maintains a positive opinion about her stepfather's

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

complicated life circumstances. To her, he is an undeserving deportee, a hard worker who was wrongfully detained and deported. Sara assumes a critical stance toward her role as a U.S. citizen, describing ICE and the "racist police" as having wrongly interpreted her stepfather's presence in the U.S. and overlooked his intentions for crossing the border without documents multiple times that is, his goals to be with and support his family. Although Sara is still a girl, she assumes multiple adult roles and helps maintain caretaking here and there for her U.S. and Guatemala-based family. [46]

5.3 Depending on dad transnationally from Guatemala

Kate, although only ten years old, critically reflects on the U.S. immigration system and the political climate in the U.S. where her father has worked since her birth. This Maya k′iche′ girl lives in a village of Zacualpa, Guatemala, and when we spoke with her in the summer of 2008 she described the realities her father, aunt, and uncle faced living and working in the U.S. without authorization and how their experiences have affected family life in Guatemala. She reported that:

> "They, [my cousin's mother and father] have work now, but not much ... [My cousin's] mom ... is afraid to go to work because before [previously] they arrested her and [now she and her husband] don't have money for coming [back to Guatemala]. This gives her worry. My grandma is [also very] worried. They [my cousin's mother and father] are going to [return to Guatemala] without money ... they [don't] have a house, only ... a scrap of land. They don't have much yet in order to make a house.
>
> Sometimes I think [when I am] alone that when I grow up I am going to the states. But I don't have money. I am worried for this. I don't have money in order to go to school. Only with one quetzal[3] [$.13 USD] I am going to school. The young boys [in my village] have 3-4 quetzals [$.39-$.52 USD] at school. And that day, one week, that already my father didn't find work, and already we don't have money, one week without money ..." [47]

Kate knew details about the difficulties her undocumented relatives experience in the U.S. and its direct effects on her life in Guatemala. She explains the source of her grandmother's worries about her aunt and uncle's deportations and returning "without money," when stating that the aunt was arrested. If they return to Guatemala without sufficient funds, Kate explains, the family's economic support will cease without their having enough to "make a house." [48]

When asked about her own feelings about migrating, Kate explained that she is not sure what she would do given the lack of employment in the U.S. for migrants like her father, aunt, and uncle. In the excerpt below Kate describes the absence of funds that could allow her to travel to be reunited with her father and sadness about not "having seen" her father, as he migrated when she was only a baby.

3 The quetzal is the currency of Guatemala. The exchange with the US dollar varies but has been relatively stable over the time of this research. One quetzal is the equivalent of $.13 USD as of May 15, 2012, according to coinmill.com.

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

> "I was three months old, he went, my mother told me, but I have not seen him. I very much want ... to see him, and I told him that I want to go to see him but I don't have money and this is why I can't go ... I felt very sad when my mother told me this and my mother also felt very sad." [49]

Although the remittances Kate's father has been loyally sending for ten years contribute positively to her living situation in Guatemala, Kate experiences emotional losses due to her father's absence. Despite this loss Kate speaks about the resources she and her family have enjoyed from her father's years of work in the U.S. While Kate longs to visit her father in the United States and to get to know him, she is also keenly aware of the costs involved in migration and the challenges she, a young girl, would face should she decide to migrate. Kate's narrative depicts a transnational father-daughter relationship that is facilitated by remittances and weekly phone calls yet constrained by complex realities of economic survival in Guatemala and the difficult work and legal situations in the United States. At only ten years of age, Kate speaks consistently about finances and her family's lack of money, which both led her father to migrate initially and "transnationalize" the family (SCHMALZBAUER, 2004), and has since prolonged their family's separation experience. While Kate reveals her precocious understanding of the role of economic forces in her family's life and the transnational space in which their family relationships take place, through her narrative her concern for the family's well-being also surfaces. Moreover, we learn that Kate's affection for her father is unquestioned but the uncertainties and sadness about whether, and if so, when, she will "see" him run deep. [50]

5.4 Maternal migration and family change within Guatemala

Julia, a 16 year old Maya k′iche′ adolescent lives with her three younger siblings and her older sister, Roxana, who became their "other mother" when Julia's mother migrated to the U.S. five years prior to the interview. Like Kate, Julia's father is physically absent from her life. However, in contrast to Kate, her father abandoned her and her family after years of abuse. Explaining why and how her family changed when her father left, Julia recalled that:

> "Roxana, [my older sister] said 'it's better I don't go [to school], better I work.' My mother didn't want her to work. My sister looked for work and my mother stayed in the house to care for us and [Roxana] worked ... After six months passed of [my sister] working, my mother went to the United States. My mother was pregnant when she left us; that's what my aunt told us. It's been many years since my father was with us, abusing us; he was drunk in the house ... my mother suffered a lot. I was very young, so I don't know; she went to the United States. I don't know why, my house is old; she always calls me and [says] to me 'When I am able to pay my debt I am going to make another house.' This is what she tells us but she hasn't made the house because she still has debt. I don't know when she will be able to pay off the debt and be able to make a house." [51]

Julia's sister dropped out of school in order to work to support the family and her mother migrated north after six months of this difficult situation. According to

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Julia, her father's earlier abuse and alcoholism and his abandonment of the family contributed directly to their extreme poverty, realities that she says also motivated her mother's departure for the U.S. The last few lines of the narrative clarify the meaning Julia has made of her mother's migration north and the shifting family roles that followed. Julia explains how she attributes her mother's migration to the family's poverty, evidenced by her mother's dreams of one day "making another house" for the family. Although Julia understands that work in the United States assures her mother a wage and, as a consequence, monthly remittances for the family, she also reported that her mother had serious trouble finding work and has not yet paid off the debt incurred by her migration. Yet Julia's narrative, presented below, reveals that despite the economic benefits the family would experience in paying off this debt, Julia and her siblings have an unresolved longing to be with their mother. Julia notes that she and her siblings:

