

The Power and Control Wheel

From Critical Pedagogy to Homogenizing Model

In this chapter, I examine the social history of one of the most important tools used by the movement to stop violence against women. The tool, or model, is called the “Power and Control Wheel.” Activists and advocates at the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (hereafter the Duluth Project) devised the Power and Control Wheel as a tool for participatory education, but it was altered as it became popular throughout the United States and became institutionalized in many antidomestic violence programs.

From the beginning of the second wave of feminism in the early 1970s, feminist activists made the connection between violent relationships and the institutions that supported violence against women. Ellen Pence, a well-known activist associated with the Duluth Project, describes the unwillingness to yield a social and political analysis of violence against women.

The battered women’s movement has, since its earliest days, identified battering not as an individual woman’s problem, but as a societal problem linked to the oppression of all women in our society. Institutions in our communities were engaged in practices that blamed women for being beaten. Early organizers in the movement challenged mental health centers who claimed women were sick, police who charged that women were provocative, courts that refused to acknowledge that women’s bruises were the result of criminal behavior . . . and an economic system and a community . . . over and over again reinforced a batterer’s power over women. (Pence et al. 1987, 5)

The political project of Pence and others was to raise critical understanding among battered women of how institutional, structural, economic, and cultural forces are implicated in violence against women. The activists who invented the Wheel were trying to link private and public violence.

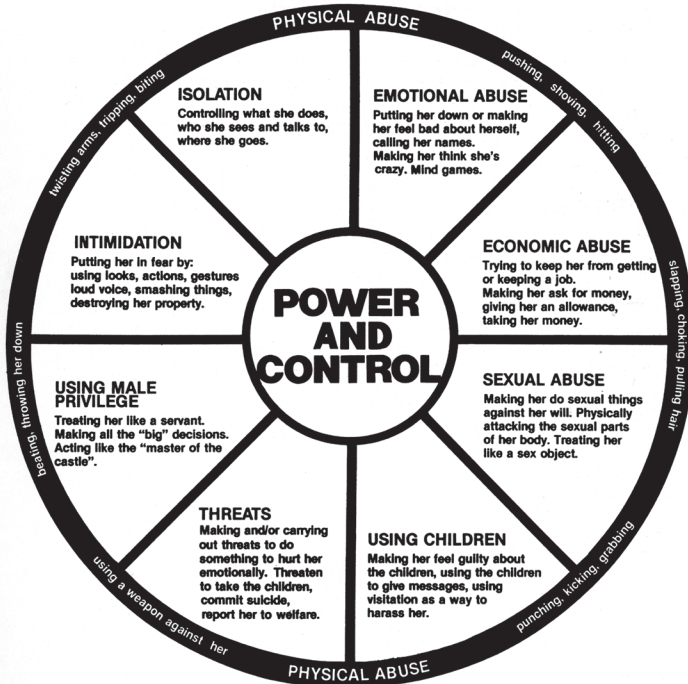


FIGURE 1. Power and Control Wheel.

At some point, however, part of their work became co-opted by oppressive economic and organizational forces. As one counselor in New York told me in an interview, “We follow the ‘Duluth Model’ of Ellen Pence. If you want funding in New York, you must use that model.” As it became institutionalized around the country, it was used in a way that *masked* the link between public and private violence. It was also used in a way that made diversity in the experiences of gendered violence harder to see. Success in one set of terms—public recognition, increased funding—has resulted in a failure to sustain its more ambitious political critiques. Though originally open to a diversity of understandings of violence, including the collusion of a range of social and cultural forces in violence towards women, it now seems generally to be used to provide a template to describe violence against women as if it followed a single pattern. Pence, one of its authors, seems to have congealed in her views. “The ones that are on there I think are core tactics that almost all abusers use” (quoted by Pheifer 2010).

The story of the Power and Control Wheel shows how grass-roots, democratic research can be used to analyze and fight against oppressive forces, in this case against a largely invisible and diffuse war against women. The other side of

the story, however, is that one must be vigilant to insure that politically liberating practices remain so.¹

The perils of institutionalization are not lost on the founders. In a training manual to combat domestic violence, Ellen Pence and Bonnie Mann express an unwillingness to surrender a collective and collectively renewed political, social, and cultural analysis of the circumstances of battered women. "Over the past ten years the nature of women's groups offered by shelters and battered women's programs has evolved from a cultural and social analysis of violence to a much more personal psychological approach. Our own experience fits this pattern" (1987, 47). How did their work move from social analysis to psychologizing individual women?

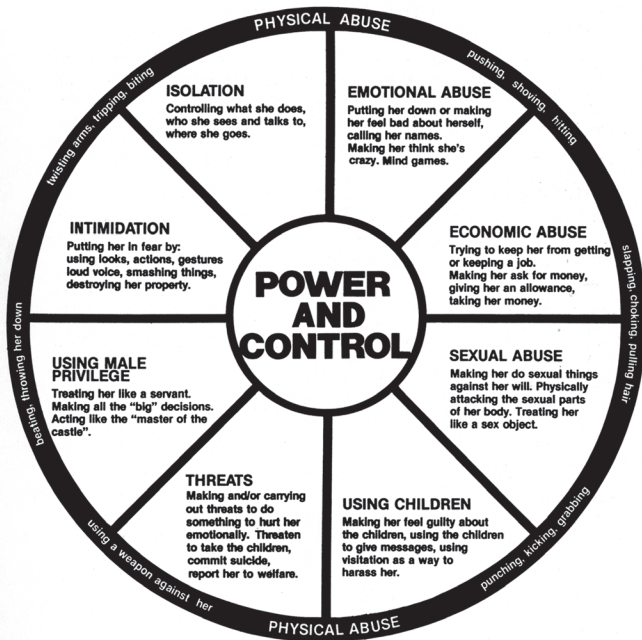
In the introduction to this work, I argued for the need to dismantle the fiction that women's experiences of violence are uniform. As one looks at institutional response to violence against women, one sees that these institutions tend not to see—in fact tend to erase the differences. In particular, the social, cultural, and structural forms of violence are often the most elusive. In this chapter I describe one place the differences are erased: in some strands of the movement to end violence against women. In a later chapter, I take up the role of the courts in this process.

