

Narrating the past to vision the future: Constructing civil society with  
women in Ukraine

By

Maureen P. Flaherty

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Peace and Conflict Studies

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Copyright © 2010 Maureen P. Flaherty

*Dedicated to the memory of Charlotte Sande Flaherty (Sandy) and Martha Zemlynska*

*Thank you for courageously sharing your life stories and your dreams.*



Figure 1 Oak Tree Medallion — designed by Krista Reid, Winnipeg

## Acknowledgements

There are so many people to thank and I can only name a few. This study began with a conversation in Ukraine several years ago and has been fueled by many conversations, both heard and not heard in the ensuing years. Martha Zemlynska, who is no longer with us, nurtured and inspired me with stories and caring in her home in Lviv. Brad McKenzie invited me there in the first place and, along with supporting my return, encouraged me to keep studying. Andy Zawarski introduced me to the music and earth of his birthplace. Sonya Stavkova was conduit, mentor, and friend without whom this study would have taken on a very different character. Halyna Harasym's wisdom and social directing skills, kept me fed, on track, and laughing all the way. My advisors – my 'team', Jessica Senehi, Charlotte Enns and Iryna Konstantuik taught, mentored, and inspired while cheering me on. I cannot imagine a finer, more critically respectful advisory committee. The Mauro Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, directed by wise, kind Sean Byrne brought me into the fold and helped me realize more of "what can be". Thank you also to Gayle, Susan, and Robyn who magically make things happen – and with a smile. Yuriy Rashkevych, Laryssa Klymenska, and Nina Hayduk of Lviv Polytechnica always welcomed me and provided the place and support to work. Slavik, Lutfor and Ihor did much more than provide technical expertise and heavy lifting. Charlotte (Sandy, here in spirit) and Terence Flaherty (here in every way) led us to be curious, seek to understand, and to contribute rather than take away. Kristina, Mandy and Heidi buoyed me up with their encouragement and understanding. Fred Beckwith's patient readings, superb photography, and humour were just part of his never-ending support as I pursued my dream. You gave me a soft place to land. "Thank you" does not approach the gratitude I feel to all of you mentioned here.

I am also grateful to the Iryna Knysh Memorial Foundation for the scholarship that boosted me over the top – and for the inspiration of the late Iryna Knysh herself.

Finally, on behalf of myself and all who read this study, I thank the women of Lviv and Simferopol, Ukraine, who so generously offered their stories, their dreams, and time out of their busy lives to share what it means to be alive and engaged. *Dooja Dyakuyu!*

## Abstract

Peace processes require an opening to self and others — a willingness to confront what is and to vision beyond present challenges to a brighter future. This type of engagement is crucial for the peaceful development of healthy, functioning societies — societies such as Ukraine, a country thrust without preparation from regional Soviet status to independent country searching for democracy. Eighteen years post-Independence the Ukrainian parliament continues to flounder unsupported by citizens. Active participation in civic affairs required for democracy is unfamiliar for most Ukrainian citizens, having internalized centuries of divisive oppression under a series of authoritarian regimes. Democracy-building and peace-building require participant agency and voice; rising out of oppression, people often need support to speak about and transform their lived experiences. This study, cognizant of the centrality of gender analysis in any context, explored the roles women’s shared narrative, dialogue, and group-visioning play in the support of personal empowerment and bridge building between diverse communities. The study invited women from the European Union-focused Western region of Lviv, Ukraine and the more Soviet/Russian-identified Eastern region of Crimea, first to share their personal stories with the researcher and second, to meet in their regional groups to vision for themselves, their families, and Ukraine. The third phase of this study invited these diverse regional groups to meet in a neutral space, reflexively exploring their parallel processes, while in phase four participants reviewed their experiences of the study. Despite initial beliefs that they have little in common, women in both regions said study participation changed them. They found telling their stories “from beginning to end” allowed them to reflect upon their own values and strengths, and having connected with themselves and their roots, they were then able to reach out to others. Rather than looking for differences, participants sought ways to express a shared vision for an inclusive, functional, peace-building future for themselves, their families, and Ukraine as a whole.

