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Inclusion of Women in Science. Long-term Strategies for Alone or With Partners' Women

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Inclusion of Women in Science. Long-term Strategies for Alone or with Partners' Women

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Abstract

Throughout history the division of gender roles has been a serious impediment for women working in science. Although they never desisted from conducting research, firstly as amateur and later as professional, they stood outside of scientific institutions and even now they hold low positions of ladder career. Women are finally in research institutions but they still need to make great efforts to achieve recognition from their colleagues and gatekeepers. Using the biographies of some contemporary scientific women, the objective of this work is to discover the role of partners at women's professional advancement. Their partners' role can supports, interferes or outlines professional decisions of women. This work also compares different cohorts of women scientist since a long-term approach that underlines social changes in Spanish society. Findings reveal that women need to plan very carefully work-life balance because some of the most important milestones coincide in the life-course. Social expectations regarding gender roles also mold women's decisions even when they are professionals and totally independents. The role of partners if they both collaborate, family background, financial status, childcare facilities, workplace environments and gender policies also contribute to success of women in professional careers.

Keywords: biography, strategies of inclusion in science, scientific careers, supportive couples, life-course, dual scientific couples, antagonist couples, mentor/mentee couples

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La Inclusión de las Mujeres en las Ciencias. Estrategias a Largo Plazo de Mujeres Solteras o con Pareja

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Resumen

Históricamente, la división de roles ha sido un grave obstáculo para las mujeres que trabajan en el ámbito científico. Aunque nunca desistieron en la realización de investigaciones, primero como amateurs y luego como profesionales, las mujeres se quedaban fuera de las instituciones científicas o bien ocupando los escalafones inferiores. Actualmente, las mujeres han conseguido ocupar posiciones en estas instituciones, pero todavía tienen que hacer grandes esfuerzos para lograr el reconocimiento de sus colegas. Mediante el análisis de las biografías de científicas contemporáneas, el objetivo de este trabajo es descubrir el papel realizado por sus parejas en su promoción profesional. El papel de sus parejas puede apoyar, interferir o esbozar las decisiones profesionales de las científicas. Este trabajo compara también las diferentes cohortes de científicas, desde un enfoque longitudinal, mostrando los cambios sociales acontecidos en la sociedad española. Los resultados revelan que las mujeres necesitan planificar con sumo cuidado las decisiones que tomarán, ya que diversos hitos coincidirán a lo largo de sus vidas. Las expectativas sociales sobre el rol de las mujeres también influirán en sus decisiones, a pesar de que sean mujeres profesionales, totalmente independientes. La contribución de sus parejas en la conciliación, las características familiares, la situación financiera, los recursos para el cuidado de los niños, el entorno de trabajo y las políticas de género también contribuyen al éxito profesional de las mujeres.

Palabras clave: biografía, estrategias de inclusión en la ciencia, carreras científicas, parejas de apoyo, ciclo de vida, parejas científicas, parejas antagonistas, parejas mentor/mentorada.

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Biographical studies have a long tradition in feminist literature (Rossiter, 1982; Haraway, 1989; Abir-Am and Outram, 1989; Wagner-Martin, 1994; Pycior et al, 1996; Magallón, 2004; Monnosson, 2008; Barral et al, 2014). The memoirs of personalities from the past are excellent depictions of the contexts and impediments in which these women developed their main achievements. In the past, they worked as assistants to their husbands or parents making great contributions in emerging fields of sciences (Etzkowitz and Ranga, 2011). They made research in the shadow of their male colleagues, until open-door policies enacted during the war that favoured women as a consequence of the shortage of male professionals (Pycior et al, 1996; Abir-Am and Outram, 1989; Richmon, 2006). Biographies of these women of the past reveal invisibility and barriers they had to break through.

Although female enrolment at scientific institutions is taken for granted today, women still struggle with many issues in their pursuit of positions and visibility (Etzkowitz et al, 2000; Long, 2001; Xie and Shauman, 2003; NAS, 2007; Schiebinger et al, 2008). The unequal distribution of women in sciences is usually attributed to boys' and girls' individual preferences (Eccles, 1987; Ceci and Williams, 2010; Hill et al, 2010) and the work-life balance that women faces during their life-course (Evetts, 1996; Xie and Shauman, 2003; NAS, 2007). Empirical research has provided evidence of the extent to which women are different with regard to publication rates (Kyvik, 1990; Fox, 2005; Leahey, 2006; Mauleón and Bordons, 2008), access to influential networks (Kanter, 1977; Reskin, 1979; Rossiter, 1993), and financial resources (Wennerås and Wold, 1997; Blake and Valle, 2000; Brouns, 2000; Hill, 2010). There is a consequent gender gap regarding salaries (Fox, 1981, Bellas, 1994; NAS, 2007), authority (Hipatia, 1998; Miqueo et al, 2003; Bornmann et al, 2008) and level of recognition (Streinpreis et al, 1999; Marsh, 2009). These works highlighted the extent to which scientific organisations actually contributed to women dropping out or progressing extremely slowly. On the one hand, the merit system disregards family matters despite of the fact that women hold a double role in professional and family spheres (Hantrais, 1993; Bagilhole and Goode, 2001; Krefting, 2003; Lyon and Woodward, 2004; González and Vergés, 2013). On the other hand, flexible and non-hierarchical work-based

organizational structures are more likely stimulating rather than competition and chilly environments for women scientists (Valian, 1998; Aaltario and Mills, 2000; Castaño, 2008; Whittington and Smith-Doerr, 2008; García de León, 2011).

Although, these works addressed obstacles of women's progression, there are still few works exploring what strategies have enabled women to chase professional goals and their inclusion in scientific institutions. Women pioneers into science were daughters of relevant scientists and grew up in a stimulating family background (Barral et al., 2014). Along the time, gender rights and equality policies promote the enrolment of women in higher education and, finally, increase the presence of women in the laboratories and departments of universities. With regards to Spain, socio-historical factors explain the inclusion of women in academia since the late twentieth century (López Sáncho et al, 2013). Some authors (Ortiz Gómez, 1996; Santesmases, 2000; Magallón, 2004) have explore relevant role of mentors, the support of JAE (Junta de Ampliación de Estudios, Board for Advanced Studies and Scientific Research and la Residencia de Señoritas (ladies' halls of residence) to promote studies and students exchange programs to continue emerging lines of research at international laboratories.

As a consequence of the Franco regimen (1939-75), familial policies pushed women into home and delay women progression in science. Therefore, those women who got university degrees and performed qualified jobs in the 50s and 60s are considered pioneers nowadays (González Ramos, 2014). They were pioneers because they developed professional careers in male-predominated environments and without supportive gender policies. Democracy brought swift modernisation to Spain and many women enrolled universities in the 80-90s. Women became ordinary people, not a novelty at universities as either students or teachers. However, women are segregated in the labour market, concentrated in some fields of knowledge and very scarcely in the highest rungs of professional ladder (Pérez Sedeño, 2001; García de Cortázar, 2006; UMYC, 2011).

Thus, the inclusion of women in science is recent. Nearly a complete generation is closing a cycle where only men were the reference; and very unlileky women scientists are daughters of female scientists (although they

maybe are daughters of male scientists). In the next decades, feminists will analyse the influence of mothers as role models to their daughter scientists. The future presents a very interesting scenario because young women will know the risks and opportunities of pursuing careers, from their own mothers' experiences. However, at this time, Spanish female scientists embark upon their professional careers alone or accompanied by their partners who also hold similar career.

There are many biographies of dual-career scientific couples, where both careers tend to be interwoven (Abir-Am et al, 1989; Pycior et al, 1996). Historically, couples did research activities together, making new discoveries and inventions -although women remained in the shadows because of social conventions-. Contemporary women also seem to prefer having scientist partners. Empirical research shows that female scientists are more often engaged to other professionals than men are (Schiebinger et al, 2008). The causes are very likely related with endogamy, the long and intensive working hours of scientists and the search for functional balance between work and family (González and Vergés, 2013). Therefore, are scientific partners still necessary for women to be included in science? Because feminist literature points to women's continuing subordination of women in dual-career scientist couples (Ackers, 2004; Shauman, 2010).

Exploring the career paths of women in science evidences the primary role of couples in both positive and negative terms. When women have collaborative partners, they share the same goals and commitments, so they may plan their lives in accordance with their common aims. Otherwise, antagonistic partners may spoil women's careers, coercing them into abandon their careers and causing more slowly advancement. Partners are important, and the lack of partners by choice is also significant among women scientists.

The Study

This study aims to identify the professional strategies of women scientists. It adopts a life-course approach which shows women's career paths, depicting both successes and failures, decision-making processes, the occurrence of ordinary events and unexpected ones. The comparison of several women's

lives yields information about which factors contribute to the inclusion of women in science. The study takes into account the institutional environment, historical and legal changes, and also family and partners.

The research question focuses on the role of partners in women developing successful careers in science as well as their ideas about family and profession. Hypothesis claims that women need to strive for gender equality in both professional and family spheres simultaneously. However, deeply-anchored ideas concerning love and family make difficult social changes for women as well as partners and bosses and colleagues. Thus, dual-career scientific couples may facilitate the inclusion of women in science because both partners follow the same goals in family and profession.

This work delves into the lives of twenty-eight female researchers and their partners, and five single women that provide some evidence about the tendency of remaining unmarried and childless of career-oriented women (Cooke, 2011). Interviews with women's partners provided further information about the couples' relationships and experiences, although analyses in this work have primarily focused on women scientists' experiences. All women work at Spanish scientific institutions although, due to the internationalisation of science, almost all of them worked abroad for many years. Additionally, five of them are originally from other countries, but working in Spain.

The women were selected by a purposive, non-random process, combining different methods for contacting them (snowball method, web searching, mailing list and key informants). The main aspects that were given priority in the selection were related to career track, field of knowledge, marital status and children. It also took scientific merits into account, verifying whether their career paths were successful or not. Herein, a 'successful career' is when women have worked their way up the ladder to permanent positions, even if these women underwent slow phases or received little recognition from the scientific community.

Selection was related to different cohorts of women in order to explore historical factors associated with access after higher studies, the advancement of gender rights and social changes. There were women who

started their careers in the 50s who are currently retired. They were pioneers of new areas of research and faced prejudices and institutional barriers against women. The youngest ones are fellow researchers who studied in friendlier environments.

The work environment also depends on the field of knowledge and, therefore, the study included women from engineering and computer sciences, mathematicians, physics and natural sciences, human and social sciences, and health and biosciences who work at universities, research institutions and enterprises centred on science and innovation activities.

Before the interview invitation, I examined their curricula and relevant documentation published on websites and in the media. Biographical data came from in-depth interviews which were structured according to the following issues:

- The main steps in their career paths
- Influence of partner/s (including former partners)
- Institutional barriers or gender biases with respect to career advancement and merit recognition
- Strategies and series of events that have facilitated/hindered their careers
- Beliefs about family, partners and children, particularly with regard to the development of their careers
- Daytime organisation, considering work, childcare and family, as well as spare time

The interviews were recorded and then transcribed for analysis. They generally took 60-90 minutes and employed a free style of conversation. Most women were delighted to talk about their lives because of their invisibility in science. The different categories of analysis were in line with the study's main objectives. For the purpose of this work, the information used was related to old and new strategies for developing scientific careers, the role of partners and family in achieving success (professional goals and completing phases), and the visibility of their professional work. The results will be presented completely anonymously in accordance with my personal ethical commitment.

Strategies of Inclusion of Spanish Female Scientists

A common characteristic of all women involved in the study is that their careers involve the development of vocational professions, not simply holding jobs to contribute to overall family expenses. In addition to obtaining salaries for their work, they are highly committed to accomplishing research activities and performing institutional functions. This circumstance has probably given them greater tenacity and self-esteem to obtain goals in their personal and professional lives, despite the obstacles referring to work-life balance, male workplace environments and social prejudices. Women require great determination to interweave personal and professional issues in order to favour self-inclusion in scientific careers.

The examination of women's career paths spotlights the mutual interference of work and family milestones, because they occur around the same time. Decisive steps in professional lives, such as earning a PhD, the mobility process and intensive track records in research, all coincide with the establishment of partnerships and making decisions about children. Thus, careers are shaped by family issues throughout their entire life-courses. And, love and family decisions are likewise moulded by professional goals and job opportunities. Success in scientific careers is dependant on institutional barriers, self-esteem and confidence, events that happen in their lives, decisions that lead to success or failure, the function of relevant people such as mentors and partners, and personal opinions on profession, partners and family.

This paper organises the information on strategies for women's inclusion in science by following sections and points of interest: changes over time of women's cohorts, the role of partners in dual-career scientific relationships, beliefs about family and profession, and the visibility of women's role in science.

Old and New Strategies

Women have taken advantage of structural changes in Spanish society. Firstly, with regards to legal rights and gender equality policies, secondly,

regarding social values and gender stereotypes and, thirdly, about the incorporation of women in the scientific labour market (particularly due to the enlargement of universities and research institutions in the late twentieth century). The inclusion of women in professional careers symbolises the rupture with traditional values, where women were mainly focused on their families and a male breadwinner centered on jobs and support of the family. But women scientists undergo a certain degree of conflict due to goals in family and profession spheres require negotiation and eventually entail gender identity shifts (Bailey, 2000). Female scientists may present a strong professional orientation and great attachment to romantic love, family and children.

Most women included in this work are married and have children, although some were single, divorced or separated. These women's unions seem to have failed because of strong career orientation. Some divorced women broke off their relationships when their partners acted as barriers to their objectives. A woman explained that they eventually broke up after she went to the United States for a postdoc and she had new aspirations regarding life and career, which ended up changing the family values they previously had shared. This is an unprecedented circumstance for certain generations of Spanish women because traditional values bound women to their husbands for life. But young women face their lives in a different way, they have a diverse game of options: live with partners, break off relationships, live alone or demand more supportive partners (Komter et al, 2012). Moreover, young women claimed they had difficulties in shaping their lives in a suitable way to let play a stimulant role in both profession and family. In this regards, one woman speculated about her troubles in meeting a partner who could understand her professional aspirations. She mentioned prejudices about women holding higher positions when male partners hold lower positions. She suggested that both men and women have to figure out modern role of women regarding new lifestyles, working and family.

With regard to children, the majority has one or two children, although women take their own decision more frequently than in the past about having children or not, with partners or without them. There are five women who have no children and those women who have children delayed the first birth until they had some job security. A general idea emerges over

professional goals since women scientists consider children a very relevant issue in their lives and, unlike the past, they accept the challenge of rearing children alone, either because they are single or divorced. Therefore, a great variety of family style underline the overlapping of traditional families with one or two children, single-parent families, couples without children and childless women.

In addition, roles of women and men in the union and relationships' negotiation have also transformed. Couples take fundamental decisions together regarding careers, stays abroad, acceptance of positions and location where they will live. Additionally, women's subordination to their partners' careers (Ackers, 2008; Shauman, 2010) is no longer the only strategy in dual-career couples. As women may have high-income, they make decisions that may affect the entire family (Green, 1997). Among the participants in the study, in addition to five single women, three women support themselves and their children and two more women are the primary breadwinners for the family.

However, women are still much more engaged in family issues than men, accomplishing more and taking on more responsibilities at home (Hochschild and Machung, 1989). Although collaborative partners may assist in the tough task of managing both family and children, women still bear the brunt of family duties by choice, priority or necessity. The gender policies and institutional support may help women to balance family and professional to a greater extent than in the past, when inclusion of women in science was almost always strongly connected to the family's economic status.

Dual-career Scientific Partnerships

Couples sharing collaborative relationships suggest that women take advantage of having scientists' partners, because they are able to face professional and personal milestones together, providing each other with a mutual support. Institutional barriers against women may overcome through supportive partners since they can involve in the struggles to liberate women from prejudices and stereotypes of male environments. Conversely, women

may be misunderstood by partners without similar professional challenges who are more oriented to traditional values concerning family and women's professional roles. Male partners might consider that it is unacceptable and overly-demanding for their spouses to have full-time jobs in science.