> "... have been thinking, and always I am saying, that I would like to go with my mother; but she is not able to [earn] money for me to come there, so I'm not going. My sister would like to go also but my mother tells my sister [that] my brothers are too young; they are little and there is no one that can care for them. And so that's what she tells us. She tells us 'I'm going to return soon, I'm coming when I find work and make money, and I'm going to return to my house, when I'm able to pay my debt I am going to be able to return to you all.' This is what she tells us." [52]

Julia and her brothers long to be with their mother but can't afford the costs of migration. Even the eldest sister wants to migrate, but as their mother explains, she is responsible for the younger children in the family. Julia introduces an important dimension of transnational economic relations that has not been sufficiently explained by economists or social scientific researchers, that is, the debt burden of those "left behind." Julia's mother wants to make a "better house" for her family—a desire that she thinks can only be secured through working in the U.S.—yet this reality keeps her separated from her children, and according to Julia, the high costs of migration prohibit their journeying north to join her in the U.S. It is also because Julia's mother has not yet paid off the debt from her journey north that Julia feels insecure and doubtful about when her mother will return and make a better house for them. Remittances improve daily life but debt threatens long-term stability and prolongs a loved one's absence. Julia's mother-daughter relationship, like Kate's father-daughter relationship, is constrained by economic challenges here and there, and these economic challenges are pronounced in the narratives of these girls in Guatemala. For Julia, her complicated cross-border mother-daughter relationship and the transnational structure of the family is also a result of the father's abuse and alcoholism. The father's abandonment of the family and the abuse she and her family suffered for many years served as the impetuses for her mother's migration and for her sister transitioning from an adolescent studying in school, into the role of the "other mother" of her and her siblings. [53]

From Julia's narrative we learn of family abuse and socioeconomic oppression and how these can impact family relationships and push more and more women to transnationalize in the contemporary era of globalization, with significant

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

consequences for the daughters in the family**.** These gendered push factors, including experiences of male desertion, abuse, and violence contributed to the migration stories of the mothers of three of the four girls in this study. The narratives of the four girls in this study also highlight the varied *and* shared resources girls leverage to confront challenges they and their families experience that are related to immigration and deportation policies and practices. [54]

6. Cross-Cutting Themes in Transnational Girls' Experiences at the Intersections

While participants narrated distinct experiences within diverse transnational, sociopolitical, racialized, and gendered systems, through applying a thematic analysis and situating the stories within an intersectional framework, we also generated understandings of experiences that cut across these interlocking forces and each girl's life. The shared experiences of girls in this study related to the transnational configuration of their families and, thus, the ways in which they reflected on the cross-border relationships in which they were engaged. Girls also spoke of the presence of economic forces in their families' migration experiences, racialized experiences within the U.S., and noted or revealed the shifts they have experienced in their families related to their own role change or the absences of their fathers. We organize this section according to the interrelated themes of "transnational ties and remittances" and "gendered relationships and inequalities" to highlight two dimensions within a more complex transnational, sociopolitical, racialized, and gendered system of interlocking power. The discussion of these dimensions enables us to elaborate on the shared experiences of girls in this study as revealed through their narratives and the thematic analysis thereof. [55]

6.1 Transnational ties and remittances

Each participant, despite different geographic, legal, and social locations, described her transnational networks and situated herself in two societies wherein she inhabits dynamic and multiple roles (BHATIA, 2007). As suggested by GLICK SCHILLER and colleagues (1995), the participants' activities and experiences within these transnational contexts constrained or facilitated the multiple and continuous connections they maintained across borders. [56]

Participants' narratives reveal economic benefits afforded to them through their parents' regular remittances. They confirmed that remittances from the U.S. to origin countries serve to maintain and strengthen transnational connections and attachments, as was the case for Kate, Julia, and Sara's half-sisters. These narratives also illuminate the particularities and complexities of transnational economic relationships for youth on both sides of the border and how, for example, they are affected by sociopolitical systems of detention and deportation. [57]

Kate and Julia also narrate remittances as "the currency of love" (HORTON, 2009). Despite positioning remittances as directly threatened by current U.S. detention and deportation practices and troubling economic realities, these youth believe their parents will continue to send remittances, suggesting their

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

dependence on their parents' performance of love as consistent economic support sent across borders. [58]

Kate discusses feeling secure about her relationship with the father she has never physically met because he regularly sends remittances to her, her mother, and grandmother. While Sara does not generate remittances for her family in Guatemala, she knows very well that her mother's labor, and the money she sends back to Guatemala, are critical to her sisters' survival there, having enabled them to achieve higher education and occupations. Sara also notes, however, that the prolonged separation between her mother and sisters has taken its emotional toll on the family. [59]

6.2 Gendered relationships and inequalities

Research on transnational mothering and migrant youth development is particularly relevant to understanding the challenges Julia and her sister, and Sara, experience in their families (HONDAGNEU-SOTELO & AVILA, 1997; SUÁREZ-OROZCO & QIN, 2006). As Julia explains, Roxana became the "other mother" of her and her siblings when Roxana was only 14. This increased responsibility was preceded by Roxana's dropping out of school to assist in caregiving even before her mother migrated. While Julia's experience of her mother's migration remains a painful and contested aspect of her family experience, she recognizes Roxana's role as an alternate mother for her and her siblings. [60]

