

Racism, Class and Masculinity: The Global Dimensions of Gender-Based Violence

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 2001 Panel Sponsored by INSTRAW & UNICEF

Friday, 9 March, 11am - 1pm
UN Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium

INSTRAW and **UNICEF** hosted a panel to discuss the interface between racism, class and men's violence against women. The panelists addressed issues such as how structural pressures and cultural norms affect men's socialization into violence, how these pressures and norms vary across groups, time and place, and what recommendations are there for combating these processes.

Opening Statement

Eleni Stamiris, Director-INSTRAW

Film Screening

"I Am A Man: Black Masculinity in America" by **Byron Hurt** [www.bhurt.com/]

Panelists

- **Ruth Hayward**: Senior Advisor, Ending Violence Against Women and Girls - UNICEF.
 - **Matthew Gutmann**: Stanley J. Bernstein Assistant Professor of the Social Sciences International Affairs at Brown University.
 - **Alan Greig**: Author, activist and independent consultant working on issues of men, masculinity and gender equality.
 - **Diana Wyatt**: Chair of the Trinidad Tobago Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
-

Background of Speakers

Byron Hurt

Byron Hurt is the former quarterback of the Northeastern University football team and is the producer of the award-winning documentary film, *I Am A Man: Black Masculinity in America*. *I Am A Man* features the voices of black men from various socio-economic backgrounds, along with interviews with some of Black America's most celebrated progressive academics, social

critics and authors. The result is an engaging, candid dialogue on black masculine identity in contemporary U.S. society.

Ruth Hayward

Ruth Hayward is the Senior Adviser, Ending violence against women and girls, at UNICEF and the author of the recent book *Breaking the Earthenware Jar - Lessons from South Asia to End Violence against Women and Girls*. She will discuss her experience in bringing men together who have worked towards ending male violence in the South Asia region, where she served some 5 years as UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for South Asia. She has over 30 years of related experience in activism, academics and the UN system.

Matthew Gutmann

Anthropologist and author of numerous publications on identity and masculinities in Latin America, including the widely acclaimed *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City* [<http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/66688.html>] and also a publication on working with incorporating men into gender and development *Mainstreaming Men Into Gender and Development: Debates, Reflections, Experiences* (Oxfam, 2000) [<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/publish/gender.htm>]. Mr. Gutmann discusses the part played by culture in gender based violence in Latin America, as well as points out how this type of violence includes both violence by men against women and against other men.

Alan Greig

Mr. Greig is an independent consultant, working at the intersections of HIV prevention, harm reduction and gender equality. For the past 10 years, Alan has worked with non governmental and community-based organizations in countries of the economic North and South to locate HIV prevention and harm reduction programs within a broader agenda of social justice. As a white, straight, northern European middle class male, Alan is confronted with the tensions between privilege and justice, identity and community, and the margin and the center. He draws inspiration from the writings of Gilles Deleuze, Gayatri Spivak and Adam Phillips, and from the struggle against all those who seek "to again take the world from us."

Diana Mahabir Wyatt

Has spent 25 years working in the field of domestic violence through counseling, supporting victims, providing shelter and advocacy. Furthermore she worked for 11 years in the Trinidadian senate making laws to protect women and children and to counter-act institutional social violence in other ways. Diana Mahabir Wyatt is currently the chair of the Trinidad Tobago Coalition Against Domestic Violence where she works closely with the Police Service in providing training for the community police in handling domestic violence and sexual abuse issues.

Racism, Class and Masculinity: The global dimensions of gender-based violence - An Introductory Statement

by James Lang
Research Coordinator, INSTRAW

When we imagine what a better world would look like, we envision a place that does not include poverty, a place where the concepts of inequality and oppression do not exist. In such a world, constructs such as race, class and gender would certainly not be used as modifiers of inequality, in fact, in such an ideal world these constructs would be devoid of their political meaning altogether. These constructs - race, class, gender - would not be used to create and perpetuate inequality, and would hardly be recognized by many.

On the surface, ironically, the scourge of men's violence towards women does not recognize race, or class and very often this violence is not discussed in terms of gender. As we see, gender-based plagues every society in every region of the world. No one group, no matter their culture, class, religion or location, is immune to the devastation of this violence. We are talking about a war that knows no boundaries, an onslaught on human development and peace. Gender-based violence destroys the fundamental human rights of adults and children alike. It is a major contributor to the blight of human poverty worldwide and restricts the global achievement of peace, freedom, and prosperity.