Nearly all the women interviewed who cohabit have a scientist partner. And, at least ten of these couples work (or worked, because there are two widowers) together in joint lines of research with their partners. The most senior women gratefully acknowledged the help they received from their husbands. In the past, when society roundly rejected women performing scientific activities, progression was easier for women with partners in the same line of research. According to these women, husbands counterbalanced the prejudices and institutional barriers against women in science. One woman explained that they travelled together to an excellent genetics lab in the United States for a postdoc. Later in Spain, she led the same new line of research, while her husband took up a different field to avoid competing against her. Likewise, an older couple interchanged dominant roles during their working lives. First, he led a solid line of research in agriculture on which she was part of his team, but when the line became outdated she headed up a new one with a new research team on which her husband was a member.

Many women in the study got married with partners who they met in university classroom or work teams. Feelings emerge as a consequence of spending long hours together; and, eventually, research works and interpersonal relationships ended up becoming intertwined. A couple in engineering mentioned they have a 'union of mutual interest' (Pycior et al, 1996) regarding family and work, based on their deep commitment to accomplishing both functions. The professional aspirations nurture the partnership of another two young scientific couples who created a neuroscience lab and started up a R&I enterprise respectively. Moreover, professional and personal relationships became blurred for a young woman and her ex-partner who, despite their rupture, remain working together because as she said: 'we make a great research team'. In fact, she follows him from country to country, accepting challenging lines of research and positions at his new locations.

Men and women scientists used to develop a mentoring relationship that they started when they were scholars or fellow researchers. They are able to be mentors, even if they are not in the same area, because mentors become familiar with the academic environment and the research career paths. Mentors usually provide information, advice and support; they provide truly valuable support when they are leader of the research group or thesis supervisor for their mentees. Mentor roles are adopted by older partners or those with more experience who usually are men. On the one hand, a mentor relationship might entail more linear and less uncertain careers for women, at least compared to other female scientists. On the other hand, it presents asymmetric power relationships since women usually follow male counterparts and hold subordinate positions in dual-career couples.

Another typical relationship between scientists from different areas in this study shows parallel careers. As they shared similar goals in academia, they chose to develop their trajectories side by side, providing mutual support on decisions about their families and professional paths. The uncertainty of research careers is usually viewed as a double challenge for both partners to face together. Mobility strategies are extremely interesting for verifying the commitment of both partners in parallel careers. They usually combined alternating decisions about where to go and when to go. Their decisions depended on each partner's job opportunities and the competences and abilities of the other partner.

According to the scientists involved in this study, totally antagonistic partners are rare. Only one retired woman explained her struggle against the prejudices of traditional Spanish society and her husband's machismo. She grew up in the United Kingdom as part of a family in exile, which marked her with different values. Thus, she fought to obtain her PhD while she juggled her work in a hospital and housekeeping. Her husband disparaged her efforts to obtain her doctoral degree and to work as a medical professional.

Despite positive changes in relationships and lifestyles, women have run up against new problems in how they manage and merge the romantic idea of partners and family with their own professional aspirations. Competitive women put the breadwinner model at risk and, consequently, they are

socially penalised. Firstly, women interiorise feelings of guilt when they spend more time at work than with their families. Men also seem to choose women with undemanding jobs in order to make their relationships easier and more conflict free. Finally, social stereotypes continue to replicate the traditional distribution of roles despite the fact that family and work spheres have been deeply transformed. In summary, women have to take complex decisions to balance the multiple roles they play as partners, mothers, professionals, colleagues and workers (González and Vergés, 2013).

Profession and Family

Regarding conceptions on family and profession, contemporary women have clear ideas about personal development involving professional aspirations. This assumption is stressed by general success-seeking ideals and the progressive inclusion of the female workforce in the highly-skilled labour market. New realities in the workplace and at home have transformed family structures, as well as women's and men's lifestyles. However, this transformation of female and male roles with respect to family duties has still not changed much in daily practice (i.e. how they distribute children and housekeeping tasks) or ideologically (how they feel about their jobs and family responsibilities).

Contemporary couples negotiate more aspects of their family relationship but the both partners' roles remain at asymmetry of power. Although women and men are now involved in more equal relationships, they are not completely equal (Hertz, 1986). As dual-career scientist couples, they share professional aspirations, which bring new behaviour patterns into the relationship. More men endorse gender equality attitude and egalitarian distribution of duties at home. But as mentioned before, some functions and roles remain on the women side and generate tensions in the relationship. Some of these tensions concern the distribution of family responsibilities and the use of time, which is a precious factor for members of the couple since both are pursuing professional goals.

Decisions about children are also part of the complex work-life balance. Since traditional roles pose a threat to women's careers, they postpone establishing a formal union and motherhood. But female scientists usually

face the challenge of pursuing both goals –children and careers– at the same time. Moreover, women rarely express that children would ever be the reason that they gave up or became less committed to their professional goals, although this is usually confirmed by their slower progression.

Couples' financial situations relieve them of many work-life tensions. In the study, women confronted diverse situations depending on their career tracks and the family's economic status. Childcare was not a problem for women with outside support, such as housekeepers, but the majority of the women interviewed are middle class and stated that they did have some type of difficulties. To face this handicap, they turned to different types of childcare depending on their resources and the institutional facilities available: housekeeper, help from their family, nursery and school. When they have collaborative partners, they create time in their tight schedules by distributing functions for caring for the children among both of them. The organisation of childcare does change however depending on whether they have small children or teenagers, when they move to another city or live abroad, and when they don't have partners anymore (Vergés and González, 2013). Thus, institutional support is decisive to middle-class women, single mothers and those living abroad.

Looking at all the women involved in this study as a whole suggests that the more resources (institutional, economic, family support) women have, the more successful they are in accomplishing more stages. In fact, according to our data, women's success in sciences is linked to having a wealthy financial position, because of family background or later personal achievements. On the contrary, more precarious conditions in the workplace and career trajectories are associated with greater difficulties in attaining professional goals.

Apart from these issues, the environment at scientific workplaces is considered an advantage to these women. They most value the flexibility and autonomy of scientific research, over the inherent workload and great demands. However, women's efforts to obtain success in their careers require much more hard work than for men who develop lineal and accumulative stages until they reach top positions, free from family responsibilities. By contrast, despite female talent and hard-work, women

usually develop more slowly and face more interruptions in their careers than men.

Visibility and Acknowledgement

Even if women have taken advantage of the support of male partners for career progression in a hostile scientific environment, women in dual-career scientific couples face the risk of their merits remaining invisible (Reskin, 1979; Rossiter, 1993). This situation has been described in biographies on female scientists from the past, pointing out that men used to obtain full and complete recognition, whereas women tended to be invisible to the scientific community (Abir-Am and Outram, 1989; Pycior et al, 1996). In this regard, it is worth asking whether or not this situation has changed in recent years. As more women hold higher and more prestigious positions, visibility problems may have been relegated to the past. However, a glance at the scientific panorama reveals many examples to the contrary. Taking the economic sciences as an example, where female representation is higher than in other scientific areas, very few women receive recognition from the scientific community. Until 2009, no women had been awarded the Nobel Prize in economic sciences, and many of the most influential economists in the world are still men.

Likewise, women's career paths in this study spotlight the persistence of the problem. Compared with their partners, few women receive more acknowledgement than their male counterparts. Thus, men usually hold the highest positions, acting as the breadwinners at home and commanding both of the couple's professional careers. Thus, women have standard careers, whereas men develop more successful ones. Notable careers of female scientists are rare. Only two women hold higher ranking and more strategic positions than their male partners, in which they have led renowned careers and received recognition from the scientific community. As these women carry out strategic lines of research, they come first when the family's goals are established. On the contrary, their male partners work in outdated or not-so-relevant topics in scientific areas. Thus, women's success seems to depend on the emergence of new areas and strategic lines of research (Etzkowitz and Ranga, 2011).

According to the discourse of two female leaders in the study, their success can be explained as a lucky strike at the beginning of their careers, which linked them to brilliant futures in their professions. In these cases, they stress that they enjoyed the support of their partners throughout their entire career path. For example, one woman explained she was selected by a headhunter when she was just finishing her telecommunications degree, and that she had always had the support of her partner.

However, the majority of women involved in the study have had standard careers in comparison to their partners who have garnered major recognition from the scientific community (regarding professional position and recognition). The decision-making process of dual-career scientific couples is mediated by their gender ideology on assuming roles. Dual-career couples take decisions in accordance with their past experiences, in which women have faced much greater difficulties pursuing scientific careers. Women struggle with work-life reconciliation and many obstacles in order to reach top positions on the scientific career ladder. Consequently, couples take more coherent decisions regarding dual careers that support male aspirations instead of the woman's goals, unless she has more clear-cut opportunities than her partner. A powerful system of previous conceptions works to perpetuate the imbalance of professional opportunities. The joint balancing of family and career objectives in hostile institutional environments makes women's progression in scientific careers much slower and more fraught with problems, which end up representing the grounds for the dual-career couple's decisions.

Conclusions

According to specific objectives, this study reveals that women from different social classes and generations have employed a wide range of strategies to face and handle problems related to work-life balance, partnerships, children and professional goals that are related to the advancement of gender issues. Despite male scientific environments, young women enjoy a more comfortable situation than older ones, because gender policies favour women in professional roles. However, contemporary female

scientists still have a weaker position than their male counterparts because of the asymmetrical distribution of gender power in private lives and stereotypes about women being less committed to professional careers. Persisting stereotypes make difficult equality between women and men, with respect to professional goals and work-life reconciliation. This suggests that gender ideology has to be attained through parallel advancement in both institutional spheres and private lives.

Therefore, social changes have led to the emergence of new scenarios in which women and men can develop their professional and family aspirations. Regarding women, they can select from among different choices throughout their lives with respect to professions, partnership and having children. In this sense, several lifestyle and family models have materalised as a result of contemporary lives. However, other issues related to traditional values about children and romantic love prevail among female scientists. They adopt strong professional orientations, accepting and taking on family challenges at the same time. Thereby, women's paths are slower and less successful than their male counterparts. Having support available is a key element in encouraging women's place in science. This support may come from their partners, public policies or scientific institutions.

As biographical studies have shown, the selection of partners is a key decision for female scientists, although the new options of divorcing or remaining single can help them elude antagonistic partners. The women's lives in this study also show partnerships in which different support strategies are established in professional and family spheres. Some women make a solid and deep commitment to their partners to face labour and personal challenges; mentoring relationships are common among scientists; parallel careers are also prevalent, usually because both partners share similar milestones along the course of their lives.

Despite women's great determination to pursue professional goals, women have to face conflicting expectations about juggling partnership and children and professional aspirations. Family issues interfere with professional aspirations, making female scientists' advancement difficult. The more traditional the roles that women hold, the more difficulties they have in handling ambitious careers. Collaborative and supportive partners make a positive contribution to their progression, but this is not enough for

work and family reconciliation because of the inequal distribution of functions. Resources are fundamental so that women can obtain middle-class positions and have children. Successful careers in science seem related to wealth, due to their family backgrounds or moving into a new social class. Apart from that, women scientists assess the scientific workplace as a positive environment that helps them manage work and family spheres, emphasising flexibility and autonomy in working hours. The advantages are further enhanced by the freer and less constrained working style at scientific institutions.

Although some women have attained success in their careers, the majority have led standard careers that are most frequently subordinate to their male partners' jobs. Invisibility is usually the counterbalance to enjoying mentoring or supportive partnerships because men, who hold strong positions in scientific institutions and collect recognition from colleagues and the scientific community. Few women are the most relevant in these dual-career scientific couples and when they do hold high positions is due to they are developing strategic or emergent lines of research.

Our findings support the idea that cohorts of women are decisive in planning successful strategies for inclusion in science, considering the professional and personal issues involved in reaching these goals. The role of partners and women's pre-established beliefs about family and children are also fundamental. Women are clearly extremely determined with regard to their professional aspirations, although traditional paradigms concerning childcare, family and relationships are still handicaps throughout their professional lives. They do though have more choices for handling work and family challenges than older women, selecting their partners, demanding support from them, planning motherhood or living alone. However, more policies and institutional facilities are required to deal with both professional and family spheres, so that they can attain success in science and reach the same levels as their male partners without so much pressure and hard-work. Women in science try to accomplish the same goals as men, while battling conflictive roles in their life paths. Social changes have opened up a new avenue for professional women, but there are still deeply-seated and old-fashioned values that impede and put up hurdles to fair play between women

and men. This research emphasises the interlocking of institutional and personal factors involved in the inclusion of women in science, and that women need working together in order to launch more gender sensitive policies for assisting women over the course of their lives.

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Gendered Organizations. The Case of Italian Astrophysics

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Gendered Organizations. The Case of Italian Astrophysics

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Abstract

Focusing on the Italian astrophysical sector, the article summarizes the results of a qualitative study that explores the role played by gender in scientific organizations. In the workplace, social and cultural practices related to gender can be considered as interpretative keys to investigate the relations of power and the processes of stratification and mobility. Furthermore, the study analyses how women-scientists define themselves on the basis of processes that act interactively on different levels and spheres of life. Only by re-defining the relationships that women and men have established, both with the socio-political order of the scientific environment and with the rest of everyday reality, gender equality can be achieved.

Keywords: gendered organizations, gender and science, scientific careers, identity.

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La Dimensión de Género en las Organizaciones. El Caso de la Astrofísica en Italia

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Resumen

Ubicado en el análisis del sector astrofísico italiano, el artículo resume los resultados de un estudio cualitativo que explora el papel jugado por la dimensión del género en las organizaciones científicas. En el lugar de trabajo, las prácticas sociales y culturales relacionadas con la variable género pueden ser consideradas como claves interpretativas para investigar tanto las relaciones de poder como los procesos de estratificación y movilidad. Por otra parte, el estudio analiza cómo las mujeres científicas se definen a sí mismas de acuerdo a procesos que influyen de forma interactiva en diferentes niveles y ámbitos de sus vidas. Sólo redefiniendo las relaciones establecidas entre mujeres y hombres, tanto en el orden socio-político del ámbito científico como en el resto de ámbitos cotidianos, puede lograrse la igualdad de género.

Palabras clave: organizaciones por género, género y ciencia, carreras científicas, identidad.

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The term "scientist" was coined by William Whewell in 1834 in his review of the Mary Somerville's volume "On the Connection of the Physical Sciences", in which she attempted to define a common identity for professionals working in the different fields of natural philosophy (Noble, 1992). However, this new collective identity has soon assumed a gender connotation. After almost two centuries, and despite the exponential growth of female participation in the labour market, women's under-representation in research and technology is still significant, especially in leadership and decision-making positions (European Commission, 2012). For this reason, over the last decades women-scientists have become the object of a new field of academic study called "gender and science". Scholars involved in this area of research investigate the inequalities that characterise the scientific sector, starting from different disciplines and according to various perspectives (Schiebinger, 1999). For instance, historians study the lives of women-scientists in different contexts and times; sociologists focus on women's access to the scientific field and on the barriers they face; cultural critics investigate normative concepts of femininity and masculinity; philosophers and historians of science analyse the influence of gender on the content and methods of the sciences and on the construction of scientific knowledge (see for example Keller, 1985; Harding, 1986; Kohlstedt & Longino, 1997; Schiebinger, 1999; Kourany, 2010). Some contributions by gender studies researchers have been accepted by national and supra-national authorities (European Commission, 2002). From a policy perspective, European institutions have been among the first to analyse systematically women's presence in the scientific field, in order to develop equal opportunities in a mainstreaming perspective – a method that requires to integrate gender equality into institutions, policies, programs and practices (European Commission, 2000).

Focusing on the organizational dimension, the present study addresses two closely related topics: the professional experiences and the identity construction of women-scientists. Scientific organizations represent areas in which gender differentiations and inequalities are constructed and reproduced. There are different levels of understanding organizations as gendered (Newman, 1995b). The first concerns gender as a social division within organizations and it highlights the ways in which work structures are

both horizontally (some kinds of job are seen as "men's work" and others as "women's work") and vertically segregated (women occupy lower grades and status positions). The second involves gender as an experience. Researching women's experience «brings into focus many of the hidden dimensions of the emotional and sexual regimes of organizations, which are masked by the apparent rationality of organizational structures and by dominant organizational ideologies» (Newman, 1995b, p. 285). A third approach, then, concerns organizational culture as a site of gendered meanings and identities. In particular, social and cultural practices related to gender can be considered as interpretative keys to investigate the structure of power relations and the system of classification and identity, that encompass multiple dimensions and refer to processes, practices and ideologies embedded in thought, language, social structures and organizational facts.

