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RETHINKING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

Case Studies from the Western Cape, South Africa.

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ABSTRACT:

The paper uses two case studies, one from research on farms in the Western Cape, and the other from a study in a Cape Town township to illustrate the ambiguous interpretations attached to domestic violence by women. While wider historical and political and other macro structural factors influence the way in which women give meaning to violence, it is also sometimes seen as communicating moral lessons and as thus being somehow productive. While women resist and even sometimes practice violence, they also reinforce culturally informed meanings attached to it.

Keywords: violence; farms; township; domestic; gender; moral

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1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past year I have been trying to come to grips with the issue of ongoing violence, particularly in the Western Cape and in townships in Cape Town, South Africa. My concern in particular has been with domestic violence which seems to persist unabated more than a decade after the end of apartheid, the institution of a liberal constitution which emphasizes women's rights and protection, the implementation of a Domestic Violence Act and a related health protocol for the screening and management of intimate partner violence. The need to look more closely at such violence was highlighted by a study we did among women in a particular area of Cape Town in 2001. We were horrified at the high levels of violence they had experienced both inside and outside the house during the previous six months. We interviewed 120 women and nearly two out of three reported the experience of violent events -75% had experiences such as being attacked or threatened with a weapon, beaten or sexually assaulted inside their homes, while 57% had been subjected to violence in their community.¹ There seemed to be some connection between violence in the home and in the community.

To try and unravel some of the links, Bourdieu's (2004) work on gender and symbolic violence has been used extensively by researchers on gender violence. He shows through his own ethnography that (male) domination is often so deeply embedded in social practices and the unconscious that the dominated scarcely perceive it as such. Bourdieu analyses how pervasive yet largely unseen violences are exercised through everyday practices in social life where political, educational, religious and economical macro structures are based in the ideology of gender differences. He argues that we can only come to grips with gender violence by, for example understanding the processes by which difference between males and females came to be seen as natural. In such a way symbolic violence, and by extension physical violence against women, becomes accepted as part of the 'normal' way that things are.

In a somewhat similar vein, South African anthropological literature on gender violence often analyses it in relation to masculine and feminine discourses and practices with men perceived as active and potentially oppressive, aggressive, violent and unable to control their sexual urges. Women are assumed to be more passive and oppressed, less

sexual and unable to safely negotiate their own sexuality (Cock 2001; Schlyter and Mapetla 1998; Morrell 2001; Shefer and Foster 2001; Wood et al 1998). Currently more attention is also given to other gendered discourses - empowerment of women, the 'protection' rather than violent domination of women etcetera.

A great deal of current research on violence also links to the work of Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004:1) who argue that any kind of violence, including that within families and intimate relationships can be linked to larger socio-economic and political exclusions. Unlike Bourdieu's work, the authors see violent behaviour as often being the only recourse in the face of oppression (Ibid: 3). Violence is then viewed as a kind of 'weapons of the weak' (van Dongen 2003).

The influence of macro economic, political and historical processes as contributing to violence is particularly salient in South Africa, where the notion of a 'culture' of violence looms large. In the past, certain groups of people, for example Zulu speakers and 'Coloureds'ⁱⁱ, have been seen as particularly prone to violence. It is viewed as a form of social pathology, resulting from a colonial and apartheid history of state violence, social and racial inequality, the militarisation of men, the legacy of poverty and marginalisation (See Borman et al 1998; Cock 2001). In the case of, for example the Western Cape, and in particular the greater Cape Town Metropolitan area, there is a perception that entire neighbourhoods have become steeped in chronic levels of violence. Black feminists particularly emphasize the necessity of taking cognisance of the specific histories of different black communities, of racism and colonization (West 2002). Recurring violence in South African communities is then usually viewed as a kind of dysfunctional response to an extended period of oppression under apartheid and to the political struggle (Robertson, 1998; Goldblatt & Meintjes 1997; Meintjes 1998). A number of South African publications have extended this focus to gender violence and the violence inflicted on each other by family members in relation to macro structural influences (Salo 2000; Campbell 1996; Henderson 1994; Glanz & Spiegel 1996).