In a more abstract sense, gender-based violence is violence that attempts to establish or enforce gender hierarchies and perpetuate gender inequalities. But the bottom line is that gender-based violence is predominately men's violence towards women and children. We acknowledge that the term "men" does not describe a monolithic group that is solely to blame for violence. Nor is it men's nature (the natural aggression of men) or men's nurture (their culture or socialization) that are alone sufficient explanations of for violence. We want to be explicit about the role of men - men as perpetrators of violence and men as potential change agents. By discussing men's violence, we will to look at the possible reasons behind it, how these reasons may vary across different contexts, and how men's violence towards women may be connected to other systems of violence and power.

The panel aims to discuss the interface between racism, class and men's violence against women. We are holding this panel and follow up on-line discussion and look forward to learning from rich discussions that place men's violence into different cultural and historical contexts and examines it vis a vis different concepts of masculinity and other discourses of power.

Racism, Class and Masculinity: The global dimensions of gender-based violence

Abstract: Toward a Politics of Masculinity

by Alan Greig

Our understanding of the connections between gender and violence begins with the reality of men's pervasive violence against women. Male/female maps easily on to perpetrator/victim. Across history, geography and culture, men do the fighting and women are often its target. A recent UNDP paper on sexual violence estimates that between one-in-six and one-in-two of all women in the world have been assaulted by an intimate partner, who in nearly all cases is male.

The opening up to public scrutiny of men's 'private' violence against women is significant. Progress has also been made in understanding the gendered nature of events of 'public' violence - for example, the use of rape as a weapon of war. But discussions of gender-based violence must also consider the ways in which the very understanding of violence is shaped by gender. UK research with male perpetrators and female victims found that the men described their violence in terms of specific acts (of physical or verbal abuse), while the women experienced violence as a continuing condition of their relationship.

Depending on one's position in the gender order, violence may be defined as act or condition. Without undermining the brute reality of physical assault, it is useful to look at the violence that is based in the unequal social relation of gender. This opens up enquiry into the structural aspects of gender-based violence, as they are expressed by the range of social, cultural, economic, legal and political institutions that sustain gender inequality. It also allows for discussion of intra as well as inter-gender violence (e.g. homophobia, assaults on gay men), as it is used to 'police' gender boundaries and hierarchies.

These structural perspectives on gender-based violence are useful to keep in mind when considering the current discourses of "masculinity" being offered to explain gender-based violence. They are useful because such discourses tend to be individualist in focus and psychological/cultural in tone. Their organizing questions are "why men?" and "which men?" and their common premise is that men are made and not merely born. This is the defining trope of gender itself, but in the case of women it was distinctly materialist in its analysis of patriarchy, the operation of sexism and its ideology of misogyny.

Words such as these are less common in masculinity discourses about men and violence. Instead, they focus on men's socialization into a set of gender roles and stereotypes that produce violence in men, either as an expression of 'machismo' or as a reaction to a 'crisis of masculinity' induced by an inability to perform their normative function (e.g. being the family breadwinner). Accounts of socialization range in their sophistication, and draw variously on psychodynamic, cognitive/behavioural, and social learning theories to explain men's relations with and violence toward women. But, in general, they share the same picture of society acting on men to make 'man' and they share the same question: "What does it mean to be a man?"

This discourse of masculinity has helped both to bring men into gender and to create a space for men (and women) to think about the processes and costs of male socialization. In so doing, it has

helped to move discussion beyond a simple blaming of men to the point where more interesting questions of responsibility and complicity can be asked, of both men and women. By registering men as gendered subjects, it has also encouraged gender perspectives on a range of development issues such as economic and political transition, governance and state formation, as well as post-conflict reconstruction.

In offering such perspectives, however, masculinity has also served to obscure others. Characterizing the rise of religious fundamentalism or the effects of neo-colonial economic periphery-center relations as 'crises in masculinity' may illuminate their connections with gender-based violence but cannot explain such complex phenomena. Racism, economic disempowerment, political disenfranchisement, geo-political relations, colonial histories, ecological trends and movements of trans-national capital are also important, and cannot simply be subsumed in an explanatory framework concerned with "what it means to be a man". Sociological accounts that explore plural masculinities and relations between men in hegemonic and subaltern positions do not help either, when the multiple factors that determine men's experience of these relations (notably race and class) are discussed in terms of gender identity.