## Table of Contents

TABLE OF FIGURES	7
INTRODUCTION	8
CHAPTER 1: STUDY CONTEXT: UKRAINE	18
CHAPTER 2: GENDER, EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE: WOMEN HOLD UP HALF THE SKY	40
CHAPTER 3: FINDING OUR VOICES: NARRATING OUR LIVES	92
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY: TELLING STORIES, SHARING VISIONS	145
CHAPTER 5: UNCOVERING STORIES BENEATH THE SNOW: JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010	165
CHAPTER 6: RETURN TO UKRAINE: JULY 2010	260
CHAPTER 7: REVIEWING THE PROCESS: WHAT HAS THIS GOT TO DO WITH PEACEBUILDING?	304
CHAPTER 8: PEACEBUILDING INFORMED BY WOMEN'S WORK IN UKRAINE	323
APPENDICES	332
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION IN UKRAINIAN IN ENGLISH	
CONSENT FORM IN UKRAINIAN IN ENGLISH	
CONFIDENTIALITY FORM IN UKRAINIAN IN ENGLISH	
INTERVIEW GUIDE	
PATH PROCESS	
WORKS CITED	346

## Table of Figures

Figure 1	The silver oak tree medallion	3
Figure 2	Map of Ukraine	18
Figure 3	Lviv city centre in February, 2010	162
Figure 4	Working off the grid: Beside the market in Lviv, Winter, 2010	162
Figure 5	Leinin points the way, February, 2010	163
Figure 6	On the road to Simferopol, February, 2010	163
Figure 7	At the corner of Karl Marx Street, Simferopol, February, 2010	164
Figure 8	Simferopol city centre, February, 2010	164
Figure 9	“I remember everything.”	172
Figure 10	“Our father survived.”	176
Figure 11	The train between Lviv and Simferopol, July, 2010	257
Figure 12	Vendors on the platform in Southern Ukraine, July, 2010	257
Figure 13	Another stop on the way to Simferopol, July, 2010	258
Figure 14	An evening break along the way, July, 2010	258
Figure 15	Time for reflection	259
Figure 16	Fields of gold	259
Figure 17	“Only in Lviv does the Statue of Liberty have the chance to sit.”	271
Figure 18	Visioning in Lviv	283
Figure 19	Lviv celebration	287
Figure 20	Visioning in Crimea	292
Figure 20	Celebration in Crimea	298

The train ride from Lviv to Simferopol is one thousand kilometers each direction — twenty-four hours to tell stories, eat home cooked foods, raise a glass of cognac for good health and friendship, sleep, read, and watch the ever-changing countryside go by. Twenty-four hours provides a glimpse into the rich diversity of Ukraine, as we travel from one world to another. We notice the change in language and culture as each platform stop brings a different assortment of vendors and wares. The vendors, mostly women, are few in the West, providing *boulichki*, *verenky*, warm vegetables and drinks. The language of platform commerce is Ukrainian for the first few hours of the trip.

Proceeding south to Crimea, the summer fields are different from those further west and north. These fields might have smaller plants, the earth sown with its second crop for the season. Again, the platform merchant population is mostly female with vendors selling apricots and baby pears, lavender, smoked fish, varieties of drinks, and mounds of stuffed toys. Here, statues of Lenin stand proudly beside the tracks. The language of trade is Russian. If you use Ukrainian, you might be challenged.

This thousand-kilometer journey is about half-way across a country rich in resources of land, people, history and culture. There is dissatisfaction, strife, and division as people struggle to find a way to live harmoniously and prosper together despite huge challenges. The struggles are seldom violent. Rather, there is an unreliably jerky tension between the need to meet basic physical needs for family, and the desire to create much needed services which, scarce as they might have been, disappeared with the collapse of the Soviet Union. While some kind of shared vision is necessary for

a country to coalesce, contested histories, identities, needs and rights threaten to destroy the fragile democracy that is slow to develop in Ukraine.