Integrating these perspectives, in the following pages I examine the role that gender plays in scientific career paths in the astrophysical sector. After explaining the object and method of the research, I structure my arguments into two parts. Firstly, I explore how the careers of women-scientists take shape in a traditionally male-dominated field. Secondly, I analyse women-scientists' identity construction. Concluding remarks focus on the need to redefine the relationships that both genders have established with the political and social order of the scientific environment and with the rest of everyday reality to achieve gender equality.

Object and Method

The aim of this study is to analyse the gender structuring and assumptions which underpin Italian astrophysical organizations, bringing out scientists' experiences of working life. The astrophysical scientific sector has the right characteristics to attract at the educational level a higher number of women compared to other "hard" sciences but, as in other disciplines, the professional sphere is historically, culturally and numerically male-dominated[1] (Urry, 2008; Cesarsky & Walker, 2010).

Gender is an important element in the development of scientists' careers. It denotes power relations between the sexes and refers to the social

characteristics whereby women and men exist in a dynamic relation to each other, being «the effect of social definitions and internalizations and reproductions of the meaning of being a man or a woman» (Alvesson & Billing, 2009, p. 21). Gender, then, is «an activity and a social dynamic, something that we do in everyday reality, and something that we make accountable to others» (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001, p. 247) and it prescribes and defines the parameters of individual experience in which women's lives are different from men's. The gender perspective I follow represents a key to understand the relationship between individuals and social settings, and the interdependencies between public and private spheres of life. It should be seen as a basic orientation rather than a distinct and clearly elaborated theoretical position. Through this general approach I describe and comment on the gendered organizations rather than promoting distinct viewpoints. The purpose is to collect the voices of scientists working into the same field, studying experiences, practices, meanings and orientations expressed by them. How do each gender rises through the organizational hierarchy? Asking this question means considering bodily differences a decisive distinction and accepting that women and men are robust categories. However, gender is not simply a fixed element imported into the workplace. It is an organizational accomplishment constructed in part through work, culture and relations that influence the functioning of organizations and the general way of thinking about aims, values, practices and so on. Therefore, I follow a broader gender approach which also focuses on other questions. Which are the predominant relations of power for men and women within scientific organizations? How do the identity constructions of women-scientists take shape?

To answer these questions we have to consider that the organizational culture, especially in male-dominated professions, is a significant barrier to change. It is defined «in terms of shared symbols, language, practices (…) and deeply embedded beliefs and values. Each of these domains has to be understood as gendered, and together they constitute an important field in which gendered meanings, identities, practices and power relations are sustained» (Newman, 1995a, p.10). The gendered culture of organizations defines «settings, tasks and behaviours specific to the men and women who work within them» and presupposes «a set of already hierarchically normed

interactions based on the sexual division of labor and on gender expectations» (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001, p. 257).

Within organizations, gender division is historically rooted in cultural systems of meanings and ideas about what is "feminine" and "masculine", two concepts constructed as oppositional, dichotomous and hierarchical where the second one is (usually) privileged. In these contexts, women relate to practices and models of action that point to social norms and representations associated to gender roles and to the system of constraints and opportunities each gender has to deal with. Their identity as women-scientists is the result of processes that act interactively on different levels and spheres of life: subjectivities and gender belonging; the images which women and men express and how they are perceived; the relations and practices that guide organizational and work activities; the behaviours of the management – a staff of male directors – and their impact on the system of careers. In these processes, gender stereotypes (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005) have the function to support and legitimize the social order determining and reinforcing the meaning of "being" a woman or a man in everyday life and in the workplace.

In Italy, the astrophysical profession can follow two possible career paths: academic departments or research institutes – since 2003 Observatories and Authorities of the National Research Council have merged into a single institute named National Institute of Astrophysics (INAF). University departments and INAF Institutes maintain consolidated relations in order to cooperate and develop research and educational activities. The institutes taken as a reference for this study are of both types.

The role of gender in scientific organizations is investigated through the analysis of the narratives of their members, that make possible to understand how scientific culture is shaped, gendered practices are legitimated and identities are constructed in (and outside) the workplace. The analysis draws on a qualitative study in which forty astrophysics (twenty men and twenty women) were interviewed. The interviewees were selected among the research staff at different professional levels – L4: post-doc/fellowships; L3: researchers; L2: associate astronomers/professors; L1: full astronomers/professors. Each person answers to a semi-directed interview

focusing on professional experience and on the system of representation (Farr & Moscovici, 1984) of science and its actors. The qualitative data are analysed favouring a thematic approach with the aim of highlighting the recurring and cross elements of the narratives gathered, rather than keeping the vertical structure of individual experiences.

In the following sections, a selection of extracts taken from the qualitative analysis of the interviews is presented. These fragments are not representative of all the opinions collected, nor are they intended to outline inappropriate generalizations or to propose an exhaustive analysis of the explored topics. They were rather chosen as examples of scientists' statements, considered to be significant illustrations of how gender differences are constructed and maintained by the discursive and relational practices of men and women.

Rising through the Hierarchy

Constitutive elements of gender segregation in the workplace are discrimination against women in promotions and the gradual spreading apart between their careers and those of male colleagues. According to Luciano (1993, my translation), careers have multiple dimensions:

> There is a demographic dimension, concerning the structure and the number of positions. There is an institutional dimension which is constituted of meanings, of mechanisms of control and legitimacy, of rules that define the behaviour allowed, the foundations of authority, the decision-making procedures, the value-criteria to measure performance and rewards. (...) There is an interactive dimension which consists of daily adaptations and face-to-face relationships through which the rules are interpreted, modified, re-invented and individuals give meaning to their stories, build and test their self, realize their aims. There is also a subjective dimension, which consists of adjustments and transitions that alternate in the course of adult life and that may (or may not) coincide with the organizational career marked by passages of status, role changes, pay increases. (p.56)

Thinking about women's scientific careers means trying to read the current situation both in its factual aspects and for the cultural and symbolic significance that accompanies the female figure in research and in society.

The career system refers to issues regarding professional mechanisms and the maintenance of membership in organization. Its activities can be clustered into the functions of entry (human resource planning, recruiting and selection), development (socialization, training, and promotions) and exit (retirement, resignations and dismissal) (Sonnenfeld, 1989). Regarding the entry and the development phases, public competition represents the main selection tool, although all interviewees believe that it is not an objective manner for the recruitment of professionals. In fact, informal networks in scientific organizations have an important role, especially if personal ties are stable and have "sponsors", i.e. prominent personalities operating at higher hierarchical levels. Despite strong competition and the existence of a scoring system – designed to make the access to organizations more open and fair – sponsors are able to assist their postgraduate students or subordinates in their careers. In the interviewees' opinion, public competitions are spoiled because of the social relationships of the candidates or their membership of particular scientific groups, and not because of gender. However, as we will see later, candidates' gender and the "quality" of their social relations may be somehow connected.

Regarding scientists' recruitment and career transitions through public competition, it should be underlined that, in order to achieve equal opportunities, public authorities have at their disposal several tools, for instance reserving at least one third of the posts among the members of the selection committees for women. The women-astrophysics interviewed – although they pointed out, in some cases, not to completely appreciate such "forcing" – are in favour of the application of this rule, complaining that this often remains unnoticed (INAF, 2010a) and that the boards, being largely composed by men, may contribute to foreclose women from professional promotions. This kind of practices and decisions reflect the fact that within scientific organizations decision-making power is mostly in the hands of men, especially as far as career mechanisms are concerned. On this point, it is also noted that, for example, the Board of Directors of INAF has not

resorted to the consulting and advisory functions of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for the approval of the Human Resources Regulation, although this is in contrast with the current norms (INAF, 2010b).

Homosociality at the highest hierarchical levels and the male culture that it reflects perpetrate gender segregations within scientific organizations. Despite the public competitions system, promotions are often based on integration mechanisms for which the new member is recruited through the designation of those already in office. The so-called "old boys' network" refers to the relations between men in formal and informal decision-making contexts and groups. However, such network is not only about excluding non-members. It involves information giving and the socialisation into masculinity of younger professionals in a place where masculinity is equivalent to senior management behaviour. These practices outline the processes of "homosocial reproduction" (Monaci, 2002, p. 77, my translation), through which «the leaders with powers of selection and promotion of staff (...) generally prefer to promote and appoint individuals with social traits corresponding to their own; (...) acting on the assumption that, in each case, they will be "naturally" more inclined to make decisions in line with their expectations and visions of the world». The uncertainty of the organizational work leads to the development of rigid inner circles to keep control in the hands of a socially homogeneous group. Women who wish to climb the professional hierarchy must satisfy a certain system of behaviour and learn a complex and hidden set of rules that reflects the male culture at its base.

> It comes to my mind the case of three women who have been department or institute directors: Woman/X, Woman/Y and Woman/Z… W/X is completely different from the other two: she has become a director because she was good, scientifically speaking; instead the others used to give more importance to "political" aspects, maintaining good contacts and relations without antagonizing anybody… At a certain point in their careers, they were already thinking about becoming directors. W/X, quite the opposite, has never had this ambition and she has become a director because there weren't any other candidates at the time. I'll tell you… Some years ago, an authority needed a new director. *Man/X*

> sponsored a candidate who was rejected by an overwhelming majority. The director had to be a full astronomer: *Man/X* wanted to step aside; *Man/Y* wasn't available; *Man/Z* was finished (because some years earlier he had tried to become a director without success) and – in the opinion of many – *W/X* wasn't fitting: she isn't aggressive, she is too kind and correct... But she was the only admissible candidate and so she became the director, almost by chance... otherwise they would have had to choose an associate, but it wouldn't have been wise to appoint an associate astronomer as a director... and if *W/X* had been passed over, they would have been accused of discrimination. If *W/Y* or *W/Z* had been in *W/X*'s place, this problem wouldn't have existed...but I have to admit that *W/X* made it better than many people could have expected. (Man1, Level4).

This extract reveals two different topics: the perceptions/representations of the female figures in science and the importance of networks and social capital in organizations. On the first point it should be observed that the woman's position (W/X) as a minority subject can be described in terms of both visibility – she is seen as an anomaly – and invisibility – she is not recognized as a legitimate leader (Kanter, 1977). In society and in the organization there is a wide range of activities that refer to symbolic categories and collective representations that reflect the polarity of genders. In the scientific institutes involved in this work, leadership is socially constructed in masculine terms, making it difficult for a woman to find a balance between being seen as a competent leader and as sufficiently feminine not to disregard gender expectations. Traditional conceptions of leadership imply that there is only one "right" way to lead in an organization, and the sort of people equipped for this leadership have to be men. In the interview, woman's visibility (W/X) as a leader depends on a different notion of leadership, linked to the gender role. However, «for women raised to be polite and deferential, the physics culture is not a natural home» (Urry, 2008, p. 154). The model of "female" leadership is the antithesis of "real" leadership, which use power in more direct and overt ways. Since women in leadership lack legitimacy within the dominant

discourse, their visibility (success and acceptance) as a leader entails disappearing as a woman through the acceptation of masculine ideals (Binns, 2010).

In order to move to the top of organizations, women have to understand the organizational culture and develop suitable coping strategies, finding individualised means of survival. Some studies have examined the reasons why women who reach positions of power tend not to work in favor of other women. There are two references in particular: "tokenism" and the "queen bee syndrome". Tokenism is a theory based on interactions and numerical proportions within a group. When there is a large preponderance of one group over another, the minority-group members are called tokens because they are typically treated as symbols of their category rather than as individuals (Kanter, 1977). Moreover, in situations in which the borders among groups – between men and women – are somewhat permeable, only a few members of the minority group will manage to gain access to non-disadvantaged positions. This explains why single individuals tend to disassociate themselves from the disadvantaged groups and to embark on personal routes – therefore unfavorable to the ingroup – instead of collective actions. The "queen bee syndrome" also shows female behaviour unfavorable to other women. In this pattern, women who have attained senior positions do not use their power either to assist struggling young women or to change the system – tacitly validating it (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005).

> Women at the top want to remain "unique" and they tend to preserve their privileges... and they also feel under pressure because they think they have to prove themselves more than men... women are always competitive with each other... they are probably more male chauvinist than men. (Woman5, Level4).

> Women at the top may have prejudices towards other women... if they had to make sacrifices and to conform to a certain kind of behaviour they could say "Why should I help other women?" (M6, L4).

In a male-dominated workplace, the pervasive rules embedded in the organizational facts collide with the women's paths to emancipation, pushing them to conform to particular ideas, behaviours and practices to be accepted in the scientific field. For a woman to become a leader, «it is then necessary to transcend the normative (ideas about) women's roles because of the incompatibility between management and what is stereotypically ascribed to women» (Alvesson & Billing, 2009, p. 60). However, if women who wield leadership in accordance with gender role stereotypes are other-perceived as "inadequate" (like women at lower positions), assertive and forthright women are perceived, instead, as aggressive or "over-the-top" and are characterized by perpetuating sexist behaviours. These viewpoints reiterate a stereotyped view of sexual difference due to the ambivalence that marks female subjects, which are confronted by the conflicting logics of public (work-related) and private (family-related) life.

We must also distinguish the scientific knowledge from the social capital linked to the workplace, that is «the set of the current and potential resources linked to the possession of a stable network of more or less institutionalized relationships (...) and to the belonging to a group as a set of agents not only provided of common properties but also joined by permanent and useful relationships» (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 3, my translation). Highlighting the importance of social networks to find and change jobs, Granovetter (1973, 1974) emphasizes "weak" ties – acquaintances at work, friends of friends – which include a greater access to new information because they involve people coming from different social circles. Instead, "strong" ties convey redundant information since the members of the network are similar to each other and belong to the same social circles. In a male-dominated organizational structure there are important differences between men and women in relation to access and mobilization of social capital. The men-astrophysicists preparing to climb the professional hierarchy appear to benefit mainly from informal networks, using a social capital structured in weak ties – i.e. those with other male colleagues – typical of a system of co-optation and male-domination. On the contrary, for women-scientists, simply having working contacts with individuals who hold higher positions do not lead to a rapid increase in their employment status. For this to

happen, they have to rely on strong ties, such as a marriage with a man-astrophysicist. If it is plausible to assume that every member of a family can take advantage of the resources accumulated by another, it is admissible to think that having a successful partner implies the advantage of being able to reach a variegated and rich basket of resources to which one could not otherwise access, and that would increase the chances of mobility (Zajczyk 2002).

> Some women in astrophysics are wives or partners of very powerful men-astrophysicists. Sometimes they don't have an impeccable curriculum vitae, but they have reached high professional levels! (W1, L4).

> There is a difference between women-astrophysicists married with men-astrophysicists and those who are not married with a man-astrophysicists! I have the impression that at least some of them have had more success thanks to a little help... (W7, L3).

If the "double presence"[2] of women in the family and at work can be a hindering factor that prevents women to conduct their scientific work with dedication (see paragraph below), the creation of a family, or even a simple "flirtation", with the "right" man may allow women to climb the occupational hierarchy faster.

> In some situations, when leaders are men, there are women who climb the hierarchy quickly for unknown reasons, even if they don't reach senior levels.... Without going as far as talking about "prostitution", I note the existence of such phenomena... (M1, L3).

The sexual dimension is a sensitive area and it is not easy to interpret. The interviews also reveal experiences of sexual harassment[3] against women in the workplace, which occur especially during the early years of the profession, when mentoring, defined as a positive action, is an essential tool for understanding the functioning of the scientific system. According to the interviewees, in some cases when a powerful personality decides to become the mentor or "sponsor" of a young woman, his actual function is not limited

to his ideal purpose. In fact, as noted by Keller (Donini, 1991, p. 69, my translation) we should not «underestimate the erotic arousal that men-scientists experience when encouraging young women». Harassments by the mentor take place in the typical scenario of teacher-student interaction and are generally configured as sexual approaches upon which promotion or punishment depends.

> I've heard of some unpleasant experiences of young female students subjected to pressures, more or less explicit, of course unwanted... From this point of view, it seems to me that the scientific community is a mirror of society. (M3, L3).