Yet violated women I have worked with over the past 8 years do not always attach these meanings to the violence committed against and by them. Rather than presenting themselves as having been victimized, they sometimes represent violence as communicating something painful but meaningful, even productive. Women told about

beating their children and about being assaulted themselves in ways which indicated that severe corporal punishment or violence was sometimes viewed as not only destructive, but also as transformative - harsh, yet also indicative of real care. I have been vexed with the question of how to make sense of, for example a farm woman who had been stabbed by her husband and saw the assault also as an expression of love. Similarly a woman living in a township was so badly assaulted with an iron bar that she had to spend two weeks in hospital. She nevertheless insisted on returning to her violator because she loved him, his beating had meaning for her.

In narratives about their own assaults and also the physical punishment they, their partners or senior family members sometimes inflicted on their children, and each other, the women I refer to in this paper all emphasized stoicism and its necessity to deal with the harshness of life with dignity and sufferance. Although fear and economic dependence played a role, these women had survived on their own in the past. Some of them controlled the household finances and had a relatively high status within it. They were at times also perpetrators of violence themselves - they sometimes beat their children or assaulted their partners. A pilot study done in relation to emergency care provision for survivors of domestic violence at Tygerberg hospital indicated a similar complex trend. The project recruited 62 subjects who had been admitted for emergency care after suffering domestic violence over a 12-week period. Of these 26 were male survivors, 15 of whom had been so badly injured by a female intimate partner that they had to seek health care (Joyner et al 2004). Something more than just the impact of dominant and unequal gender ideology and an oppressive history seemed to be at play.

In this tentative paper I will try to highlight some of the more invisible and deceptive aspects of domestic violence by using narrative examples and two case studies - one of women of fruit and wine farms, and one of working class women in a township in the Western Cape. In case study 1 refer to women on farms and try to show the very intricate interweaving of historical and current notions and practices of violence impact on women, the meaning they attach to it, and how they comment on it. Case study 2 focuses on women in an urban area, namely Lavender Hill. I once more show how abused women frequently subscribe to and reinforce culturally informed meanings attached to violence.

2. CASE ONE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON FARMS

2.1 Paternalism

Fruit and wine farms in the Western Cape are often analysed with reference to the historical and still extant relationship of paternalism between farm owner (s) and workers (Ewert and Hamman 1999). It broadly involves the many ways in which employers and employees on farms are viewed as belonging to one 'family' (du Toit, 1992; Murray, 1993). The origins of paternalism lay in colonialism and the practice of slavery in the Western Cape (Scully, 1989). Currently paternalism still largely involves an implied moral contract largely supported both by workers and farmer owner(s) (du Toit, 1992:325; du Toit and Robins, 1995:12, 12; Gibson 1996). Paternalism constructs the farmer, his family and the workers and their families as a community of interest, closely linked by economic interdependence and shared interests in the welfare of the farm (Gibson, 1996). The majority of permanently employed workers live on the farm - many of them for two or more generations.

2.2 The complexity of violence

The many complex factors that intersect in the particular and contextual meanings people attach to domestic violence was starkly demonstrated one Sunday afternoon when I was doing research there. Two of the farm workers, Jamie Galant and his half-brother, Koos, had been drinking and playing dominoes together. Koos accused Jamie of cheating and a fight broke out, during which they stabbed each other. Jamie was badly hurt and when their wives tried to intervene, they were subsequently beaten and cut as well.

Both the Galant brothers enjoyed positions of relative authority on one of the farms. Koos' wife, Kitty, was a strong, forceful woman. Yet she also received a black eye and less visible bruises. Netta Galant, Jamie's wife, had a bruised face and a cut in her arm. The interpretations subsequently attached to this incident of violence related to the particularity of paternalistic relations on the farms and the meanings attached to intoxication, as well as to violence as a way to strengthen a person and to communicate something to others - including disciplining care and concern for him or her.