One cannot presume to measure for all time the efficacy of a particular tactic or strategy independent of how it is practiced, by whom, and with what sort of institutional backing. Apparent confinement can be refuge. What looks like refuge is sometimes confinement. What something *means*, what it stands for, and how it is used changes through time and context. Stuart Hall:

The meaning of a cultural form and its place or position in the cultural field is not inscribed inside its form. Nor is its position fixed once and forever. This year's radical symbol or slogan will be neutralized into next year's fashion; the year after, it will become the object of a profound cultural nostalgia . . . The meaning of the cultural symbol is given in part by the social field into which it is incorporated, the practices with which it articulates and is made to resonate. What matters is not the intrinsic or historically fixed objects of culture, but the state of play in cultural relations. (Hall cited in Giroux 1992, 187)

POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL: METHODOLOGY AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

To get a handle on some of the complexity of liberation and collaboration, radical action and conformism, the new and the old, I will first interrogate the critical pedagogy of the Power and Control Wheel. As the staff of the Duluth Project first conceived it, the Wheel has two parts (figure 2) (Pence et al. 1987, 31ff). I have seen the first part of the Power and Control Wheel in practically every



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200 WEST FOURTH STREET
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Institutional and Cultural Supports for Battering

Tactics of Power and Control	Institutional and Community decisions which support individual batterer's ability to use abusive tactics (police, courts, media, medical, clergy, business, education, human services).	Cultural Values and Beliefs that support batterers.
Physical Abuse		
Sexual Abuse		
Isolation		
Emotional Abuse		
Economic Abuse		
Minimizing and Denying		
Using Children		
Threats		
Using Male Privilege		
Intimidation		

FIGURE 2. Institutional and Cultural Supports for Battering.

program I have been to or heard about, including several versions in Spanish. It has been translated into forty languages worldwide, including Maori, Hungarian, and Icelandic. But generally speaking, the entire two-tiered approach, used as an educational tool, has been absent. The second part of the code, *that part that seeks to uncover and describe institutional and cultural collaboration with the batterer*, is often eliminated.

The Wheel was developed from a specific methodology that drew heavily from the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire.² His contribution is a pedagogical theory to develop a "critical consciousness." A critical consciousness of domestic violence, for example, would be one in which a battered woman can situate individual abuse within greater societal processes of oppression and domination. The Power and Control Wheel works as a pedagogical tool for the analysis of violence, an analysis that then passes into wider consideration of institutional and cultural supports for battering.

In reviewing the code and method, I will pay special attention to *how* it instigates a critical appraisal of domination. That is, I would like to look at its methodology for uncovering violence.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project was begun in the late 1970s by a group of battered and formerly battered women, each of whom had survived battering in the absence of a formal shelter or hotline. They formed a women's group to begin to discuss and develop responses to the violence each had experienced. They also began an educational campaign to provide information to the community on violence against women. As they flourished as an organization, they perceived a need to develop new educational methods. "The neighborhood-based education groups were well attended and very successful. However, after several years, we felt increasing discomfort with the process we were using. Our lecture/discussion format provided information but did not truly involve women in the process of discovery. There was an imbalance of power in our 'giving' women information and their receiving it. We began to experiment with Freire's teaching methods" (Pence et al. 1987, 1–2). It was through Freire's methods that they moved away from simply providing information. The methodology as they practice it begins with surveys and interviews with battered or formerly battered women. "Each year since 1981 we have conducted a survey of women, asking what kinds of issues they want to discuss in groups. These surveys are crucial to the educational process. No matter how many women come to the doors of our programs, we cannot assume that we know what they want from groups unless we ask and listen to their responses" (1987, 7). The process of surveying women is ongoing and intrinsic to their method. Focusing on battered women, the project members solicit thoughts, questions, and concerns from women in bars, around a

kitchen table at a shelter, on benches waiting for court hearings, in the hair salon. Through this process, they amass qualitative data for analysis. The thoughts and concerns voiced are not only descriptions of their experience, nor are they confined to specific instances of abusive behavior. They include questions, reflections, opinions, dilemmas. Some samples from their surveys follow (1987):

How do I deal with the fact that I don't like my son because he is like his father?
 He doesn't hit me, but he break things, smashes walls, and says he isn't a batterer.
 Sometimes emotional abuse is worse than physical abuse.
 Does alcoholism cause battering?
 Why do I feel guilty about staying with him?
 Why do I feel guilty about leaving him?
 He keeps accusing me of being a lesbian.
 We've been to three different marriage counselors, and they all encourage us to do things I'm scared to do.
 How do you deal with his threats to commit suicide?

The body of texts that they solicit serves as the material from which they abstract "themes." Themes stand for the basic characteristics of one's situation put in terms of a general context of domination and oppression. Thus, the theme contains recognizable elements, since it was generated through interviews, but at the same time, it has been put in a larger social and political framework. Pence explains:

Themes broaden the base of a single issue. The facilitator looks for themes in the survey that allow her to pose a problem, the analysis of which will help the group make connections between seemingly isolated concerns. For example, specific abusive behaviors appear on the list twelve times. These behaviors are repeatedly mentioned in our surveys. This suggests that battering consists not only of physical abuse and threats, but also of abusive acts which reinforce the physical violence. If we examine each of the acts individually we may be misled as to its intent, cause, and impact. (Pence et al. 1987, 9)

Discovering recurrent motifs, the project members conceptualize themes that are intended to generate critical connections among moments of behavior that had seemed random, inexplicable, and hard to conceptualize as abuse. By this method, for example, the abuser who verbally degrades someone, denies her perceptions, breaks things, and punches the wall could be revealed as inflicting abuse. Themes provoke discussion and insight among women into what counts as abuse and how abuse is linked to other phenomena. The discussions also have the consequence of breaking isolation between women.