These behaviours support the code of segregation and reinforce the idea that women are primarily sexual subjects, rather than individuals with intellectual abilities. If in most cases harassing behaviours are not well-accepted, some female permanent members of the astrophysical staff, thinking back to their experience of mentoring, also show a "regret" for not having taken advantage – in terms of work and career opportunities – of situations resulting from a particular "interest" towards them.

> If you are a pretty young woman everyone would like to be your "mentor"... and this is a card that you can play in your favor if you're shrewd enough. Now, with hindsight, I would play that card better, of course! Instead, at the moment I felt uneasy... seniors were always looking for me ... (W6, L3).

In a male-dominated workplace, women worth is often valued according to cultural standards of beauty and women who wish to be successful need to compete with other women also on these terms. The organization of scientific research configures itself as a laboratory in which gender relations are negotiated. However, gender is not the only component which acts at the core of relationships. In some situations, social interactions emphasize biological/sexual differences, while at other times they minimize, contradict or complicate them.

Towards Women-scientists' Identity

Work has long been understood as central to male identity, signifying personal/family responsibility and commitment to the duties of citizenship. It determines the status in society, and vocational identity helps considerably in establishing a sense of worth and knowledge about oneself. In other words, working activity helps building the social identity of the subjects, even in a historical phase in which a relative loss of centrality of the meaning of work, compared to other spheres of life, can be assumed. With the rise in female participation in the labour market, work is increasingly influencing also women's identity and self-esteem. However, women who undertake professional careers are often seen (and they see themselves) as stepping outside the traditional female role, especially those who are employed in male-dominated professions. In fact, the professional sphere represents a relevant context for gender differences, influencing the development of identity and defining the expectations of women and men.

Identity «is the system of meanings that, linking the individuals with the cultural universe of shared values and social symbols, allows them to give their actions a meaning for themselves and others, to make choices and to give coherence to their own biography» (Sciolla, 1983, p. 105; my translation). From a gender point of view, identity can be seen as a key reference point where cultural masculinities and femininities are played out – through expectations and feedback – and expressed, as people act following their sense of who they are and what they want (Alvesson & Billing, 2009). Gender identity plays an important part in the process of identity construction and can be defined as «the recognition of the implications of one's belonging to one sex in terms of the development of attitudes, behaviours and desires, more or less conforming to the cultural and social expectations» (Ruspini, 2003, p. 17; my translation). Therefore, the process of acquisition of gender identity is related to the definition of gender roles and it has its origin in the social and relational network of the subject (Melucci, 1991). Identity develops and changes over time in a social and cultural context and in close interaction with other people who confirm, support or disrupt – through policies, rewards and sanctions, acts, language and so on – different claims[4]. This continual process ensures that the

attainment of social identity is at one and the same time a «referent for individual continuity, an index of collective similarity and differentiation and a canvas upon which identification can play» (Jenkins, 1996, p. 21). In other words, the ways in which meanings are created in the multiple dimensions of the identitarian process answer to the expectations and constraints of particular environments. In Giddens' words (1991, p. 52), identity «is not something that is just given, as a result of continuities of the individual's action system, but something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual», in accordance with a model that considers both continuity and mutability of identity – the ability to adapt to changing circumstances in order to create a coherent individual/social identity.

In order to explore the identity construction of women-scientists, it is necessary to examine the generative power of conventions, beliefs and representations regarding women's scientific work, analysing the effects produced by these socio-cultural dimensions on individuals' behaviours and interpretations. However, not only the professional setting has to be considered; also domestic arrangements «are part of the culture of science. Despite the historical distinction between the domestic and public spheres, private life is not separate from public life» (Schiebinger, 1999, p. 93). Studying how individuals relate to social facts and face everyday reality as a whole, we are able to explore the foundations of their decisions and to highlight the conflicts between roles, the processes of categorization and the socially legitimated conventions about women-scientists. Analysing women's personal orientations we can cast a light on their attitudes, values and choices, that are significant elements for identity.

According to the majority of the women interviewed, scientific activity is a significant source of self-esteem. However, women-astrophysics do not always consider the working dimension as a foundational experience of their identity or as a preeminent space of evaluation of their existence. The analysis reveals instrumental attitudes towards employment, in respect of which it is necessary to review and re-balance personal priorities.

> Two years ago I wouldn't have hesitated in telling you that my work was an important part of my life. Today I have a permanent

> position but to get there I made sacrifices... Now I have two children and the focus of my life has shifted. (W8, L3).

In reference to the Italian case, the issue of women-mothers who are forced to neglect work for childcare refers to the low degree of de-familization through the welfare state – the lack of public interventions that provide adequate support services – and to the "familistic" cultural heritage that appoint women to perform care activities and take on household responsibilities (Esping-Andersen, 1996). The only way to make scientific career easier seems to be to postpone or renounce to motherhood, acquiring a professional model constructed on male ideals. In fact, give birth to and look after children prevent women from maintaining a network of contacts and a competitive curriculum vitae in terms of number and quality of publications. Trying not to appear different from their male colleagues, women with children have to eliminate almost everything (i.e. time for themselves) but work and family, nevertheless they also lose the flexibility that would be needed to work late or to engage colleagues in informal discussions. Moreover, as they experience motherhood in most cases with a precarious job, women may find themselves without economic protection.

> I know a woman who had a post-doc position… She had a difficult pregnancy, and had a bad time because she had no protections… She kept her job because our supervisor avoided pointing out her absences. For this reason later she changed her job. This is an example of how the rules of the system tend to exclude women... (M6, L4).

Although the majority of the men interviewed know about these difficulties, they tend to think about motherhood as "a women's thing". Many men-astrophysicists also suggest women should not renounce their private life, considering sexual characters as the determining features of what is "natural" in society. On the contrary, career and achieving power are presented as unfeminine and somehow "damaging" to femininity. These opinions are also based on sexual ambivalence, a mix of hostile sexism that considers women "inferior", thus legitimizing the male social control, and benevolent sexism that idealizes women as wives and mothers.

> There are women who do not have children and have dedicated their lives to their career, but this is not a good thing and it is not the winning choice! You cannot have everything in life, you must be able to find a balance between your spheres of life and try to be happy with what you have. I think women who have reached top positions by giving up other aspects of their life then repent ... (M7, L3).

Careers of women-scientists are interpreted as individual choices – not always approved by male colleagues – in a context of constraints and opportunities biologically and socially defined. Female biological and social – gender-related – characters, can also affect the decisions of hiring and promotion, and they ensure that the male model of worker – without "extra-organizational" commitments – appears the only one able to offer guarantees.

> During the selection phase, anything can be used against a woman: "she has children, then she will have to stay at home because they get sick", or "she has no children, and then she will want to become a mother". If she is not married: "she is a bitch, no-one wants to marry her" if she is divorced "she is a bitch because she is divorced"... (W1, L1).

The analysis of the interviews shows that excessive engagement in science can often make women feel guilty. This emotion especially grips women who live a discontinuous presence in their family, and it is accompanied by the idea not to pay adequate attention to the family members. Any deviation – even temporary – from the path defined by gender roles and social rules implies a self-stereotypization – i.e. the tendency of self-appraise themselves on the basis of the stereotypic traits – within the image of the "unnatural mother", more inclined to work ambitions rather than to her "natural" role of social reproduction.

> I used to pick my son up from childcare at 6 pm, and when he learned to talk he asked me "Mom, why do you come so late? The

> other moms come at 4 pm or 2 pm". My son was three years old, poor creature... I used to see the other mothers who had more time and to feel guilty... (W2, L2).

Women who totally commit themselves in a male-considered profession – not devoting themselves to the traditional role – risk being considered "unfeminine" and feeling unfulfilled. Women-scientists engaged in both roles wonder if their activities are effective. Women who heavily invest in their profession but do not reach – for any reason – concrete recognition, may experience a re-visitation of their priorities, restructuring their actions in accordance with new orientations. Compared to men-astrophysics, self-image and self-esteem of women-astrophysics seem to be less dependent on their job and social position. If it is difficult to accept male gender models and conciliate the different roles that women are – or want – to play at the same time (wife, mother and scientist), younger women-researchers – who are in the hierarchy-based professional positions – seem willing to make radical choices. When they feel their biological clock is clicking away, they wonder about the possibility of finding a balance between work and private life and they tend to prefer biographical trajectories focused on family. This is partly due, beyond doubt, to the precarious conditions in which young researchers have to work and to the increasingly higher age at which scientists gain permanent positions in universities and research institutes. The uncertainty related to the future – and the impossibility to control it – is crucial to structure and redefine values and priorities in the light of how individuals represent reality and imagine their identity to be socially perceived. Although most women are today involved in a process of gender-role fluidization, performing multiple gender roles depending on the different social realities they have to deal with, when the context interferes with this ambivalence, the balance can be redressed through the "shelter" of the traditional gender role, which is still able to provide some control over reality.

> If in the future I won't be able to continue to work in the astronomical field I will change job... I'd be sorry for this, but I must also think about my family and my life ... I can also adapt myself... (W2, L4).

> I may feel satisfied when I write an article, but I'm happy for other things… If I have to give up astronomy to have a family I wouldn't have problems... of course, I would be disappointed but I think I have the "feminine" spirit of sacrifice... (W4, L4).

The willingness to perform an act of deprivation in the professional sphere in order to devote to the role of wife and mother seems to represent a potentially constitutive act of the identity of the women interviewees. These "sacrifices" go hand in hand with the traditionalist and familistic Italian culture, which tends to take for granted, even in the laws and social policies, that the management of most of the household tasks is women's business. On the contrary, it is very rare for men to limit or interrupt their work commitments. When the trade-off between professional life and household responsibilities interest fathers, men have to deal with an unsympathetic social context: the work environment disapprove requests for leave or special permissions by men, considered as evidence of weak attachment to the profession. In fact, family-oriented fathers have not yet been fully legitimated in the social and cultural codes, also because of women acceptance.

> I have two children and at times I had to put barriers to work, not to have my private life invaded... but it was held against me. I was told that I should be clearer and decide if I wanted to take care of my children or of my job... the most surprising thing was that it was always emphasized by women. (M8, L3).

A stereotyped conception of gender roles is strong among the interviewees. In women's interviews, we can appreciate negative representations of themselves and of their own gender-belonging, resulting from the comparison with the dominant (high-status) group – the reference point in relation to which the other group is defined. In case of stereotypical behaviour, the gender victim of it is devalued and the responsibility of the unfair treatment suffered is attributed to it.

> Every woman will certainly say, "We need more women in decision-making positions!", but then she is not so sure... maybe for cultural issues or because, as some people say, women are really less suited to decision-making positions. (W1, L3).

The dominant norms of organizational culture conflict with, or at least severely undervalue, the norms and expectations associated with "being a woman". Stereotypes linked to roles place men and women in a sort of "natural" (supported, or at least tolerated) order, and they play a fundamental role in maintaining power imbalances between genders (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005). In addition, the working path of the majority of women-astrophysics interviewed is marked by the recognition of their shortcomings and failings, without claiming what it is not perceived as deserved.

> I do not know if the scientific environment values the contribution of women... I have produced less than a man of my age[5]. (W8, L3).

> I can't stand competitiveness, and I have never been able to get a political-organizational mindset, and this is not a positive thing... it is a fault. (W2, L1).

The focus on individual accountability and the interconnections between self-affirmation and recognition of the "others" qualify many women-astrophysics' attitudes more than men's. Women's emphasis on their own limitations refer to the belonging (or not) to the scientific context and to the dynamics that take shape in it. The process of identity construction, in fact, is in part linked to the socio-cultural dimension of the context in which the individual is placed (Melucci, 1991), that is the framework of resources and constraints that nourish and define the meanings of that context and manage its terms and conditions, purposes and expectations.

The potentiality of the ambivalence related to the female gender often introduces the need for a (difficult) harmony of roles and identities. In fact, women-scientists' identity is also defined in relation to the allocation of values and priorities to different activities. The asymmetric distribution of household and care responsibilities, the gendered nature of scientific organizations, the persistence of the ideal-type of the male breadwinner and

the deficit in the provision of assistance services, have an impact on women's professional chances. These aspects may lead the women-scientists interviewed to quite homogeneously define themselves as low-status group – i.e. the identity that is assigned by comparison with the male-group benchmark and that is experienced within male-dominated contexts – and the researcher to perceive the absence of intra-gender differences, without finding an identity construction potentially unhitched from the traditional gender role. Women-scientists' identity struggles to establish itself in the present, but it can try to project itself into the future of female subjects who choose to work to assert it.

Concluding Remarks

The hard recognition of women-scientists' role and their persistent difficulty in reaching senior positions in research are central issues for national and supra-national institutions and authorities (European Commission, 2000), also regarding the specific sector of astrophysics (IAU, 2009; INAF, 2010b). Legislative progress in the field of equal opportunities and the achievement of formal equality have not yet eliminate discriminations and prejudices towards female subjects. This situation brings to women's careers being "slower" than men's (INAF, 2010b) and to the fact that women gradually desert the scientific field – the metaphor of the "leaky pipeline" (European Commission, 2000, 2002).

As observed, within workplaces gender order takes shape from different interacting factors – such as individual, organizational, interpersonal and socio-cultural features – and puts women in a position of estrangement in hierarchically, relationally and symbolically male-dominated contexts. These considerations point to the issue of citizenship of women in science. To ensure that women become citizens with full rights in the scientific field, policy makers should not simply work to reach a balance in the numerical proportions between genders in scientific organizations or to analyse their chances of inclusion and participation in a given context. Instead, they must especially investigate the relationships that both genders have established with the political and social order of the scientific environment, their

recognition and their gazes on the scientific community. Only by redefining the mechanisms on which wills, expectations and values of individuals (women and men) depend, the potential of critique and innovation can be developed within paths that seem universally established. According to Schiebinger (1999, p. 195), however, «change will have to happen simultaneously in many areas», that is the social and cultural dimensions of everyday reality as a whole – e.g. gender roles and interactions and the relationship between home life and the profession. Giving a critical visibility to the hegemonic masculinity of gender relations and practices may represent a path to change.

Notes

[1]In Italy, women attending Ph.D programs in Physics are around 30% of the total and in Astronomy the gender participation is equal (Masciadri & Schneider, 2009). However, the presence of women among university research staff is rare (Tot: 14.8%; Researchers: 26.1%; Associate Professors: 11.7%; Full Professors: 3%) and into the National Institute of Astrophysics (INAF) women-scientists are about 27% of the total research staff (35% at the start level, 15% at the top level) (INAF, 2010b).

[2]The concept of "double presence" indicates cross-gender experiences and women's simultaneous presence – both in the physical and in the symbolic sense – in different and conflicting spheres of life (Balbo, 1978).

[3]Sexual harassments may occur at different levels of gravity and have the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a worker through physical, verbal or non-verbal practices.

[4]The identitarian process has a social component (the conception a person has of itself as being a part of a group) and a personal one (the experience of self-reflection – on individual history, hopes and plans – based on the needs of personal coherence), routinely related to one another.

[5]On this point, it is noted that «factors such as age at promotion, disciplinary fields, number of publications are only a partial explanation of the gender differences in the career pathways in science. The main explanatory factor is and remains gender» (Palomba, 2006, p. 136).

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Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Spain. A Quantitative Analysis

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Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Spain. A Quantitative Analysis

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Abstract

A growing number of authors have been suggesting the necessary incorporation of children in the analysis of gender violence and, specifically, in the analysis of intimate partner violence against women (IPV). Such incorporation would be relevant not only for reducing children's invisibility and vulnerability, but also for achieving a better understanding of the characteristics and dynamics of IPV. Based on these considerations, we present in this paper the results of a secondary analysis applied to the data obtained in the last Spanish Survey on Violence Against Women. The available information allows us to analyze: 1) the presence of children exposed to IPV, 2) the relationship between this presence and the probability of reporting the violence, and 3) women's perception about the parental role of the aggressors.

Palabras clave: gender violence, intimate partner violence, childhood, quantitative analysis.