Throughout Julia's narrative, her experience of losing a mother is coupled with descriptions of her and her siblings gaining an "other mother" in her sister. As Julia describes the shift in family roles that resulted first from the abandonment of her father, and second from the migration of her mother, it becomes clear that sociopolitical factors in Guatemala (including the absence of economic support for abandoned mothers) and the immigration system in particular have forced multiple changes in her family (see also CLARK, GLICK & BURES, 2009). Julia's family's experience does not fit neatly into Western constructs of adolescence and, thus, calls for more cross-cultural study and theorizing on adolescent development and the adultification experiences of youth in transnational families (SUÁREZ-OROZCO et al., 2010; BURTON, GARRETT-PETERS & EATON, 2009). Conversely, Roxana's shifting responsibilities as a consequence of her father's desertion and her mother's migration are concurrent with research on girls in U.S.-based migrant families, which suggest they too adapt to taking on more household responsibilities than their male counterparts when the family migrates and resettles in the U.S. and their mothers are absent due to work (HEYMAN et al., 2009; SUÁREZ-OROZCO & QIN, 2006). [61]

Julia's narratives also reveal that she links her mother's migration and the resulting loss she and her siblings experience to their father's alcoholism and his later desertion of the family. A similar pattern emerges in the transnational family experiences of Teresa and Sara. While not mentioned in the above excerpts, Teresa and her mother revealed to HRMP researchers that their migration to the

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

United States was motivated by marital disagreements between Teresa's mother and father, including his forbidding their migration to the U.S., through which her mother sought critical healthcare for Teresa. As Sara noted in her interview, her mother initially migrated to support her half-sisters after their father, Sara's mother's first husband, died in a car accident and left Sara's mother as the head of household and sole supporter. Even though Sara's mother remarried, her second husband, Sara's biological father, continued to cause her mother to suffer, which has likely influenced Sara's role in her family. Additionally, while Sara's stepfather remains a part of the household when he is in the U.S., her narratives suggest that the absence of a permanent male figure has shifted her role from daughter to her mother's confidant. As the oldest sibling in the U.S.-household and the daughter of an undocumented Maya k′iche′ migrant woman, Sara shoulders burdens beyond her years, and is challenged to contribute to keeping the family afloat and emotionally strong and to confronting injustices in U.S. immigration and deportation systems. Sara, like Kate and Julia, also shoulders the burden of poverty and its effects for family relationships, responsibilities, and motivations that propel the "transnationalizing" of families, especially by those who are breadwinners for the family. Sara and Teresa's narratives also highlight how male figures and spousal relationships can impact migration experiences and a mother's choice to migrate without authorization. Importantly, Sara's narratives explicitly raise concerns about some of the multiple experiences of discrimination and racism reported by adult migrants who are not only the object of overt discrimination but also of a new racialized and objectifying discourse. This discourse includes many in the U.S. referring to police practices of stopping those suspected of being undocumented as the threat of "driving while brown," and of undocumented migrants who are frequently robbed while walking in their neighborhoods being called "ATMs [automated teller machines]" because they carry large amounts of cash on pay day (see BAGNATO, 2010 for more information). Sara's narratives suggest that she is all too aware of these threats to her stepfather and mother. [62]

In contrast, Kate lives in a multigenerational all-female household in Guatemala while her father remains physically absent but economically present in her life. Kate's family structure is congruent with previous patterns of migration, which emphasized the presence of male migrants in the U.S. who labor for families in origin nations (JOLLEY & REEVES, 2005). Nonetheless, taken together, these girls' relationships and the inequalities and discriminatory practices they, their siblings, and mothers experience within their families suggest that while men were previously conceived of as the "providers" of transnational and migrant families and suffered these indignities, mothers are increasingly pushed to become the primary support for the family, often lured into domestic labor in the U.S. In the absence of male figures or in the presence of abuse and violence (JOLLEY & REEVES 2005; PETROZZIELLO, 2011) migrant women are often objects of similar indignities. Moreover, as mothers adjust to the needs of their families, their daughters in countries of origin adjust to the absence of a mother and reproductive laborer, and take on positions of increasing responsibility and authority in the home and in relational contexts (SCHMALZBAUER, 2010; LEE & PACINI-KETCHABAW, 2011). [63]

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

7. Discussion of Analysis of Narratives and Identified Themes

This exploratory study sought to better understand the experiences of a small sample of Central American girls living in transnational and mixed-status families. It elaborated on the limited educational, psychological, and migration studies research conducted with youth in transnational families. Few scholars in these fields have looked to youth, and specifically, girls, in U.S. and Guatemalan contexts to increase understanding of how sociopolitical and globalizing forces generated by immigration and deportation policies and practices affect their lives. Similarly, research with girls and women frequently neglects to focus on or demonstrate the resources they leverage to confront punitive policies and practices or the challenging positions they occupy in familial and other contexts (BURMAN, 2006). This study demonstrated that girls narrate experiences within diverse transnational, sociopolitical, racialized, and gendered systems, supporting feminist intersectional theories, which emphasize how these systems impose interlocking constraints on identity, positionality, and social developmental contexts (McKANDERS, 2010). Moreover, this study found that despite or perhaps because of their experiences and lives at the intersection of these systems, the girls in this study gave voice to their personal strengths as they reflected on their experiences in their families and with marginalizing forces related to migration and deportation. [64]

All girls in this study demonstrated significant knowledge about their family members' lives, whether they were based in the U.S. or Guatemala. Additionally, each girl, ranging in ages from 10 to 16, reflected on questions of fairness and/or justice. As Teresa focused on "interpersonal relationships and threatened ruptures," she shared her knowledge about the immigration authorities in the U.S. and their powers to do "good and bad" for undocumented migrants like her and her mother. Teresa also noted that the authorities in the U.S. treat people differently because of their gender. ICE did not arrest or detain Teresa's mother when they came to her work, which Teresa believes is because of her mom's role as a mother, even though ICE has implemented this practice with hundreds of thousands of other male and female migrants throughout the U.S. (BRABECK et al., 2011). [65]

Through her narrative, Sara confronted "unjust systems for hard working migrants," drawing our attention to the unjust encounters her stepfather and mother have had with U.S. detention and deportation systems. Sara also spoke of discrimination related to race and ethnic identity, revealing her knowledge of the racialization of the Maya as well as her own attempts to identify with the ethno-linguistic minority group to which her family belongs while being part of a transnational family in a country that encourages homogenization and assimilation (CHAITIN et al., 2009). [66]

