DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ARMENIAN FAMILIES
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY:
CREATION OF EDUCATIONAL BROCHURES

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Marriage, Family and Therapy

By

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Evaluation of Domestic Violence Brochure (English)

Evaluation of Domestic Violence Brochure (Armenian)
There are very limited educational resources available to Armenian speaking domestic violence (DV) victims within Los Angeles County. A DV brochure targeting Armenian youth between the ages of 12-24 can increase rates of prevention. Research indicates that Department of Justice does not track DV as a separate category of crime; therefore, DV statistics are limited to surveys of different agencies, which vary significantly. The situation in Armenia is similar. Culture and tradition appear to be a significant factor in the silence accompanying DV within Armenian families. The author has created a DV brochure in English and Armenian for the Armenian population of Los Angeles County. Professionals within the Armenian community rate it highly and request copies for their clientele.
Chapter 1
Introduction

Domestic violence is a multi-layered problem that affects many people around the world. It destroys families, decimates healthy relationships, and plants the seeds of violence for the next generation. However, its accompanying silence and denial are almost as destructive as the domestic violence itself. This is especially true in Armenian families, where the boundary between silence and loyalty is vague. Many Armenian women endure years of abuse without having the courage to act, unaware of alternatives, or lacking resources to protect themselves. The following is the story of an Armenian woman who experienced domestic violence and wanted to share her story. She also chose to remain anonymous; therefore, all names in the story are fictional.

Ani came to the United States at the age of nine, and grew up in a house with two older brothers. Her abuse started early as her older brothers treated her as an inferior, regularly forcing her to do household chores, yelling at her, and calling her names. In addition to the everyday verbal abuse, she also endured frequent beatings when she disobeyed their orders. They did not allow her to leave the house by herself, or receive phone calls from anyone her brothers had not personally met. She recalls an incident of misplacing something that belonged to one of her brothers at the age of 14. Not being able to find the item, she was so scared of punishment that she urinated on herself. Having lived a traumatizing childhood, Ani was eager to break away from her home by the only means she thought was available to her - marriage.

One of her few escapes was spending time with her closest friends, as her brothers knew and trusted them. Ani managed to keep in touch with them and
participate in some of their gatherings and celebrations. She was 15 when she met 16-year-old Armen at her best friend's birthday party, where he was drinking vodka from the bottle, and by the end of the night was found vomiting from intoxication. This was Ani’s first red flag; Armen had significant problems, but she ignored them. Given that she was vulnerable, “looking for love,” Armen did not need to put forth much effort to win over Ani’s heart. Unable to receive calls at home, Ani relied on arranged phone calls by close friends and get-togethers at common friends’ houses, to continue contact with Armen. However, 3 months into their relationship, Ani was already heartbroken, as Armen announced his plans to date other people. Ani was devastated! As she expressed her discomfort with dating others, Armen convinced her that “if she truly loved him, she would patiently wait for him to go through this phase of his life, without dating anyone.” This was another red flag that Ani ignored.

The next 2 years saw Ani lose over 40 lbs, and undergo a major depression. When Armen was ready to restart their relationship 2 years later, she had been “faithfully waiting for his return.” As they proclaimed their commitment for each other, Ani began to notice a gradual worsening in Armen’s behavior. Nevertheless, after 2 months of secretly dating each other, Ani and Armen engaged to be married. Meanwhile, the problems continued snowballing. Armen became ruder to Ani, frequently raising his voice and treating her with disrespect. Armen forbade her to wear “revealing” clothing, such as short skirts or spaghetti strapped shirts. Not only did she have to obtain permission from her siblings to go out, now she had to have Armen’s approval as well. These changes affected her circle of friends also, as now she was not allowed to talk to certain classmates, who according to Armen “did not bring honor to her.” He likewise
claimed that since they were engaged, this did not bring honor to him either. These were people who Armen considered “whores,” because of their outgoing and social personalities. In addition, friendships with males were entirely out of question.

Problems escalated to another level after their marriage, another 2 years later. Ani recalls an incident, during an engagement party at a banquet hall. Ani said something that enraged Armen to a point where she feared he could strike her in public. To avoid this, she ran to the bathroom, but Armen followed her. She remembers him cornering her, punching her to the ground, and then continuing to kick her, leaving her bloody and bruised all over her body. After realizing what he had done, and that others had witnessed his vicious act, he dragged Ani to the car. There, he apologized, and “explained” to her that his actions were due to his “great love for her.” Once again, Ani believed his explanation and so they devised an alternate story to tell the others, to justify her bruises. According to their story, three Mexican men had attacked them in the parking lot as they were leaving that night. The men had asked for their jewelry, but Armen had refused, therefore an altercation had ensued. The attackers had beaten Ani, taken her bracelet, Armen’s wedding ring and his cell phone. The lie was complete, and she hoped everyone would believe it.

Unfortunately, similar incidents continued and multiplied throughout their marriage, and each time Armen apologized for his actions, meanwhile blaming her for “causing his anger” and warning her “not to repeat the same mistake.” In time, Ani internalized the blame and agreed to work on those behaviors that brought about Armen’s wrath. She had grown to view men as tough, controlling, demanding, and abusive “when necessary.” As a result, Ani accepted violence as a normal male
behavior, and continued to endure abuse from the love of her life. The years passed, and the cycle continued. Armen alternated between buying her brand-name clothing and accessories to striking her and employing "sympathetic explanations." According to Ani, their relationship has not always been bad; in fact, they shared many good times together, which effectively kept her in the relationship.

Ani is still married to Armen and has no immediate plans to break up the marriage. She is aware of the availability of her choices now, but is far from taking any action towards a change. There are many factors supporting her inaction. Ani knows that if she chooses to leave Armen, her in-laws, with whom she currently resides, will not only blame her for their failed marriage, but also verbally abuse her. She also knows that divorce will bring disappointment, shame, and "dishonor" to her family of orientation. Moreover, she fears retaliation from Armen. The negative backlash of the Armenian community - shaming her for her divorce, is also in the back of her mind. With so many dynamics against her, the financial burden of supporting herself and her 3-year-old daughter without any help becomes another overwhelming factor. It is my hope that one day Ani will be able to take advantage of the resources available to her in improving her and her daughter's current situation.

When talking to Ani, the path to her awareness of domestic violence as a problem in her life, and the resources available to her, becomes very difficult to trace. Nobody has ever taken preventive measures with her; therefore, she has slowly been absorbed into a life of a victim. One can only wonder how different her life could have been had she been educated about domestic violence and recognized its destructive role early in her life.
Domestic violence is an incredibly serious problem and a public health concern in the United States. The Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief (as cited in the Family Violence Prevention Fund website, 2007) reports that “On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day” (Domestic Homicides, ¶ 1). Non-fatal abuse is even more prevalent, as Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) have found that 21.7% of females in the United States are victims of domestic violence, and this is accounting only for rape, physical assault and stalking victimization as variables. It can be assumed that if the study were to include other forms of abuse, the percentage of the victims would have been higher.

Thankfully, there is a multitude of resources available to English-speaking victims of domestic violence: both for the prevention and the termination of a violent relationship. “Break the Silence, Make the Call,” urges the National Domestic Violence Hotline website (n.d.) in their mission to educate the victims, the abusers, and their friends and families by bringing more awareness to the issue. Most importantly, its website offers a helping hand for those who reach out. Fortunately, the agency is not alone in its prevention efforts and availability of help. Other mainstream agencies include the Young Women’s Christian Association, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the American Bar Association’s Commission on Domestic Violence, The National Center for Victims of Crime and the Family Violence Prevention Fund. While there is considerable support for English speaking victims of domestic violence, a search for agencies that tend to the needs of Armenian-speaking victims in either Armenia or in the Los Angeles community shows an absence of such resources.
Statement of the Problem

While looking for resources in Armenia, I encountered only two centers that deal with domestic violence in particular. One of these centers is called “Hope”. Here is a very vivid example of the work they do, in a story about Mariam, a young woman of 23. “Irritated and ashamed by his wife’s inertness”, Mariam’s husband threw her off the second floor window (Manucharova, 2002-2003, ¶ 17). Her family members brought her to Hope and asked for the center to formalize their divorce papers; however, the staff was reluctant to do so. “The center’s aim, workers say, is to strengthen families, to help them overcome conflict situations and to recommend divorce only as a last measure” (Manucharova, ¶ 5). Eventually Hope helped Mariam get a divorce. During their first year of existence, servicing 358 women, Mariam was the first client that the agency had helped obtain a divorce. The center holds a self-evident bias that can put women in danger. The second subdivision of Hope consists of a domestic violence shelter (called Home for Mother and Child), where women can stay for a week to a month. According to the center, 49 women had stayed at the shelter during their first year.

Another article (“Domestic Violence in Gyumri”, 2005) talks about a center called “Ajakits” (supporter) based in Gyumri, Armenia. According to a report by Eva Medzorian, the center’s 24-hour hotline receives an average of seven phone calls a day (“Domestic Violence in Gyumri”). Trained volunteers, under the supervision of four paid professionals, handle these calls. According to Ms. Medzorian, during their 7-year existence, the center has helped 5,000 women, and in addition, for the past 5 years they have provided the women with psychological and legal counseling programs. Furthermore, the center organizes roundtable-training sessions about domestic violence
with an aim to educate the public. It also provides a shelter to the victims of domestic violence. Armenian International Women's Association representative to United Nations, Mary Toumayan, stated that although Ajakits offers “prevention, awareness and rehabilitation to the victims of family violence” (“Domestic Violence in Gyumri”, 2005, Politicians are Indifferent, ¶ 3), Ajakits has no government support or recognition. At the time of the report, Ajakits had one top priority: “finding funds to rent two Safe House Shelters, one in the city and one in the village” (“Domestic Violence in Gyumri”, Politicians are Indifferent, ¶ 5).