The problem lies partly in reifying masculinity as belonging to men, a culturally-produced gender identity that leads men to be violent. The result is a focus on trying to 'fix' men's gender identity, to re-produce a new masculinity for men that is non-violent, yet still authentic (men still have to be real men). In turn, this leads to an emphasis on providing new role models, bringing boys up differently and re-socializing men. These are laudable initiatives but they are often curiously divorced from basic questions about the distribution, expression and effects of power. Socialization not only brings men into gender, but also enters them into multiple and interacting sets of unequal social relations, structured by class and status, race and ethnicity, sexuality and gender. The dynamics of men's positioning within these relations raises questions about privilege and powerlessness, and their impacts on men's responsibility and vulnerability, that cannot be adequately explored within the static framework of masculinity-as-identity.

The links between men, gender and violence are better approached through a 'politics of masculinity'. This is concerned not with the production of men, but with the production of social meaning and the use made of masculinity, and its binary logic, in policing difference and producing hierarchy. A politics of masculinity is interested in the negotiation not definition of identity, in the process of identification by which 'self' is defined in relation to 'Other'. Gender-based violence is a part of this violence of identification and the structures of inequality it creates, linked to misogyny, homophobia, racism and class-based exploitation. A political discourse of masculinity asks questions about men's relationship to these structures and their violence, as both beneficiaries of the 'patriarchal dividend' and sufferers of other forms of oppression, based on class, race and sexuality. It directs attention toward programs and policies that focus on social justice and not just gender identity, that work with institutional accountability as well as individual responsibility, and that offer men ways of changing not only themselves but also their communities and societies.

Racism, Class and Masculinity: Gender-Based Violence in Latin America

by Matthew C. Gutmann

Assistant Professor of Anthropology and presently the Stanley J. Bernstein Assistant Professor of the Social Sciences International Affairs at Brown University

Department of Anthropology,
Brown University,
Box 1921,
Providence, Rhode Island 02912
401-863-7732 (tel)
401-863-7588 (fax)
Matthew_Gutmann@brown.edu

Presentation for panel organized by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and UNICEF at the Commission on the Status of Women Annual Meeting; United Nations, New York City, 9 March 2001.

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a cultural anthropologist, an ethnographer. I am not a statistician. Others better equipped to provide horrifying figures on wife beating, coerced sex, and other gender-based violence. I wish to raise conceptual frameworks within which to understand the tortured relationship between male cultures and gender-based violence, and touch on findings from my ethnographic studies in urban Mexico.
2. Suffice it to say that in Latin America, looking at figures for physical assaults on women initiated by male partners, for example, according every recent population-based study these continue to be a major problem across all social strata. Yet also of significance is that, with specific reference to men, three out of four young people who die from “everyday” violence like homicides and accidents in Latin America are male. And a good case can be made, I think, that the causes of many these deaths are gender-based. Without a doubt, in areas of military conflict, the proportions are even higher.
3. In this brief talk I take for granted that we in this auditorium are all generally aware of the problem of gender-based violence, and that we are committed to resolving this problem. That is, I do not seek to prove that there exists a relationship between racism, class, and masculinity on the one hand and gender based violence on the other so much as I seek to present ideas about how to resolve these problems.
4. As an anthropologist, what I think will be most helpful will be to speak about two points: one, the part played by culture in gender-based violence in Latin America; two, understanding how gender-based violence includes both violence by men against women and against other men.