Although Kate focused most of her narrative on her affective ties to her father and how she depended "on dad transnationally," she also made us aware of the in- depth knowledge she possessed, and the associated concerns she and her family experienced as they tried to deal with simultaneous emotional losses and

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

economic gains. These losses and gains were related to having physically absent relatives including Kate's father. [67]

Julia also expressed her family's resilience and the willingness and competencies of both her and her sister for taking on caregiving roles in response to the abandonment of an abusive father and the physical absence of a caring mother. While Julia and Kate share the losses related to the absence of their parents, they also share the experience of incurring material benefits because of parental migration, although both continue to be plagued by financial concerns. [68]

It is important to note that while Sara describes the financial needs of her sisters in Guatemala, neither she nor Teresa spend much of their narratives discussing their own financial concerns. This is likely related to the fact that these children of migrants in the U.S. are based in the U.S. and thus experience more material resources from the migration of their parents and the wealth of the country in which they are developing, compared to girls who remain in origin countries while their parents labor in the U.S. These girls also reveal, however, that encounters with immigration and deportation policies and practices have serious consequences for their daily lives, and are perhaps more interruptive to them than they are to the lives of girls in Guatemala. Teresa, for example, had to visit the offices of ICE with her mother several times in an attempt to receive relief from the deportation charges looming over her own and her mother’s lives. Even though Sara benefits from her status as a U.S. citizen and, therefore, does not worry about her own deportation from the U.S., she is the only youth in this study who had the experience of visiting the jail where her parent was being held. As Sara explained, her step-father was in jail *because* of his status as an undocumented Mayan migrant from Guatemala. [69]

These findings suggest that distance may have both positive and negative emotional consequences for girls in transnational families. Specifically, distance from the U.S. where detention and deportation practices are increasing, and increasingly punitive (BRABECK et al., 2011), may mediate the impact of immigration and deportation policies on the lives of Central American transnational girls in mixed-status families. For girls in Guatemala, worry for their parents' abilities to find work and send money home may persist, but threats from encounters with immigration and deportation systems and the authorities who are part of these systems remain at a distance. For girls in the U.S., confrontations with sociopolitical forces may occur frequently, but the material benefits of living in the United States may buffer girls from other negative experiences related to persistent poverty experienced in origin nations. The challenges and strengths of the complex contexts in which each girl in this study is living, and the personal strengths that each girl in this study possesses, have, nonetheless, enabled them to develop their own voices and power with which to confront and reflect on their difficult experiences, as this study has demonstrated. [70]

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

8. Limitations and Future Work

Despite these important findings and the significant contributions that this study and these girls have made to our understanding of the experiences of youth and girls whose parent(s) are "on the move," there are several important limitations to this research. First, because we, the authors of this study, are native-English speaking Caucasian, U.S. citizen women who *can* speak Spanish, and the migrant participants in the overarching HRMP are largely undocumented Spanish and k'iche' speaking Mayan migrants from Guatemala, this research was only possible through our joint participation in the HRMP. Through this participatory and action research project researchers from academia and members of the partner immigrant community organizations put time into building "just enough trust" with one another, allowing us to develop relationships needed for the research to be conducted (see LYKES et al., 2011; MAGUIRE, 1987; MARTÍN PÉREZ, 2006). Collaborating with participants through a participatory and action research process that allows community members and participants in a study to voice their concerns and disagreements with researchers also enabled us to ensure that risks to participants would be minimized. This was essential as families experience daily risks and fears of being detained and deported. While the PAR research design and limited sample size were appropriate for this study, the results of this work are not generalizable beyond the participants. In this work, we sacrificed generalizability of findings for in-depth, within-case analysis and some across case observations (CRESWELL, 1994). Furthermore, limitations of time and funding prevented follow-up interviews with the youth participants. Follow-up interviews may have yielded more information regarding, for instance, how participants themselves interpret the role of gender in their experiences of migration and transnational processes (PESSAR, 2005). [71]

Despite these limitations, valuable information from and about girls in transnational and mixed-status families has been systematized from which suggestions for future research are summarized. First, each female participant, despite different individual characteristics and life experiences, presented stories that evidenced how the structural realities of transnationalism and deportation influence their lives. These girls all had knowledge of detention and deportation and provided reflections about how they or their families had been affected by these practices. Additionally, several participants discussed how they or their sisters' roles were affected by the absence of protective males or father figures in their or their family's lives and within the globalizing contexts of transnationalism, migration, and deportation. All participants also described non-egalitarian gender relations in their family contexts. These findings suggest that roles and responsibilities of young girls shift during processes of migration and family change. This finding is valuable to transnational, educational, and psychological scholarship about migrant youth development, as little research has focused on how girls experience and interpret their positions in transnational and mixed-status family configurations when one or both parents are physically absent (TRASK, 2010). [72]

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Another important finding is that girls in Guatemala and the U.S. within our sample were knowledgeable about the experiences of relatives who were located in entirely different cultural, social, and political contexts. Girls as young as ten-years old developed understandings of the socioeconomic and sociopolitical challenges relatives in the U.S. and Central America confront on a daily basis and how these challenges affect their own economic and psychosocial family experiences. This suggests that youth in transnational families may be benefiting from an informal learning context in ways not yet known to psychological, educational, and other scholars of migrant youth development. This finding sheds light on the experiences of a new generation of potentially "multinational" children and/or global citizens, who engage with cultures through the maintenance of cross-border relationships (TRASK, 2010; LEVITT, 2001). It also suggests that important learning may occur for youth engaged in cross-border relationships that does not fit the typical model of Euro-American youth development, which views youth's interactions with objects and persons in their immediate environment as the primary engines of development (see, e.g., BRONFENBRENNER & MORRIS, 2006 for a discussion of proximal processes). [73]