Politicians and anti-violence activists, including the Minister of Health, Dr. Mihran Nazeretyan (“AUA College of Health Sciences”, 2004) have spoken out against domestic violence, and advocated for the creation of means of education and awareness about the subject. Eva Medzorian (“Domestic Violence in Gyumri”, 2005) presented a 34-page booklet, on domestic violence in the North-Armenian region of Shirak, produced by “Ajakits” in order “to raise awareness and educate families on DV” (Roundtable Conference, ¶ 1). Although there is more awareness of the issue, these two programs discussed above appear to be the only domestic violence programs in Armenia, identified in publications.

The situation in Los Angeles is different. The members of the Armenian community have use of a multitude of resources along with the rest of the population of the area. Language barriers and cultural differences, however, often hold them back from utilizing these resources and force them to look for resources within the Armenian community itself. The Armenian Relief Society (ARS) and Armenian Evangelical Social Service Center (AESSC) assist Armenian-speaking victims of domestic violence,
but appear to be the only resources for the part of the community that does not speak English (Moreau & Ghazarian, 1996). ARS offers callers the choice of one of two counselors or in some cases refers to their psychologist Dr. Levon Jernazian (ARS Counselor, Personal Communication, September 27, 2006). In addition, ARS is quick to provide information about the YWCA as well. AESSC offers Father Demirjian’s intensive spiritual and practical premarital counseling before couples wed, and he encourages the couple “to call a priest if a problem arises, before the situation spirals out of control” (Moreau & Ghazarian, Before it’s too late, ¶ 1).

Fortunately, Glendale YWCA has become another resource for the Armenian-speaking population. The center has produced educational literature about domestic violence in Armenian. In fact, some employees of the YWCA have appeared on Armenian television to educate the community about the problem. However, neither the YWCA, nor ARS, nor AESSC seem to possess particularly engaging materials aimed at educating the younger generation of Armenians. There is in fact a dearth of domestic violence information geared toward Armenian youth.

Purpose of Graduate Project

The Armenian Community of Los Angeles County is as susceptible to domestic violence as other communities. However, professional literature about the Armenian population and resources specifically aimed at victims of Armenian descent are in short supply. More importantly, there is a lack of education regarding domestic violence and its prevention. Several forms of education, such as workshops, seminars, videos, and literature, including booklets and brochures can be helpful in the goal of prevention.
The purpose of this project is to create and produce educational brochures in English and Armenian, aimed at early prevention of domestic violence within the Armenian community of Los Angeles County. The goal of prevention is to target an audience of Armenian youth aged 12-24 within the community. Six subsections of a tri-fold brochure provide ample room offering general education to the target audience, keeping them engaged, and sparking an interest in individual research of the topic. The full color brochures will include a definition of domestic violence, information about the cycle of violence, the first signs of domestic violence, presentation of statistics among Armenians, and resources for victims. The information will be conveyed in the form of slogans, images, lists, and bullet points. The brochure will include contrasting colors and high-quality images to keep its presentation engaging and appeal to a higher numbers of people in the target audience.

A brochure about domestic violence is selected as the medium of information for several reasons, including but not limited to the observation that there do not appear to be any brochures that reach out to the Armenian community of Los Angeles County. The 21st Century has continued to change the ways people experience the world, including ways they learn information. The use of captivating and creative imagery can capture and maintain the attention of youth, and even communicate without words. In fact, effective images can stay in their memories long after they have forgotten the content. Additionally, it appears that the younger generation does not seem to accept reading as a mainstream form of self-education. A questionnaire studying the reading habits of 6th to 9th grade adolescents found that only 8% of the participants were later qualified as “readers” based on their love to read and the amount read as a leisure
activity (Strommen & Mates, 2004). Therefore, a brochure is an ideal method of communication as it requires minimal reading.

Another reason for the choice of a brochure is its high accessibility. Locations such as clinics or offices are sites where brochures can be easily displayed, picked up, and then carried in a pocket or a purse. Brochures can also be handed out after a workshop or a seminar of domestic violence for the Armenian youth. They are easy to distribute, as they can be issued to everyone in certain grade levels at an Armenian school. The size of a brochure also makes it a very appealing option.

Terminology

*Intimate Relationship*

The United States Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Statistics website (2006) defines an intimate relationship as involving “current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends including same sex relationships.”

*Domestic/Intimate Violence*

For the purposes of this project, the terms "domestic violence" and "intimate violence" will be used interchangeably because of the widespread usage of both terms and similarity of meanings.

Wide-range definitions of domestic violence are used by different governmental, civil, and non-profit agencies, making it more difficult to form solidarity in dealing with the problem. However, several definitions have become central in their usage, one of which defines the legal standpoint of the problem. The United States Department of Justice website defines domestic violence as “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over
another intimate partner. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, 
humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound 
someone” (n.d., ¶ 1). Five main forms of abuse are then defined:

1. **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, slapping, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting, hair-pulling, biting, etc. Physical abuse also includes denying a partner medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use.

2. **Sexual Abuse:** Coercing or attempting to coerce any sexual contact or behavior without consent. Sexual abuse includes, but is certainly not limited to marital rape, attacks on sexual parts of the body, forcing sex after physical violence has occurred, or treating one in a sexually demeaning manner.

3. **Emotional Abuse [also known as Social Abuse]:** Undermining an individual’s sense of self-worth and/or self-esteem. This may include, but is not limited to constant criticism, diminishing one’s abilities, name-calling, or damaging one’s relationship with his or her children.

4. **Economic Abuse [also known as Financial Abuse]:** Making or attempting to make an individual financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding one’s access to money, or forbidding one’s attendance at school or employment.

5. **Psychological Abuse [also known as Mental Abuse]:** Causing fear by intimidation; threatening physical harm to self, partner, children, or partner’s family or friends; destruction of pets and property; and forcing isolation from family, friends, or school and/or work. (¶ 3-7)
In another definition by the National Center for Victims of Crime website, domestic violence is defined as “the willful intimidation, assault, battery, sexual assault or other abusive behavior perpetrated by one family member, household member, or intimate partner against another” (2004, Definition, ¶ 1).

**Victim**

The person who has experienced abuse or violence.

**Abuser/Batterer**

For the purposes of this project, the terms "abuser" and "batterer" will be used interchangeably, because of the widespread usage of both terms and similarity of meanings.

The person who commits the abuse or violence.

**Armenian Families**

Families who are of Armenian descent and/or originate from Armenia as well as many different countries worldwide, including the Armenian community of Los Angeles County.

**Family of Orientation**

The family one is born into.

**Chapter Summary**

Armenians in Los Angeles are susceptible to domestic violence as are others; however, there is a lack of professional literature about and resources for the Armenian population. Unfortunately, there appear no programs educating the younger generation regarding domestic violence and its prevention. The creation of domestic violence brochures is being proposed, for the purposes of prevention within the Armenian
community of Los Angeles. Chapter 2 provides information regarding the statistics and available resources for victims of domestic violence, particularly those of Armenian descent. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 discuss the creation of an educational brochure regarding domestic violence.
This chapter discusses the literature relevant to the several facets of domestic violence in the Armenian family, including statistics, different outlooks, the role of culture and tradition, and a description of the cycle of violence.

Domestic violence occurs worldwide, and is not a problem of one particular culture. People commonly assume that domestic violence primarily affects developing countries, however, Conway (2004) notes that putting the burden of domestic violence within developing countries is problematic. According to her, this view not only denies the reality, but it also excuses the other parts of the world from taking action against domestic violence. Nevertheless, any research of cultural differences and similarities in connection to domestic violence is another step forward in the work against this global problem.

Statistics

*Incidence Rates in the United States*

There are several sources of statistics on domestic violence in the United States. These statistics occasionally appear in oral and literary discussion as well as academic literature. However, the United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) Bureau of Justice Statistics does not recognize, record, or track domestic violence as a separate category of crime (2006). Most of the information available about such crimes appears to be based primarily on surveys conducted by non-profit organizations and other agencies.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime data brief (as cited in the Family Violence Prevention Fund website, 2007) states, “On average, more than three women are
murdered by their husbands or boyfriends every day" (Domestic Homicides, ¶ 1). A USDOJ document (Greenfeld, Rand, Craven, Klaus, Perkins, Ringel, Warchol, Maston, & Fox, 1998) also states that an estimation of “960,000 incidents of violence against a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend occur each year” (Prevalence of Domestic Violence, ¶ 1). On the other hand, another source (Collins, Schoen, Joseph, Duchon, Simantov, & Yellowitz, 1999) estimates that about 3 million women are physically abused by their husband or boyfriend each year.

A more detailed examination of both findings resulted in some conclusions. Collins, et al. (1999) conducted a telephone survey of 2,850 women and found that 3% of the participants reported experiencing domestic violence in the past year. This percentage was then extended to the general population, and it was estimated that about 3 million women are victims of domestic violence nationwide each year. Greenfeld, et al.; (1998) does not provide specific details about the collection of their data by USDOJ, but their numbers reflect the total of what was reported to the authorities. In fact, citations of their figures neglect to mention that this is the number of both male and female victims and 85% of the that total are female victims. Moreover, the USDOJ, Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey of 1998, (as cited in the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence website, 2007) states that 25% of all rapes are marital rapes, which affect over 75,000 women every year.