The project members select or devise codes that can be analyzed from three perspectives: “personal, institutional, and cultural.”

When the design team has decided that the theme is generative—that it allows for discussion on all three levels—the next step is to develop a code. A code is a teaching tool used to focus group discussion. It can be a picture, a role-play, a story, a guided meditation, a song, a chart or an exercise. The code provides a reference point for discussion and analysis . . . In designing a class the group facilitators prepare for their roles not by outlining a rigid structure that routes discussion from Point A to Point B, but by working to understand an issue more fully, so that as women we are able to make connections in our lives between our personal experiences and the world we live in. (1987, 10)

While the facilitator has determined the code, the character and direction of the process of analysis are open-ended. Within its original practice, then, the code is one step in an entire pedagogic and theoretico-political enterprise.

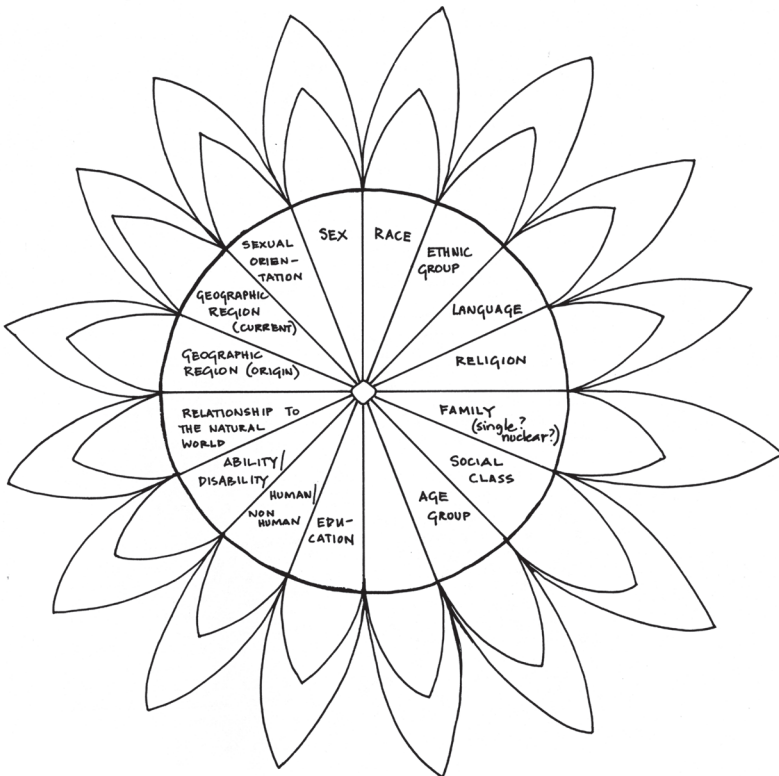


FIGURE 3. The Power Flower.

A facilitator commented on how the process of isolating codes made her change how she “reads” the world: “When I first started working on this curriculum I’d be hearing songs on the radio or seeing scenes in movies and on TV as possible codes. Suddenly everything had the potential to be a focus for discussion in a women’s group” (Pence et al. 1987).

The Power and Control Wheel is an example of a code. Twenty years later, in 2010, Pence described the process: “So we went to all three of those groups over several months, and kept developing this thing over and over and we’d bring our little designs in, we had a lot of different designs to it and finally we came up with the one where we put the ‘Violence’ around the outside and all the other tactics on the inside. We were trying to make it like a wheel where the violence held everything together. These tactics were . . . all part of a system” (*Power and Control* 2010). The Power and Control Wheel is one example of a code, one example among many (figures 3 and 4 show examples of other codes).

In the second part of the workshop, women furnish responses to a chart that asks them to think of instances in which social institutions and cultural mores support the violence. As it is conceived, women see how social institutions, such as the welfare office, housing officials, and cultural forces (such as traditional

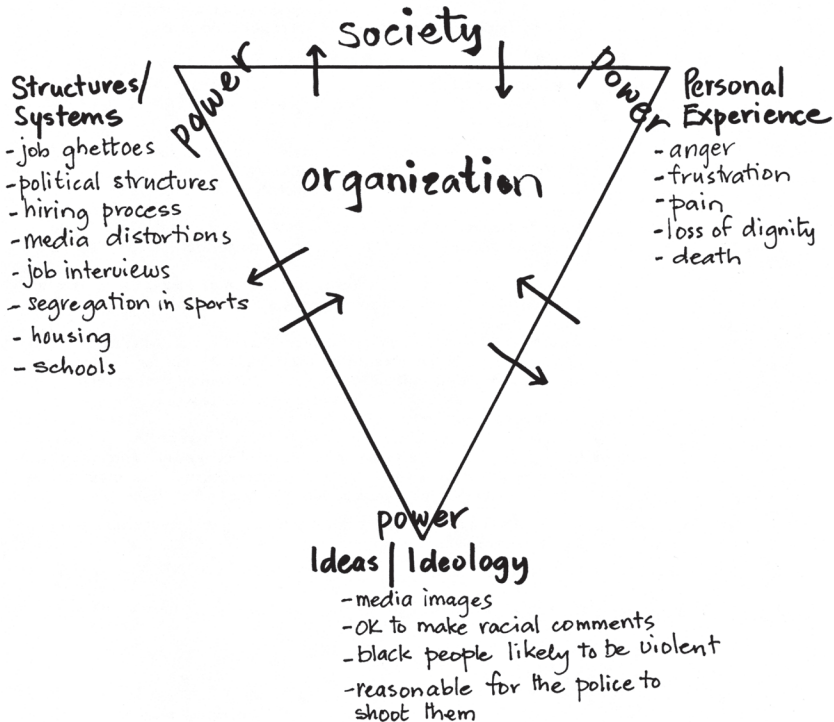


FIGURE 4. The Triangle Tool.

hierarchies within a community) collude in abuse. (Figure 2 shows the two charts in tandem.)