Finally, the girls' willingness to share their narratives and reflect on and critique sociopolitical and family contexts suggests that despite these young girls' and their families' origins in repressive societies, with recent histories of military violence and civil war, they have developed critical voices and power which they perform in different settings. Research on the importance of involving youth who have been marginalized from systems of power in critical consciousness raising activities that can lead them to redress their and their families' experiences of marginalization, such as through organizing and activism (e.g., GINWRIGHT & CAMMAROTA, 2007), may be applicable to girls in transnational families, both in U.S. and global contexts. This research also warns, however, that youth who are marginalized from systems of power or disenfranchised from institutions in the countries where they live can be disinclined to civically engage in their communities (GINWRIGHT & CAMMAROTA, 2007). It is possible that children of undocumented migrants, who receive contradictory messages about their rights in the United States and the rights of their parents, will grow up with ambivalent or even negative attitudes towards engaging in the polity and civil society. These questions should be examined in future research with youth and mixed-status families in the United States, and internationally, who are experiencing similarly confusing messages from the countries in which they live (NESSEL, 2008). [74]

This study is among the few that have integrated perspectives from psychological and multidisciplinary transnational research with youth to analyze narratives of Central American girls. Despite the important implications suggested here, this work has only scratched the surface in identifying how multiple interlocking structural forces (transnationalism, deportation, sexism, racism, etc.) influence girls' experiences in their families and other developmental contexts. More interdisciplinary research is needed focusing on the local and transnational developmental contexts and experiences of youth in migrant and transnational families, as U.S. detention and deportation practices, and global socioeconomic conditions portend that transnational families will remain separated by borders for

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

many years to come (CAGLAR, 2006). Future research and actions by policy makers, educators, and social scientists should attend to transnational youth and families and the powerful systems of detention and deportation, which continue to threaten the livelihoods of families on both sides of the border. [75]

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the participants and their families and our co-researchers in the larger MHRP project, of which this study is a part, all of whom have generously participated over multiple years. Some of the work described here has been generously supported by an anonymous contribution to the Center for Human Rights and International Justice at Boston College. The authors also thank the American Association of University Women (AAUW) for providing dissertation support to the first author of this study, which contributed to the completion of this article.

Appendix: Human Rights of Migrants Project: Youth Interview Questions for U.S. Participants (Adapted for Guatemalan Maya Youth)

1. Where were you born?
2. (If not born in the U.S.): How long have you been in the U.S.?
3. Where were your brothers and sisters born?
4. Where do you live?
5. What language(s) do you speak at home?

Using the paper and markers provided draw us a picture of your family. Please draw each family member in a way that shows him/her doing something or demonstrates what he/she does in your family, that is, what is her/his role the family.

[Participants will have ten uninterrupted minutes to complete these drawings, diagrams or maps. Interviewer should check in on them half way through to see if there are any questions, concerns. If child refuses to complete drawing, do not insist; go directly to the questions.]

Now we would like to ask you a few questions about your drawing/diagram/map.

1. Can you tell me about ... [pointing to each person, symbol in the drawing/map]? Who is this and what is she/he doing? What is she/he thinking? Feeling?
2. Is there anyone in your family who is not here in your picture?
    a. If yes, why is she/he missing from the picture/diagram? Can you tell me more about him/her? [Probe here to learn more about any family members not living in U.S. with the current family.]
3. (If child is present in drawing): Can you tell me a story about what you are doing in this picture? How do you "fit" into this family? Do you have a role in the family?

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

4. (If child is not present in drawing): Why are you not present in the drawing? Where are you? What are you doing? How do you "fit" into this family? Do you have a role in the family?
5. What is it like for you to live in XXX?
    a. What do you like most about XXX? What do you like least?
6. What is it like for you at school?
    a. Can you tell me about a typical day at school? What do you like? What don't you like?
    b. Did anyone at school or at home help you with problems you have at school?
7. Has anyone in your family (including you and your parents) had a bad experience because he/she was not born in the United States or because he/she does not speak English well?
    a. If yes, can you tell me a story about that experience?
    b. Did someone help her/him? Can you tell me about it?
8. Has anyone important to you ever been told by U.S. government that they had to leave this country?
    a. If yes, do you know why they had to leave? Can you tell me the story?
    b. How did you feel about this?
    c. Has it affected you? (I.e.: Has it affected how you feel about living in XXX? Has it affected your schoolwork?)
9. Has your mother or father talked to you about the possibility of leaving the U.S.?
    a. If yes, can you tell me about what your mother/father has told you?
    b. If yes, can you tell me about how you felt about the possibility of leaving the U.S. some day?
10. Have you heard about the word "deportation"?
    a. If yes, from where? (I.e., friends? A teacher? A neighbor? News? Parents?)
    b. If yes, do you know the meaning?
    c. Do you know anyone who has been deported?
    d. What are your thoughts and feelings about deportation?
11. Is there anything else about living in the United States and in XXX that you would like to tell me about?
12. Do you have any questions for me?

Thanks very much for talking to me today.

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

References

Adams, Richard & Bastos, Santiago (2003). *Las relaciones étnicas en Guatemala* [Ethnic relations in Guatemala]*, 1944-2000*. Antigua: CIRMA.

Agunias, Dovelyn (2006). *Remittance trends in Central America*. Migration Policy Institute, http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=393 [Date of access: April 6, 2011].

Amelina, Anna (2010). Searching for an appropriate research strategy on transnational migration: The logic of multi-sited research and the advantage of the cultural influences approach. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *11*(1), Art. 17, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1001177 [Date of access: March 31, 2012].

Andrade-Eekhoff, Katharine & Silva-Avalos, Claudia (2003). *Globalization of the periphery: The challenges of transnational migration for local development in Central America*. FLASCO, http://bibliotecavirtual.clacso.org.ar/ar/libros/salvador/flacso/andrade.pdf [Date of access: May 15, 2012].