Rennison (2003) cites findings of the National Crime Victimization Survey, which also states that 85% of all victims of intimate violence in 2001 were women. On the other hand, “A Report of the Violence Against Women Research Strategic Planning
Workshop” (as cited in Eastside Domestic Violence Program, 2000-2003) states that men make up 95% of all domestic violence perpetrators.

The number of unreported crimes is still unknown, however there are some estimations. Ringel (1997) has found that over two-thirds of the cases of rape and sexual assault go unreported. It has also been estimated that about 90% of all domestic violence incidents are not reported (The Spiritual Dimension in Victim Services, n.d.).

Incidence Rates in California

Although sources vary in their estimations, there is a high concentration of Armenians living in Los Angeles as well as throughout California, making statewide statistics relevant to note. Some estimates (Takooshian, n.d.) state that about 200-300 thousand Armenians live in Los Angeles; National Geographic (2004) reports that there are 200,000 Armenians in the city; whereas The US Census Bureau (2000) estimates only 64,997 Armenians living in the City of Los Angeles and 152,910 in the County of Los Angeles. Takooshian (n.d.) gives an approximate figure of about 280,000 Armenians living in California, while the US Census Bureau (2000) has recorded 204,631 Armenians in the state. The exact number is probably somewhere in between.

One of the ways of gathering statistics is looking at something feasible, such as the number of domestic violence-related calls for assistance. The Office of the California Attorney General website (2005) states that 181,362 domestic violence-related calls were made for assistance in the year of 2005 in California. Of these, 1,233 involved firearms, 3,700 involved knives (or cutting instruments), 12,867 involved other dangerous weapons, and 75,227 involved personal weapons, such as body parts. According to the statistics, this is the lowest number of calls in the last 18 years, with the
numbers steadily dropping since 2001. This may be due to the higher awareness of domestic violence, increasing prevention, growing resources for victims, or increased publicity and availability of resources.

*Incidence Rates Abroad*

Cultural factors play an important role in the study of domestic violence in Armenian families, as well as other ethnic groups. Therefore, it is essential to look at rates gathered from different countries around the world. Johnson and Hotton (2003) cite domestic violence statistics regarding married or cohabiting women 18 years of age and older, gathered from several sources. Johnson states that Canada records an abuse rate of about 29% (as cited in Johnson & Hotton). A 21.7% rate of abuse has been recorded in the United States (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Heiskanen and Piispa found a 22% rate of abuse in Finland (as cited in Johnson & Hotton). A 23% rate was found in Australia according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (as cited in Johnson & Hotton).

Examining the statistics of different populations was useful. However, it did create some inconsistency, because the type of abuse they studied was not specified. Looking into the aforementioned study conducted in the United States (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000), it was found that three types of abuse were studied: rape, physical assault, and stalking victimization. They found that 4.5% of the female respondents had experienced rape, 20.4% had experienced physical assault, and 4.1% had been victims of stalking. Tjaden and Thoennes reported that overall 21.7% of the female respondents in their study had experienced at least one of the above-mentioned forms of violence; however, they did not study psychological, financial, or emotional abuse, leaving a lot more to be desired from these statistics. This brings up further questions about
unreported incidence of domestic violence. The reporting of current abuse is narrow, which subsequently limits the validity and quality of findings.

Incidence Rates of Armenians in Lebanon

I myself grew up with the illusion that domestic violence is not a serious problem. It was only later that I realized it is one of the issues we, as a culture, do not talk about. Therefore, coming from an Armenian background, I expected to face a culture of silence, but my findings were more discouraging than predicted. The absence of official statistics along with professional literature about domestic violence in Armenian families was astounding. Only one professional article found discusses any information about Armenians in the context of domestic violence. A study by Keenan, Hadad, and Balian (1998) looks into the cultural perspective of domestic violence in low income families of Lebanon, comparing Moslem-Arab and Christian-Armenian populations. It is a qualitative study involving 306 low-income married women (all with children) in two urban Lebanese clinics. The participants were divided into two settings. The first setting studied 106 Lebanese Moslem women. The second one looked at 200 Christian Armenian women. In these two groups 95% of all women consented to the study, with only 5% declining.

The participants were involved in a semi-structured interview inquiring “if they had been physically abused by their husband and, if so, to describe the first such incident and the most recent incident” (Keenan et al., 1998, Methodology, ¶ 2). Keenan et al. also try to find out when the abuse occurred, what triggered it, and in the cases of only prior abuse: “why the violence had ended” (Methodology, ¶ 2). Of the 306 women, 10 (under 10%) of the Lebanese participants, and 50 (25%) of the Armenian participants
report physical abuse by their husbands. There are three major reasons given by the participants as the causes of the abuse: unmet marital role expectations, conflicts with in-laws, and substance abuse. There are also many overlapping reasons.

Unmet role expectations include the failure to fulfill household chores such as cooking, cleaning, managing the household budget and childcare (Keenan, et al., 1998). According to the study, an Armenian participant explained how it happened: "He came home after work and the meal was not ready, and he beat me. He has become very nervous since the war. My children are not doing well in school. He holds me responsible, so he beats me" (Context of Physical Abuse, ¶ 2). Unmet role expectations on the part of the father also predict abuse. An Armenian participant stated that her husband beat her because she wanted money to buy food, and the husband did not have any.

It is characteristic for many married Armenian couples to live with their (usually the husband’s) families of orientation. As a result, there is a high possibility of conflicts with the in-laws. However, in the case of some of the women being studied, the conflicts had translated into domestic violence. An Armenian participant (Keenan, et al., 1998) stated that when her mother-in-law’s expectations of her were not fulfilled (i.e. housework was not completed “on time”) her husband would beat her.

As indicated by Keenan et al. (1998), substance abuse is the third main cause of domestic violence, and most likely the one with the most severe consequences. An Armenian participant relayed the following story.

My husband drinks daily. Three days after my youngest child was born, it was hot and I was sleeping with the baby on the balcony. He wanted to have sex on
the balcony. I refused and he threw me out onto the street after the beating.

(Context of Physical Abuse, ¶ 13)

The study cites several other causes for abuse among the Armenian participants. These include jealousy, challenge of husband’s authority, disobedience, and lack of deference to a husband’s decisions about family matters.

**Incidence Rates of Armenians in Armenia**

Although there were no journal articles regarding domestic violence in Armenia, further research helped conclude that the Armenian print media has expressed some interest in the topic, writing about domestic violence to some extent. Abrahamian (April, 2006) reports the findings of a poll taken in 2004-2005 by the Sociometer Centre for Independent Sociological Studies; the poll involved 1,200 women from Yerevan and 8 surrounding towns and villages and was conducted jointly with the Women's Rights Centre. According to the findings, 75% of those surveyed stated that they are victims of domestic violence. In another article, Abrahamian (December, 2006) informs that 46% of the participants reported violence in the home, and a quarter of them reported the violence occurred in the presence of the children. The inconsistency between the rates describing the same study is unjustified. Neither one of the articles specifies the subtypes of domestic violence.

Another article ("Fifty Percent," 2000) on a similar survey of 1200 women from different parts of Armenia “attempts” to separate the different types of abuse. Aharon Adibekyan, the director of the independent sociological centre Sociometr in Armenia, reports that “50 percent of women suffer from violence, 75 percent of the representatives of the fair sex are subjected to physical and moral humiliation in their daily life and
about six percent - to sexual violence” ("Fifty Percent," ¶ 1). Unfortunately, these findings are also problematic, as the terminology used in the study is not accepted in the United States, making it difficult to pinpoint the exact types of abuse the participants suffered.

Another article found in mainstream Armenian media describes additional differentiated findings of a survey researching changes in Armenian society and their impact on Armenian families (Arshakian, 2002). Ethno-sociologist Mihran Galstyan, head of “Akunk” sociological center, notes that the surveys were conducted according to UN standards. The statistics show that 69.3% of the women studied had experienced psychological abuse, 7.8% experienced physical abuse, and 0.07% experienced sexual abuse.

In a domestic violence conference organized by Project Harmony (2002), Armenian representatives quote statistics from a survey conducted by the "Trust" Social Fund and Sociological Research Center in Armenia. The survey studied 400 female victims of domestic violence, sampled mostly from hospitals. Unfortunately, the Armenian representatives do not include detailed information concerning the types of abuse studied. The results they presented declared that one-ninth of the women in Armenia were victims of domestic violence (Project Harmony). That makes up about 11% of the female population. Looking at the presented findings of the neighboring countries, and the results of previously quoted studies, one can deduce that the numbers presented to this conference are not very credible.

According to Project Harmony (2002), the representatives from Azerbaijan presented a survey of 500 people from different regions of Azerbaijan, conducted by
Pathfinder International. One of the questions read, “Does your husband beat you?”
(Project Harmony, Highlights of Discussion that Emerged: Azerbaijan, ¶ 2) Of the
participants, 23% answered “Yes,” 51.1% answered “No,” and 25.8% declined to
answer. Similarly, the Georgian representatives quoted statistics from a survey of 800
Tbilisi citizens of both genders, conducted by the Young Psychotherapist Association,
with the support of Project Harmony. There was a question aimed to identify the rate of
domestic violence in Georgia. It asked, “Does DV happen in families in Georgia?”
(Project Harmony, Highlights of Discussion that Emerged: Georgia, ¶ 3) Thirteen
percent of the respondents answered “no”, 54% answered “sometimes”, 22% answered
“often”, and 10% had difficulty answering. Compared to the Armenian statistics, the
statistics of both Azerbaijani and Georgian representatives appear to be more authentic.
Unfortunately, this is yet another reminder of denial, deeply rooted in a culture of
silence.