### **Why I wanted to do this study**

Put in the simplest possible terms, a peace culture is a culture that promotes peaceable diversity. Such a culture includes life ways, patterns of belief, values, behaviour, and accompanying institutional arrangements that promote mutual caring and well-being as well as an equality that includes appreciation of difference, stewardship, and equitable sharing of the world's resources among all its members and with all living things. It offers mutual security for all mankind in all its diversity through a profound sense of species identity as well as kinship with the living earth. There is no need for violence. In other words, peaceableness is an action concept, involving a constant shaping and reshaping of understandings, situations, and behaviours in a constantly changing lifeworld to sustain well-being for all. (Boulding, 2000, p. 1)

The music of Russia and Ukraine has always struck a chord in my soul. My first trip away from North American soil was at the end of 2000 when I was invited to teach a small social work course in collaboration with a CIDA-funded project, Reforming Social Services: Canada-Ukraine<sup>1</sup>. With many factors coming together, this was a turning point in my life. I met people who had entirely different life experiences and who were willing to open and accept my humble and clumsy offerings as they continued to work for changes not dreamed — let alone conceptualized — ten years previous.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reforming Social Services: Canada-Ukraine was a multipronged CIDA-funded project whose educational component involved the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Social Work, Winnipeg, Canada, and Lviv Polytechnic University, Lviv, Ukraine. One of the main foci of the project was to develop a sustainable, accredited Social Work program at Lviv Polytechnic. The community also had to be involved in this process as advisors and as resources for training budding social workers. Part of the project then included responding to a need for training and resource development in the community.

In 2002 I accepted a position naming me “the person on the ground” for this same project. I lived in Lviv, Ukraine, for approximately 18 months of the next two years, developing and teaching courses for a new social work faculty at Lviv Polytechnic University and working with Lviv citizens to develop innovative social services. My new colleagues spoke little about their histories unless specifically asked, and then they seemed surprised that I was interested.

During informal and class discussions we spoke about the use of the word “I.” People were clear that personal point of view and preference were of little consequence outside the family home: the machinations of the State or others in authority would decide the future. Speakers often used the third person, “it could be that,” even in responding to inquiries about their own health.

I spent the winter of 2002 – 2003 in Lviv. It was a cold winter, and the building we were teaching in had no central heating. In response to my exclamations about the radiators not working, folks commented that the university had not yet turned on the heat. To manage in the shared small space of the multi-windowed instructors’ office, we women would sit, backs to the windows, parkas on, wearing gloves to type our class notes. Periodically, one of us would perch directly upon the small portable heater to facilitate a thaw while others laughed at our folly. Still, in spite of the bone-chilling cold I experienced, I had no idea that my colleagues were much, much colder. I would go home to a heated apartment after a day’s work and crawl into a hot bath. I later learned that many of my colleagues had neither heat nor hot water in their homes because the

State did not turn on the heat until December 1 that year. Being a guest in the country, I was protected emotionally and physically from many every-day hardships.

Return trips to Lviv to conduct workshops in 2004 and 2005 reminded me of the strength and resilience, the humour and depth, of Ukrainian people in spite of ongoing adversity. I also experienced the faltering hope Ukrainians had for their country and future.

### **The silence of hopelessness**

Ukraine and Ukrainians have struggled long to survive as families, and as cultural entities in their once-region, now-country. The country is multifaceted and multi-layered. If Ukraine were to be considered in a musical context, perhaps it would be as individual voices in sometimes competing choirs as will be seen in the chapters that follow. The twentieth century united a divided country under one authoritarian regime within the USSR. The response to the regime depended upon many variants — history being one of them (Marples, 2007).