Artico, Ceres (2003). *Latino families broken by immigration: The youth' perspectives*. New York: Lfb Scholarly.

Baca Zinn, Maxine & Thornton Dill, Bonnie (1996). Theorizing difference from multiracial feminism. *Feminist Studies*, *22*, 321-331.

Bagnato, Christopher (2010). Change is needed: How Latinos are affected by the United States Criminal Justice System. *Chicana/o-Latina/o Law Review*, *29*, 59-68.

Bhatia, Sunil (2007). Rethinking culture and identity in psychology: Towards a transnational cultural psychology. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, *27*, 301-321.

Bhatia, Sunil & Ram, Anjali (2009). Theorizing identity in transnational and diaspora cultures: A critical approach to acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *33*, 140-149.

Brabeck, Kalina & Xu, Qingwen (2010). The impact of detention and deportation on Latino children and families: A quantitative exploration. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *32*, 341-361.

Brabeck, Kalina; Lykes, M. Brinton, & Hershberg, Rachel (2011). Framing immigration to and deportation from the United States: Guatemalan and Salvadoran families make meaning of their experiences. *Community, Work & Family*, *14*, 275-296.

Braun, Virginia & Clarke, Victoria (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*, 77-101.

Bronfenbrenner, Uri & Morris, Pamela (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In Richard Lerner & Wililam Damon (Eds.), *Theoretical models of human development. Handbook of child psychology, Vol. 1* (5th ed., pp.793-828). New York: Wiley.

Bryceson, Deborah & Vuorela, Ulla (2003). *The transnational family: New European frontiers and global networks.* London: Oxford.

Burman, Erica (2006). Engendering development: Some methodological perspectives on child labour. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 7*(1), Art.1, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs060120 [Data of access: May 15, 2012].

Burton, Linda; Garrett-Peters, Raymond & Eaton, Sherry (2009). More than good quotations: How ethnography informs knowledge on adolescent development and context. In Richard Lerner & Laurence Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology, Individual bases of adolescent development, Vol. 1* (pp.55-92). New York: Wiley.

Caglar, Ayse (2006). Hometown associations, the rescaling of state spatiality and migrant grassroots transnationalism. *Global Networks*, *6*, 1-22.

Central Intelligence Agency (2012). *The world factbook,* https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gt.html [Date of access: May 15, 2012].

Chaitin, Julia; Linstroth, J.P. & Hiller, Patrick (2009). Ethnicity and belonging. An overview of a study of Cuban, Haitian, and Guatemalan immigrants to Florida. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *10*(3), Art. 12, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0903122 [Date of access: May 15, 2012].

Chaudry, Ajay; Capps, Randy; Pedroza, Juan Manuel; Castaneda, Rosa Maria; Santos, Robert & Scott, Molly (2010). *Facing our future: Children in the aftermath of immigration enforcement*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute,

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412020_FacingOurFuture_final.pdf [Date of access: April 6, 2011].

Chavez, Lilian & Menjívar, Cecilia (2010). Children without borders: A mapping of the literature on unaccompanied migrant children to the United States. *Migraciones Internacionales*, *5*, 71-111, http://www2.colef.mx/migracionesinternacionales/revistas/MI18/n18-071-111.pdf [Date of access: April 7, 2011].

Cho, Eun K.; Chen, Dora W. & Shin, Sunghee (2010). Supporting transnational families. *Young Children*, *65*, 30-35.

Clark, Rebecca; Glick, Jennifer E. & Bures, Regina (2009). Immigrant families over the life course: Research direction and need. *Journal of Family Issues*, *30*, 852-872.

Creswell, John (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Davis, Shelton (2007). *Migration, remittances, and ethnic identity: The experience of Guatemalan Maya in the United States. Moving out of poverty: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on mobility*, Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Degni, Filio; Pöntinen, Seppo & Mölsä, Mulki (2006). Somali parents' experiences of bringing up children in Finland: Exploring socio-cultural change within migrant households. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum:Qualitative Social Research*, *7*(3), Art. 8, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs060388 [Date of access: May 15, 2012].

Dreby, Joanna (2010). *Divided by borders: Mexican migrants and their children*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Fass, Paula (2005). Children in global migrations. *Journal of Social History*, *38*, 937-953.

Fix, Michael & Zimmerman, Wendy (1999). *All under one roof: Mixed status families in an era of reform*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, http://www.urban.org/uploadedPDF/409100.pdf [Date of access: April 6, 2011].

Frabutt, James (2006). Immigrant youth mental health, acculturation, and adaptation. *Catholic Education*, *9*, 499-504.

Gifford-Smith, Mary & Brownell, Celia (2003).Childhood peer relationships: Social acceptance, friendships, and peer networks. *Journal of School Psychology*, *41*, 235-284.

Ginwright, Shawn & Cammarota, James (2007). Youth activism in the urban community: Learning critical civic praxis within community organizations. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *20*(6), 693-710.

Glick Schiller, Nina; Basch, Linda & Szanton-Blanc, Cristina (1995). From immigrant to transmigrant: Theorizing transnational migration. *Anthropological Quarterly*, *68*, 48-63.

Godoy, Angelina (2002). Lynchings and the democratization of terror in post-war Guatemala. Implications for human rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, *24*, 640-661.

Goldblatt, Hadass & Rosenblum, Sara (2007). Navigating among worlds: The experience of Ethiopian adolescents in Israel. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 22*, 585-611.

Gonzalez, Roberto (2011). Learning to be illegal: Undocumented youth and shifting legal contexts in the transition to adulthood. *Sociological Review*, *76*(4), 602-619.