The Different Viewpoints on Domestic Violence

The Outlook of Experts in Armenia

There appears to be some consistency regarding the percentage of psychological
abuse within the studies in Armenia, however the statistics for physical and sexual
violence do not seem very consistent and appear to be artificially deflated. When people
with involvement in the studies or the evaluations voice their opinions that appear
biased, it becomes clear how the studies have yielded unreliable findings. Mihran
Galstyan, who had participated in the evaluation of an aforementioned study
(Abrahamyan, 2006, April 07), states that “Many organizations just extort grants from
abroad, the foreign mediation into Armenian families is quite dangerous, if the woman is
constantly told her husband has no right to reprimand on her, we will not have families” (¶ 13). This statement leads to the consistent conclusion that husbands “have a right to reprimand their wives.” On another occasion Armen Ashotian (Abrahamyan, 2006, December 14), a member of the Armenian parliament, voiced a similar opinion.

Domestic violence is not a feature of our families. I think that people who want to raise this problem are really not bothered by the issue but just want to get new grants. They are lowering the image of Armenia for the sake of their own pockets. There are occasionally cases of it, but domestic violence is not on a big scale in our society. They shouldn’t present Armenia as some kind of African tribe, where people eat one another. (¶ 11)

It is unfortunate that the potential creation of laws regarding domestic violence could hinge on the support of such politicians who embody ignorance and racism.

Thankfully, there are also those who speak out. For example (AUA College of Health, 2004), Dr. Mihran Nazeretyan states that for too long domestic violence has not been recognized as a public-health issue, and only now it is becoming “an agenda item for state decision-makers and lawmakers” (AUA College of Health, ¶ 2). Furthermore, many have specific proposals of what needs to take place. The majority of experts gathered at a book presentation regarding domestic violence (Arshakian, 2002) suggested, “Increasing the number of rehabilitation centers where people can get counseling and advice on how to avoid conflicts in future” (¶ 6). Some of the suggestions of the health panel included the availability of more information, education and public discussions, involving entire families, greater mass-media coverage, and
further legislative initiatives including the cooperation of lawmakers in improving the laws regarding domestic violence.

Outside observers seem to agree. Belinda Cooper (Experts Discuss Responses, 2001), one of two authors of a comprehensive study on the domestic violence in Armenia, suggests creating new categories of crime that address the specific facets of domestic violence “with [their] own standards of proof” (¶ 7). She notes that domestic violence is different from other forms of assault, and therefore we need to deal with it accordingly. Thankfully, Cooper and Duban, her co-author of the study, are not the only outside experts taking note of domestic violence in Armenia and its neighbors.

Project Harmony (2002) organized a domestic violence conference between countries in the Caucasus, Russia, and Ukraine. Representatives from Armenia were also invited. The purpose of the conference was to share problems, solutions, and learn from each other’s information and available resources in connection to domestic violence. Each country’s representatives brought forth information regarding research projects, victim services, legal advocacy, strategies of raising public awareness, and the professional challenges in the context of each of these categories. Afterwards, they tried to summarize the lessons learned and plan common strategies. Details of this conference are presented in the previous section.

The Outlook of People in Armenia

Recognizing the problem of domestic violence is the first step in finding help. Awareness makes it easier for people to request advocacy for themselves and in certain cases helps them become their own advocates. Unfortunately, information regarding people’s awareness of the problem in Armenia and their willingness to talk about it is in
short supply. This appears to have stemmed from years of silence, which affects people's judgment regarding the possibility of change. A study of people's views towards seeking help in Armenia did not appear very encouraging. A poll's results ("Fifty Percent," 2000) show that "Armenian women are quite pessimistic about the future - 35 percent think that the situation of Armenian women will only get worse and 25 percent do not expect changes for the better" (¶ 4). Aharon Adibekyan has stressed that women in Armenia do not recognize violence as such and view it as a normal occurrence.

In another survey of 1,626 women (Arshakian, 2002) from different regions of Armenia, the participants were asked how many of them would seek help if they were victims of domestic violence. The study revealed that only 18% of the participants would ask for assistance from law-enforcement bodies. On the other hand, it was encouraging to know that at least 3.1% of the participants suggested opening shelters for victims of domestic violence.

*The Outlook of the Armenian Community in Los Angeles*

Due to the lack of literature about domestic violence in the Armenian community of Los Angeles County, I set out on a journey to gather information about the level of awareness in the community regarding the issue. The research I was planning to conduct took some unexpected twists and turns, and most of the information obtained was limited, vague, and very difficult to gather. The reason for this was most likely the sensitive nature of the subject and the overwhelming culture of silence I encountered. There were people questioning my motives, expressing distrust in the reporting parties, or simply denying the existence of any information at their disposal. I spoke to
professionals who had worked with victims of domestic violence and the findings were not heartening. Domestic violence has been defined as a problem that is exaggerated by silence. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) website states, “silence is the batterer’s best friend” (2007, Breaking the Silence of Domestic Violence, ¶ 3). The website goes on to advocate breaking the silence as a form of combat against domestic violence. If silence is so destructive, how does a culture of silence affect its victims?

Coming from such a background, I made a decision to talk to everyone and anyone who was willing to talk about domestic violence within Armenian families. Thankfully, there were people who agreed to share information. These people became an invaluable part of my work, and I extend my deepest gratification to them. I attempted to talk to psychologists, social workers, police officers, priests, and journalists. I received the biggest support at the Glendale YWCA, where many agreed to provide help. I was even able to obtain limited written materials in Armenian for the Armenian-speaking clientele.

Interestingly, the people interviewed at the Glendale YWCA (personal communication, October 12, 2006; personal communication, October 18, 2006) were very keen to point out that domestic or intimate violence is a universal problem and is not specific to one cultural, ethnic, or socio-economic group. According to a case manager at the Glendale YWCA, it is an “equal opportunity problem.” There seems to be a consensus that the problem is evident in all communities and with members of all groups, however the means of dealing with it are different, based on values, beliefs, and traditions of particular groups.
YWCA employees appear to agree that more Armenian women should take advantage of the resources offered by Glendale YWCA since it appears to be the only agency that can provide a full range of services to domestic violence victims in the Armenian language, because of the availability of Armenian employees (personal communication, October 12, 2006, personal communication, October 18, 2006). It provides the Armenian victims guidance, resources, and the empowerment needed to break through the violence and take action. The case manager from Glendale YWCA was excited about the ongoing change of Armenian women from being quiet, shy, and accepting of abuse to women who stand up for themselves. Due to the low rate of Armenians asking for services from the YWCA, in some instances, YWCA case managers take the initiative and search out Armenian victims of domestic violence from police department files to contact themselves (personal communication, October 12, 2006). If the perpetrator is to pick up, they make an excuse for calling, so as not to disclose their identity. However, if the victim is to pick up, having confirmed their safety, the YWCA case managers discuss their services.

In a separate interview, a volunteer coordinator at the YWCA (personal communication, October 18, 2006) commented on the subject of one of the myths regarding the three major subdivisions in the Armenian community: the “Hayastantsis” (Armenians from Armenia), the “Parskahyes” (Armenians from Iran), and “Beirutsis” (Armenians from Lebanon). According to the volunteer coordinator, the perception is that Armenians from Armenia tend to be the abusive members of the community, and they are the ones who need the services, but this is false (personal communication, October 18, 2006). It was also noted that statistics show about one out of three women
in the United States are potential victims of domestic violence and that Armenians are naturally included in the statistics.

During my journey to collect information regarding domestic violence in Armenian families, I also witnessed E. Karagezian, a volunteer coordinator from Glendale YWCA on a one-time appearance on a live Armenian talk show “Right to Speak” (Moradian, 2007). The discussion of the day circled around the problem of domestic violence within the Armenian community, in which people were encouraged to call-in with their ideas. There was a variety in the dozen or so calls made to the program. Two of the callers spoke about their sons being overprotective of siblings, especially sisters, which seemed to lead to early marriages for them, to escape. Others praised the work being done and asked for YWCA’s phone number. However, there were also defensive phone calls. One caller defended a “man’s right to check his wife’s mileage,” if he is suspicious of her, while others blamed the women for causing the abuse themselves by having exercised their human rights.

Another agency willing to discuss domestic violence within the Armenian community was Ark Family Center. A counselor at the Ark Family Center (personal communication, December 6, 2006) agreed that there is a lack of statistics available concerning incidence rates within the Armenian community and that the only resources available to Armenian-speaking victims are YWCA and therapy. The counselor was aware of the extent of the problem within the Armenian community and maintained that prevention can be achieved through the education of the next generation. It appears that one of Ark’s goals is to involve more people in social services and advocacy, bringing much needed help to the field. In my pursuit of finding information within the
community, there were many closed doors and half-hearted responses as well. Many of the people I made contact with cited different reasons in refusing a face-to-face meeting.