Here is a list of responses solicited from the part of the workshop that looks at institutional and cultural support for battering (1987).

Pastors tell women it is their role to be subservient to their husbands; even if the husband gets "carried away," the wife owes him forgiveness.

Marriage counselors ignore the man's use of violence or equate it to the woman's yelling at him.

Judges lecture women during protection order hearing, stating that they too are part of the problem, or they issue mutual restraining orders when the woman hasn't used violence.

Judges order women into counseling when they have not used violence.

Judges refuse to enforce their own court orders requiring counseling or no contact with women.

Courts threaten lesbian battered women with the loss of their children when they ask the court for protection.

Doctors prescribe Valium to women who are suffering emotionally from battering, ignoring the reason for their suffering.

Welfare workers allow themselves to be used to harass women by following up on false reports from batterers of welfare fraud and child abuse.

Social structures (the law, medicine, organized religion) and bureaucratic institutions (the police, law courts, social service providers) are mapped onto personal experience. Places assumed to be safe can be refigured through this process. The police are no longer necessarily just protectors, but they are put into the context of their collaboration with the batterers. Cultural practices are interrogated for the ways in which they buttress violence against women. It depicts systematic oppression.

One of the virtues of the two-part schema is that in the first instance, the pedagogical device is intended to solicit the unique instances of abuse and to provoke reflection on distinctive, individual behavior. In the second step, the personal characteristics of the batterer and the battering situation are placed in a way that motivates connection and reflection on their full sociohistorical scope. The passage from detail to larger sociopolitical systems and structures undermines the privatized nature of abuse. Through critical consciousness, the battered woman comes to see that the personal is political.

CHARTING OPPRESSION

The Wheel provides an arresting view of space. It is a powerful and excellent tool for critical analysis. One shelter worker commented to me in an interview,

“Women had such a powerful response almost always. It was like, oh my god, this is my life. They just immediately began describing stuff that is just like that” (fieldwork interview). Part of its genius and power is to provide a narrative, to see how behavior that looks at first to be nonabusive functions as part of an abusive pattern. The picture it draws is cohesive: the parts derive their significance and their strength from their interrelation. Like the spokes that represent them, each form of violence reinforces the control, while the whole system is in turn held together by physical and sexual violence. “At the hub of the wheel, the center, is the intention of all the tactics—to establish power and control. Each spoke of the wheel represents a particular tactic. The rim of the wheel, which gives it strength and holds it together, is physical abuse” (Pence et al. 1987, 11–13).

In a recent interview, Ellen Pence comments that in retrospect the Duluth Project should have distinguished the *purpose* of the abuse from its *consequences*:

I always interpreted it as that women were saying that men desired power and control, and when I did my men’s groups I would say that I would always think that you were desiring, but I never heard the men say that. And that’s when I started to understand the difference between feeling . . . entitled to that control and desiring it . . . Like as a white person, me feeling entitled to certain space, it wasn’t the desire to dominate people of color, it’s two different things . . . So I ended up not thinking that men wanted power and control, I ended up thinking and realizing, I think, that they felt entitled to it. Which is a different way of talking to men about it then. (2010)

The difference is between positing a universal psychological dynamic and looking at concrete experience:

The Power and Control Wheel . . . said, “When he is violent, he gets power and he gets control.” Somewhere early in our organizing efforts, however, we changed the message to “he is violent *in order* to get control or power.” The difference is not semantic, it is ideological . . . By determining that the need or desire for power was the motivating force behind battering, we created a conceptual framework that, in fact, did not fit the lived experience of many of the men and women we were working with. Like those we were criticizing, we reduced our analysis to a psychological universal truism. (Pence 1999, 28)

The Duluth Project distinguishes staying close to the real lives of men and women from the impulse to reduce the dynamics of battering to a universal psychological model. The pedagogy rejects assuming uniformity and universality and imputed psychological states. This contrasts strongly with the universal models we have already discussed, such as Lenore Walker’s “Cycle of Violence” (1989). As we shall

see below, the Duluth Project explicitly contrasts itself with Walker's influential theory.

Another quality of the resulting device is a focus on domination to the exclusion of a battered woman's resistance.³ The pedagogy develops *critical* perspective, but it would have been useful to see more of a focus on the language of *possibility* (Giroux 1992, 19ff). A critical language remains within the paradigm of oppression, while a language of possibility elaborates individual and collective resistance, possibility, and potential.⁴ To its credit, the workshop discussion does ask women to name an action that they have taken to stop violence or abuse. "This demonstrates that as battered women we have never become total doormats, that we have in fact acted and can continue to act to protect ourselves" (1987). Oppression is never complete. The pedagogy points women in the direction of having them enunciate forms of resistance, mostly individual forms of resistance, but also collective. Some examples they draw out of their workshops include the following (1987):

hanging up when he calls so that he can't emotionally abuse me by calling me names or playing mind games with me;
 getting a protection order;
 asking my employer to move me to another office where I'm more protected from his harassment;
 talking secretly to a friend he has refused to allow me to see to let her know what's happening.