In the first instance, the brawl acquired meaning at the level of farm relations itself. The incident and its physical outcome had suddenly put everything the two families had built up on the farm in jeopardy. According to their labour contract, assaulting another worker was a very serious offence for which an employee could be dismissed. If the two men were sacked, chances were good that their families might also have to leave the farm and move elsewhere.

Women (and men) were nevertheless sometimes badly injured over weekends and would stay away from work for days afterwards. It was important to keep violent incidents from being reported to the owner. In the case of the Galants, Jamie stayed in hospital for two months and eventually lost the use of his eye. Yet none of the Galants ever registered a complaint and the incident, though apparently known by everyone, was never publicly discussed. The farm owner, well aware of what had happened, nevertheless accepted the Galant's version of it being an accident. In this way disciplinary proceedings were avoided.

This complex ways in which violence was handled on farms was further highlighted by the narrative of Driena Barends, a woman on another farm, who had been caught up in an abusive relationship when she became pregnant by her ex-lover and had to take unpaid maternity leave:

When he was drunk he used to beat me terribly. He stabbed me twice, once I ended in hospital. It was only the next day when I did not arrive for work that Miss (the farmer's wife) sent Anna to ask. I went to hospital. .. We never talked about it...

By insisting that workers only come to their homes in case of a 'real' emergency, i.e. not one brought about by fighting or domestic violence, the farmers could pretend not to know about it. While the farm owner would normally take employees to the hospital, the Galant family called and paid for an ambulance to transport Jamie. Because the Galant family, including the two women, never 'officially' discussed the event with the farm owner or his wife, all pretended that the violence had never happened and that Jamie had had an inexplicable accident. Thus the normality of farm life was maintained.

At the same time the assaults by Driena's partner and of the Galant brothers happened while they were under the influence of alcohol. Koos and Jamie's mother, as

well as Netta, subsequently told me that the two men had been “*besete met die drank, as daai duiwel eers in jou is, is jy nie 'n mensie, jy doen vieslike dinge*” (possessed with/by alcohol, that devil, once its in you, you are not human, you do terrible things). Inebriation was often likened to a form of possession. While drunken people would sometimes be ridiculed, they were also allowed to behave in ways, or to say things that were not acceptable under normal circumstances. Drunken people could attack others, but sober people rarely assaulted drunks - except when the latter were themselves being violent. They had the devil in them and were not really responsible for their actions. Retaliating against a violent drunk was nevertheless acceptable - it taught them a lesson they would only really understand once they were sober again.

I thought at the time that Sara Galant, the mother of Koos and Jamie, would hold her oldest son responsible for blinding his brother. As seen above, she stressed the fact that both men had been drunk at the time, they had been “*nie mensie*” (not human, like an animal, not culpable). She also added that Koos was the oldest and that Jamie “*moet ma leer, hy se bene moet ma sterk wees, wie wiet wa gebeur as hy da byte is?*” (he has to learn, his legs/bones must be strong, who knows what happens when he is outside). Here she seemed to attach a moral meaning to the violence and the subsequent suffering Jamie experienced. He had to learn, through the violence inflicted on his body, to be strong. This strength was necessary for when he worked on the farm, but especially for the world outside it where nobody could anticipate what might happen if he was caught cheating.