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Menores Expuestos a Violencia contra la Mujer por Parte del Compañero Íntimo en España. Un Análisis Cuantitativo

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Resumen

Cada vez más autores destacan la necesaria incorporación de la infancia en el estudio de la violencia de género y, en concreto, de la violencia contra la mujer por parte del compañero íntimo (VCI). Tal incorporación puede facilitar, no sólo una menor invisibilidad y desprotección de niños y niñas, sino también una mejor comprensión de la propia violencia, sus características y dinámicas. Partiendo de estas consideraciones, en este artículo se presentan los resultados de un análisis secundario de los datos obtenidos en la última Macroencuesta sobre violencia contra las mujeres en España. En concreto, la información disponible permite analizar: 1) la presencia de menores expuestos a VCI; 2) la posible relación entre esta presencia y la formulación de denuncias; y 3) la percepción que tienen las mujeres en torno al rol parental de los agresores.

Keywords: violencia de género, violencia del compañero íntimo, infancia, análisis cuantitativo.

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The lack of social recognition can intensify the victimization effects in case of violence. This is especially relevant in relation to gender violence, that has been present throughout history but has not been considered as a social problem until recently (Araujo, Guzmán & Mauro, 2000). Among the different shapes that gender violence can take, it has received special attention the study of intimate partner violence against women (IPV). This violence is also our general object of study but, in this article, we will focus on the analysis of a number of aspects related to children's exposition to IPV.

Specifically, we present the results of a secondary analysis of the data obtained by the Center for Sociological Research (CIS, for its acronym in Spanish) in the last Survey on Violence Against Women in Spain, conducted in 2011[1]. Although the main purpose of this survey is not the analysis of children exposed to IPV, we will try to extract and analyze all the information that can be related to this population. Thus, according to the variables included in the questionnaire, our objectives are: 1) to determine the presence of children in IPV settings, 2) to analyze the relationship between this presence and the probability of reporting the violence, and 3) to study women's perceptions about aggressors' parental role.

The initial research hypothesis related to objectives 1 and 2 are:

H1. The presence of children in IPV settings increases the probability of the women reporting the violence.

H2. There is a predominant differentiation between the violence against a partner and the parental role of the aggressor. Consequently, being violent with a partner doesn't determine women's perceptions about aggressors' parenting skills.

Theoretical Framework

The term gender violence is used to embrace those forms of violence that are based on the gender identities and relations prevalent in a given society (Espinar & Mateo, 2007). In other words, it refers to a violence linked both to the imbalance in gender power relations and to definitions, stereotypes, identities and expectations about what it means to be a woman and to be a man. Among all the different forms gender violence can take in this paper we will focus on one of them: the violence against women by an actual or a

former intimate partner (IPV). In this sense, it is generally recognized that the violence against women by husbands and intimate partners provides the highest evidence of the determinant role gender identities and inequalities play (Martín & Martín, 1999). This violence has been receiving an increasing academic and political attention and around it there is a relatively broad agreement in terms of terminology, impact, characteristics and prevalence. Specifically, according to the World Health Organization (2013) about 23% of the women living in high-income countries that have ever had a partner have suffered physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner at some point in their life. In the European Union (FRA, 2014), around 22% of the adult women report to have experienced physical and/or sexual IPV at least once in their lives. In Spain, a study based on a sample of 11,000 women using primary care centers reported a prevalence of about 35% for 2007 (Ruiz *et al*., 2010).

Although much of the research on IPV incorporates references to the involved children, this population is usually studied only indirectly. Therefore, and despite a growing interest in recent years, some authors consider still insufficient the available information (Øverlien, 2010; Erikson, 2010). An expression of these limitations is the variety of terms used to refer to these children. In this sense, options such as 'witnesses of IPV' have tended to be abandoned as they hardly include the possibility of hearing, seeing the consequences or being part of the violence (Grip, 2012; Holt, Buckley & Whelan, 2008). More inclusive terms are beginning to be broadly accepted in an attempt to cover the diversity of situations and experiences: 'exposed to' (Holden, Geffner & Jouriles, 1998), 'forced to live with' (Goddard & Bedi, 2010) or 'subject to' (Eriksson, 2010) violence. According to this logic, some authors have suggested the need to include all the children exposed to IPV in the category of victims, regardless of whether they are or they are not direct targets of the violence. This reclassification would have obvious practical and political implications (Cunningham & Baker, 2004; Eriksson, 2011).

The most usual approach to the study of children exposed to IPV is the quantitative one, mainly aimed at the description of the consequences the violence has for this population (Øverlien, 2010, p. 87). Therefore there is quite available information about the physical, psychological, emotional and behavioral effects that IPV has on boys and girls (Graham-Bermann, Castor,

Miller & Howell, 2012; Levendosky *et al*., 2013; Kuhlman, Howeel & Graham-Bermann, 2012). This information allows us to conclude, among other things, that the impact of IPV on children is more significant than traditionally thought (Øverlien, 2010, p. 91).

In addition to identify the effects, some studies have also tried to quantify its prevalence. However, as highlighted by Øverline (2010, p. 81), 'both because of the variability in what is understood and reported as domestic violence, and because researchers and practitioners define ‘a child exposed to domestic violence’ differently' the comparison between results is extremely difficult. Anyway, we can mention some relevant data. For example, in a survey carried out in Sweden (Annerback, Wingren, Svedin & Gustafsson, 2010) with young people aged 13 to 17, 11% responded affirmatively when asked about exposure to any incident of IPV. In the United States, Zinzow *et al*. (2009) obtained a prevalence of 9% for the exposure to severe forms of IPV among adolescents aged 12 to 17; while a research in the United Kingdom (NSPCC, 2012) concluded that 12% of children under 11 and 17% of adolescents aged 11 to 17 had been exposed to physical IPV at least one time in their lives.

Other dimensions and perspectives have also been analyzed, although to a lesser extent. For example, this is the case of relevant issues as: the meaning IPV has for children themselves, the inclusion of a gender approach or the study of mother's interpretation about their children's exposure to IPV. One of the most neglected issues is the analysis of the relationship between the children and their fathers (Eriksson, 2010; Perel & Peled, 2008; Rothman, Mandel & Silverman, 2007). In this sense, according to Maria Eriksson (2002, p. 3): 'A man's relationship with his partner and his relationships with his children can be conceptualized as parts of the same gender project, as arenas that might be linked to an overall process of gender constitution'. However, previous researches point out a general tendency to separate the partner/aggressor role to the parental role, so that fathers are broadly interpreted as essentially nonviolent (Eriksson & Hester, 2001; Eriksson, 2002).

In this article, despite the limitations of using secondary data, we will try to make some contributions to this research area. We won't be able to address children's experiences or aggressors' perceptions, but we can provide information on other relevant aspects: 1) the presence of children among

cases of IPV, 2) mothers' perception about aggressors' parental role and 3) to what extent the presence of children can increase the likelihood of mothers reporting the aggression.

Methodology

We have applied a secondary analysis to the data obtained in the fourth Survey on Violence Against Women in Spain. This survey was conducted by the CIS in 2011 on behalf of the extinct Spanish Ministry of Equality. The main difference between the fourth (and last) survey and the previous ones (conducted in 1999, 2002 and 2006) lies in the method of data collection. While telephone interviews were used in the three first surveys, the latest one is based on face-to-face interviews at the respondents' homes. This option has led to a decrease in the sample size (from 20,552 in the first survey to 7,898 in the last one). In any case, the sample continues being representative of the population of women over 18 years old living in Spain.
The main objective of the series of surveys is to know the approximate number of women who are or have been victims of violence in the family context, with particular attention to IPV. Additionally, a number of variables have been included in order to analyze possible relationships between different characteristics and being a victim of violence. In this sense, the fourth survey incorporates several new variables that help to obtain information about the presence of children exposed to IPV, as well as about how women perceive aggressor's parental role and custody rights. We will focus our attention on these variables.

Specifically, the data analysis has been carried out using SPSS statistical program, that has allowed the univariate and bivariate analysis of the relevant information. Given the mainly nominal nature of the selected variables, we have applied an exploratory and descriptive approach, analyzing possible relationships through contingency tables, and Chi-square results. When required we have also calculated the adjusted standardized residuals in order to analyze not only the relationship between variables, but also between specific categories of the variables.

Cases of Intimate Partner Violence

The first step is the necessary construction of IPV indicators. In this regard, two different strategies to detect cases of violence have been applied in the series of Surveys on Violence Against Women. These two strategies have been characterized as Type A and Type B violence. Type A cases refer to those women technically considered as victims of violence; while type B cases are related to those women who identify themselves as victims (Sigma Dos, 2006). Thus, in the type A strategy women are classified as victims after their affirmative response to a number of items that reflect different forms of violence. This classification is carried out regardless how women themselves interpret their own experience. They are considered victims of violence even if they don't recognize themselves as such. The specific question used for detecting type A violence was: (P35) 'At present, how often would you say that a closely related person...?'. The response was associated with a set of 26 items, including different forms of psychological, physical, sexual, economic or social violence. Additional variables enable to identify the person exercising the violence and, therefore, it is possible to select those cases where the aggressor is the husband/partner or ex-husband/ex-partner.

For the first three surveys, the affirmative responses (and the categories 'frequently' and 'sometimes') to 13 selected items (those describing situations rated as more severe) were used in order to construct the indicator of Type A violence. This same strategy has been followed in the present article for the analysis of the fourth survey[2]. Thus, taking into account only the violence exercised by partners or former partners (IPV), about 10,2% of the surveyed women can be classified as victims of type A violence. This percentage is relatively similar to the results obtained in the previous surveys (12,4% in 1999, 11,1% in 2002 and 9,6% in 2006) (Sigma Dos, 2006).

Regarding the second strategy, type B violence, women are directly asked if, during the last year (P36) or at some point in their lives (P37), they have felt being battered by her husband/partner, ex-husband/ex-partner or by other family member. Thus, type B refers to situations that make the women perceive themselves as being abused. Once again it is possible to identify those women who responded affirmatively and selected their partners or former partners as aggressors. In this case 2,9% of the surveyed women

claim to have been victims of IPV during the previous year, and 10,7% at some point in their lives.

Results

Children Exposed to IPV

The lack of agreement around concepts and the difficulties in detecting and accounting IPV cases make it especially problematic to obtain comparable data concerning the number of children exposed to this violence (Øverline, 2010). Usually, women's perspective is taken as reference for analyzing the presence of IPV and the extent to which children are involved. Consequently, the attempts to account mainly depend on women's perception about both violence and its effects.

Considering the data provided by the CIS' survey we can follow two procedures in an attempt to quantify the presence of children in contexts of IPV. These two procedures rely on the two different strategies applied to identify cases of violence: type A (women technically considered as victims of violence) and type B (women that classify themselves as victims of violence). Briefly, we can stress the relatively high presence of children in IPV settings: there are children in 43% of the type A cases and in 54% of the type B ones (considering the women that have ever felt being abused). These results support previous researchers (Eriksson & Hester, 2001) who underline the importance of including children in the study of IPV.

Women who affirmed having been abused (type B violence) and had children (under-18s) at the time of the abuse were asked if their children had directly suffered the violence. 54% of the women that had ever felt being battered and 60% of those who had felt being battered during the last year answered affirmatively. These results don't allow us to know what 'suffering directly the violence' means to women and to what extent they consider a risk the simple presence of their children in contexts of IPV. Thus, although we have obtained relatively high percentages, the results still support previous studies highlighting a tendency for mothers to underestimate the degree to which their children may be affected by the violence they themselves suffer (Øverline, 2010, p. 89).

Children's Presence and the Probability of Reporting the Violence

Previous researches highlight the contradictory effects that children's presence has on women's interpretation of IPV, as well as on their decision to end or continue a violent relationship (Espinar, 2006; Rhodes, Cerulli, Dichter, Kothari & Barg, 2010). In fact, children's presence can both foster women's permanency in a violent relationship (supposedly putting their children's welfare before their own) and encourage the women to report or finish the cohabitation with the aggressor (Salazar, Högberg, Valladares & Öhman, 2012; Chang *et al*., 2010; Enander & Holmberg, 2008).

Using the data of the CIS' survey it is not possible to deepen the study of all these aspects, but we can analyze the relationship between two key variables: children's presence and the probability of the women reporting the violence. Thus, for type B violence (i.e. for women who classify themselves as victims of violence) it has been possible to analyze whether it is more likely to report when there are children exposed to the violence (Table 1).

Table 1
*Relationship between women reporting the violence and children's presence (%)**

Base: cases of type B violence

		Presence of children		Total
		Yes	No	
Reporting the violence	Yes	36,0	21,3	30,9
	No	64,0	78,7	69,1
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Own elaboration from the data provided by the study number 2,.848 (CIS)
* Chi- Square: 16,145; P-value: 0,000

As shown by Chi-Square results associated with Table 1, it is possible to speak about a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. That is, the probability of reporting is significantly higher when there are children exposed to IPV. 36% of the women with minor children at the time

of the abuse reported the violence, compared to 21% of the women who had no children or whose children were not minors. In short, children's presence seems to encourage the women to report the violence. Still, it should be noted that most women (69%) do not report the aggressor, whether they have minor children at the time of the abuse (64%) or not (79%).

Continuing with the analysis of type B violence, another possibility is to test if children becoming direct victims of the violence (at least from the respondents' point of view) encourages women to report the situation. The results are shown in Table 2. Once again Chi-square test indicates a significant relationship between reporting and the perception of children as directly affected by the violence. 47% of the women who responded that their children had been directly affected reported the situation against 24% of those who denied this direct implication. Still, we can highlight that in around 54% of the cases with children being direct victims of violence the situation was not reported.

Table 2.
*Relationship between women reporting the violence and the perception of children being directly affected (%)**
Base: women who classified themselves as abused (type B violence) and had minor children at the time of the abuse.

		Children perceived as directly affected by the violence		Total
		Yes	No	
Reporting the violence	Yes	46,5	24,4	36,5
	No	53,5	75,6	63,5
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Own elaboration from the data provided by the study number 2,.848 (CIS)
* Chi- Square: 23,235; P-value: 0,000

In case of type B violence and when the abuse had not been reported, women were asked about the reasons for not reporting. 40% answered 'for my children' as either first, second or third option. The available data do not

enable us to know if this answer is related to an attempt to guarantee children's economic security, or it has more to do with maintaining the family unity and the coexistence of parents and children. In any case, the results would seem to support previous researches (Espinar, 2006; Rhodes *et al.*, 2010), where children appear to be an incentive both to report and end a violent relationship and to not report and try to keep the family unity. The results also suggest a relatively restricted perception of women about the risks their children face when exposed to IPV.

Women's Perception about Aggressor's Parental Role

According to different authors (Eriksson, 2002; Guille, 2004; Perel & Peled, 2008; Rothman *et al*., 2007; Salisbury, Henning & Holdford, 2009) there is a widespread tendency to dissociate the parental role from the partner role. Consequently, the presence of violent attitudes and behaviors toward a partner does not necessarily affect how aggressor's parental skills are perceived. This dissociation would be prevalent in the society, among victims of IPV, and also in social services and judicial procedures, with a tendency to precede the maintenance of the relationship between fathers and children against other considerations.

The survey we are analyzing allows a direct approach to this issue, as it includes a question about the degree of agreement with the following statement: 'A man beating his partner does not imply him being a bad father'. The results obtained for the whole sample would appear to contradict the supposedly widespread tendency to dissociate the roles of partner/aggressor and father. Thus, 69% of the surveyed women are little or not in agreement with the statement against 23% that are very or quite in agreement. If we observe the results in Table 3[3], it is noteworthy that victims of IPV (both type A and type B) seem to be significantly more in agreement with the differentiation between the roles of partner/aggressor and father.

Table 3
Relationship between violence (type A and B) and dissociation of roles (partner/father) (%)

		Type A violence*		Type B violence**	
		No	Yes	No	Yes
Agreement with the statement: 'A man beating his partner does not imply him being a bad father'.	Very/Quite	22,0 (-4,6)	29,1 (4,6)	22,4 (-2,1)	25,6 (2,1)
	Little/Not at all	69,6 (4,1)	62,5 (-4,1)	68,6 (-1,3)	70,8 (1,3)
	Don't know/ No answer	8,4 (0,0)	8,4 (0,0)	9,0 (5,3)	3,7 (-5,3)
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Own elaboration from the data provided by the study number 2,848 (CIS)
* Chi- Square: 21,353; P-value: 0,000
** Chi- Square: 29,666; P-value: 0,000

If we only consider the cases of type B violence, there are not significant differences in dissociating roles between those women with minor children in the moment of the abuse and those without. However, differences are statistically significant between those who stated that their children had directly suffered situations of violence and those who denied it[4]. Thus, 76% of the abused women whose children had been direct victims of violence were little or not in agreement with the possibility of an abuser being a good father. This percentage is significantly lower (66%) for the women who reported that their children had not directly suffered the violence. However, the information included in the questionnaire don't allow us an appropriate interpretation of these results. Among other things, it would be necessary a deeper knowledge about women's understanding of their children's relationship with the aggressors and experiences of violence.