When the USSR — Russia, really — offered Ukraine independence in 1991, the choice was made almost by default (Politkovskaya, 2007). The Orange Revolution of 2004 was the first time the people themselves rallied cross-country. Ukrainian citizens, tired of ongoing government corruption, little infrastructure, and continued economic struggle, were uplifted when President Yuschenko, having survived an assassination attempt during the lead-up, was elected (Page, 2004). At least half of voting Ukrainians

actively chose their president rather than accept one by default. They had new hope that their country would develop and prosper as a state.

For the first six months of his term, Viktor Yushchenko was seen to move Ukraine ahead, particularly in areas supporting development and expression of Ukrainian language, culture, and religion. Unfortunately, with ongoing infighting and unaddressed corruption in government, the Ukrainian economy continued to struggle. The Orange Revolution was not followed by the policies and programs necessary to install a concrete, functional infrastructure for Ukraine.

Ukrainians became increasingly cynical about possibilities for a prosperous Ukraine. Prosperity meant living such that each adult need not have two or three jobs in order to eke out a modest living for his or her family. The divide between a largely pro-European west and pro-Russian (generally more prosperous) east seemed to widen. People verbalized great fear for the future (Bukkvol, 2009).

Ukrainians who might be considered 'middle-class' spoke about the day-to-day challenges to put bread on their tables. They spoke of disappointment in their leaders and a sense of helplessness to effect any change.<sup>2</sup> Even the historically and culturally important support of family was being eroded by the economically necessary migration of family members. Employable young adults were leaving to take *any* paid job

---

<sup>2</sup> When I worked in Ukraine in 2001-2003, university colleagues would line up every second Tuesday to collect their pay packets. Often the money was not there. At that time, and reportedly to this day, a full time university instructor may make one hundred seventy-five Canadian dollars a month. A reasonable middle income was and is still approximately five hundred Canadian dollars. Most of those jobs are working for companies based outside Ukraine.

anywhere to send what money they could home.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile seniors in particular were forced to go to the streets to sweep them, or to stand, hand out, head bowed, begging in order to survive.<sup>4</sup> This was not peaceful living.

International media proclaimed abroad the near disastrous management of the Ukrainian parliament (Bertelsmann-Stiftung, 2010). Written and spoken messages I received mumbled despair. Women spoke with shame and sadness about their spouses losing their jobs. Most single incomes left the employee living far below subsistence level. People scrambled to sell things and live as frugally as they could, not foreseeing a better future. They spoke about fear for their adult children. Nobody complained to the outsider, but when asked pointed questions, jovial chat would drop briefly and the truth would come out. Many spoke with bitter nostalgia about Soviet times: at least then the suffering was supposed to be shared by all, and for a purpose. There always seemed to be a plan even if the citizens had no idea what it was. People were being looked after.

Ukraine's fifth presidential election was scheduled and rescheduled, finally to be held in early 2010. News from Ukraine was dismal. Russia had cut off gas because Ukraine did not pay the bill (BBC News , 2009). There was an ongoing power struggle

---

<sup>3</sup> Even more than in the first years of the twenty-first century, many Ukrainians are looking abroad for survival. Those able to find work in Poland, Turkey, Greece and other countries move away and send money home. One apartment I lived in had been vacated but remained owned by a couple who had gone abroad five years previous to earn money for the family. They left their children to be raised by grandparents. See for example Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (2007) for an example of the extent of the migration.

<sup>4</sup> From 2000 to this day, church courtyards and street corners are populated with seniors with their covered heads down and their hands out. The numbers reportedly decreased for a year or two after the Orange Revolution, until the economy took another dive in late 2008. I have continued to observe that many of the labourers who conscientiously sweep the streets and manually remove snow from the sidewalks are senior women. My winter of 2010 reinforced this understanding.

between Yulia Tymoshenko and Viktor Yanukovich, the two people who had led the Orange Revolution (Atlantic Council, 2009). Their primary opponent had a history of criminal involvement and close ties to Russia (Harding, 2010). People talked about not bothering to vote if they talked about the election at all.