Koos' wife, Kitty Galant, initially seemed to revolt against the lack of importance attached to the violence perpetrated on her and her sister-in-law. Koos Galant had beaten both Netta Galant and herself. Netta's knife wound was also the result of Koos' actions. Kitty took her young daughter and left the farm the day after the stabbing. She moved to another farm, about ten kilometres away, where she started to work and lived with her cousin. Kitty was adamant that she would not return. About four months later, Koos went to fetch Kitty home, after he had heard from friends and family that she was pregnant. The farm manager's wife subsequently told me with obvious satisfaction that Koos had done the “right thing, a woman's place is with her husband”, while Kitty herself simply said: “He is my husband, we are all stronger now”. Other women applauded Kitty's decision to return. She had suffered and, without breaking the conspiracy of silence

surrounding the blinding of Jamie, had nevertheless made clear that she attached a negative meaning to Koos' violence against her by leaving the farm. Yet, knowing that she was to become a mother once more, she was also willing to behave like a strong and loyal woman who puts the interest of her family above her own. As indicated above, the fact that her husband had to fetch her back was clearly interpreted by others on the farm as an expression of her disgust; she was understood to be giving a moral commentary on the domestic violence perpetrated on her. Yet, she took Koos' drunkenness at the time into consideration as well. Even while he had been 'possessed', he had also physically asserted his maleness and his right to discipline members of his family - he had chastised Jamie and also the women when they tried to intervene. By doing so he had hardened and strengthened them all. At the same time Kitty had, through her actions, commented on the gendered dimension of his violence and had publicly chastened him by leaving. The violence and the ways in which these people responded to it was informed and understood in relation to local cultural, social and moral perceptions and relations (Das et al 1997). These, in turn were deeply embedded in Christian notions of morality and of the responsibility of marriage partners and parents to exercise harsh discipline for the good of loved ones. To 'spare' a loved one such treatment was akin to negating them, softening them and making them incapable of functioning in the family and in the community outside.

2.3 Resistance

Yet all domestic violence was not accepted at all times. Given the gendered biases and constraints of South African society in general and farm life in particular, women on farms developed their own ways of dealing with and attaching meaning to violence (see van Dongen 2003). They responded in many ways; they endured, briefly resisted or tried to put themselves and their children out of harms way. From time to time women retaliated or instigated violence themselves. Well knowing that she would be 'punished' again afterwards, Driena Barends said:

Sometimes ... when he was really drunk, I would hit him. With the pan, or a piece of wood, once I broke a jug on his head. But when he was sober again, he would know and I knew he would repay me.

Like her partner, Driena could also become possessed by drink and subsequently behave violently. At the same time she used her partner's own drunkenness to "teach him a lesson", even when she knew he would "repay" her later. Through her actions Driena felt that she maintained a kind of equality between her partner and herself.

Rather than allowing her husband's drinking to escalate into a situation of physical threat, another farm woman said that she took her children and went to spend the night with other family members when her husband became violent. Kariena Vasvat, in turn, rather acted pre-emptively when her husband got drunk. She was adamant that she:

will not allow a man to lay a hand on me. If I see he becomes like that (threatening/abusive) I trick him into the room and I lock the door. He shouts and screams and swears and threatens to kill me, but I take my child and leave him like that until he is sober again.

In the case of Driena Barends mentioned above, the cycle of violence was finally broken by her own actions as well as by the involvement of another woman, the farmer's wife. According to Driena Barends (Gibson, 1996:17):

I was cooking outside on the fire that night. There had been a power failure. I had something to drink. That evening he came home and shouted ... He started to chase me, but I hid in somebody's house. Later when I thought that he had gone I returned to the fire. And suddenly he was there, he had a knife. He kicked the food from the fire. I could not even save it, the cats just came out of the dark and grabbed the meat and ran away. Then I got angry. I thought, stab me tonight and I will kill you. I threw the boiling water over him, I grabbed it from the fire and threw it at him. He was stinking drunk and I was going to teach him a lesson. After that the boss said that he must leave. They (the farmer and his wife) said I must decide whether I wanted to go with him. If I wanted to stay, I could get the house. I did not go with him.