RISING TO THE CONCRETE

One thing that needs to be emphasized is that the Wheel was never intended to be a "map." The space of the Wheel was not intended to be the *equivalent* to the spaces that women occupy. It is not even a *description* of those spaces in the normal sense. It is an attempt to grasp those spaces and to interpret them, to represent those spaces to battered women, so they talk about the abuse they have experienced. The strength of the methodology is measurable in its flexibility in apprehending action in its larger cultural context, located in history, at the same time as not losing sight of the specificity, the singular. Pence comments:

A woman in a violent relationship is not allowed to step back and look at her life for what it really is. Her abuser imposes an interpretation of her reality that protects his self-interest. He works to prevent his partner from thinking about herself as a person separate from him. With few exceptions, batterers attempt to cut women off from other people, places, ideas, and resources that would help her understand what is happening to her . . . The expression "can't see the forest for the trees" describes what it is to be like in the midst of a bad situation trying to make a good

decision . . . One of the most dramatic things a women's group does for a newcomer is help her to step back and see more of her life, and from that place to make decisions in her own interest. (Pence et al. 1987, 15)

The purpose is to provide a technique, a catalyst, a challenge, to battered women to draw connections. In this sense, the intent of the method is not to abstract from the concrete but to supply the concrete with meaning, to motivate in women a theoretical turn on their own situations, to order the endless flow of the incremental phenomena of the everyday by reframing it. It is striking in its ability to organize frequently encountered tactics of batterers in a way that is animating, thought-provoking, inviting.

Violence against women can be painted as if it exists only in closed spaces and as a matter between two people. Gendered violence can be theorized as private, domestic, spousal, and always the same. Or it can be seen as multifaceted, manifold, and propped by massive, bureaucratic organization, extending into structural mechanisms of governing. Defining the relevant space for analysis of violence is central to how the violence is understood. If the space is homogeneous and imagined to include only the private sphere, the violence will be viewed only as private.

The Power and Control Wheel and its companion, the Institutional Supports for Battering chart, ingeniously challenge the privatization of violence. Since they correspond to the private and public respectively, they appear to assume the split between the private and public spheres. But they then show the tie between the private and the public. This is an astute method for troubling the private/public split that grounds the privatized nature of abuse.

However, using the Power and Control Wheel by itself, one is left with only the private dynamic of the couple in the home. One person uses physical and emotional abuse to control his or her intimate. Only by using the second chart, Institutional and Cultural Supports for Battering, can one tie the private to the public—or more accurately, who is implicated in maintaining intimidation. This might include friends who don't ask questions, agents of the law, the law itself, emergency room staff, religious authorities, neighbors, kin, and so on. I emphasize this because the depoliticization of the Power and Control Wheel hinges on this separation of one diagram from the other. "Battering not only consists of seemingly isolated acts of individual abusers. It encompasses a much larger system of actions of abusers and of the community institutions which support women abuse" (Pence et al. 1987, 31).

Though the method breaches the private/public split, it is nonetheless premised within the split. Other forms of violence that involve different relations of power that already occur against the grain of the private/public split are not incorporated into this schema, such as violence against sex workers or domestic workers. Its conceptual exclusion of other forms of spatiality reveals the formulation as abstract: it proposes a generalized template through which to read violence according to a unified and uniform map.

"THE WHEEL IN MOTION"

Is the Power and Control Wheel homogenizing? Does it contribute to the product of making violence against women uniform? Does its pedagogy hide difference or reveal it? The Wheel was designed by battered women in Duluth after interviewing battered women in that particular locale. A schema like the Power and Control Wheel is thus limited in its very design to engaging that particular group of women. The particular aspects of (some) women's lives in Duluth, the resources available, and the way in which gender is configured there all serve as the material for the construction of the code.

Elsewhere, or for women located in a different structural position (for example, undocumented women or women who are incarcerated), a different code would need to be invented through a similarly rigorous analysis of the local conditions of women's lives. Part of this is due to the fact that systems of sexism, racism, colonization, and homophobia combine in a range of ways and need to be examined in a way that is attentive to different locales. It makes sense to use the Power and Control Wheel in Duluth with the women on whose lives it is based. Nevertheless, some of the Duluth Project's literature has broader aspirations. The author-activists remark that some of their work "offers a framework for discussion of how the abusive tactics of batterers are *the same* as those used against poor people, people of color, women, and all other oppressed people in our society" (Pence, et al. 1987,26; emphasis added). This is an unsubstantiated generalization. This way of putting things does not allow for analysis of the fact that some white middle-class women mistreat women of color who clean their houses, for example. Both groups of women are oppressed as women, yet the white women are clearly not oppressed in the same way that the women of color are in that situation.

So we can fairly ask whether the entire critical method is used as a process in other places. Educational codes produced according to this method are bound to the time and place of their origin. Also, they are supposed to be used as a *generative moment*. As a code, the Wheel is intended to provoke reflection rather than curtail it. If the process is not used elsewhere, then we can ask what work the Wheel is doing, how it is used, by whom, with whom, how, and why. Although the Wheel is flexible, it can be used in a way that stops or stunts discussion among battered women.

As it has traveled, by and large, the Wheel has become a model rather than a device to provoke analysis. The Wheel has made its way into shelters, antiviolence projects, and websites. The following section has some examples.

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women published a pamphlet entitled "Understanding Battering," in which they reproduced the Wheel. They introduce

it with the caveat, "This model was developed for use primarily with white, heterosexual battering, so other types of controlling behavior may be more common in other groups." In the passage, the Wheel has already changed from a *technique*, enmeshed in a particular process and method of popular education to become a *model* of domestic violence. Although the same pamphlet emphasizes that the "model" be used "as a starting point only," it is already on the road to being ossified.

Nothing in the original methodology commits them to exclude women of color and lesbians of any color. The process of conducting interviews and isolating resurgent themes does not necessitate exclusion of certain groups of people. Moreover, since the code is used to provoke critical analysis, it need not provide a perfect description of violence. In any case, "white, heterosexual women" is not an internally homogeneous group.