### **Peacebuilding curiosity**

Democracy of any kind requires citizen involvement. How do people become involved in a democracy when they don't have a picture of how their democracy could look and function? What if people don't see their own strengths and so can't focus their energies to collaborate with other citizens for their future?

History told me that Ukrainians all across the country had gone through unimaginable challenges. Still, little of the past was shared with outsiders and only recently is the history of these hard times being spoken about within families in Ukraine. Meanwhile, people's strengths, the ways they managed without major civil violence, generally remains unexamined.

Narrative has long been used as a peace-building tool in some cultures. Recently, truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) in South Africa (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003; 2010) invited victim stories to hold perpetrators accountable and rewrite official history hopefully moving toward healing from unimaginable trauma. A TRC in Canada now aims to acknowledge the pain and suffering of Aboriginal residential school survivors asking survivors to tell their stories as one step towards reconciling a traumatic past (Government of Canada, 2009).

I wondered if narrative could be used in Ukraine as a tool for resource identification through the internal and external dialogue that is part of sharing story. Both narrative therapies (Anderson, 1997) and solution focused practices (Duncan & Miller, 2000) assist individuals to speak aloud their personal stories, acknowledging strengths that shepherded them through hard times; narrators then develop a story or a vision for a future where people continue their lives peacefully unfettered by the past. While not labeled as narrative creation, this type of visioning is also often used by communities as they strategically create plans for their futures (Homan, 2004).

I wondered, “What would happen if people — women — were invited to speak about their personal experiences? What if women were invited to think about the past, through the present, into their dreams for the future? Further, what might happen if people — women — who are so diverse shared their thoughts and dreams with each other?” Could this kind of work inform peace-building practices?

### **This study**

This study tells the story of what happened when women from two diverse regions of Ukraine were invited to tell their stories, including their hopes and dreams. After telling their individual stories, the women were invited to gather in groups within their regions to vision together for the future of their country. The women then reached across the country — in their regional groups — to speak with each other about what they could do to support each other in their personal work as well as collaborate further for the future of their families, and their country.

To anchor the study, the next chapter shares some of the context in which the study took place. Ukraine, the setting for this study, continued to change during the preparation and throughout the work of the study itself. The context continues to change.

The literature review that supports this study is found in chapters two and three. Chapter two focuses on gender and empowerment in social change — the rationale for asking women in particular to participate in this study. This is a relatively new area of research even though women have always played a role in social change toward construction of a more humane world. Chapter three relates to the uses and power of narrative since narrative is the primary tool used in this action research.

### **Peacebuilding possibilities**

The research work in Ukraine follows the introduction to context and literature review. In this study, to most accurately reflect their experiences, the eighteen women participants from two diverse regions of Ukraine share their stories in their own words, through their own voices. The participant stories and collaborative work lead to some simple and powerful conclusions about possibilities for navigating around the boundaries of issues to create possibilities for work toward super-ordinate goals<sup>5</sup>. The women themselves also shed light on the elements of personal storytelling and group

---

<sup>5</sup> Lederach (2003) writes about the need to look for places where people can and do work around conflicts finding ways to collaborate toward common goals.

visioning that could become part of the foundation of peace-building in diverse communities.

# CHAPTER 1

## Ukraine: Land of blue and gold



Figure 2 Map of Ukraine (from [www.myukraine.info](http://www.myukraine.info), 2010)

The setting for this study is Ukraine, a country rich and diverse in history and in the present day (Marple, 2007; Reid, 2003/1997/1985). Shaped by centuries of oppression through divisive and authoritarian control, Ukraine has distinct east-west regions. Different regional occupation experiences are visible to this day in the architecture, language, and religions of eastern, southern, and western Ukraine. Differences are also evident in the ways people think about independence, the ways they vote, and the ways they treat symbols of previous regimes (Zviglyanich, 1998 ). With Independence

suddenly thrust upon the country in 1991, Ukrainians were cheated of the opportunity to build foundations necessary to prepare for active engagement in civil society (Politkovskaya, 2007) — involvement in building their future(s). This complicated history is interwoven and reflected in all other aspects of Ukraine's existence.