The farmer's wife was the driving force behind the farmer's decision to dismiss and evict Driena Barend's lover (see also van Dongen 2003). He had been drunk, had had previous warnings about drunkenness at work and his own violence had ultimately led to his being injured and unable to work. Domestic violence had spilled over into the workplace and the conspiracy of ignorance could not be upheld anymore. Driena

Barend's lover was dismissed. By appealing to the underlying notion of family and by especially petitioning the farmer's wife concerning the negative impact which an eviction would have on her children, Driena Barends was able to retain the house. The fact that she did the domestic work in the farmer's house had made her an even closer member of the farm family, an aspect which she successfully used to her advantage. Like Kitty Galant, Driena was applauded by other women. She had accepted the violence against her to protect her family and to prove her loyalty, when she felt her 'disciplining' had been "asked for", she was stoic and accepting, but she also retaliated at times. She felt she had to teach her partner a lesson once he threatened the sustenance of the family. The cats running off with the food she had prepared for them was the final straw - he had to be punished and the relationship had to be finally ended.

. Such often contrary meanings given to violence by women were also evident in the township in Cape Town where we worked. Unlike on the farms, where men were largely the breadwinners, in the township men were often financially dependent on women, and this situation was seen as going against the nature of men. These women were more exposed to public discourses about domestic violence as being the legacy of unemployment and apartheid. Even so, they gave meaning to it in ways which were very similar to those raised by the farm women.

3. CASE TWO: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE URBAN AREA OF LAVENDER HILL

3.1 Current discussions

As I indicated at the beginning, domestic violence and the battering of women in South Africa is usually contextualised against the legacy of an oppressive patriarchal and apartheid system and the ensuing inequality and normalization of violence outside and within family relations, especially since Black women had the least power and were the most oppressed and exploited (see Hampton et al 1993). It is widely assumed that institutionalised violence led to many men experiencing a sense of powerlessness and perceived emasculation (Fedler and Tanzer 2000; Vetten 2000). Using Connel's (1995) framework Jensen (2001) tried to disentangle the marginal masculinities on the Cape

Flats and argued that it was almost always intertwined with subordination and domination, race, class, gender and notions of violence and danger.

In this part of the paper I attend to the experiences of women living under circumstances where violence is often only one part of the many hardships of ordinary life. I was part of an ongoing study in Lavender Hill and the adjacent Vrygrond in Cape Town. Lavender Hill was established as a township for 'Coloureds' under apartheid as part of the scheme to forcibly remove certain population groups from the centre of the city to outlying areas. The community of Lavender Hill has a history of resistance to apartheid and of finding ways to avoiding State and other forms of control through subversive practices such as '*smokkelhuise*' (literally "smuggling" houses) and making 'illegal' claims on State subsidies. Thus people in these economically depressed areas could appropriate, however momentarily, aspects of power that lightened their conditions of life (see Jensen 2001: De Certeau 1984).

Historically, coloured women have been able to access State grants and -housing and, however inadequate this may have been and still is, it has given them some independence from working-class men while also forcing the women into more masculine roles. Such women have nevertheless remained dependent on the 'masculine' State. In this respect Salo (2000:4) argued that the contestation between the institutionalised masculinities proscribed by the dominant State and the subordinate masculinities of gangs and working-class husbands was physically articulated on (the bodies of) coloured working class women. The conflict concerned the control of State institutions over coloured women and its intervention in the private household sphere, a sphere that previously used to be the domain of working- class males. As a result of their reliance on State assistance, women could to some extent financially support unemployed men and youths through their access to welfare grants and housing. They were nevertheless also perceived as unwilling and disloyal allies in the struggle against impoverishment. While these women could escape poverty by marrying more affluent partners, men mostly did not (and still do not) have this option. Through gendered violence, males can assert control over women and resist the purchase of the dominant masculinity on women (Salo 2000:4).

3.2 The complexity of interpersonal violence

Many women in our study sustained physical injuries when they were assaulted at home. As on the farms, a strong link between alcohol and substance abuse and physical violence was reported. Interviews indicated that domestic life was often violent, even though the dynamics of violence and the response to it varied a great deal. Relationships between children, and between parents and children, frequently reflected the use of violent language or threats of violence, as well as physical aggression. It was not only males who beat up their partners and/or children. Some of the women reported that they retaliated against their partners and at times instigated fights. According to one participant, Mrs E, her partner became drunk over weekends and often accused her of having sex with her own son. Sometimes she herself would get intoxicated and as she put it:

When the alcohol begins to talk, all hell breaks loose, then I really tell him off, I even hit him (*bliksem hom*).