María Lugones has addressed this question of work by white women which "leaves women of color out." "White women used to simply and straightforwardly ignore difference. In their theorizing, they used to speak as if all women *as women* were the same. Now white women recognize the problem of difference. Whether they *recognize* difference is another matter . . . It is interesting to see that the acknowledgment is a noninteractive one" (Lugones 2004, 85; emphasis in the original). Lugones argues that some white women have come to acknowledge a problem of working politically or writing as if all women are the same, but without taking up the question of difference, interrogating it, seeing how difference works not in isolation but in terms of how women of color and white women are connected with one another.

The MCBW booklet offers a disclaimer qualifying the relevance of the Wheel for nonwhite, nonheterosexual women but offers no guidance for those outside of that circumscribed domain nor insight regarding what others ought to do. The disclaimer, as Lugones points out, is a technique for evading substantive engagement with the question of difference. After the disclaimer, nothing again indicates that difference has been recognized (see Lugones 2004, 85).

One way to have solved this dilemma would have been to present the Power and Control Wheel as a code embedded *within a methodology*, instead of as a model. From a technique used to provoke women into critical analysis of their situation with their batterer and in the wider society, the Wheel has become a description of violence. Its detachment from the interview process marks the passage from its dynamic potential to its ossification.

In particular, in the new version, a particular solution is proposed: *escape*. Escape implies individual movement away from a situation. To describe abuse as "building barriers" to a woman's escape or safety is already to advance the solution of leaving. This proposal of escape to safety is important. But escape is not a possibility for all.

Which leads one to ask: what happened to the chart that asked women to interrogate the institutional and cultural supports for battering? It has disappeared. One of the persistent motifs of the passage of the Wheel is how, as it has

been institutionalized, it has lost its partner. The second chart, far less popular, was precisely that chart that violated the private/public split of domestic violence and showed how outside spaces also support abuse. With it, "escape" could no longer be the clear end-all solution for all women. The relation it drew extended to provoke institutional and cultural critique.

"QUÉ OPCIONES TENGO?"

Even while the Power and Control Wheel is sometimes asserted to apply only to white, heterosexual couples, it is also employed elsewhere unproblematically to define violence involving women of color and lesbians of any color.⁵ For example, the Wheel has been frequently translated into Spanish for use with Latinas (see figure 5; also see my interview with a Latina activist in the next chapter). I take as the example the pamphlet "Cómo sobrevivir la violencia doméstica: Una guía para capacitar a mujeres maltratadas," compiled by "Peace over Violence" (formerly *the L.A. Commission on Assaults against Women*). The words are translated into Spanish, although the Wheel remains the same. The original methodology, the process of conducting interviews, isolating themes, and so on, can apply to many different communities. But the Wheel taken alone surely is not intended to match *any* form of violence against women forever. The Duluth Project insists that conducting surveys annually is crucial. "No matter how many women come to the doors of our programs, we cannot assume that we know what they want from groups unless we ask and listen to their responses" (Pence et al. 1987, 7). The Wheel is the result of the process of conducting surveys. It should not to be reemployed uncritically.

In these new contexts, however, the Wheel is presented in such a way that subverts the original intent of the methodology. This in itself might not be a problem; time and context change, and one may rework tools, words, and so on, in a new context to revivify them. In this case, however, the Wheel has been represented in a way that is opposed to its original design. It does violence to women's experiences and is misleading. "Aquí le explicamos lo que es la violencia doméstica y qué recursos existen para ayudarle a protegerse a si misma y a sus hijos. [Here we explain to you what domestic violence is and what resources exist that can help you protect yourself and your children]." While I appreciate the activists' efforts in naming abuse, I worry that there is something vaguely patronizing in "explaining" what domestic violence is to Latinas. Raising consciousness among Latinas is important; however, the *Rueda* names *for* Latinas what violence is, instead of soliciting them to name it in their own terms. The purpose of the guide is consistent with the way that the Power and Control Wheel is presented. "La Rueda de poder y control" (diagram 5) is introduced as a *description* of violence. "Este diagrama representa todas las formas en que su compañero violento abusa de usted para mantener control sobre su vida. [This figure represents all the ways in which your violent partner abuses you in order to maintain control over

La rueda de poder y control

Este diagrama representa todas las formas en que su compañero violento abusa de usted para mantener control sobre su vida.

Por lo general, el nivel de violencia aumenta con el tiempo y los golpes se hacen más y más frecuentes. Una vez que su pareja comienza a tratarla así, es muy raro que el abuso deje de suceder a menos que haya algún tipo de intervención.

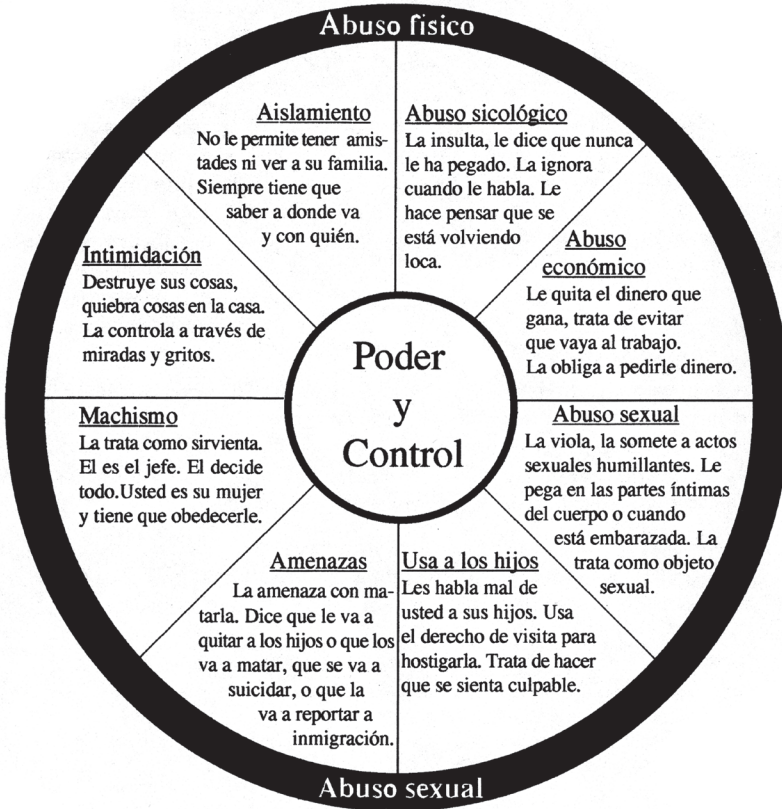


FIGURE 5. La rueda de poder y control.