Gonzalez-Mena, Janet (2008). F*oundations of early childhood education: Teaching children in diverse settings* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Grandin, Greg, Levenson, Deborah T, & Oglesby, Elizabeth (2011). *The Guatemala reader: History, culture, politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Hamann, Edmund & Zúñiga, Victor (2011). Schooling and everyday ruptures transnational children encounter in the United States and Mexico. In Cati Coe, Rachel Reynolds, Deborah Boehm, Judith Meredith Hess & Heather Rae-Espinoza (Eds.), *Everyday ruptures: Children, youth, and migration in global perspective* (pp.142-160). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Hamilton, Nora & Chinchilla, Norma (1991). Central American migration: A framework for analysis. *Latin American Research Review*, *26*, 75-110.

Haskell, Johnna; Linds, Warren & Ippolito, John (2002). Opening spaces of possibility: The enactive as a qualitative research approach. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *3*(3), Art. 14, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0203145 [Data of access: May 15, 2012].

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Heyman, Jody; Flores-Macias, Francisco; Hayes, Jeffrey; Kennedy, Melinda; Lahaie, Claudia & Earle, Alison (2009). The impact of migration on the well-being of immigrant families: New data from sending communities in Mexico. *Community, Work and Family*, *12*(1), 91-103.

Hiller, Patrick; Linstroth, J.P. & Ayala Vela, Paloma (2009). "I am Maya, not Guatemalan, nor Hispanic"—the belongingness of Mayas in Southern Florida. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *10*(3), Art. 10, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0903106 [Date of access: October 25, 2011].

Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette & Avila, Ernestine (1997). "I'm here, but I'm there": The meanings of Latina transnational motherhood. *Gender & Society*, *11*(5), 548-571.

Horton, Beth (2009). A mother's heart is weighed down with stones: A phenomenological approach to the experience of transnational motherhood. *Culture, Medicine, & Psychiatry*, *33*, 21-40.

Immigration Policy Center (2011). *Number holds steady at 11 million, three-fifths have been here more than a decade*, http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/un [Data of access: May 15, 2012].

Jolley, Susan & Reeves, Haley (2005). *Gender and migration, overview report*. Bridge, Institute of Development, http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/CEP-Mig-OR.pdf [Date of access: March 20, 2011].

Kanstroom, Daniel (2007). *Deportation nation: Outsiders in American history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kanstroom, Daniel & Rosenbloom, Rachel (2009). Restoring justice and fairness to our deportation laws. *Manteniendo a las familias conectadas: Reporte anual 2008-2009* [Keeping families connected: Annual Report 2008-2009], http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/humanrights/pdf/chrij_annualreport_2010.pdf [Date of access: February 15, 2011].

Küver, Jan (2009). Cultural and corporate belonging in the course of transnational biographies: A case study of a Sierra Leonean immigrant in Germany. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *10*(3), Art. 23, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0903234 [Date of access: May 15, 2012].

Lee, Joanne & Pacini-Ketchabaw, Veronica (2011). Immigrant girls as caregivers to younger siblings: A transnational feminist analysis. *Gender and Education*, *23*(2), 105-119.

Levitt, Peggy (2001). *The transnational villagers.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Levitt, Peggy & Jaworsky, Nadya (2007). Transnational migration studies: Past developments and future trends. *Annual Review of* Sociology, *33*, 129-156.

Lykes, M. Brinton; Hershberg, Rachel & Brabeck, Kalina (2011). Methodological challenges in participatory and action research with undocumented Central American migrants. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, *3*, 22-34, http://www.psysr.org/jsacp/Lykes-v3n2-11_22-35.pdf [Date of Access: May 15, 2012].

Maguire, Patricia (1987). *Doing participatory research: A feminist approach*. Amherst, MA: Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts.

Martín Pérez, Alberto (2006). Doing qualitative research with migrants as a native citizen: Reflections from Spain. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 7*(3), Art. 1, http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/135/291 [Date of access: October 30, 2012].

Mazzucato, Valentina & Schans, Djamila (2011). Transnational families and the well-being of children: Conceptual and methodological challenges. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *73*, 704-712.

McCall, Lauren (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs*, *30*, 1771-1800.

McKanders, Karla (2010). The unspoken voices of indigenous women in immigration raids. *Gender, Race & Justice*, *14*, 1-39.

McKenzie, Sean & Menjívar, Cecilia (2011). The meanings of migration, remittances and gifts: Views of Honduran women who stay. *Global Networks*, *11*, 63-81.

Melville, Margarita & Lykes, M. Brinton (1992). Guatemalan Indian children and the sociocultural effects of government-sponsored terrorism. *Social Science & Medicine*, *34*, 533-548.

Menjívar, Cecilia (2002). Living in two worlds? Guatemalan-origin children in the United States and emerging transnationalism. *Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies*, *28*, 531-552.

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Migration and Human Rights Project, Center for Human Rights and International Justice (2012). *Annual Report*, *2011-2012*, http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/centers/humanrights/news/newsletter.html [Date of access: November 21, 2012].

Mishler, Elliot (1986). *Research interviewing: Context and narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Morrison, Andrew; Schiff, Maurice & Sjöblom, Mirja (2008). *The international migration of women*. Washington D.C: The World Bank.

Nessel, Lori (2008). Families at risk: How errant enforcement and restrictionist integration policies threaten the immigrant family in the European Union and the United States. *Hofstra Law Review*, *36*, 1271-1302.

Parreñas, Rhacel (2005). *Children of global migration: Transnational families and gendered woes*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Parreñas, Rhacel (2009). Inserting feminism in transnational migration studies. Paper presented at *Feminist Research Methods Conference*, Centre for Gender Studies, Stockholm University Sweden, February 4-6, 2009, http://aa.ecn.cz/img_upload/6334c0c7298d6b396d213ccd19be5999/RParrenas_InsertingFeminisminTransnationalMigrationStudies.pdf [Date of access: April 1, 2011].