As on the farms, drinking alcohol was akin to becoming possessed - in the case of Mrs E, the alcohol 'speaks' and she can say or do things for which she would not really be held responsible later. At another time she hit her partner over the head with a plate, apparently expecting him to retaliate at some stage. As with Driena Barends, her violence communicated something - her anger - it also seemed to level the unequal relations between them somewhat:

I know he will get back at me (hit back) but then it (anger) is out.

Another participant, Mrs D said:

Now I cannot give in, if I do he can kill me. The thing is I am not really violent... hit the children and swear but only when they behave like *skollies* (*gangsters*). But things come ..., violence comes to you, you take it or you fight back. When he attacks me, I fight back, he is strong, but I scream and hit as well with anything I find. I know he drinks on weekends and that is when I get hit... You must stand fast. You get beaten, but if you do not stand fast you might be dead (Cheryl Salmon) (see also Jensen 2001:299) .

In the above narrative the violence was productive if it prevented the children from behaving like gangsters. A Christian imperative of exercising discipline over the morality of family members was most often used by the women to give meaning to their own violence and the assaults against them by partners or family. At the same time violence could somehow be anticipated and the fear of it controlled by the knowledge not only of its imminence, but also of how to behave once it happens - taking it, standing fast and fighting back. The ambiguous nature of domestic violence was stressed by the fact that a number of women reported that they sometimes beat their children. One woman said that when she found out her son had stolen from a local gang member, she had beaten this adolescent boy so severely that he lost consciousness. She stressed that she herself had to be strong to do so, she also intimated that if she had not beaten her son so harshly the gang members might have killed him for his impunity. Beating him signalled her adherence to local notions of gang morality, it affirmed her authority over her son and her will to discipline him for his own protection (see Salo 2002). He had to learn that he could steal, but not from gang members who might kill him.

Conversely at least one woman had sought an interdict against an adult son who had repeatedly assaulted her. Others reported that adolescent and adult sons had threatened them. Being male was often viewed as being in itself an indicator for violence. Men simply could not control themselves. At the same time maleness was also dangerous - men were expected to either endure or mete out violence. While certain violence perpetrated against men could be read as messages about being a man, the same could be said of violence against women and the meanings they attached to it.

3.3. Women's role, women's lot

When he beats me I just say to myself, its fine, its okay....tomorrow is another day. I know he hits me because he loves me and I say nothing because people will think badly of us ... Life is hard, we must be hard (Mrs Y).

It is a woman's lot to be beaten, she must stay by her husband and he must discipline her. He is the head (of the house). It is a woman's lot (Mrs X).

As seen above, the responses of the women to violence were often ambivalent. Some viewed physical violence as the action of men when their partners did not fulfil what they

saw as their gendered duties (see also Damon 2002). Often the women themselves seemed to subscribe to fairly stereotyped gender roles. They indicated that they expected males to be aggressive when they themselves transgressed expectations of themselves as caregivers. As Mrs F reported:

He broke my jaw, because I did not have his food on the table on time. He told me that if I did not listen, then I have to feel. He then beat me. He told me that when he arrives at home, his food should be waiting on the table for him ready to eat.

Yet once more, violence was understood to communicate a stern but possibly productive message. When I asked a respondent about the beating she had given a young son, she said : *Ek slat die vesta in hom in, hy soekit. Ek slat hom dat hy wiet* (I beat the understanding into him, he seeks it. I beat him so he knows). In response to a question about the violence against herself, she said that her partner “*het die liefde so in my ingeslaan*” (has beaten the love into me). Beating was thus understood as physically pounding the message of belonging, disciplinary concern and even love into a family member. This was not seen as similar to the ‘neutral’ violence perpetrated by strangers - it had to be understood in the context of family relations and the responsibility to harden and strengthen members and oneself. This issue was also the most problematic for us. Many of the women were ambivalent about the violence they experienced. One older woman said her husband had not beaten her for some time. She seemed genuinely concerned, reasoning that:

He does not love me anymore, he probably has another woman.