CULTURE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

1. Is “culture a double-edged sword”? Reluctance on the part of many, of course, to blithely criticize other cultures. Nonetheless, there is no mistaking the fact that a relationship exists between culture, broadly construed, and gender-based violence.
2. Talk of “dismantling those aspects of culture that oppress women while preserving what is good.” Misses the point that cultures are not so static, not so homogeneous, not so free of internal conflict. Indeed, even with respect to the “negative” aspects of social life that are often considered, both popularly and in scholarly literature, linked to cultural traits, it may be that attributing social ills to culture is at least far better than making it primarily a question of individuals, child-rearing patterns, alcohol abuse, or, for those more convinced by biological arguments, in the case of male violence that such proclivities are ultimately propelled by hormones, morphologies, and genetics.
3. Culture is not simply a set of ideas or relations from which one can select and reject, as one does the food in the UN cafeteria. To discuss cultures is to wrangle and contest fundamental human relationships based on inequalities.
4. In meetings of men with histories of wife-beating in Mexico City, participants seek to justify their own gender-based violence have included the arguments, “What do you expect, I’m a man.” The thinly veiled implication being, “I am a Mexican macho man,” as if making this cultural association absolves men of responsibility for violent actions. Men also excuse domestic violence with comments like, “She provoked me.” The implication being that one must not provoke a macho. (Nor must we rest content with assigning machismo, in the sense of sexism, to Mexican, Spanish-speaking, and Latino men in particular: machos of this kind are just as easily found in the United States, Russia, Japan, and Zimbabwe.
5. In other words, it is not uncommon for men in Mexico City to justify gender-based violence using “sociological” logic: “The culture made me hit her.”
6. When discussing these issues of wife beating and sexual coercion, men in Mexico City and other urban areas of Latin America sometimes present themselves as both victimizers and victims. Victimizers of women, and victims of the very culture that has inculcated in them the rationale for gender-based violence.
7. The perception that, as products of macho cultures, men in Latin America are compelled to violence against their compañeras and against other men. What is wrong and right about blaming the culture. How understanding that violence does have something to do with social and cultural relations is far better than leaving it as a question of deviant personalities.
8. Yet, of course, this begs the question: how do practices like gender-based violence change?
9. Although efforts to generalize for hundreds of millions of Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking men are more common outside the region, men (and women) in Latin America themselves often attribute more violence to certain kinds of men: men from rural areas, men from another neighborhood, poor men, young men.
10. It might be easy and tempting to dismiss much of the reasoning by men about being products of macho cultures, and by men and women about other men being far more violent, as the specious justifications of insufficiently repentant wife beaters.

11. Questions of political economy, and class, must be linked to questions of culture: In October 1994, in South Carolina, in the United States, Susan Smith stated that “a black man” drove her two children into a pond and killed them. Newspaper reports talked of “black male” culture somehow revealing a cause for the murders. It turned out, however, that Smith, a white women, killed the children herself. When this was discovered, culture dropped out of analysis of the incident, and explanations tended instead to explain the unfortunate event as the act of a deranged individual.
12. Cultures are not static. They are processes embodying change as much as resilience. Gender-based violence is widespread throughout the world, and not something peculiar to one region or social group. Nor is blaming “traditional” culture the solution. There is plenty in modern cultures that gives rise to domestic violence, too.

MALE-ON-MALE VIOLENCE IS OFTEN GENDER-BASED, TOO

1. Not a question of replacing male violence directed at men with male-on-male violence as exemplary of gender-based violence. Is a question of including it.
2. Men are unquestionably, and in their own fashion, wrestle with issues long of concern to both scholars and activists concerned with gender-based violence.
3. Hegemonic versus marginal/subordinate masculinities: violence grounded in homophobia is gender-based violence.
4. It is by understanding that these men are products of violent societies and by this I mean not simply racist notions that paint poor men (and women) as the truly violent members of society, but also that they live in a world governed by widespread state-sanctioned violence as well that we might glimpse part of the answer as to how transformations may occur.
5. Homicides and survival, conscription and war: Certainly affecting “civilian” populations, including women, but in particular ways they involve men-as-men. As Benno de Keijzer, a Mexican physician and gender rights activist, notes, masculinity itself must be considered a risk factor in many contexts. And as the Vice President of the University of Cape Town, Mamphela Ramphele, notes in discussing the relationship of masculinity to particular forms of gang violence in South Africa, being a girl can in certain situations even be a protective factor against much street violence.
6. In 1994, for example, of 116,623 deaths from homicides in the 29 countries comprising the Americas including the United States 88.6 percent were males and 11.4 percent were females. Mortality from injuries purposely inflicted by others (homicides) were 7 to 12 times more frequent among men in 1994 in all subregions of the Americas.
7. Not just a gender question. Youth and especially poverty just as relevant if not more so. But gender is part of the problem and gender must be part of the solution.
8. Gender-based violence perpetrated by men is not simply displaced anger of humiliated men, whose anger and aggression against other men is unleashed instead against wives, girlfriends, and other women. Nor is gender something pertaining to women alone: men are engendered and engendering in their relationships with each other as well.
9. Male violence in Latin America arises not from a particular, if amorphous, culturally rooted sense of maleness, a cognitive system some denote as machismo.
10. Gender-based violence by men against women and other men in this region, as in others, is rooted instead in very specific, modern as much as “traditional,” conditions of

inequality between men and women, including the growing independence of women in terms of employment, education, fertility, and other ways.