Still struggling internally for the vitality dreamed of with Independence declared in 1991, Ukraine teeters on the verge of overt ethno-political conflict (Marples, 2007; *Kyiv Post*, 2010). In order to better understand its complexities, Ukraine can be viewed through a gendered lens (Enloe, 2010; Reardon, 1996; Sylvester, 2002) which then focuses on numerous intersecting factors.

Social Cubism as a model of analysis helps to understand Ukraine's challenges by isolating six factors which are constantly shifting in interaction and relationship. These factors are history, demography, religion, economics, politics, and psycho-cultural factors (Byrne & Carter, 1996).

## **Inter-related factors**

### **History**

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Ukraine has been a nation torn apart by occupying forces themselves in conflict. Western Ukraine has been in turn the property of Austria, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, and Russia. Ukraine lying east of the Dneiper River has for the most part remained under the rule of Russia with Kyiv, Ukraine's present capital, once bearing the auspicious title of 'mother' for Russia (Billington, 1970; 2004).

Events following the dawn of the twentieth century are the most present for twenty-first century Ukrainians. This is due not only to proximity in time. The twentieth century also brought further twists and layers to already complicated stories and histories. Following World War I (WWI) in Western Europe, Western Ukraine made a failed bid for independence, leaving behind groups of committed patriots. Instead of independence, western Ukraine was annexed to Russia as part of a pact made between warring Russia and Germany in 1939 (Marples, 2007). In part, this meant that western Ukraine was added to the other, more southern and eastern regions expanding one of the republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and completing the introduction of Communism to the whole of the area comprising present day Ukraine. Although the Soviet experience imposed some unity across Eastern bloc countries, this meant a total shift in philosophy and in everyday living for many people in Western Ukraine. The shift was particularly meaningful, disruptive, and indeed devastating to people who owned land. In order to increase the number and size of collective farms, or *kolkhoz*, the State appropriated 'for the people' the land of anyone who was seen to have more than his share. Dekulakization<sup>6</sup> involved killing or deporting 'well-to-do' farmers and their families, those who perhaps owned stock along with their small plot of land allowing them to live relatively autonomously (Berkhoff, 2004).

After mixed responses to directives to construct collective farms from those privately owned, millions of Ukrainians starved to death while still required to fulfill

---

<sup>6</sup> The word 'kulak' in Ukrainian means clenched fist indicating perhaps some power and tight-fistedness.

their quotas of grain and produce committed to the Soviet Union. This time in history, in the early 1930s — now known as *Holodomor* — carries its own set of contested narratives. Were people deliberately starved as Stalin's punishment for their 'disobedience' of the collectivization policies, or was this horror the result of nature and neglect (Marples, 2007; Amis, 2002)? The reality is that reluctance or inability on the part of farmers to provide the correct quota of grain was seen as a threat of Ukrainian nationalism and was followed by attacks on Ukrainian culture, churches and intellectual institutions (Berkhoff, 2004). The stories of Holodomor, long silenced, are now being brought to the surface fueled by money and energy of the Ukrainian diaspora, situated mainly in Canada and the United States.<sup>7</sup> Of course, these stories are contested, even within Ukraine (O'Neil, 2010).

Then, the invasion of Nazi Germany through Western Ukraine in 1942 brought what some saw initially as liberation from Soviet oppression and a new chance for an independent Ukraine. Other Ukrainians saw the Nazis as the enemy. Still others saw just another oppressor (Berkhoff, 2004; Marples, 2007). During this time ethnic groups in both Ukraine and Poland — people who had managed to live together in relative harmony for centuries — were deliberately pitted against one another. From the point of Nazi rulers, ethnic Ukrainians followed close behind Jews as the most contemptible humans. German policy and practice dictated that the newly available land of Ukraine

---

<sup>7</sup> In addition to the work of Berkhoff (2004) and Marples (2007) see films such as *Famine-33* directed by Oles Yanchuk, now available in Ukraine and abroad in Ukrainian with English and other sub-titles (Yanchuk, 2004).

was to be settled by Germans. Eradicating Ukrainians cleared the way (Berkhoff, 2004; Marples, 2007).