This tendency to relate love to discipline, even when violent, is supported by research done elsewhere (Maforah et al 1999). For these women the injuries they sustained or inflicted were understood as physical manifestations of her own or a man’s disciplinary concern on her body. As one participant said:

My boyfriend hit me because he was afraid that some other guy would take me away from him. My friend told me that he hit me because he loved me. My blue eye and split lip is a sign of his love for me.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I have tried to grapple with structural issues which seem to inform women's understanding of violence against them. While the violent relationships in which the women found themselves could be seen as the result of the discourses and practices of the state and dominating institutions, and as Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois point out (2004), the women themselves were sometimes doomed to repeat it, they also interpreted the violence as simultaneously "saying something" about belonging and even concern within their specific context. Through violence the interconnectedness between family members and between families and the wider community was maintained, patrolled and 'rectified'. Through their own violent actions the shortcomings or negative behaviour of family members could be recognized and even addressed without necessarily affecting wider relationships, which were more impersonal, volatile and difficult to control.

The meaning attached to domestic violence was closely linked to local notions of morality and it was not understood as destructive at all times. It was sometimes expected and accepted as 'inflicting' valuable lessons and of 'hardening' the recipient to the vagaries and sufferings of life. The ability to bear with it, but also to make it known and to 'comment' on it in culturally acceptable ways was recognized by others. Women dealt with violence in different ways - they fled, locked up their partners and retaliated. The latter was often presented as a way to 'even out' the unequal relationship between men and women, even when the message or challenge was only understood later, once the recipient was sober. Ultimately the infliction of violence was understood to increase the ability of the abused to survive, even while harming them.

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ⁱ A purposive sample of 90 women who had been assaulted at home and a random sample of 40 women who attended a community festival were interviewed. The results concerning the experience of violence in the community were as follows:

Attacked with a weapon: 19% purposive sample (17/90); 5% (2/40) random sample;
Threatened with a weapon: 19% (17/90) purposive sample; 9% (7/40) random sample;
Beaten: 16% purposive sample (14/90); 7% (3/40) random sample;
Sexually assaulted: 18% purposive sample (16/90); 9% (4/40) random sample

Incidences of violence at home were as follows:

Attacked with a weapon: 30% (27/90) of the purposive sample and 21% (8/40) of the random sample reported being attacked with a weapon.
Threatened with a weapon: 39% (35/90) of the participants in the purposive sample and 26% of the random sample (10/40) had been threatened with a weapon.
The majority of the participants were attacked with a weapon by a lover or husband. A few mentioned another family member or acquaintance. Of the women who had been physically attacked (with/ without weapon) about one in three was absent from work as a result.
The prevalence of beatings reported was extremely high in the purposive sample where 76% (68/90) of the participants reported this form of abuse.
In the case of the random sample 33% (13/40) of the participants reported physical abuse in the previous 12 months.
All the physical assaults reported by women had been carried out by a husband or lover.
Those women who reported being physically beaten, had been assaulted an average of 5 times over the previous 12 months.
In the purposive sample 49% (44/90) of the women had been kicked out of their homes by their partners in the previous 12 months.
An average of 6 days was lost from work as a result of physical abuse in the purposive sample.
Of the women who had been physically assaulted more than half had to seek medical treatment.
Sexual assault: 8% (7/90) of the purposive sample reported and 5% (2/40) of the random sample reported sexual assault. This might be misleading because most of the women did not define forced sexual activity within a relationship or marriage, as assault.

ⁱⁱ The category used for people of mixed origin under old racial classification and now in terms of designated groups for affirmative action.