11. The resolution of gender-based violence surely lies as much in reducing general levels of violence of all kinds in the world, and in following the initiative taken by women and women-based groups that have organized against these particular forms of oppression.

Racism, Class and Masculinity: Race, class, culture and gender-based violence

Summary of Presentation at the Panel on Racism, Class, and Masculinities: The Global Dimensions of Gender Based Violence

Diana Mahabir Wyatt

1. I am assuming, for the purposes of this study that the definition of "class" in the context mentioned by INSTRAW is economic class, that race means the primary, or most prominent racial group (a large proportion of our population is racially mixed) and that culture means ethnic culture, since in the Caribbean ethnicity is more of a socialization factor than national borders, and that gender-based violence refers mainly to violence by males toward females.
2. The Annual Report of the Rape Crisis Society in 1996 pointed out that one of the effects of the structural adjustment that the Trinidad and Tobago society was undergoing as a result of the conditionalities attached to various World Bank loans that the country had contracted was that jobs in the public sector, often jobs meant for poverty alleviation, were being cut. This has also been the pattern in other Caribbean societies over the last two decades. Since the majority of these jobs were filled by men, one of their traditional sources of authority, as breadwinner had been cut off. Women, on the other hand, could always get work as low-paying domestic workers or in equally low-paying garment factories, and in many cases reported to them, the women, now the households only income earner were being beaten as men were using violence to reassert their authority.
3. In the Caribbean culture, women who have 'visiting relationships' with the fathers of their children, who visit them and bring money or other means of support for their children when they visit, have always headed a substantial number of Afro-Caribbean households. The East Indian culture makes this form of relationship less common in Indo-Caribbean families, but in very poor households, particularly in rural areas it is also fairly common. Their mothers therefore primarily socialize the children of these unions. When these men cease to support their children, the mothers, who use corporal punishment as their primary form of socialization, are particularly vicious in punishing their boy children to prevent them, as they say, from "turning out like your worthless father".
4. There is research in other cultures to suggest that corporal punishment by parents negatively affects a child's self esteem (Barrish, 1986) and there is ample reason to suggest that this is also true of children in the Caribbean, especially when coupled with the "like your worthless father" syndrome. The association of corporal punishment and the female as the major source of the punishment is exacerbated by pre-school and primary school teachers who also use corporal punishment as their primary method of

classroom discipline, particularly, but not limited to, government-run public schools, and evidence is that boy children are more often the targets of beating in schools in those cultures where corporal punishment is used in schools than girls are (Hyman & Wise, 1979).

5. The resultant cycle is apparent: lowering of self esteem, programmed anger towards the female socialize, rejection of the female-dominated school system (in our cultures boys get poorer marks, drop out of school much more often than girls do, and are less likely to finish secondary school or go on to tertiary education) resulting in lowered job expectations and achievement, higher crime rates among the drop-outs, a continuation of the pattern of one-parent, female headed households, and the resultant poverty.
6. The focus of the INSTRAW study is what can be done about this tie-up.
7. Until the issues of parenting and corporal punishment are addressed, the beating/school rejection/low employment achievement/poverty/low self-esteem/gender-based violence will, in my mind, continue to manifest itself in the society.
8. Parents from higher-income families are less likely to use corporal punishment as the primary means of discipline for their children, and can afford to send their children to private schools where violence is less likely to be used as a form of classroom management. Their children grow up with greater self-esteem, are less likely to be beaten in the prestige government - run secondary schools, are more likely to go on to tertiary education, and are also more likely to be entrepreneurs and to attain higher levels of employment.
9. Ramesh Deosaran's book on Psychonomics and Poverty (UWI Press, 2000) posits a model of society which balances social psychological measures with socioeconomic measures, and this, also can be a factor in changing the paradigm of gender-based violence, poverty (class) and culture.
10. The race factor shows itself differently in different Caribbean countries, depending on the extent to which East Indian and Chinese Indentureship , Portuguese and Syrian/Lebanese immigration, and European settlers intermingled with the indigenous population and the African slave population exhibited itself. Barbados, for example, is almost exclusively an Afro/White population, with economic and social classes, as well as socialization methods reflecting these distinctions, whereas in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, the racial and ethnic divides are between those of East Indian and African heritages.
11. There is little difference in the extent of gender-based violence in the two cultures, however, although the domestic violence may manifest itself for different reasons. In East Indian families, particularly among the non-professional classes, wife beating is culturally sanctioned, and mothers-in-law often insist that their sons beat their new wives to teach them how to be obedient wives. Pundits (Hindu) and Imams (Muslim) have traditionally upheld the right of the male to so treat their wives. Only in the last five years has their been a movement against this, as Inter-religious organizations have begun to influence attitudes. In Afro-Caribbean households domestic violence is more often a result of role modeling and a reaction against the early socialization of the young male, although the Christian churches have also played a part in spreading acceptance of male violence against women by urging battered women to "turn the other cheek" and forgive, as the responsibility for family unity has largely been seen as a female responsibility.
12. Since women have been treated by Caribbean Governments as lesser mortals, according them fewer places in schools, making their qualifications for secondary schooling higher