I contacted several Armenian psychologists, asking for an interview. One of them called back the next day after receiving my message, and stated that he does not have the expertise of working with victims of domestic violence. I inquired if any of his clients had experienced domestic violence, and his answer was “not enough of them.” I think he either did not wish to talk to me or did not like the topic.

Another Armenian psychologist’s secretary contacted me within a week of receiving my message, and inquired who I was and what I wanted. She was satisfied with my response and stated she would call me back. The next day I received a call back and was asked some questions such as where this research will be published and why I contacted them specifically. Only then, she told me that the psychologist would be contacting with me within 7-10 days. After waiting for two months, I decided to call him again and this time he called me back to inform me that his work is not based on statistics but on his own life experiences, and therefore he is of no use to the research. He elaborated by saying that he has very little information about domestic violence within the Armenian community, and it involves specific cases, which he cannot disclose.

Several people in the field pointed me towards Armenian Relief Society (ARS), not only as a resource for victims of domestic violence but also as a good source of information. I visited the center and explained what I was looking for, and was quickly informed that nobody from the counseling center was present. Instead, I was given a phone number where I could leave a detailed message for them to call back. I left a
message for the counselors, introducing myself and informing them of the nature of my research. An ARS counselor contacted me, informing that there are two counselors and a psychologist that deal with domestic violence, however none of them has enough expertise to discuss the matter. I asked for an interview in any case, and the counselor promised to call me back. I later received a short message from the same counselor, notifying me that the psychologist is the only person that deals with domestic violence victims, and that he is too busy to meet for an interview.

On another occasion, I tried to locate someone at “Asbarez,” one of the more prominent newspapers of the Armenian community, to discuss their coverage of domestic violence within the Armenian community. After I finally located the person to talk to, he informed me that to the best of his knowledge, there are no articles about domestic violence. I’ve come to another dead end.

I also visited Armenian churches and left some messages for several priests. However, most of those messages were not even returned. The one priest who agreed to an interview, wished to remain anonymous. It was during this interview, however, that I began feeling a greater awareness of the extent of the denial within the community. This particular priest was relatively accessible and agreed to the interview without much hesitation. These factors raised my optimism until the actual interview began. The priest’s response to my first question about his awareness of intimate violence within the community was that [Armenian] women here know their rights and sometimes take advantage of them. It was apparent; the denial was in full force. Details of this interview will be discussed in the next section.
I also wondered if law enforcement would have nationality-specific information on the subject. I decided to contact Glendale Police Department for statistics regarding Armenian families due to the high concentration of Armenians living in the city of Glendale. A Los Angeles Times article (Covarrubias, 2005, August 8) states that the City of Glendale is “now home to about 85,000 Armenians, one of the largest populations outside Armenia itself” (¶ 15). The US Census Bureau’s estimations are more modest in comparison. According to their findings (2000), the Armenian population of Glendale consists of 53,840 people.

I hoped I would finally be able to gather specific information. However, contrary to my beliefs, this was not as easy as expected. I spoke to several people and finally reached the person who could give me the information. The officer was extremely polite and sounded very interested in helping me. After listening to what information I was asking for, he promised to get back to me. Unfortunately, the only response I received from him was an email stating that the Glendale Police Department Records classify Armenians in the category of “white,” therefore there are no specific statistics outlining the rate of domestic violence in Armenian families. Further attempts to contact the officer were unsuccessful. Another avenue has been successfully blocked.

**Culture and Tradition**

Armenians in Armenia and in many countries around the world remain a rather conservative group, holding their culture and traditions in high value. One important aspect of Armenian culture is the immense importance placed on pride in one’s family. This pride makes the decision to reveal any family problems to others very difficult and shameful.
The needs of the family always took precedence over individual needs, and the importance of maintaining a strong sense of family honor was continually reinforced. Armenian children were taught not to bring shame (amot) to the family name. The precedence of family over individual needs seems to be maintained among present-day Armenians as well. (Dagirmanjian, 1996, p. 385) Lissa Nicholson of the Glendale YWCA (as quoted in Moreau & Ghazarian, 1996) explains it in the following manner:

It's very hard for an Armenian woman to come forward for help, or an Armenian man to come forward and say, "I'm a batterer and I need help," because in the Armenian community you don't air your family problems in public, and that's the challenge for this community—it's a cultural issue. (Admitting the Problem, ¶ 5)

A case manager from Glendale YWCA (personal communication, October 12, 2006) agrees that domestic violence is not a topic that is ever talked about in the Armenian community, further stating that, often, Armenian women put other Armenian women down for talking about their own traumatic experiences of domestic violence. The case manager recalls declining an appearance on a live television show to discuss domestic violence because of the fear of being verbally attacked on air.

Another element that can further complicate the incidence of domestic violence in an Armenian family is the involvement of members of the abuser's family of orientation as additional abusers (personal communication, October 12, 2006). A Glendale YWCA case manager was careful not to claim that the phenomenon is non-existent or even rare in other cultures, but stated it appears to be present in the majority of victims in the Armenian families. The following was brought up as an example of
one such situation. An Armenian man brought over a woman from Armenia, married her, and then locked both her and their child in the garage. The husband’s mother, who lived in the same house, was obviously aware of the situation, but did nothing about it for several months. When the victim finally did manage to escape with the help of her mother-in-law, she had cigarette burn marks on her body, and reported that her husband had urinated on her. The mother-in-law was charged as an accomplice for knowing but not taking action until much later (personal communication, October 12, 2006). In other cases, the husband’s family members have much more of an “active role” in the abuse. A great number of Armenian couples live with one of their (mostly the husband’s) families of orientation, which intensifies problems within the family.

There appears to be a double standard within the Armenian culture. On one hand, we are taught to respect the women, and over sanctify mothers; on the other hand, there are blind eyes turned to the abuse of many women. In fact, often women are blamed for the abuse. Early 20th century writer Yervand Otyan wrote his thoughts on “beating women” in a literary essay titled “Should the Woman be Beaten?”

As a result of the wrongly interpreted modernization, women get less beating than in the good old times. ... The day the habit of beating women totally disappears among us, ‘the gentle women of the Armenian world’ will cease to exist. (as quoted in Abrahamyan, 2006, April 07, ¶ 32)

Similar messages can be found in some folk sayings such as “Woman is wool; the more you comb it, the softer it gets,” “A husband’s beating is like a rose’s pricking” (as quoted in Abrahamyan, 2006, April 07, ¶ 28), or “Women are like rugs, you got to
whack them once a month” (Glendale YWCA case manager, personal communication, October 12, 2006).

Sometimes violence is even associated with the selection of mates. A 78 year old Armenian male defines it as a very useful tool: “If the woman escapes in a corner of the house when you beat her, then she will become a wife; if she runs out, then she will not” (as quoted in Abrahanyan, 2006, April 07, ¶ 30). This is how he had chosen a wife for himself, and later - wives for his sons; he was satisfied with the results.

Unfortunately, a lot more is done to keep the family intact rather than addressing the problems within. In many instances, mothers advise their daughters to stay in an abusive relationship for the sake of the children. Some women think that since they were abused, it is inevitable for the younger generation to experience the same pain. Hence, the problem becomes normalized.

Outside attempts to empower women are at times viewed as attacks on the family. Ms Karagezian states that when she goes on Armenian television shows to talk about domestic violence, people always call to blame her for trying to break up families. She poses a powerful question: “How do you define family? (Moradian, 2007)” It appears as though many people have defined concealment of problems as “loyalty to the family.” Consequently, many in the community are unaware of the severity of the problem of domestic violence.

The previously mentioned priest, whom I interviewed, agreed that domestic violence is present in the community and needs some attention; however, he followed this by saying that domestic violence is highly overestimated and deeply misunderstood.
He claimed that it is not nearly as big of a problem as it used to be since women now know their rights and take advantage of them sometimes.

He was rather agitated about the fact that some women do not want to exclaim the traditional “I do,” when asked if they agree “To obey” their husband at the altar, as part of an Armenian wedding ceremony. In essence, he felt that there is no more sanctity of marriage, women just talk back over and over and finally get their husbands to beat them. He maintained that some of the causes of domestic violence are disobedience and talking back. Both are actions on the part of a woman and, therefore, pin the responsibility on her. When asked about solutions, the priest suggested for the couple to seek counseling before marriage, which may be conducted by a priest or a therapist. It is unfortunate that such priests, embodying sexism, could conduct pre-marital counseling for the prevention of domestic violence.

**Cycle of Violence**

Although some agencies and experts list four or more stages to the cycle of violence, the general consensus in the field appears to be a cycle with three phases (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, n.d.; Eastside Domestic Violence Program, 2000-2003; Divorceinfo, 1996-2007) that are most commonly referred to as the tension-building phase, the acute battering incident, and the honeymoon phase.

The phases vary in duration and there is no set time on how long the whole cycle may last, as it may vary from a few hours to a year, or more (Oakland County Coordinating Council Against Domestic Violence [OCCCADV], 2004). OCCCADV notes that, “Not all domestic violence relationships fit the cycle” (¶ 6).
The tension-building phase is the time when tension begins building between the couple because of the aggressor's abusive way of dealing with problems connected with finances, work, children, etc. (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, n.d.). This is often accompanied with verbal, psychological and physical abuse. In attempts to exert power and control over the victim, the batterer (who is more likely to be using alcohol or drugs) becomes more possessive, critical, and unpredictable (Eastside Domestic Violence Program, 2000-2003).