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your life].” Rather than a starting point, the diagram purportedly identifies all the ways in which the reader is battered. “This diagram represents all the ways . . .” Such a purpose can only exclude certain experiences of violence that exceed the model and mold others to conform to it.

The construction of violence does not always translate so easily across race and gender lines, particularly when the batterer is himself or herself in a subor-

dinate position with respect to race and class. What might appear on the face of it as a tactic of control might be displaced rage or motivated by the pleasure one takes in being cruel or in inflicting pain, for example.⁶

For the dynamics of abuse, it may make a difference that the actors are Latino. Depicting the dynamics of battering as universal is helped along because the second diagram of the Duluth Project, the Institutional and Cultural Support for Battering, has disappeared. (Domestic) violence among Latinos is painted as homologous with any other precisely because the “institutional and cultural relationship to battering” among Latinos is not represented; it is conceptually excluded.

The proof? The text goes on to ask “¿Qué opciones tengo?” (What options do I have?) (figure 6). The options include: “centros de terapia,” “la policía 9-1-1,” “órdenes de protección” which offers the unlikely description and promise, “Son documentos de la corte que especifican que el agresor no debe acercarse a su casa o lugar de empleo, que no debe llamarla ni hostigarla. Si tiene una orden de protección y su agresor la viola, llame a la policía . . . deben arrestarlo. [They are court documents that specify that the abuser may not go near your house or place of employment, that he is not allowed to call or harass you. If you have an order of protection and your abuser violates it, call the police. They are obligated to arrest him.]” Not so much optimistic as misleading in its description, orders of protection can stipulate or proscribe any combination of those actions, or none of them. That orders of protection are in any case ineffectual is repeated over and over by women in the movement. A shelter advocate commented in an interview:

You know, when you called yesterday you came here and you wanted to talk about the orders of protection . . . Listen, I've been here for nine years and let me tell you, the orders of protection are bullshit. Absolute bullshit. This is what I tell women when they come in here: [she holds a piece of paper in two hands and places it across her mouth] “Fuck you bitch.” Does it stop that? [she punches the paper, rather alarmingly, and I am taken slightly aback, as it flutters down behind her] Does it stop that? It is one tool in your toolbox, I tell the woman [she takes the paper and neatly puts it down in front of her], along with new locks [she takes the 3M pad and lays it beside the piece of paper], a divorce order [she lays down a stapler]. These are all tools. The order by itself is just a piece of paper. (Fieldwork notes)

An order of protection, in other words, may not provide the protection it promises. The narrative of police responsiveness is, if not fictional, at least excessively hopeful. The pamphlet presupposes that the women are documented (legal residents), since it recommends that the women have their legal papers when they leave. It also presupposes that the women will be able to communicate with the police: “Si no le quiere ayudarla, ¡insista! Es su derecho. [If (the police)] do not

¿Que opciones tengo?

Líneas de ayuda para mujeres golpeadas



Servicio las 24 horas para mujeres golpeadas que necesitan apoyo e información. Su llamada es confidencial. (Teléfonos en la pág. 15).

Refugios



Casas donde se ofrecen servicios de emergencia a mujeres golpeadas y a sus hijos. La estancia es de hasta un mes. La dirección es secreta para que su agresor no pueda encontrarla.

Grupos de apoyo mutuo

Mujeres golpeadas se reúnen con una consejera para dar y recibir apoyo moral. Algunas han dejado a sus golpeadores mientras que otras siguen con ellos.

Centros de terapia

A veces hay programas de consejo en español para mujeres golpeadas en clínicas comunitarias. Llame a una línea de ayuda para mujeres golpeadas para el centro más cercano.

Tratamiento para hombres violentos

Estos programas tratan de ayudar a golpeadores a resolver sus problemas sin violencia. Por lo general, sólo después de un año de tratamiento una vez por semana se pueden ver cambios en el comportamiento del golpeador.

Asegurar su casa

Asegúrese de tener cerraduras fuertes en las puertas y ventanas de su casa o departamento.

Cambiar de residencia

Si su golpeador la ha amenazado, o si teme que un día la golpee o la mate, un cambio de residencia y teléfono es una opción.

La policía 9-1-1

Si su pareja le ha golpeado, ha cometido un crimen. Llame a la policía al 9-1-1. En Los Angeles deben arrestarlo si Ud. tiene heridas visibles.



Ordenes de protección

Son documentos de la corte que especifican que el agresor no debe acercarse a su casa o lugar de empleo, que no debe llamarla ni hostigarla. Si tiene un orden de protección y su agresor la viola, llame a la policía...deben arrestarlo.

Ayuda legal

Hay agencias que le ayudan a obtener órdenes de protección gratis. También se pueden obtener divorcios a bajo costo. Las líneas para mujeres golpeadas le darán una referencia. En la página 15 aparecen los teléfonos de varias agencias.

Clases de defensa personal

Aquí le enseñan a tener confianza en si misma. Adquiere habilidades para defenderse efectivamente de un asalto de un extraño o compañero.

Familiares, amigos y vecinos

A veces puede recurrir a una hermana, comadre o vecina. Quizá tiene pena o piensa que no la comprenderán, pero a veces nuestros seres queridos son los que más nos quieren ayudar. Pídale a sus vecinos que llamen a la policía si ven a su golpeador cerca de su casa.