Nevertheless, two more variables can be analyzed in order to provide further information about women's interpretation of aggressors' parental role. Specifically, the surveyed women were questioned about the degree of agreement with the following statements concerning children custody:

- If there is a verdict of guilty, aggressors' children custody should be removed.
- After serving the sentence, custody should be returned to the father.

Regarding the first item ('If there is a verdict of guilty, aggressors' children custody should be removed') the results are relatively different from the ones previously observed. First, the rejection of the dissociation of roles rises to 83% for the whole sample (that being the percentage of women who are very or quite in agreement with the removal of children custody if there is a verdict of guilty). Similarly, Table 4 shows, on the one hand, a significant relationship between type A violence and a greater disagreement with the withdrawal of children custody (consistent with Table 3); and, on the other hand, a significant relationship between type B violence and a higher agreement with the withdrawal of the custody. In this sense, the presence of a legal resolution (a verdict) appears to increase the association of roles (abuser/partner and father), especially among women who claim having been battered.

Table 4.
Relationship between violence (type A and B) and the degree of agreement with the withdrawal of children custody (%)

		Type A violence*		Type B violence**	
		No	Sí	No	Sí
Agreement with the statement: 'If there is a verdict of guilty, aggressors' children custody should be removed '.	Very/Quite	83,4 (1,5)	81,3 (-1,5)	82,8 (-2,9)	86,7 (2,9)
	Little/Not at alll	7,9 (-3,0)	11,0 (3,0)	8,2 (-0,4)	8,6 (0,4)
	Don't know/ No answer	8,7 (1,0)	7,7 (-1,0)	9,1 (4,3)	4,7 (-4,3)
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Own elaboration from the data provided by the study number 2,848 (CIS)
* Chi- Square: 9,757; P-value: 0,008
** Chi- Square: 18,183; P-value: 0,000

The statement 'After serving the sentence, custody should be returned to the father' adds an element of permanence not included in the previous item. Thus, the percentage of women who show a clearest association between the violence against a partner and the parental role decreases to around 65% (that being the percentage of women who are little or not in agreement with returning the custody to the father after serving the sentence). However there is a remarkable increase in the percentage of women who don't know or simply choose not to answer this question (around 20% of the surveyed women).

Table 5

Relationship between violence (type A and B) and the degree of agreement with returning the custody after the father has served the sentence (%)

		Type A violence*		Type B violence**	
		No	Yes	No	Yes
Agreement with the statement: 'After serving the sentence, custody should be returned to the father'.	Very/Quite	11,6 (-2,4)	14,5 (2,4)	12,1 (1,7)	10,1 (-1,7)
	Little/Not at all	64,7 (-1,1)	66,7 (1,1)	63,9 (-5,6)	73,5 (5,6)
	Don't know/ No answer	23,7 (3,1)	18,8 (-3,1)	24,0 (5,0)	16,4 (-5,0)
Total		100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: Own elaboration from the data provided by the study number 2,848 (CIS)

* Chi- Square: 12,884; P-value: 0,002

** Chi- Square: 32,377; P-value: 0,000

Finally, the results in Table 5 are relatively consistent with the ones observed in Table 4. On the one hand, the women victims of type A violence show a significant greater agreement with returning the custody to the father once he has served the sentence. On the other hand, the women who have ever felt being abused by a partner or former partner (type B violence) express a greater rejection of this devolution (around 74% are little or not in agreement). In any case, there is a significant negative relationship between

the two forms of violence and not knowing/not answering the question, so that victims of both type of violence (A and B) express or appear to have a clearer opinion. In contrast, serving the sentence raises more doubts among those women supposedly not victims of violence.

Conclusion

This article presents the results of a secondary analysis applied to the data obtained by the Spanish Center for sociological Research (CIS, for its acronym in Spanish) in the last Survey on Violence Against Women in Spain, conducted in 2011. According to the variables included in the questionnaire, our objectives are: 1) to determine the presence of children in IPV settings, 2) to analyze the possible relationship between this presence and the probability of women reporting the violence, and 3) to study women's perceptions about the parental role of the aggressors.

With regard to the presence of children in the context of IPV cases (both type A or women technically classified as victims of violence and type B or women self-classified as such), we can conclude that this presence is relatively high. Exactly, in 54% of all the cases of type B violence and in 43% of the type A cases there are minor children exposed to the violence. Among women who have ever felt being abused (type B violence) and had minor children at the time of the abuse 53% stated that their children had also directly suffered violent situations. Even being a relatively high percentage, this number must be interpreted in the light of the results of previous authors that highlight a trend among mothers to underestimate their children's involvement in the violence (Øverline, 2010, p. 89). In this sense, it would be necessary further research into two specific areas: first, the study of alternative sources of information beyond mothers, as may be children themselves (Cater & Forsell, 2014; Eriksson & Näsman, 2008; Øverlien & Hydén, 2009); second, the analysis of women's interpretation about gender violence and about the extent to which children can be affected.

Our first hypothesis suggested that children's presence would affect women positively in relation to reporting the violence she was suffering. However, results seem to support previous researches highlighting the contradictory role that children's presence has (Espinar, 2006; Rhodes *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, we can only conclude a partial confirmation of the

hypothesis. On the one hand, although the majority of the women who have ever felt being abused by a partner or former partner (type B violence) have not reported the violence, children's presence correlates with an increased likelihood of reporting. On the other hand, children are also one of the main reasons that women give for not reporting the violence. In this sense, it would be necessary a deeper knowledge about other aspects as, for example, the possibility of not only reporting, but also ending a violent relationship or about women's interpretations regarding the coexistence of children and aggressors.

In our second hypothesis, we predicted a predominant dissociation between violence against a partner and aggressor's parental role, so that violent attitudes or behaviors toward the mother would not necessarily affect women's perception of aggressor's parenting skills (Eriksson, 2002; Guille, 2004; Perel & Peled, 2008; Rothman *et al*., 2007; Salisbury *et al*., 2009). However, our results would not show a clear support to this hypothesis. In this sense, it is relatively high the percentage of women (for the whole sample) that disagree with the statements: 'A man beating his partner does not imply him being a bad father' and 'After serving the sentence, custody should be returned to the father'. Especially high is the percentage of women who are strong or quite in agreement with the statement 'If there is a verdict of guilty, aggressors' children custody should be removed'.

It is noteworthy that the victims of violence (both type A and type B) are significantly more in agreement with the fact that being violent with a partner does not necessary turn the aggressor into a bad father. Consequently these women would seem to dissociate to a greater extent the role of partner (aggressor) and the role of father. However, when it is introduced the existence of a guilty sentence results vary. The victims of violence seem to have clearer opinions (with lower percentages in the category Don't know / No answer) than the rest of the sample. Moreover, although victims of type A violence continue to show a greater probability to dissociate roles, victims of type B violence are more critical of aggressors' parental skills, showing a greater refusal to them maintaining the custody of the children.

In short, this is a research area that still requires further study, especially applying a qualitative approach, and focusing on the experiences and interpretations of the children themselves (Cater, 2004). It is also necessary an even deeper analysis of how women interpret gender violence, the risks

this violence has for exposed children and the parental role of the aggressors (Grip, 2012). Likewise, we would need further insight into how aggressors themselves interpret their parenting skills and the relationship with their children (Peled, 2000, p. 26). All of them are relevant areas for a better understanding of the experiences of children exposed to IPV and are also essential issues to improve the intervention with them.

Notes

[1] Survey commissioned by the former Ministry of Equality. CIS' study number: 2,858. Additional information can be found at: http://www.cis.es.
[2] It is worth to note that type A indicator has not been included in the official reports of results for the 4th survey. These reports only reflect the responses to each item in a disaggregated way. CIS' report is available at: http://www.cis.es. The report of the Government Department for Gender Violence is available at: http://e-mujeres.net.
[3] Tables 3, 4 and 5 include in parenthesis the adjusted standardized residuals. A value greater than ±1,9 indicates a (positive or negative) significant relationship between categories of the variables. Thus, residuals facilitate the interpretation of the tables beyond what chi-square statistics indicate.
[4] Chi-square: 4,800. P-value: 0,028.

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What's Critical Feminism Doing in a Field Like Teacher Education?

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What's Critical Feminism Doing in a Field Like Teacher Education?

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Abstract

This manuscript looks at the role that critical feminism may have within the teacher education community. The author looks at the many components that are incorporated within critical feminism, and how we may look to such a scholarship as a way to think differently about ourselves as prospective and current teachers. Throughout the manuscript, the author brings in many diverse scholars, and demonstrates how their work complements the many components of critical feminism. Specifically, the author looks to the practice of self –reflexivity, and how this practice can be strengthened through the many characteristics that encompass a critical feminist theory. The manuscript concludes with a brief discussion of considering the potential contributions that critical feminism may have within the field of teacher education.

Palabras clave: critical feminism, teacher education, self-reflexivity.

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¿Qué está haciendo el feminismo crítico en un ámbito como la formación del profesorado?

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Resumen

Este artículo examina el papel que el feminismo crítico puede tener dentro de la formación del profesorado. El autor analiza los muchos componentes que se incorporan dentro del feminismo crítico, y cómo nosotros podemos plantearlo en un disciplina como una manera de pensar diferente acerca de nosotros mismos, como maestros actuales y futuros. A lo largo del artículo, la autora demuestra cómo su trabajo complementa los muchos componentes del feminismo crítico. En concreto, la autora mira la práctica de la auto -reflexividad, y cómo esta práctica puede fortalecerse a través de las muchas características que abarcan una teoría crítica feminista. El artículo concluye con una breve discusión que considera las posibles contribuciones que el feminismo crítico pueda tener en el ámbito de la formación docente.

Keywords: feminismo crítico, formación del profesorado, auto-reflexión.

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> *Feminist theory can bring a substantive integrity to our practice when it is used as a tool to acknowledge difference in ways that unite and organize diverse people for social change. [There] is an organizing principle around an evolved feminism that encourages women and men to acknowledge their diverse backgrounds and to gather strength from their experiences of oppression and shared commonalities, and to provide opportunities to rally their abilities for collective action… It is also concerned with how intersections of knowledge can be functional and productive and can contribute to the abilities of teachers and learners to understand themselves and strive to transform themselves and society* (Brady & Dentith, 2001 p. 166, 168).

The focus of this manuscript will highlight the ways in which educators (defined in this case as pre-service teachers, current educators, as well as faculty within higher education) could potentially understand critical feminist theory as a framework, and methodologies[1] of resistance as an integral component within the theoretical framework. I will argue that critical feminist theory is a relevant and important framework to be utilized methodologically and pedagogically in teacher education. By deploying elements of critical feminist theory within the context of teacher education, pre-service teachers and teacher educators will have a better way of deepening their understanding for how to be more self reflexive, critical and counter hegemonic in their future teaching practices.

Critical feminist theory, as a theoretical and pedagogical framework, offers teacher educators and prospective teachers a unique opportunity to critically engage with themselves and their students not only in their teacher education programs but in their future classrooms as well. To note, McWilliam (1994) argues, "I have learned that contemporary feminist theorizing can be usefully applied to actual practices across a range of teacher education endeavors, from policy analysis to pedagogy and from research to the "reality" of field experiences' (p.147).

Moving further, as we consider themes of democracy, liberation, and individual experience, I aim to further frame and argue that critical feminism is an anti-oppressive theory[2], and one that embodies critical and difference

centered perspectives. Moosa-Mitha (2005) discusses, that feminist approaches to research are "collectivist, women-centered, and grounded in lived experience". She discusses how a feminist approach to research privileges the specific and the contextual, and argues that in order to fully understand the many diverse experiences of oppression, we must move away from validating positivist[3] academic knowledges and "Truths", and instead, base a feminist theory upon lived experiences and oppositional social movements. When conducting research, feminist theorists position the researcher and the participant in engaged and self-reflexive activities.

Thus, rather than making universal claims, feminist researchers are working to make sense of one's social reality through lived experience and subjectivities that can be based on narratives, performance, as well as other methodologies that incorporate individual and personal experiences (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Importantly, we see a similar discussion within standpoint theory. Au (2012) describes standpoint theory as:

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> A recognition of personhood and one's equality, which means that by definition, it must also be connected to antiracist and antihomophobic positions, among others. Hence, standpoint has to contend with issues of power and oppression in a general sense because, as a paradigmatic orientation, standpoint openly acknowledges that the social location of the oppressed and marginalized (as defined by historical, social, cultural, and institutional contexts) is the best vantage point for starting knowledge projects given that it can provide a clearer, more truthful lens for understanding the world than that of hegemonic epistemologies (p.8).

As such, the discussion moving forward will build off of standpoint theory, as its premise and underlying principles deeply connect to how I understand critical feminism and its relationship to education.

Furthermore, Dadd's (2011) argues, "The dilemmas facing humans seeking a liberatory theory for education are global *and* particular. When we understand this, we realize that feminist thought and action is a key element to critical social theory and is crucial to its engagement with the educational enterprise" (p.190). In order to demonstrate that critical feminist theory is an effective framework to be used within teacher education, it is important to

explicitly discuss how I understand the many dimensions and nuances of a critical feminist theory.

McLeod (2009) argues that feminism and education are malleable and political. Poststructural feminism is not a:

> bounded, fixed-in-time transcendental theory, but a shifting, socially and temporally embedded system of reasoning, that generates particular ways of thinking about education and about feminism-its political project, the topics that warrant "new concepts," and its sense of history and possible futures (McLeod, p. 146).

It is this philosophy that helps shape how I begin to understand critical feminism.

Men and Feminism

It is important to examine the roles men have within the realm of critical feminism, given that teacher educators, preservice teachers, and current educators are comprised of both men and women. Harding (2004) argues that there are many possibilities in contemporary feminist thought for men to make significant contributions as well as be subjects of feminist thought. For the purposes of this discussion, it is helpful to consider the following statement as a way to think about men and their roles within critical feminism and the education community: " As some feminists of color have argued, one will want to appreciate the importance of solidarity, not unity, among groups with different but partially overlapping interests" (Harding, 2004, p.195). It is for this reason that I build off of the White reconstructionist perspective as a way to connect men and feminism.

Similar to how White reconstructionism (Leonardo, 2009) argues for recognizing one's position and privilege, and using this as a way to speak out against oppression and inequity, men, too, can serve as allies and refuse to accept and respect masculinity ideals. Harding asks, "Can not men, too, learn to listen, and go on to use what they learn critically to rethink the institutions of society, their cultures, and practices?" (p.185) Therefore, as Harding (2004) argues, we must take a moment to rethink the role of men and feminism, and see critical feminist thought and practice as creating

spaces for men to speak out against patriarchal politics and thought, their relations to dominant patriarchal discourses, and their distinctive ways of organizing the production of knowledge. Additionally, feminism must include a critical race perspective, which I will discuss at a deeper level later on in this chapter.

Defining Methodologies of Resistance

Critical feminist theory, as a framework, is comprised of methodologies of resistance that work towards the following goals: disrupting the educational canon and mainstream academic knowledge[4], questioning hegemonic understandings of oppression, as well as intimately looking at the diverse methods and forms of resistance within critical feminist theory as a way to reconsider how we might understand our roles as teachers and learners. Additionally, in order to understand critical feminism, we must pay particular attention to the many components (or methodologies of resistance) that help conceptualize it as an evolving and malleable theory and framework.

To better understand methodologies of resistance, I refer to the important works of Paulo Freire. However, in doing so, we need to move further and re-envision his call for an education for critical consciousness[5] and liberatory pedagogy. Freire defines liberatory pedagogy as: " This pedagogy (the pedagogy of the oppressed) makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation" (Freire, p.48). In other words, Freire argues that we must examine the individual and/or collective forms of oppression as the starting points (one's reality), of which we can then move forward to combat and free oneself from this oppression through critical action and intervention.