than for male students (despite which girls continue to excel) , in the police force and the judiciary dismissing wife-battering as unimportant unless it resulted in death, and even then rewarding spousal killing with sentences less than were commonly given for crimes against property there is a strong element of institutional support for gender-based violence. There have been numerous cases where rape and child sexual abuse have been regarded by the courts (with male judges presiding) as resulting from the female victims behaviour and dismissed, further strengthening the institutional support for male violence against women. The adversarial nature of the judicial system, in which victims of child sexual abuse by men have been treated by defense lawyers as criminal liars, unimpeded by the presiding magistrates, is a reflection of this.

13. The T&T Coalition Against Domestic Violence, of which I have been the head for the last 15 years, has repeatedly called for a greater male participation in the elimination of gender-based violence, in the belief that it is only when men influence other men to cease wife battering, that they will listen . Curiously enough, the Police Service , which traditionally has upheld gender-based violence by supporting instances in its own ranks and dismissing complaints by victims from the public were the first to respond when they began a Community Policing unit, and began working with us in trying to be pro-active in preventing it from happening in the communities they served, talking to and counseling (as well as threatening) perpetrators as well as helping the victims.
14. Other men's groups have been ineffectual in response, rightly perceiving this a being a way in which their power base may be undermined. Those that specifically do address the problem have had a tendency to insist on the victimization of the male. Individual men have assisted in the work the women's groups are doing, but it is seen as primarily the womens' responsibility.
15. The combination of Community orientation, greater interaction of NGO groups as well as interaction by NGO's and government institutions, along with the persistent activities of womens' groups have brought about significant changes in reducing instances of institutional support in the courts and religious organizations for gender-based violence.

Racism, Class and Masculinity: An introduction to "I Am a Man: Black Masculinity in America"

(transcription of statement by:)

Byron Hurt

E-mail: hurtgbc08@aol.com

www.bhurt.com

I want to start by telling you a little about myself and what inspired me to make this film. I started out in this work as a result of being a college athlete. I got recruited to become a part of a program designed to educate men about violence against women, an issue that --at that time in 1993 -- I knew absolutely nothing about.

Because of the fact that I knew of no other men, in my life or my world, who spoke up about sexism or violence against women, I was a bit hesitant to become a part of this program. I had no

model; no one in my world that did anything similar to this. But I was challenged as a person who considers himself to be a leader and who cares about my community and someone who wanted to be aware of social issues and wanted to create social change. I decided to accept the challenge in addressing this issue. I had to learn a lot about issues surrounding gender, men, masculinity and violence against women.

I began to work with college male athletes and talking to them about the way men who are not abusive towards women could positively affect men who were abusive. Who could confront men's abusive behavior and challenge men who were abusive either physically or verbally towards women and send a negative message to those men.

Since 1993 when I began working with the program I have traveled all over the country and lectured, educated, facilitated workshops and training sessions. Basically sparking a dialogue with men and really trying to encourage men to be proactive bystanders whenever they see men who are physically or verbally assaulting women, confront negative attitudes that men have about women.

It has been a very interesting and life changing experience for me as a young man, as a black man. When I was a college student I considered myself to be socially aware and socially conscious as a result of engaging in these issues, I look back at that time of my life and realize that I was race conscious as a black man but not necessarily gender conscious, and I think that there is a big difference. Particularly in the African-American community, communities of color, where black men are often marginalized, or feel the brunt of racism, we typically tend to look at how we are oppressed as men, without looking at the way in which we also oppress and violate women, and women's space. So that has been one of my big challenges in terms of reaching out and addressing men of color. But I will say that on a positive side I feel that I have had a certain amount of success in engaging black men on these issues because of the fact that men of color can identify with oppression. Men of color can identify with being stereotyped, can identify with a history of abuse. I feel that I have been able to reach men.