Although the victim can often predict what is about to happen, these thoughts are repressed and there is a refusal to confront reality (Divorceinfo, 1996-2007). Instead, fearful of a more severe incident and attempting to avoid adding to the tension by any means, the victim tries to calm the abuser by using whatever has worked in the past. Frequently the victim begins experiencing anger, but does not recognize or express it, which often results in a depression (Divorceinfo). As the tension continues building, it becomes apparent that there is going to be "an explosion."

A certain incident becomes the trigger point for the explosion of the tension, and an acute battering incident occurs (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, n.d.). This incident often has nothing to do with the relationship, it can be as trivial as difficulty at work or problems on the road. Sometimes, knowing that it is only a matter of time until the batterer explodes, the victim may provoke the incident at an opportune moment, such as at a time when children are not present (Divorceinfo, 1996-2007). Generally, the acute battering incident is shorter in duration than the other two phases. In terror, the victim tries to defend everyone, including the children, simultaneously trying to find a place to hide (Eastside Domestic Violence Program, 2000-2003). The violence during
this phase can be very serious, and the victim may be severely hurt (Abuse Counseling and Treatment). Once the violence has begun, the victim is powerless to stop it, only the batterer can put an end to it.

When the wrath subsides, the batterer realizes the line was crossed, and often apologizes for the abusive actions, promising never to act in such a way again (Abuse Counseling and Treatment, n.d.). The batterer believes that the victim has learned the "lesson," and floods the victim with gifts and loving behavior. In this honeymoon phase, the batterer may also minimize or deny the abuse, to make it easier to forget for both of them (Eastside Domestic Violence Program, 2000-2003). This often affects the victim's judgment, causing them to minimize or deny the abuse. Desperately wanting to believe in the change, the victim is easily convinced by the perpetrator's words and actions, and is rededicated to the relationship (Abuse Counseling and Treatment). The two connect emotionally once again, strengthening their commitment to the relationship. This is when the cycle of victimization becomes complete, because the good times of the honeymoon phase keep the victim in the relationship, allowing for recurring victimization. In time, the feelings of the honeymoon phase wither away and the couple once again returns to the tension-building phase.

**Chapter Summary**

In the beginning of this chapter there is a presentation of the incidence rates of domestic violence in order to illustrate the prevalence of this problem within the United States, California, the Armenian community of Lebanon, and Armenia. These statistics also shed light on the amount of information available and the ways that different parts of the world treat domestic violence.
In order to contextualize the role of domestic violence within the Armenian community of Los Angeles County, there was an introduction of diverse viewpoints of the problem in Armenia and in the Armenian community of Los Angeles County. The description of the role of culture and tradition within Armenian families demonstrates some of the ways such viewpoints are shaped. Both of these segments are geared towards a better understanding of Armenians and the specificities of domestic violence within Armenian families. An explanation of the cycle of violence concludes the chapter. This is yet another tool used for decoding the complexities of domestic violence. Chapter 3 provides information regarding the preparation of the educational brochures for the Armenian community.
Chapter 3

Project Implementation

This chapter discusses the development of educational brochures, which aim to inform the Armenian community of Los Angeles about domestic violence. There is a lack of educational resources for victims within the Armenian community and specifically there do not appear to be any brochures or other written information that reach out to this sizeable portion of the Los Angeles community. Following is a detailed narrative, which discusses how the brochure was developed, the intended audience, publication and distribution plans, and its contents.

Brochure Development

Having decided to create an educational brochure, I conducted research regarding other such publications within the Armenian community. Although there are many brochures regarding domestic violence in general, I found none in the Armenian language or tailored for the Armenian community. The only encountered piece of literature with a similar format, in Armenian, was a booklet (translation: “Going Home Needs to be Safe”) created by the Domestic Violence Unit of Community and Senior Services, County of Los Angeles. It consists of 20 pages and contains a lot of useful information. However, the booklet has some drawbacks: the writing is rather long and the booklet is not very accessible, because of its size. It is also not very engaging, as its technical appearance is not designed to capture and maintain attention, or to communicate anything through images.

A brochure, on the other hand, is more accessible, and if correctly constructed, can provide enough information to spark interest for further research regarding the
subject. Its creation would also provide variety in the Armenian community, where there is an ongoing need for more resources. A study (Thompson, Rivara, Thompson, Barlow, Sugg, Maiuro, & Rubanowice, 2000) found that domestic violence brochures placed in clinic restrooms were very well received, as patients took them on a regular basis.

I researched numerous brochures to learn more about their formats, type of information included, and graphics. After this research, I formed an outline that clearly organized the important information into different segments of the brochure. The information was gathered from previously cited sources within the literature review, and other sources which are included in the references. After the completion of the writing, I translated the information into Armenian so as to make it available in both languages.

Once the text was ready, I began searching for a graphic design specialist, to make certain that the brochures had visual appeal, as this is more effective in capturing or maintaining interest in today’s image intensive culture. I met with a graphic designer at 3 Corners Publishing who had experience with creating designs aimed at the Armenian community. He was very intrigued by the idea of contributing to such a project.

After becoming more familiar with the severity of the problem and reviewing the information to be included in the brochure, he readily agreed to assist in the creation of the design and presented the project to his agency. In a matter of a week, 3 Corners Publishing made a unanimous decision to publish and assist in printing of the brochures. They viewed this as a healthy step towards prevention of domestic violence within the
Armenian community, and wished to contribute. After we completed the design, the brochures were as appealing as they were informative; they were ready for publication.

**Target Audience**

The target audience of this brochure is Armenian young people, aged 12-24, educating them for the purpose of prevention of domestic violence. The cover of the brochure is captivating; it is meant to appeal specifically to a youthful audience. The brochure is meant to give youth knowledge and tools to prevent abusive situations when they arise in the future. However, it can also serve as a tool of empowerment for those who are in domestic violence relationships already. Armenian-speaking youth are equally targeted with English-speaking youth, as there are two versions of the brochure, one for each group of the Armenian community.

**Distribution Plan**

The plan for distribution consists of three parts. At the time of gathering information for this project, I came across several professionals who were helpful in providing me with resources for the completion of the project. Most of them also showed great enthusiasm regarding the creation of a brochure focused on domestic violence for Armenian clientele. In fact, the majority of the people I interviewed or met during my work on the brochures have asked me to provide them with copies of the brochures. Considering the high level of networking within the Armenian community, it is safe to assume that more people will be requesting copies of the brochures because of their associations with the people who will carry them.

The second part of the distribution plan is based on a meeting with an Armenian therapist who has a live show on Armenian television. Although he was unable to
provide any information about the prevalence of domestic violence in Armenian families, he extended an invitation to his television show as a special guest once the brochure was completed. He wished to share the information contained in the brochure and bring it to the community's attention as a valuable tool against domestic violence.

Moreover, in my communication with 3 Corners Publishing, I was made aware that they would want to place a copy of the brochure on their website and organize a fundraiser to publicize the brochure in order to collect necessary funds for widespread distribution in clinics, doctors' offices, and other places, throughout Los Angeles County.

**Brochure Outline**

Following is a detailed outline of the Domestic violence brochure in English. The Armenian version of the brochure is a direct translation. The brochures are intended to be distributed side by side so that the English-speaking Armenians will recognize it as something that is directed toward them, since the cover does not explicitly state that the brochure is for Armenians. The covers are not specifically directed to Armenian speaking people, so as to encourage English readers to take interest also.

It must also be noted that pages 2, 3, and 4 include a picture of chains as a background, which directly relates to the wording used in a portion of the text encouraging the victims to liberate themselves from the “chain of violence.” Similarly, the background of page 6 (the resource page) is a picture of an open door leading from darkness to the light and lush green pastures. This is intended to symbolize the fact that there is an opening to a brighter future once the victim commits to taking the necessary steps to freedom.
A. Title: “Domestic Violence is a Crime!”

B. Graphics: Picture of verbal abuse by a man who is shouting at a woman, while the latter is attempting to embrace him with love.

C. Statistics: On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends every day.

**Page 2: What is Domestic Violence?**

Definition of domestic violence:

A. Physical Abuse

B. Sexual Abuse

C. Emotional or Verbal Abuse

D. Economic or Financial Abuse

E. Psychological or Mental Abuse

**Page 3: Cycle of Violence**

Description of the cycle of violence:

A. Tension-Building Phase

B. Acute Battering Incident

C. Honeymoon Phase

**Page 4: First Signs of Domestic Violence**

A. The importance of timely detection of first signs of domestic violence.

B. A listing of first signs.

C. Slogan: Break the Chain of Violence – Seek Help!

**Page 5: Domestic Violence in Armenian Families**
A. Information about domestic violence in Armenian families. This is included in order to inform the community about the severity of the problem, and to inform victims that they are not alone in their experience.

B. Domestic violence statistics of Armenians in Armenia. This is included in order to inform the public and victims that this is a global phenomenon which needs to be addressed rather than dismissed as an unavoidable byproduct of stress caused by being displaced from one’s homeland.