Passel, Jeffrey S. & Cohen, D'vera (2009). *A portrait of unauthorized immigrants in the United States*. Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center, http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/107.pdf [Date of access: April 5, 2010].

Pessar, Patricia (2005). Women, gender, and international migration across and beyond the Americas: Inequalities and limited empowerment. Paper presented at *Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, Mexico City, November 30 to December 2, 2005, http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/IttMigLAC/P08_PPessar.pdf [Date of access: October 26, 2011].

Petrozziello, Allison (2011). Feminised financial flows: How gender affects remittances in Honduran-US transnational families. *Gender & Development*, *19*(1), 53-67, http://www.remesasydesarrollo.org/uploads/media/Petrozziello_2011_Gender_remittances_Honduran_US_transnational_families_1_.pdf [Date of access: October 26, 2011].

Portes, Alejandro & Rumbaut, Ruben (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Post-Deportation Human Rights Project, Center for Human Rights and International Justice (2011). *Annual Report, 2010-2011*, http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/centers/humanrights/news/newsletter.html [Date of access: November 7, 2011].

Razack, Sharene (2007). Stealing the pain of others: Reflections on Canadian humanitarian responses. *Review of Education, Pedagogy and Cultural Studies, 29*, 375-394.

Riessman, Cathy (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Russell, Glenda & Kelly, Nancy (2002). Research as interacting dialogic processes: Implications for reflexivity. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *3*(3), Art. 18, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0203181 [Date of access: May 15, 2012].

Schmalzbauer, Leah (2004). Searching for wages and mothering from afar: The case of Honduran transnational families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*, 1317-1331.

Schmalzbauer, Leah (2010). Disruptions, dislocations, and inequalities: Transnational Latino/a families. *North Carolina Law Review*, *88*, 1857-1880.

Smith, James (2006). *Guatemala: Economic migrants replace political refugees*. Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute, http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/print.cfm?ID=392 [Date of access: April 4, 2011].

Somerville, Kara (2008). Transnational belonging among second generation youth: Identity in a globalized world. *Journal of Social Sciences*, *10*, 23-33.

Spencer, Margaret Beale; Dupree, David & Hartmann, Tracey (1997). A phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST): A self-organization perspective in context. *Development and Psychopathology*, *9*, 817-833.

Sternberg, Rosa Maria & Barry, Charlotte (2011). Transnational mothers crossing the border and bringing their health care needs. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, *43*(1), 64-71.

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Suárez-Orozco, Carola & Qin, Desiree (2006). Gendered perspectives in psychology: Immigrant origin youth. *International Migration Review*, *40*, 165-198.

Suárez-Orozco, Carola; Bang, Hee Jin & Kim, Ha Yeon (2010). I felt like my heart was staying behind: Psychological implications of family separations & reunifications for immigrant youth. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *26*, 222-267.

Suárez-Orozco, Carola; Pimentel, Allyson & Martin, Margary (2009). The significance of relationships: Academic engagement and achievement among newcomer immigrant youth. *Teachers College Record*, *111*, 712-749.

Suárez-Orozco, Carola; Yoshikawa, Hirokazu; Teranishi, Robert & Suárez-Orozco, Marcelo (2011). Growing up in the shadows: The developmental implications of unauthorized status. *Harvard Educational Review*, *81*(3), 438-472.

Terrazas, Aaron (2010). *Salvadoran immigrants to the United States*. Washinghton DC: Migration Policy Institute, http://www.migrationinformation.org/USFocus/display.cfm?ID=765 [Date of access: April 6, 2011].

Thronson, David (2010). Thinking small: The need for big changes in immigration law's treatment of Children. *UC Davis Journal of Juvenile Law & Policy*, *14*, 239-255.

Trask, Bahira (2010). *Globalization and families: Accelerated systemic social change*. New York: Springer.

U.S. Census Bureau (2011). *Overview of race and Hispanic origin: 2010*, http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf [Date of access: April 17, 2011].

United Nations (2011). *Global migration database*, http://esa.un.org/unmigration/ [Date of access: February 11, 2011].

Women of PhotoVoice/ADMI & Lykes, M. Brinton (2000). *Voces e imágenes: Mujeres Mayas Ixiles de Chajul/Voices and images: Mayan Ixil women of Chajul* [Voices and images: Maya Ixil women of Chajul]. Guatemala: Magna Terra.

Authors

Rachel HERSHBERG, Ph.D., is a Postdoctoral Associate at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. Her research explores positive youth development and the development of critical consciousness in diverse youth, including in migrant and transnational youth.

Contact:

Rachel M. Hershberg

Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development
Lincoln-Filene Center
Tufts University
Medford, MA 02155, USA

Tel.: +1 617-627-6506

E-mail: Rachel.Hershberg@tufts.edu

M. Brinton LYKES, Ph.D., is a Professor of community-cultural psychology, Associate Director of the Center for Human Rights and International Justice and Chair of the Department of Counseling and Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology at Boston College. Her current interdisciplinary participatory and action research focuses on migration and post-deportation human rights violations, with a particular focus on transnational and mixed-status families; health disparities; cross-community women's leadership development; and women's struggles for justice, healing, and reparations in the face of gross violations of human rights.

Contact:

M. Brinton Lykes

Professor of Community-Cultural Psychology
Chair, Counseling, Developmental and Educational Psychology Department
Associate Director, Center for Human Rights & International Justice
Boston College, Campion 308, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA

Tel: +1 617-552-0670
Fax: +1 617-552-1981

E-mail: lykes@bc.edu
URL: https://www2.bc.edu/~lykes/

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/

Citation

Hershberg, Rachel M. & Lykes, M. Brinton (2012). Redefining Family: Transnational Girls Narrate Experiences of Parental Migration, Detention, and Deportation [75 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *14*(1), Art. 5, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs130157.

© 2012 FQS http://www.qualitative-research.net/