Visitas supervisadas con los hijos

Si él tiene derecho de visita o si comparten custodia de los hijos, usted tiene el derecho de pedir un arreglo que la proteja de él, como visitas supervisadas por un amigo, un familiar o una trabajadora social, o en un lugar público.

FIGURE 6. ¿Qué opciones tengo?

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want to help you, insist! *It is your right!*]” (emphasis in the original) (figure 7). They also tell battered women that they can make a citizen’s arrest of their assailant, which the police are obligated to respect. It advises this as if a battered, undocumented Latina in Los Angeles were in any position to insist on anything from an L.A. cop.

The pamphlet rests upon a narrative of citizenry and nationhood (De Genova 2005; Calavita 2007; Berlant 1997). From the standpoint of space, the fact that many Spanish-speaking Latinos cross *la frontera* illegally cannot be overlooked, especially if recommending that they look for assistance from *la policía*. Methodologically, the suggestion that women go to the police or the courts is only made possible *because* they do not ask women to consider the institutional and cultural supports for battering.

N. lives and works in California. She is being harassed and stalked by her exlover who is undocumented. N. calls me to ask me what she should do. Among other things, I give her the phone number in the pamphlet “*Como sobrevivir la violencia doméstica.*” She calls the number and the person who answers recommends that she call the police, get a court order, leave and stay with friends, and seek counseling. Option one is unacceptable because she is not prepared to turn her exlover, an undocumented lesbian, over to the police. Moreover, her neighbors in this largely immigrant neighborhood are suspicious of the police and the law; they would shun her if she called the police into the neighborhood. If she were to get a court order, she would be forced to come out as a lesbian, which she does not want to do. She cannot afford to leave her home; she has made her life in the community, and to leave would be to leave everything. She does not want counseling because there is nothing wrong with her. “I was mistreated,” she says, “I do not need therapy.”

The advice she is given is consistent with that offered in the booklet: seek an order of protection, call the police, get therapy. In developing a protocol for responding to violence against women, the authors of the pamphlet clearly did not have women like N. in mind. They have not taken stock of the notion that some battered women do not want to turn their batterers over to the police, that the court system is not an acceptable option for them. The advice is not based upon, and thus does not touch down well on, the circumstances, the lived spaces of the intended audience.

As I argued above, the Duluth Project has tried to stay clear of universal psychological models. Pence remarks, “The process of education must constantly compare theory to the real experiences of women so that we do not operate from false assumptions” (Pence et al. 1987, 22). She is concerned that the popular pedagogy and its methods can become separated from their grounding in the circumstances in which women find themselves. She continues,

Such assumptions lead us to actions which do not result in changing the system. *Perhaps there is no better example of this than the Cycle of Violence*

La ley en California

En California el "castigo corporal marital," o sea, la violencia doméstica, es un crimen. No tiene que estar casada con el agresor para que la proteja la ley. Si tiene moretones o huesos quebrados la policía puede arrestar al agresor por felonía. El estado levanta cargos contra él y usted es un testigo.

En la ciudad de Los Angeles, si usted tiene heridas visibles, la policía tiene que arrestar. Si no hay suficiente evidencia para arrestar, la policía hará un "Reporte de violencia doméstica." Es importante como evidencia si algún día vuelve a suceder.

Si no arrestan al agresor, Ud. puede hacer un arresto de ciudadano (no tiene que ser ciudadana). Diga que desea hacer un arresto de ciudadano, él policía llenará un formulario y deberá arrestarlo.

Si se lo llevan y tiene miedo de que regrese a lastimarla, el policía puede ayudarle a obtener una Orden de Protección de Emergencia después de horas hábiles. Si no le quiere ayudar, ¡insista! Es su derecho. El día siguiente podrá conseguir una orden más duradera. Utilice las referencias en este libro.

Si viola la orden, ¿qué puedo hacer?

La policía debe arrestar si se viola la orden de protección. Llame al 9-1-1 y dígales que su golpeador está violando la orden y que Ud. está en peligro. Bajo la ley, la policía debe responder lo más pronto posible a llamadas de violencia doméstica, especialmente si existe una orden.

ORDENES DE PROTECCIÓN

La orden de protección ordena que el golpeador no la llame o se acerque a su casa o trabajo. Se fija una cita para que un juez evalúe la situación. Si el juez cree que usted está en peligro se extiende la orden por 2 ó 3 años.

Según la orden, usted tampoco debe contactar al golpeador. Es importante no hacerlo. Si decide volver con él, hay que ir ante el juez para anular la orden. Si usted le hace una trampa para que viole la orden y se dan cuenta las autoridades, es muy posible que no reciba la ayuda que necesita si algún día corre peligro.

La defensa personal y la ley

La ley en California dice que uno puede usar "fuerza razonable" para defenderse. Esto es el nivel de violencia requerido para defenderse de un ataque o para salvar su vida.

Bajo la ley, no se puede reaccionar injustamente (pegarle a alguien que le pide la hora), o usar fuerza excesiva (usar una pistola contra un agresor que no está armado) o tomar venganza contra un agresor.

En ciertos casos una mujer que usa una pistola contra un agresor sin armas ha usado "fuerza razonable" si no tenía otra opción y temía por su vida.

Si lo lastimo al defenderme, ¿pueden arrestarme?

Si. La ley que obliga a la policía a arrestar cuando hay heridos puede ayudar a mujeres golpeadas que han sido lastimadas por sus compañeros. Pero, si una mujer lastima a su agresor al defenderse, puede ser arrestada.

Si la arrestan porque lastimó a su golpeador, asegúrese de que el policía lo indique en su reporte. Obtenga tratamiento médico y explíquelo al doctor como fue lesionada.

Se considera "razonable" porque los hombres suelen ser más fuertes y más grandes que las mujeres.

FIGURE 7. Es su derecho.

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