C. Information about domestic violence statistics of Armenians in Los Angeles.

D. Slogan: Break the silence – Stop the Violence

Page 6: Resources for Armenian Women

A. Recommendation to seek help when experiencing domestic violence.
   1. Glendale YWCA
   2. Ark Family Center
   3. Armenian Relief Society

B. 24-Hour Hotlines: A listing of 24-hour hotlines.

Chapter Summary

Due to the lack of educational resources about domestic violence in Armenian, I chose to create a brochure to address that need. After conducting the appropriate research, and deciding on a target audience, I constructed a distribution plan, organized the information, and designed a brochure with help from 3 Corners Publishing, whose staff agreed to also publish and assist in printing of the brochure. Chapter 4 includes the brochures in both languages.
Սիրելում Թանգարան
Վար Շարալյանի

Օգտություն Թանգարան
Վար Շարալյանի

Երբ այն հասկացվում է, որ այս թանգարանի անցքերով մասնակցիները
ազդեցություն նկատում են այս թանգարանի տեսանկյուններով իրենց
նախապատրաստության մեջ, այն թանգարանը իր աշխատակիցների հետ
միավորելու համար հանդիպումի կազմի մեջ է ընդգրկվում։

Թանգարան YWCA (818)240-0888
- Մարդիկներիի ծառայություն
- Հեծանյութի բացվածք՝ հեծանյութի ծառայություն
- Վաժանական առևտրի ծառայություն
- Սոցիալական ծրագրերի պատմություն
- Ուսումնական ծրագրեր, որոնք պատմություն

Անհեղեղված և հայտնի է, որ այս թանգարանը
նույնպես իր բնապահանջները կարող է տալիս ազդեցիկ
աշխատակազմների գործում

Ար Շարալյանի
- (818) 626-1045

Մանկավանք իր հեծանյութի ծառայություն
- Օգտություն ծառայություն
- Սըրտի պատմություն
- Քաղցրերի տեղեկություն

Վար Շարալյանի
- 24-րդի հանդիպումներ
- Մանկավանք ծառայություն
- Մանկավանք ծառայություն հանդիպում

24-ամյան հանդիպումներ
- Ազգային Թանգարան
- Սնկություններ
- YWCA Ընտրային ծառայություն
- Թանգարան YWCA (818)242-1106
- Աշխատակիցներ (818)626-0439
- Սպահարիի Պետ-Պետրոսյան (818)540-4000
- Սպահարիիի Պետ-Պետրոսյան (818)794-2439
- Համազգային Թանգարան ապահովում շենք
Ըստ է պատմության նշանակություն

Երկրի հայ բյուզանդական ճանաչության հարցը, որը ծնվել է մասնակի տարածքներում այգիների առաջին շրջանում, հայ պատմության մեջ տեղ է գտնվել.

Մարմնադրված Բռնության գործարանը, ապացույցներ, հրուշ, գազար, գազար, հրուշ, մարմնը ռազմական, նրա մշտական գործընթացը ստեղծվել է պատերազմի փուլավորման կենսագրակցությամբ.

Մարմնադրություն ռազմական ձևով գործարանի հարցում, կատարվում է հաջողության համար, ատենախոսության արիթախոսության մեջ. Մարմնադրության մեջ տեղ է գտնվել.

Հայկական Դադարան Ազգ

Այստեղ պատմությունները համարվում են հասավ մի դասական փուլը, որը ծնվել է մասնակի տարածքներում. Բռնության իրականացնում է դասական համակարգի փորձարարություն, նրա մշտական գործընթացը ստեղծվել է պատերազմի փուլավորման կենսագրակցությամբ.

Այստեղ, մերժելով տարածքի քաղաքական համարվում է, որը ծնվել է մասնակի տարածքներում. Բռնության իրականացնում է դասական համակարգի փորձարարություն, նրա մշտական գործընթացը ստեղծվել է պատերազմի փուլավորման կենսագրակցությամբ.

Հայկական Դադարան Ազգ

Այստեղ, մերժելով տարածքի քաղաքական համարվում է, որը ծնվել է մասնակի տարածքներում. Բռնության իրականացնում է դասական համակարգի փորձարարություն, նրա մշտական գործընթացը ստեղծվել է պատերազմի փուլավորման կենսագրակցությամբ.
If you are experiencing domestic violence, ask for help immediately! There are agencies in the community that are able to help Armenian-speaking clients.

Glendale YWCA: (818)240-0888
- Information about your rights.
- Individual and group counseling services.
- Placement in temporary shelters at the request of the victim.
- Legal, housing, work-related, school-related, and health care assistance.
- Child-caring programs.

Ark Family Center: (818)662-7045
- Individual and group counseling services.
- Additional education regarding domestic violence.
- Availability of services without regard to age, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual preference, or national origin.

Armenian Relief Society: (818)241-2972
- Individual counseling services.
- Necessary referrals for additional assistance.

24-Hour Hotlines:
- Emergencies: 911
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline: (800)799-SAFE (7233)
- YWCA Domestic Violence Shelter Hotline: (818)242-1106
- Valley Trauma Center (For victims of rape): (818)886-0453
- LA County Child Abuse Hotline: (800)540-4000
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: (800)SUICIDE (784-2433)

On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends every day.
What is Domestic Violence?

It is the use of fear to exert power and control over a spouse or a loved one. There are several forms of domestic violence:

Physical Abuse:
Hitting, slapping, shoving, grabbing, pinching, hair-pulling, biting, denying a partner medical care, forcing alcohol and/or drug use, etc.

Sexual Abuse:
Coercing (or attempting to coerce) any sexual contact or behavior without consent; marital rape, withholding affection, attacks of sexual nature.

Emotional or Verbal Abuse:
Undermining an individual's sense of self-worth and self-esteem through constant criticism, downgrading one's abilities, naming-calling, or damaging one's relationships with others.

Economic or Financial Abuse:
Making or attempting to make an individual financially dependent by misusing total control over financial resources, withholding one's access to money, or forbidding one's attendance to school/work/etc.

Psychological or Mental Abuse:
Causing fear by intimidation through threats of physical harm to self, partner, pets, property, or others. Isolating the victim from family, friends, school, or work.

Cycle of Violence

Often abuse is not constant, but occurs in cycles which usually consist of three phases:

Tension-Building Phase
Tension builds between the couple as the batterer gets upset, communication problems, financial problems, work, children, etc. This is often accompanied by verbal, psychological and physical abuse. An intense point occurs before a severe incident and attempts to relieve the tension by any means: she "works on you".

Immediate Batterer Incident
A severe incident occurs, often due to a more severe incident and attempts to relieve the tension by any means: she "works on you".

Honeymoon Phase
When the batterer calms down he realizes that he went too far, and often apologizes for his actions, promising never to act in such a way again. He believes that the victim has learned her "lesson" and floods her with gifts, attention, and loving behavior. Desperately want a change, she is easily convinced and rededicates herself to the relationship. In time, the feelings of the honeymoon phase wear away and the couple once again returns to the tension-building phase.

First signs of Domestic Violence

Often the abuser is a pleasant and well-loved individual, which is why the victim feels like she is in a fairy-tale. Abuse starts slowly, sometimes with criticism of appearance or behavior. All of this decreases the chances of detecting signs of abuse in the abuser's actions. Therefore, it is imperative to recognize the initial signs of domestic violence, to prevent the problem. It is essential to be alert when your partner:

- puts pressure to get involved quickly.
- is jealous or possessive and tries to control you.
- humiliates and criticizes you in front of others.
- monitors your actions - where you go and what you do.
- has a bad and unpredictable temper.
- blames you for his problems or mistakes, without taking responsibility.
- threatens to hurt you or your loved ones if you leave.
- isolates you from friends and family.
- hits you.

Break the chain of violence - Seek Help!

* About 85% of victims of domestic violence are women.
** Which may also be considered as the first phase.
*** About 95% of perpetrators of domestic violence are men.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

Due to many factors, there appears to be a culture of silence regarding domestic violence within the Armenian community of Los Angeles County. This silence passively re-victimizes those who have already suffered from its pain. The culture of silence is also reflected in the lack of educational resources available to Armenian speaking victims within the community. The only resources available are a few agencies that provide help to victims who ask for assistance; however, many do not recognize their own victimization. I concluded that there was a need for a domestic violence brochure, targeting Armenian youth of Los Angeles County between the ages of 12-24. Such a brochure could encourage communication regarding the subject and educate many regarding the complexities of domestic violence, subsequently increasing rates of prevention.

The United States Department of Justice does not track domestic violence as a separate category of crime. Therefore, all statistics are limited to surveys of different non-profit organizations, agencies, etc. These statistics vary significantly due to the different methodology used to collect the data and variations in the criteria used to define domestic violence. Thankfully, there are numerous resources available to English-speaking victims of such crimes in the United States.

The variability of domestic violence statistics abroad is similar, including countries like Armenia. However, the only professional article found regarding domestic violence rates in Armenian families, within and outside of Armenia, is about the Armenians living in Lebanon. Many experts in Armenia voice their disapproval
regarding the current methods of dealing with domestic violence and demand changes in the legal system and a greater effort geared toward prevention. Nevertheless, resources are still very limited. The silence accompanying domestic violence within Armenian families appears to be rooted in the form of cultural norms.

After reviewing the existing educational resources for the Armenian-speaking victims of domestic violence, a brochure was created in English and in Armenian to serve the Armenian community of Los Angeles County. The brochure was presented to a panel of 13 professionals within the Armenian community for evaluation of effectiveness. The panel commended the brochure and 9 out of 13 of its members requested copies for their clientele.

**Brochure Evaluation**

The two brochures and two evaluation sheets (one for each language) were presented to a panel of professionals within the Armenian community asking them to rate the brochures based on categories of: accuracy, appeal, clarity of language, topic insight, relevance to Armenian clientele, and availability of resources. For example, the statement for the category of appeal was “Great appeal based on well-proportioned graphics and writing.” All categories were to be rated on a scale of -2 (Strongly Disagree) to 2 (Strongly Agree), with 0 being “Neutral/No opinion”. The evaluation also provided room for comments. The members of the panel were asked to evaluate one or both of the brochures to the best of their language skills.