One way that I thought that I could make a tremendous impact was by creating a documentary film that took a look at some of the issues that I have been engaged with and have been thinking about. Because I wanted to share with, particularly black males, what I had learned about gender and gender issues. I wanted to be able to use the film to create discussion, spark dialogue and to push consciousness, not just with black men but with everybody. So I was inspired to produce a documentary film, which took me four years to produce. I have four different versions of the same film and was quite humble by the process of documentary filmmaking. I shot the film in fifteen cities across the country. I interviewed black men from various social, economic and educational backgrounds. I also interviewed women who shared their views who shared their thoughts and feelings about black masculinity. I have shown the film in more than 60 colleges, universities, museums, film festivals across the United States, and its been a tremendous experience for me. One thing that I failed to mention is that I also been part of a team that works with the U.S Marine Corps in trying to implement a program that addresses gender violence and homophobia in the Marine Corps. That has also been a tremendous opportunity to enlighten men who have a certain stature in the society in terms of their masculine status, in terms of their hyper

masculine persona. To begin to get men thinking about these things, challenging other men about these issues that we are here to address today.

One thing that I have become a lot more clear about is the fact that from the male perspective, from the men's side of this, and I know that women have been engaged in these issues for decades, we so lack education as men and we have been so mis-educated and misinformed about cultural notions of masculinity in our society. It damages us as men, because we are not free to be who we are, as human beings not just as men. I can see the effects of how sexism not only affects women in a negative way but how it affects men in a negative way as well. I think that educating men about these issues and the more men that we have who can educate other men is vitally important, so that we can partner with women and try to create a culture that is not a rape culture and that is not so hostile against women and women's issues. Where there's not such a huge backlash against women who are trying to do progressive work in this area.

Racism, Class and Masculinity: the global dimensions of gender based violence

(transcription of statement by:)

Ruth Hayward

The title for this panel is so complex that anyone deciding to come to it, or be in it like myself, would start to think about what do all these things have to do with each other. That's where I began in the last few days -- stopping people I knew, or didn't know and saying 'What do you think race, class and gender have to do with each other?' and then asking them 'and what does all that have to do with violence?' Now if we had time I would ask you to turn around to each other and discuss this for a few minutes and then debrief, and I think that very quickly you would have arrived at the core that most people I talked to arrived at.

At first they would be quite startled at the question and then they'd say things like 'Oh they're ways to put people into groups' and then they would say 'But they're also ways to say that some members of the groups are better than the others and maybe that some of the groups are more important than the others'. Actually then to distinguish, or to discriminate differences and make categories is not a value judgment in and of itself. It's when there is an assignment of superiority, or entitlement and the expectation that violence is expected and accepted to maintain that superior position that the trouble comes in.

So then when I would ask 'Alright what does this have to do with violence?' Well you see the answer already. Then if I would say 'Fine now it doesn't really say gender in the first part of the title, and then we have masculinity so what is that?' The people would say, in effect, 'that's just the marker for the part of the gender category that is in the superior position and that is expected or accepted to use violence to maintain it. So then if one thinks about it there are a lot of other categories that have to do with ethnicity or type of economy or colonial experience that people use to categorize each other and assign positions and play value judgments. So indeed, there are intersections, and we can't solve all that here, but the brain entertains how as these categories that lay on top of each other, and the people who are right at the bottom of all the categories are

going to have the most heavy burden on them of 'violences' for maintaining different kinds of 'superiorities' by people in these other groups.

One of the basic divisions, if not the most basic division for human beings, is male-female, and so its not unusual that multiple discriminations, ones that are loaded with value judgments --not just seeing difference -- load up on women and girls and justify violence against them. That makes it all the more remarkable and important that not only girls and women speak out against their position and become empowered but that those who are defined as the "privileged ones" question their own privilege and question what they have to pay, in some cases, to maintain it: violence or aggression, and what they lose; a loss of their humanity, if not a lot of economic costs also.

So what encourages me is that right now as we speak about problems here at CSW there are privileged people of many categories men as well as women who are speaking up against the expectation of violence and working very hard against it.

Another question I ask myself is are we bringing up our children to use rape as a systematic weapon of war, to beat each other, to kill each other, (that's primarily for boy children)? Are we bringing up our girls to accept that, to be victims - if not victim survivors? Of course we would all say NO, but it seems that we are, and that may be because we haven't questioned enough the prevailing norms for masculinity and femininity in the world. We haven't questioned enough how we are socializing our children according to those norms, both consciously and unconsciously.