The return of the Red Army after the battle of Stalingrad was seen by many in the east as the return of normalcy — the homecoming of Mother Russia. For more people in the West who had suffered the scorched earth policy as the ‘Cossacks’ retreated in 1941, the Red Army return might have brought home conscripted relatives, but it also meant the return of yet more oppression and a severing of connections with those farther west (Berkhoff, 2004; Marples, 2007). The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ideally should have provided equal opportunities for all people within every soviet. As it was, Stalin’s five-year plans were inequitably punitive. Some present-day republics organized, working overtime to free themselves from this autocratic rule (Figes, 2007). Soviet stories, spoken aloud outside the USSR, were used for a variety of purposes as noted in my introduction. Within the USSR, whispers are now being broadcast within Ukraine and other parts of the former Soviet Union in movies such as *The Soviet Story* (Snore, 2008), adding to the multiple and contending discourses of Ukrainian identity.

Ukraine came finally to Independence in 1991; however, unlike several other republics, this happened quietly, without many rallies and protests by the populace. Even though more than ninety per cent of those who came to the polls in 1991 voted for Independence believing they would be better off without Russia (Pavlychko, 1997), some say that Independence was thrust upon Ukraine before it was ready to take on

the huge tasks of autonomous living (Politkovskaya, 2007). More recent developments in Ukraine are discussed in the sections following.

### **Demography**

Present-day Ukraine suffers from depopulation with a post-Independence rise in infant and adult mortality that is just beginning to stabilize (Shanghina, 2004). Prior to Independence, beginning circa 1989, intelligentsia and religious leaders who had been banished to Siberia as punishment by the Soviet regime were allowed repatriation rights, and an estimated 1.6 million people from the former USSR returned home. The population flow continued until 1993 when the birth rate in Ukraine began to decline and the death rate increased. In 1996 there were 800,000 deaths<sup>8</sup> and 500,000 live births<sup>9</sup> (Zviglyanich, 1998) with this early mortality being attributed in part to poor pensions, malnutrition, and lack of health care in early post-Soviet times.<sup>10</sup>

Disposed toward survival, many pensioners long for the paternalistic Soviet times when food, shelter, and basic healthcare were available to all. In addition, lack of viable

---

<sup>8</sup> The death rate in Ukraine is one of the highest in Europe, and among working-age people, it is estimated to be the highest anywhere in the world (Shanghina, 2004; Piroshkov & Safarova, 2006). The death rate of men exceeds that of women by two or three times in all age groups, but is most noticeable among thirty-to forty-five-year-old citizens within the boundaries of reproductive age. Besides physical health reasons, death in this age group is particularly high due to unnatural reasons, with suicide being the number one cause of unnatural death.

<sup>9</sup> Babies who die within the first week of life in Ukraine are said to have died from complications of pregnancy.

<sup>10</sup> *The Earth Times*, October 2007, indicates that the birth rate in Ukraine has been showing a slow but steady increase since January 2007, with up to 17 percent more births in the Western regions of Ukraine. Still, the death rate overrides the increase at this time.

employment and/or the lack of a living wage<sup>11</sup> push many younger Ukrainians to ‘traffic’ their labour to countries such as Poland, Germany, and Italy, among others. While legally remaining Ukrainian citizens, these women and men work to send money home to their families, while remaining physically unavailable to support their families or the infrastructure that would help develop this country (Maksymovych, 2007; Malarek, 2004). An estimated 70 percent of the illegal migrant workers are women — many lured abroad with the promise of work as nannies, housekeepers, etc., but for whom virtual slavery in the sex trade all too often becomes their lot (Malarek, 2004; Maksymovych, 2007). Other educated working-age people move abroad particularly to Britain, the US, and Canada; these people are often from the sciences and areas of arts and culture — a Ukrainian ‘brain drain’ that leaves Ukraine that much poorer (Panchemenko, 2006).