There were 13 professionals evaluating the brochures, including four experts from the YWCA (counselors, group coordinators, etc.), four social workers, three psychologists, and three marriage family therapists. Every one of them had experience
with domestic violence victims. All of the members of the panel participated in the evaluations, resulting in nine evaluations for the brochure in English, and seven evaluations for the brochure in Armenian.

Several members of the panel acknowledged a lack of information about domestic violence statistics in Armenia, marking 0 (no opinion) for accuracy. Because of this, accuracy is the lowest rated category with an average score of 1.11 for the English brochure (as shown in Table 1), and 1.14 for the Armenian (as shown in Table 2). The other categories of the evaluation have relatively higher ratings for both of the brochures (as shown in Tables 1 & 2). Some of the members of the panel also used the comments section to voice their enthusiasm regarding the availability of a domestic violence brochure for the Armenian community of Los Angeles County. One of the evaluators called it “a wonderful asset for our community,” as it can empower victims to ask for assistance in stopping the cycle of violence. She went on to note that having the brochure in two languages will be very important, as it will “be helpful to those who have language barriers.”

Another evaluator praised the brochure because of the broad spectrum of people that it can benefit, including domestic violence survivors, social workers, teachers, etc. A third member of the panel admired the author’s use of language that is neither pedantic nor condescending. He added that although much more could be presented about domestic violence, a brochure would not be sufficient for everything to be included. The brochure was well accepted and 9 out of the 13 members of the evaluating panel requested copies of the brochure for their clientele.
Table 1

*Evaluation Scores of Brochure in English*

<table>
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<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Appeal</th>
<th>Language clarity</th>
<th>Topic insight</th>
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Table 2

*Evaluation Scores of Brochure in Armenian*

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<th>Language</th>
<th>Topic insight</th>
<th>Relevance to Armenian</th>
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1.14 | 1.86 | 1.86 | 1.71 | 1.71 | 1.71
Discussion

Creating domestic violence brochures for the Armenian community of Los Angeles County was a very rewarding experience. It furthered my knowledge on the topic and on the nuances of producing informational material for the greater population. One of the most valuable lessons was about the importance of technical soundness which has an important bearing on the effectiveness of the brochure.

Fortunately, the panel of evaluators had some experience with such projects which enabled them to offer valuable suggestions to fine-tune the brochure. For example, one of the evaluators suggested including within the brochure the fact that the different stages of the cycle of violence can vary in length. Another one suggested including withholding kissing and sex as part of the definition of sexual violence. This enabled me to make the brochure more informative and effective. Another lesson I learned from the feedback was the importance of being succinct and not flooding the reader with too much information. This defeats the effectiveness of the particular format.

Due to several reasons, I have not made all of the suggested changes of the evaluators. I was unable to substantiate some of the suggestions within the existing literature. Other suggestions were not included in order to make the brochure more effective by limiting it to the most pertinent information.

Future Work

A great deal of work remains to be done in the field of domestic violence within Armenian families. Brochures in English and Armenian are a welcome step forward, but they will not single-handedly solve the problem. I will be working in the future on the
further development of the brochures, augmented by the feedback from the targeted audience and other professionals in the field.

In addition, by publicizing the problem in Armenian media, and through face-to-face meetings, I hope to encourage other professionals to make their own contributions in battling this problem within our community. I hope that with our combined effort, we can influence changes in our culture and, while working on expansion of treatment resources, we can work on the most important aspect of this problem – prevention.
References


Appendix A: Consent to Participate in Interviews

ASHOT TADEVOSIAN
INTIMATE/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
INTERVIEW RELEASE FORM

I, __________________________________________________________

Street ______________________________

City ______________________________

State(Region) ______________________

Postal Code(zip) _______________________

Country __________________________

Phone ______________________________

E-mail (capitals) _______________________

have agreed to be interviewed by ASHOT TADEVOSIAN, a graduate student in the Marriage Family
Therapy Masters program at California State University of Northridge. I grant ASHOT TADEVOSIAN
full rights of ownership to any interviews of me and agree that ASHOT TADEVOSIAN may publish any
interviews in print in his graduate thesis or project, or electronically on a web site on the Internet in any
language. I grant ASHOT TADEVOSIAN exclusive permission to use direct quotes or paraphrases of the
interview conducted.

I agree that ASHOT TADEVOSIAN may use my name, and statements without further approval on
my part. I release ASHOT TADEVOSIAN, and its assignees and designees, from any and all claims and
demands arising out of or in connection with the use of such material, documents, and artifacts, including
but not limited to, any claims for defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

I understand that ASHOT TADEVOSIAN plans to retain the product of my participation as part of
his graduate thesis or project and that the materials may be used for exhibition, publication, presentation in
public, on the World Wide Web and successor technologies, and for promotion of awareness, prevention,
and termination of intimate/domestic violence in any medium.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signed ____________________________________________

Date ______________________________

Interviewer's Name ______________________________________

Signature of Parent or Guardian
(if interviewee is a minor) ______________________________________

Printed Name of Parent or Guardian Date ____________________________
Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What is the extent of your awareness about the problem of intimate/domestic violence within the community?
2. What is the extent of your personal contact with victims or perpetrators of intimate/domestic violence?
3. Are you aware of any sources of information regarding the incidence rate of intimate/domestic violence within the Armenian community?
4. How serious of a problem do you think it is?
5. Are there any steps that are being taken towards identification and termination of incidents that you are aware of? If so, what are some?
6. Are there any steps that are being taken towards prevention that you are aware of? If so, what are some?
7. Are there any resources (i.e. hotline, counseling) available to victims of intimate/domestic violence that you are aware of?
8. What are some cultural aspects that make this an especially sensitive issue?
9. What other factors should be taken into consideration when dealing with the issue within the community?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about the topic?
Appendix C: Proposal to Obtain information from Glendale YWCA

A Proposal to Obtain Statistical and Personal Information Regarding Domestic Violence in Armenian Families

Glendale YWCA
October 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you today, to inform you of my background and the work that I am currently involved in, and to request your assistance in obtaining relevant information for it. I am a full time Masters Degree student of Marriage Family Therapy at California State University of Northridge, on my way to graduation in Spring of 2007. I am currently in the process of writing my thesis on the very sensitive subject of intimate violence in Armenian families.

Coming from an Armenian background, I am well aware of the beliefs, traditions, and values of upbringing in most Armenian families, part of which is keeping family matters within one's family. Having witnessed other cultural expressions also, I came to the preliminary conclusion that these values within Armenian families appear to have fostered a culture of silence regarding negative experiences in the everyday lives of many people. One of these experiences is domestic or intimate violence. Because of these cultural aspects, domestic violence appears to be a particularly sensitive issue in the Armenian community.

In my quest to spread some light on the problem, and come up with some recommendations, I have begun researching the topic in professional journals, newspapers, by contacting police departments, Armenian therapists, priests, non-profit organizations, YWCA, etc. Unfortunately, I have not yet been successful in finding much information on the subject within the professional literature. I believe the reason for that partially may be due to the culture of silence. Another assumingly very valuable resource, the Glendale Police Department, informed me that Armenians have been categorized under “white” in their records, and therefore specific statistics about the prevalence of domestic violence in Armenian families cannot be produced, as they cannot be separated from the rest of the population in this “white” category. Several Armenian therapists I have contacted, for whatever reasons, did not wish to speak at any length about the subject either.

Because of the difficulty of finding relevant information so far, I have come to rely on other means of obtaining information, some of which are listed above. One of the resources that I hope can be very beneficial is Glendale YWCA because of its experience in dealing with victims of domestic violence, and the vast Armenian population that resides in the area.
The specific information that I am looking for can be in any form, as long as it can help me get a better understanding of the problem in the Armenian community, and look for likely solutions. This can be done through statistics or personal stories, since one paints the whole picture, while the other adds brushstrokes, making the picture considerably more personal and therefore easier to identify with. At the same time, I understand and respect the rules and regulations that Glendale YWCA adheres to, and would not request anyone’s name against their will, which could potentially compromise that person.

What I am asking at this point are any statistics about the prevalence, forms, and frequency of the abuse that may be at your disposal. The other type of information that I hope you may be able to provide me with are any personal stories (without names) that may give symptoms, warning signs, and methods used to deal with the situation.

Due to the sensitivity of the information and the confidentiality of the people involved, I understand the information that is available may be limited, however I hope you will take into consideration, the professional matter with which this information is intended to be used, and the goals of the thesis/project, which are to serve the community at large. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ashot Tadevosian
Marriage Family Therapy Trainee
California State University of Northridge
Appendix D: Evaluation Forms for the Educational Brochures

Evaluation of Domestic Violence Brochure (English)

Please circle the appropriate boxes as they pertain to the different aspects of the brochure regarding domestic violence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral/No Opinion</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>All of the facts are accurate</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great appeal based on well-proportioned graphics and writing</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language is understandable to all</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete understanding of topic</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very relevant to Armenian clients (victims, family members, abusers, etc.)</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ample resources available</td>
<td>-2</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
### Evaluation of Domestic Violence Brochure (Armenian)

Please circle the appropriate boxes as they pertain to the different aspects of the brochure regarding domestic violence.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral/No Opinion</th>
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