I look to Denzin and Lincoln, (2008) who argue that by re-grounding Freire's pedagogy, we must merge together the ideals of critical and indigenous scholars. This union can be thought of as a *critical indigenous pedagogy* (CIP). The particular dialogue that Denzin and Lincoln call upon incorporates specific ideologies and understandings: Inquiry is both political and moral; methods are used critically and for social justice purposes; transformative power of indigenous and subjugated

knowledges are valued; praxis and inquiry are emancipatory and empowering; western methodologies, and the modern academy must be decolonized (2008). Thus, a methodology of resistance includes, but is not limited to the aforementioned themes, while also incorporating practices and pedagogies that aid in the reconfiguration of "traditional" research and teaching practices.

These ideas are shared by Darder, (2006) who argues:

> We must stretch the boundaries of critical educational principles to infuse social and institutional contexts with its revolutionary potential. It is a moment when our emancipatory theories must be put into action, in our efforts to counter the hegemonic fear-mongering configurations of a national rhetoric that would render teachers, students, parents, and communities voiceless and devoid of social agency (p.11).

In order to sufficiently argue that methodologies of resistance are important, relevant, and vital within the context of teacher education, we must situate the themes and ideals with pre-service teachers in mind. Specifically, educators must engage with methodologies of resistance in ways that proactively move towards a critical pedagogy that disrupts the hegemonic cultural and educational practices that often permeate many teacher education programs.

As Kinchole and Steinberg (2008) argue:

> Such ways (indigenous knowledges) of knowing and acting could contribute so much to the educational experiences of all students, but because of the rules of evidence and dominant epistemologies of Western knowledge production, such understandings are deemed irrelevant by the academic gatekeepers (p.136).

Although not prescriptive in practice, one of the ideals of incorporating methodologies of resistance is that they call in to question these current structures of power and knowledges within the academy (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008).

Smith (1999) argues this point further. She states, " The form that racism takes inside a university is related to the ways in which academic knowledge is structured as well as to the organizational structures which govern a university". Privileges are protected and are already in place. Thus, Smith (1999) argues, histories must be retold, authenticated, and rewritten in order to remove the oppression of theories that continue to be perpetuated, unchallenged, and stagnant within the academy.

Similarly, Grande (2009) articulates for a space in which we may incorporate *Red Pedagogy* within our educational communities. She argues that unless we pose critical questions and engage in dangerous discourse, we will not reach a point of un-thinking one's colonial roots and rethinking democracy. Many of the characteristics of *Red Pedagogy* connect and fall inline with some of the aforementioned modes of resistance; it is fundamentally rooted in indigenous knowledge and praxis, promotes an education for decolonization, and is grounded in hope… just to name a few. Most important, Grande (2009) argues, " [*Red Pedagogy*] speaks to our collective need to decolonize, to push back against empire, and reclaim what it means to be a people of sovereign mind and body" (p.201).

Additionally, one of the ways in which methodologies of resistance can help educators and pre-service teachers think more critically and proactively about the often-times unchallenged nature of traditional Western schooling is to consider the concept of *multilogicality.* Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) define multilogicality simply as the need for humans to encounter multiple perspectives in all dimensions of their lives. This idea is central to understanding indigenous knowledges and perspectives. Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) further argue that multilogicality shapes social analysis, political perspectives, knowledge production, and action; all elements that make up methodologies of resistance. Thus, by incorporating multiple viewpoints and ways of being and seeing the world, " multilogical teachers begin to look at lessons from the perspectives of individuals from different race, class, gender, and sexual orientations. They are dedicated to search for new perspectives" (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008, p.139).

Moving further, not only is it important to consider multiple viewpoints and perspectives, but self- reflection, and the consideration of one's positionality as it relates to understanding oppression is another component to engaging with methodologies of resistance. Thus, we must

recognize our own positionalities in order to challenge the dominant paradigms of traditional educational practices, as well as the hegemonic understandings of oppression and resistance.

A final characteristic for understanding methodologies of resistance can, and should "produce spiritual, social and psychological healing" (Denzin & Lincon, p.15). The concept of healing takes on many forms, one of which results in a personal and social transformation that can lead to mobilization and collective action. This transformation results in critical pedagogies and practices that honor human difference, while giving us opportunities to come together with a shared agenda towards emancipation and liberation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). It is through these alternative ideals and practices which are incorporated within methodologies of resistance that we may envision a reworking of the university in general, and teacher education in particular.

Recognizing Critical Race Theory within Critical Feminism

As a scholar of critical race theory and education, Ladson -Billings (2009) continues her discussion regarding race and education arguing "race *still* matters". Thus, I look to the following quote by Crenshaw et.al. (1995) as a way to keep the conversation going:

> "There is no canonical set of doctrines or methodologies to which [CRT scholars] all subscribe" (p. xiii). But, CRT scholars are unified by two common interests- to understand how a "regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America" (p. xiii) and to change the bond that exists between law and racial power" (as cited within Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 114).

Therefore, although critical race theory hasn't been explicitly discussed within the aforementioned characteristics of critical feminist theory thus far, it is important to note the characteristics of CRT that are woven throughout the conceptualization and discussion of critical feminist theory. Importantly, "CRT's insistence on story-telling and counter narratives provides us with a powerful vehicle for speaking against racism and other forms of inequity"

(Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 120). CRT challenges the cultural scripts that state individualism, equal opportunity, and success are available for all Americans. Not surprisingly this cultural script conveniently omits the fact that there are structural and institutional factors that make this advancement near impossible for many people. Therefore, Ladson-Billings reminds us that, "CRT argues for the primacy of race in understanding many of the social relations that define life in the United States. CRT is a constant reminder that race still matters" (p.121).

Additionally, and as Bhandar (2000) reminds us, "Feminist interventions in critical race theory have been crucial in shaping and developing a legal discourse that recognizes the intersectionality of race, class, and gender formations" (p.109). Arguably, the political component of education cannot be understated, as we see the importance of recognizing the presence of critical race theory and critical feminism throughout the entirety of our educational discourse.

Critical Feminism as an Evolving Framework

The discussion that follows will demonstrate the many ways in which critical feminism continues to evolve and move forward as a framework for responding to the many diverse injustices and oppressions that we encounter both in and outside the field of education. In a broad sense, the central characteristics of feminism include

> The recognition that gender is a phenomenon which helps to shape our society. Feminists believe that women are located unequally in the social formation, often devalued, exploited and oppressed… Feminism is a social theory and social movement, but it is also a personal political practice. For feminist educators, feminism is a primary lens through which the world is interpreted and acted upon (Kenway & Modra, 1992, p.139).

Thus, although critical feminism includes many diverse components, the way in which it is grounded aims to offer universal principles.

For example, although critical feminist theory is malleable and multi-dimensional, there are, what appear to be, some universal components,

or "pivot points" to critical feminism that Dadds (2011) notes. Dadds supports Agger's (1997) claim that, " Feminist theory has developed in a more grounded way than Marxism because theory and lived experience are consistently respected, interacting in both dialectical and reflexive ways to provoke us to live better lives in the here and now, not postponing liberation" (Agger, 1997, p.102). Dadds (2011) argues that feminist theory is constantly interrogating an entire interconnected system, and by doing so, is aiming towards liberation, emancipation, and empowerment.

The "pivot points" that Dadds (2011) refers to help clarify some of the aforementioned themes within methodologies of resistance, and thus, critical feminist theory. In short, the pivot points include: *Reflexive historicity, lived experience and hidden structures, dialogic engagement with the margins, and embodiment and interdependence.* These pivot points "serve as key feminist contributions to critical social theory and educational scholarship. Insofar, we are engaging education with a critically social *feminist* eye" (Dadds, p. 177, 178).

Before beginning an analysis of the many contributions to critical feminist theory, it is important to consider the concept of essentializing, which Code (1991) critiques, by discussing the damage it can do in relation to feminist epistemology. In feminist thought, there is often a desire to find a common voice among women. Code argues against this practice, noting that the differences in race, class, and sexuality are neglected. Code (1991) states, "Feminists need to demonstrate the reality of social injustices and practices and to work as hard for change in larger social structures and institutions as for change in the 'personal' areas of women's lives" (p. 320). Her interpretation offers women the voice to stand together, but recognizes the need to define themselves individually.

Throughout my own understanding of critical feminism, as well as thinking about such work in the broader context of society, I believe it important to consider how our own intersecting identities are diverse, yet our goals for fighting against oppression help join us together. Thus, we can see that developing an understanding of critical feminist theory is not simplistic, prescriptive, or easily definable. However, by examining various components, movements, and the politics surrounding them, we can have a better understanding as to how critical feminism as *framework* moves to dismantle oppression in various forms and dimensions.

Additionally, it is important to note that critical feminist theory, as a framework, does not offer specific or "text-book" ways we can go about creating or transforming spaces. Rather, it calls on us to reconsider our existing understandings of knowledge, power, and spaces of empowerment. One way that critical feminist theory acknowledges the many diverse forms of resistance is by examining recent liberatory social movements that have been used as ways to leverage transformation and liberation.

Sandoval (2000) engages within this discussion by calling for a *differential consciousness*, and argues for a transformative way of reassessing our current understandings of theoretical and methodological forms of oppositional praxis. Sandoval discusses the various ways in which race, gender, and sexuality intersect, and why it is imperative that all forms of resistance within each form of oppression must be addressed if true oppositional resistance can take place.

Sandoval notes, "Hegemonic feminist scholarship was unable to identify the connections between its own understandings and translations of resistance, and the expressions of consciousness in opposition enacted among other racial, ethnic, sex, cultural, or national liberation movements" (Sandoval, p.54). Sandoval recognizes that previous forms of oppositional resistance have worked and challenged boundaries, however, she argues for a way to move forward, or expand upon the many diverse forms of opposition. In *Methodology of the Oppressed,* Sandoval considers four historically significant social movements or forms of resistance: equal-rights form, revolutionary form, supremacist form, and the separatist form, and argues for a fifth, or differential form of oppositional consciousness or resistance (Sandoval, 2000).

The historical involvement of U.S. feminists of color in regards to oppositional consciousness and resistance tended to move in and out of the four ideologies (forms) mentioned above. Sandoval points to Anzaldúa's recognition of this activity as weaving between and among oppositional ideologies[6] In other words, Sandoval explains, " I think of this activity of consciousness as the "differential," insofar as it enables movement "between and among" ideological positionings (the equal rights, revolutionary, supremacist, and separatist modes of oppositional consciousness) considered as variables, in order to disclose the distinctions among them" (Sandoval, p.57). Sandoval calls for a coming together, a commitment to reach across

disciplines and forms of resistance to better effect and engage in egalitarian social justice. Thus, we must unite in solidarity if we hope to systematically and institutionally transform how we are preparing our preservice teachers for teaching in the twenty-first century. What follows is a way in which we may consider Sandoval's call for a differential consciousness as a way to help interpret and understand the many dimensions that fall within critical feminism.

To begin, I refer back to the late 1970's, when The Combahee River Collective (1978) offered a powerful epistemological critique that discussed four major topics: "1) The genesis of contemporary black feminism; 2) what we believe, ie., the specific province of our politics; 3) the problems in organizing black feminists, including a brief history of our collective; and 4) black feminist issues and practice (Combahee River Collective, p.3)". These specific modes of resistance arouse out of the disillusionment and lack of resonance felt by many Black feminists during certain liberation movements of the 1960's and 1970's.

The Combahee River Collective needed more than the isolated modes of oppositional resistance practiced politically at the time, ie: civil rights, Black nationalism, and the Black Panthers. The belief of the Combahee Rive Collective was that "the most profound and potentially the most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end someone else's oppression" (Combahee River Collective, p.5). Thus, we see a break away from the generic understanding of traditional feminism, and instead, a move towards the reframing and reconsidering of alternative modes of oppositional resistance.

It was around the same time of The Combahee River Collective that Women of Color began fighting for equality and social justice outside the borders of "White feminism." Butler and Raynor (2007) explain "Selecting the phrase *women of color* by many women of U.S. ethnic groups of color is part of their struggle to be recognized with dignity for their humanity, racial heritage, and cultural heritage as they work within the women's movement in the United States" (p.198). Recognizing various strains of Women of Color helps individualize and understand the experiences of many groups of diverse women.

Further, Garcia (1989) notes, to define feminism for Women of Color, it is imperative to recognize the "struggle to gain equal status in the

male-dominated nationalist movement and also in American society" (p. 220). It is both a fight against sexist oppression and racist oppression. Women of Color understood the need to find a place to fight for equalities within class, race, gender, and sexuality. Acosta-Belen and Bose (2000) explain,

> Out of the subordination of Latinas and their initial exclusion from both male-dominated ethnic studies movement and white-dominated women's movement, Chicanas, puertorriquenas, and women from other disenfranchised U.S. ethnoracial minorities began to forge and articulate a feminist consciousness and collective sense of struggle based on their experiences as members of diverse individual nationalities, as well as on their collective panethnic and cross-border identities as Latinas and women of color (p.1114).

This partnership demonstrated that it was vital for coalitions to be formed to distinguish themselves from the feminist movement, however, it was just as important to keep their respective autonomous identities. Anzaldúa (1997) notes "The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our thoughts" (p. 272).

Similarly, hooks (2009) argues, "Feminism in the United States has never emerged from the women who are most victimized by sexist oppression; women who are daily beaten down, mentally, physically, and spiritually- women who are powerless to change their condition in life. They are a silent majority" (p. 31). Building off of the Combahee River Collective's discussion of the racism within the feminist movement, hooks discusses the evolution of feminism, beginning with Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique.* She uncovers the 'actual' fight Friedan waged, which was masked by a façade of camaraderie, in that Friedan seemed to argue the movement included *all* women. This example reveals the origins of the feminist movement as something that was one-dimensional, narrowly focused, and even narcissistic.

hooks argues for an emphasis on the multiple, diverse, and individual ways women experience oppression. She not only resists the

"hegemonic dominance of feminist thought by insisting that it is a theory in the making, that we must necessarily criticize, question, re-examine, and explore new possibilities" (p.39), but goes further to explain how her own role in the revolution has not been as a result of past feminist consciousness-raising. She states, "We [black women] are the group that has not been socialized to assume the role of exploiter/oppressor in that we are allowed no institutionalized "other" that we can exploit or oppress" (p. 43).

Thus, as part of a true feminist struggle, hooks insists that "Black women recognize the special vantage point (our) marginality gives (us) and make use of this perspective to criticize the dominant, racist, classist, sexist hegemony as well as to envision and create a counter-hegemony" (p. 43). hooks calls for the making of a liberatory feminist theory and praxis that undeniably depends on the unique and valuable experiences of Black women.

Collins (2000) also recognized that as a collective, Black women have been subjected to various forms of oppression: economic, political, and ideological, and argues " While common experiences may predispose Black women to develop a distinctive group consciousness, they guarantee neither that such a consciousness will develop among all women nor that it will be articulated as such by the group" (p. 24).

For another interpretation of critical feminism that further challenges hegemonic understandings of oppression, I refer to Million, (2009) who discusses the term *felt analysis.* Felt analysis is a way for Native women to discuss and examine their personal narratives that aim to speak out against the radicalized, gendered, and sexual nature of their colonization. Felt analysis creates a new language in which to discuss the "real multilayered facets of their histories and concerns by insisting on the inclusion of [our] lived experience, rich with emotional knowledge of what pain and grief and hope meant or mean now in [our] pasts and futures… the importance of felt experiences as community knowledges that interactively inform [our] positions as Native scholars…" (p.54). Million argues that not only is felt experience often ignored, but its very purpose is misconstrued and considered a subjective form of narrative, thus, it cannot be considered "Truth" or objective, "except in Western sciences' own wet dream of detached corporeality"(Million, p.73).

Million explains that through the very existence of these stories (felt analyses) we see alternative truths and alternative historical views. Million quotes Jeanette Armstrong: "We must continue the telling of what really happened until *everyone* including our own peoples understands that this condition did not happen through choice" (as cited within Million, 2009, p.64). Thus, per Million, it is imperative for the victims of history to tell their stories in order to break through the silence that has systematically distorted the real Truth, and to challenge what is recognized as a "past that stays neatly segregated from the present".