One article that recently I came upon by David Perry is called 'Incubated in Terror' and it talks about the effect on the child, the baby, and the development of the baby's brain by being in an atmosphere where there is ongoing violence, even though that baby doesn't have to itself be hit. This is a neurobiologist who talks about a different chemical wash, and a different response system that may characterize a coping style throughout life. So, what are we doing by not examining this enough and what is the impact on the children and the future?

Let me then come to South Asia, where I had the privilege to be the regional deputy director for almost five years. There, in addition to having responsibilities related to program review and gender issues, I really started a program that would try to find and feature men as women who were challenging prevailing gender norms, challenging the patriarchy, raising questions about new masculinities. A lot of people in South Asia said 'you wont find any men who are doing this, and they wont agree to cooperate with you'.

I was quite inspired by Radhika Coomaraswamy's excellent analysis [<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/mwom.htm>] of the root cause of gender based violence. As most of you will know, she says that the primary cause is really unequal gender relationships and assigned stereotypic notions of masculinity and femininity that have been constructed in the assignment of superiority to one and inferiority to the other. So to end gender violence one has to attack that root cause.

It seemed very important to find men as well as women who were not behaving in the expected way and who were speaking out and challenging norms in their own culture. It also seemed very important to bring them together so they had a space to recognize each other, create solidarity, and it seemed very important to give them resources, recognition and media. What are you doing by doing that? You are publicizing new norms.

In 1997 in conjunction with some other organizations we brought together some 120 activists from all of South Asia intentionally from different fields. It wasn't just 'the police' or 'the lawyers' or 'the artists' they were all there. And it included 40% men. And I had them at different tables with names, so that they were seated with people that they didn't know, so that they had to break set of all kinds of categories and judgments they had about each other, whether it was based on which country they were from, whether it was based on gender, whether it was based on their profession. The policemen were not comfortable with the big blow-ups in the room that showed police using violence against women. Artist might not be comfortable with something else. But everybody engaged in a general debate about the issues concerned with gender violence and what to do about it.

In the course of this, one gentleman Rahul Roy, stood up because I had done a very small paper called 'Needed: A New Model Masculinity' and he said, quite rightly, 'No its new models of masculinities'. I think all the women here if not the men have had the experience where you sitting talking to a man and he says something very supportive to you about issues concerning wanting to have gender equality or overcoming violence and you say 'boy, this guy is really different from the others', but then you're with him in a mixed group, or in front of other guys and he's totally different. He doesn't speak up in front of the other men because then he wouldn't be maintaining the norm and his image of masculinity and expectation. So I thought it was very important to have a place with a mixed group, where the men could recognize each other but also speak up in a way that provided solidarity among themselves but also partnership with women.

One of the things to come out of this process was a series of films called 'Lets talk men' which provides models of different types of masculinity made by four male film directors from different South Asian countries. There is a guidebook for use with these films and it is now being disseminated by UNICEF and Save the Children throughout South Asia. In individual countries other activities began. In Bangladesh they took the 'Lets talk men' idea but they generalized it to featuring men in little hold up things and in TV spots in a big program, also with well known men talking about new laws against violence. Talking about the importance of taking your wife to the hospital when she is ill etc. So it started going out into different types of interventions, what men's roles would be.

For the book, we interviewed some 200 activists against violence, again 40% men, not necessarily the same ones who were at the meeting. There is a section in here about men challenging the patriarchy, there is a section on masculinities and femininities and I think my role is to amplify their voices so that is why I can shamelessly say I recommend this book, because it is their voices. I think they have it in the UN bookstore. The name is 'Breaking the Earthenware Jar: Lessons learned from South Asia to end violence against women and girls.'

There is a place, which shall be nameless in South Asia where a girl child upon birth is put in an earthenware jar and stuffed in the ground and left there to die. An older person will say about a pregnant woman 'If she survive that vessel she will not survive the earthenware jar'. So the idea is to break all constraints on gender roles and the value of male and female.

Some interesting things now are coming up, with James Lang, Michael Kaufman with the White Ribbon Campaign and with Geoff Prewitt from UNDP. Together we are organizing a meeting funded in part by the Rockefeller Foundation, which will be in Bellagio, Italy in October, with a very small group of only 25 people working with men to end violence against women and girls.