Next, I turn to Muñoz, (2009) who uses elements of queer theory[7] to disrupt or challenge heteronormativity, or "a model of intergender relations, where one thinks, sees and lives straight" (Sumara & Davis, 1999). Such a practice, by nature, demonstrates another component of critical feminist theory: reconsidering and reframing dominant understandings of concepts, methods, and theories.

Muñoz (2009) calls for a methodology of hope which he describes as " A backwards glance that enacts a future vision" (p.4). He refers to such a methodology as way to move forward with the idea that queerness it not simply a being, or a state, but rather a matter of thinking about that thing (queerness) that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing" (p.1).

In other words, Muñoz moves thought, time and space away from the here and now, and calls for a utopia, or a conceptual understanding of life as the "not-yet conscious" and a different way to consider queerness. Muñoz's queer futurity calls for an awareness of the past in order to critique the present. In doing so, Muñoz recognizes much of queer critique to be antirelational and antiutopian, thus a movement to think beyond the moment and being available to the not-yet-here.

Per Muñoz, we must reconsider prescribed time and space, and instead, be critically proactive for conceptualizing a different and better future.

Finally, I recognize the important contributions that Anzaldúa (1987 & 1997) offers to critical feminism. Anzaldúa refers to a concept termed *borderlands feminism*, where she describes a sense of feeling like she was caught between two cultures, while simultaneously feeling like an alien in both. Anzaldúa compares her experience to that of "two worlds merging to form a third country, a border culture". She describes her experience as a

cultural collision, such that she felt like she was "Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, la mestiza undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 78).

Another part of la mestiza that Anzaldúa (1987) recognizes is her lesbian identity. She weaves the phrase, "not me sold out my people, but they me," demonstrating a challenge to the vendida or "sellout" label often assigned to Chicana lesbians who are charged for melting into "White society". She states, " Being lesbian and raised Catholic, indoctrinated as straight, I made the choice to be queer. It's an interesting path, one that continually slips in and out of the white, the Catholic, the Mexican, the indigenous, the instincts. It is path of knowledge-one of knowing (and of learning) the history of oppression of our raza. It is a way of balancing, of mitigating duality" (p. 19).

As demonstrated, there are many facets to conceptualizing and understanding critical feminist theory. By recognizing the many diverse modes of oppositional resistance, and how those affected by oppression choose to respond, we see that critical feminism in constantly evolving, and truly interdisciplinary within the realm of academia. Further, in analyzing these particular feminist and queer scholars, we can see how the process of conceptualizing critical feminism aims to liberate oneself from the confines of a more prescriptive practice or mode of understanding resistance. Finally, although unique in their own theories and methodologies, what such scholars all have in common is that they offer alternative ways of looking at emancipating oneself from the institutionalization of oppression; an integral component of teaching and learning in empowering and liberating spaces. Importantly, as I look back on my relationship to critical feminist theory, and the connections I have made throughout my own teaching and learning, what CFT does best is help me better understand my students and families as individuals, as opposed to groups who may or may not share similar situations or circumstances.

Moving Forward: Contextualizing Critical Feminist Theory in Teacher Education

Much of my discussion thus far has focused on examining diverse methodologies of resistance and how they help define and better conceptualize the many components of critical feminism. In order to move forward and situate critical feminism within teacher education, it is important to refer back to critical pedagogy and critical Whiteness studies, and understand how critical feminism moves further, and actually builds off of both of their aims and goals. As Kenway and Modra (1992) state, " As critical pedagogy theorists claim that they are quintessentially engaged in democratizing the education process, (their) failure to engage with feminism casts considerable doubt on their authenticity" (p.138). Thus, in order to truly problematize and challenge the politics and intersections of race, class and gender in our classrooms and schools, it makes sense to ground ourselves within a critical feminist lens.

To situate critical feminist theory within the field of education, I look to Cannella and Manuelito's, (2008) who see feminist research, conceptualizations and practices as wide ranging, complex, and constituting the diversity of human beings. They further consider the role of feminism as a social science to increase social justice from diverse standpoints, with the goal of creating transformative solidarities that can bring about a wide range of possibilities for human beings who truly care for one another. Greene (1992) makes a similar claim:

> Most (feminists) deliberately resist temptations of harmonious agreement, although they surely come together in a concern for authentic liberatory teaching and for the rejection of patriarchy. Demonstrating at every step that there exists no "essence" of radical feminism, they are drawn to shifting viewpoints, interruptions, the idea of multiple identities. And yet, as they make clear their refusals and resistances, they identify some of the most crucial and unsettled issues confronting teachers in search of emancipatory pedagogies today (p.ix).

Similarly, Butler and Raynor (2007) discuss and look at feminist pedagogy over the past twenty years or so and argue for "reveal(ing) a call for teaching from multifocal, multidimensional, multicultural, pluralistic, interdisciplinary perspectives" (p.202). They suggest that this can be accomplished through transformation. They define transformation as the need to unify as human beings, while helping to capture and hold onto the differences. They state, "Transformation implies acknowledging and benefiting from the interaction among the sameness and diversity, groups, and individuals" (p.203). Butler and Raynor (2007) highlight the complexity of their argument through the simple words of a West African proverb, "I am we". Albeit concise, what its meaning implies is that through the lived experiences and working through the intersections of race, class, gender and ethnicity, sexuality, etc., we can truly move forward in fostering emancipatory and liberatory spaces for all who take part in the education of our children.

When thinking about critical feminism within education, Lather (1991) considers certain questions which help us reflect upon a liberatory curriculum that directly address elements of self-reflexivity[8], knowledge as power, as well as a deconstruction of what we have been deeply embedded in throughout many years of Westernized schooling. As Lather argues " Reflexive practice is privileged as the site where we can learn how to turn critical thought into emancipatory action" (Lather, p. 13).

Moving further, Lather (1991) suggests, " One cannot talk of students learning without talk of teachers teaching" (p.1). She deeply connects the link between knowledge and power, empowering pedagogy, and praxis as an interruption strategy. All of these components help support many of the characteristics and elements of critical feminist theory.

What might we gain as both teachers and learners if we considered some of the following questions when we look at our teacher education classrooms and communities? *Did I encourage ambivalence, ambiguity and multiplicity, or did I impose order and structure? Have I questioned the textual staging of knowledge in a way that keeps my own authority from being reified? Did I focus on the limits of my own conceptualizations? Who are my "Others"? What binaries structure my arguments? What hierarchies are at play?* Finally, and what Lather suggests might be the most important, D*id it (the curriculum) go beyond critique to help in producing pluralized*

and diverse spaces for the emergence of subjugated knowledges and for the organization of resistance? (Lather, 1991 p.84).

Such reflexivity mirrors what Zeichner (1992) refers to as a social reconstructionist conception of reflective teaching. Within such a practice, "Schooling and teacher education are both viewed as crucial elements in the movement toward a more just and humane society" (p. 166). This form of reflecting makes central the way teachers choose to respond and work to disrupt the status quo in schooling and society. Additionally, a social reconstructionist practice of reflecting teaching is rooted in its "democratic and emancipatory impulse and the focus of the teacher's deliberations upon substantive issues which raise instances of inequality and injustice within schooling and society" (p.166). Ultimately, and similar to a dialogical relationship, such reflecting is purposefully political in nature, communal in practice, and collaborative with its commitment to transform unjust and inhumane institutional and social structures.

Such a practice falls directly inline with a critical feminist framework. As such, Goodman (1992) contends that it is hard to imagine true reflexivity without acknowledging interpersonal relationships, the conception of knowledge, or the relationship between ones students and their learning. Thus, as Goodman notes, " Feminist pedagogy offers preservice teachers an opportunity to reflect on the way in which education is a form of cultural politics within a very direct and personally meaningful context" (p.180).

Moving further, Maher and Tetreault (1994) support the practice of reflecting by specifically examining the goals of a feminist classroom or setting. They discuss the importance of fostering a space where students can work to recreate knowledge and history for their own communities and cultures, rather than rely on andocentric bases of traditional knowledge. Maher and Tetreault (1994) explain that the feminist classroom is one where viewpoints of all groups in society and not just the most powerful are heard and delivered to the students. They state, " The meanings people create about aspects of themselves, like gender, culture identification, and class position vary widely in different classrooms. Although these meanings are in constant flux, they nevertheless reflect the unequal power relations that govern the society outside the classroom" (p.202). Thus, by framing the teaching and learning of pre-service teachers with the practice of critical

reflecting, we can begin to think about systematically changing the direction of a colonized, and one-dimensional way of engaging with ourselves as well as our students.

Finally, I look to one of the most important components of conceptualizing critical feminist theory as it relates to teacher education; the practice of engaging in honest dialogue as it relates to many of the themes discussed thus far. Although it is often difficult to immerse ourselves within such conversations, by doing so, we create spaces to theoretically or conceptually reconsider our current understandings of oppression, resistance, knowledge, and power, and what this might mean in the context of teaching and learning in the twenty-first century.

Importantly, as Berry (2010) suggests, it is imperative that the relationship between the professor/educator and the pre-service teacher shift, in that the traditional asymmetry between power and privilege transform. The professor/educator must be open to learning from their students, and their lived experiences. As Berry argues, "Students' stories, including their stories of school, are important to know in the context of their development as teachers because these stories, these experiences, may influence what they learn and how they learn it as well as what they choose to teach and how they choose to teach as emerging teachers" (p.24).

This act (engaging in thoughtful and critical conversations, as well as self-reflecting), in and of itself, will hopefully offer new ways to question the "traditional" nature of schooling, as well as to listen and learn about the many diverse sources of empowerment and resistance, in addition to the unique experiences that all students bring to the classroom. Thus, by deploying a critical feminism as a framework within teacher education, we create spaces to begin and renew vital conversations. This practice alone might not guarantee a tangible transformation to the asymmetrical relationships within the education community, but what it will do is ignite a conversation. This conversation will hopefully be the starting point for thinking about moving towards reimagining teacher education. By looking at redefining elements of teacher education through a critical feminist lens, we can guide pre-service teachers in their journey to becoming reflective and critical educators.

Notes

[1] I use Hesse-Biber, Leavy & Yaiser's (2004) definition of methodology: "Scholars create a feminist methodology by arguing against the mainstream ways research has proceeded and how theory has been applied to research questions and data. Feminists explicitly link theory with methods" (p.15).

[2] Kumashiro (2002) describes an anti-oppressive theory as a way of teaching to create a more safe, tolerant, and open-minded classroom for oppressed students.

[3] Hesse-Biber, Leavy & Yaiser (2004) define positivism as "based on deductive modes of knowledge building where objective and value-neutral researchers typically begin with a general cause and effect relationship derived from an abstract general theory" (p.5).

[4] Mainstream academic knowledge is defined by Banks (1996) "The concepts, paradigms, theories and explanations that constitute traditional and established knowledge in the behavioral and social sciences" (p. 11).

[5] Freire (1974) describes a critical consciousness as being *in* and *with* one's reality, and that "within every understanding, sooner or later an action corresponds" (p. 39).

[6] Anzaldúa (1987) compares her experience to that of "two worlds merging to form a third country, a border culture". She describes her experience as a cultural collision, such that she felt like she was "cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, la mestiza undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war" (p. 100).

[7] As described in Lorraine Code's *Encyclopedia of Feminist Theories,* queer theory is " a function of resistance not only to the heterosexist norm but also to itself as it encompasses a multitude of differing and discordant communities and political projects" (p.415). In other words, although queer theory can and often does serve as a platform of oppositional resistance regarding sexuality, it can also be considered a way to redefine the concept "queer", thus a rupture in the standard definition of queer theory.

[8] Within the context of critical feminism, I refer to the following definition of self-reflection: " Instead of using reflection as a code word for "professional thinking" it should be used as a heuristic device through which teacher educators and preservice teachers can collectively construct a comprehensive understanding of what it means to teach given our current political, social, and educational circumstances" (Goodman, 1992, p.184).

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Critical Perspectives on Child Sexual Exploitation and Related Trafficking

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Review

Melrose, M. & Pearce, J. (Ed). (2013). *Critical Perspectives on Child Sexual Exploitation and Related Trafficking.* Reino Unido: Palgrave Macmillian.

Margaret Melrose y Jenny Pearce, destacadas investigadoras de la Universidad Bedfordshire de Reino Unido, abordan en este volumen diferentes temas de interés para el ámbito de la protección de menores víctimas de trata y/o explotación sexual. Mediante las contribuciones de otras investigadoras e investigadores, compilan información basada en evidencias sobre los diferentes escenarios en los que se producen este tipo de violencias, así como las innovaciones sociales que se están desarrollando en el Reino Unido.

En el primer capítulo Margaret Melrose realiza un análisis crítico del discurso dominante sobre explotación sexual de menores que fundamenta las políticas públicas del Reino Unido. Argumenta que la expansión reciente del concepto de explotación sexual ha provocado que éste se vuelva maleable y señala que este discurso está reproduciendo estereotipos sobre la infancia y situando a las víctimas afectadas en un rol pasivo, carentes de agencia.

Jon Pitts afronta en el segundo capítulo la problemática de la explotación sexual de menores en las pandillas juveniles. Mediante estudios empíricos, subraya la necesidad de superar las definiciones comunes de explotación sexual infantil que ignoran la complejidad de las situaciones de abuso y explotación. Así, revela datos alarmantes sobre el aumento de las violaciones en grupo perpetradas en Reino Unido contra mujeres y adolescentes, que han aumentado en un 150% entre los años 2004 y 2008, disminuyendo cada vez más la edad de víctimas y perpetradores.

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Carlene Firmin, en el tercer capítulo, analiza si las conceptualizaciones actuales sobre abuso y violencia permiten identificar y responder eficazmente a las relaciones de abuso y violencia sexual que se producen en el grupo de iguales y defiende la necesidad de introducir la perspectiva de género en la definición y contextualización adecuada de este tipo de abuso.

El cuarto capítulo trata un tema fundamental para derribar falsas creencias y mitos en torno a las relaciones "consentidas" que generan una victimización secundaria por parte de instituciones y profesionales. Jenny Pearce considera cuatro tipologías explicativas para comprender cómo ese aparente consentimiento se encuentra coaccionado por diversas características y situaciones sociales límites que vulneran las capacidades y posibilidades de las personas.

Helen Beckett explora en el capítulo 5 las vulnerabilidades y deficiencias del sistema de protección de menores basándose en las conclusiones de un estudio realizado a gran escala en Irlanda del Norte, identificando, por otra parte, ejemplos de prácticas prometedoras.

En el siguiente capítulo, Isabelle Brodie, revisa estudios relacionados con la explotación sexual de menores en Escocia, analizando las diferentes políticas aplicadas para tratar el problema y si éstas se fundamentan en evidencias científicas. Más adelante, en el capítulo 9, Lucie Shuker aborda las conexiones entre los sistemas de protección y el riesgo de padecer abuso y explotación sexual. Además, expone un modelo para entender la importancia de atender tanto los aspectos físicos como psicológicos y relacionales en los procesos de recuperación de las víctimas, otorgando un papel importante a la comunidad.

Nicola Sharp resalta en el capítulo siete la importancia de incorporar una perspectiva interseccional para corregir el olvido de las mujeres y jóvenes negras y de minorías étnicas, y comprender que sus experiencias están mediatizadas por diferentes sistemas de desigualdad, con el fin de favorecer una adecuada valoración y protección de los riesgos de explotación sexual, como desapariciones, matrimonios forzados y violencia basada en el honor.

El capítulo ocho plantea un asunto relevante para la democratización de los procesos de intervención social: la necesidad de escuchar las voces de

las víctimas de abusos y promover su participación activa en la toma de decisiones que les conciernen a su protección, como una manera de realizar una atención más adecuada y de promocionar su recuperación.

Por último, el libro señala contradicciones en las políticas públicas de la Unión Europea, indicando que existe una tendencia a individualizar el problema, encubriendo así las circunstancias sociales, económicas, políticas y culturales que sustentan globalmente las situaciones de explotación sexual y desigualdad.

En definitiva *Critical perspectives on child sexual exploitation and related trafficking* es una lectura académica recomendable para profesionales de la intervención social y para personal investigador interesado en contribuir a la superación radical de un problema de enormes proporciones que vulnera gravemente los derechos humanos.

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