Along with the changing life/death and work–related statistics, health care needs in the Ukrainian population have shifted in negative ratio to the kind of healthcare that is available in Ukraine. Ukraine also now leads Europe in cases of syphilis, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS (Shanghina, 2007; UNAIDS, 2007). In order to access adequate healthcare, family members of the ill are usually required to provide personal and nursing care for their loved ones along with a ‘stipend’ for the physician(s) and paid nursing staff (Stavkova, S., personal communications May, 2003/June, 2005; Zemlynska, M., personal

---

<sup>11</sup> The average wage in Ukraine is critically low with the average monthly wage in 2000 being 230 grvnas (\$42 US) and that of a university professor in 2005 being considered high at \$175 US (personal communication, Stavkova, S., 2005; 2010). According to Shanghina (2004, p.4) at the time of her writing there were more than one million families in Ukraine for which the per capita income monthly did not reach 50 grvnas (US\$9)

communication 2004)<sup>12</sup>. There are beautiful sanatoriums in the country, such as the facility at Truskavets in Western Ukraine, and several huge ‘rest’ facilities originally meant for officers of the military in Crimea, but while these facilities are staffed by Ukrainian physicians and researchers, the patients are largely from abroad — those who can pay handsomely for the services (Zemlynska, M., personal communication, June, 2004).<sup>13</sup>

One consequence of the demographic trends in Ukraine is that the constant threat of unemployment and subsequent destitution, loss of family members to emigration, and early death by pensionless seniors contribute to what amounts to a societal depression. This trend is somewhat less visible in Eastern Ukraine. The closer the population is to Kyiv, the better the living conditions; this is where foreigners flock for business in oil and gas. Kyiv also maintains strong ties to Russia, for it was the ‘mother’ after all (Billington, 2004; Reid, 2003/1997/1985).

## **Religion**

At best, during Soviet years, affiliation with any religion other than the tolerated Russian Orthodox threatened access to university and relegated the individual to the most menial of work situations (Amis, 2002; Reid, 2003). Still, throughout history, even

---

<sup>12</sup> During our July 2010 trip, there was a necessary visit to a doctor during which we were told that, even though an individual was seen in a public hospital, the doctor should be personally paid by the patient.

<sup>13</sup> Ms. Zemlynska took me on a tour of Truskavets in 2004. The picturesque village built up around the sanatorium was a resting place for many citizens during summer breaks. This village bordered a state-of-the-art facility for people with disabilities and chronic health problems who travel from all over Europe as evidenced by the large new vehicles with Russian, German and even Swiss license plates in the parking lots.

during Soviet times, religion provided private sanctuary for many Ukrainians. The Russian Orthodox Church along with other Christian sects was well populated prior to the Soviet regime; however during Soviet times following World War II and prior to Perestroika, only the Ukrainian exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Association of Evangelical Baptists, part of the European Baptist Federation, continued to legally operate within Ukraine (Yelenskyi, 2001). Since 1988, the number of registered religious organizations has increased almost four times and now exceeds four thousand.

In present day Ukraine, only two percent of religious communities are comprised of its ethnic minorities such as Judaism or Islam. Most of Ukraine's Jewish citizens were killed during the Holocaust of World War II or were covertly moved further east into the far regions of Russia. Fifty-three percent of all religious organizations in Ukraine are Orthodox (Reid, 2003). Eight years ago more than seventy percent belonged to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate. Russian connected Orthodoxy has traditionally been open about its political affiliations and today continues to appeal to civil authorities to silence competitors' interests in social problems and any sort of real dialogue (Reid, 2003). Numbers continue to shift, with approximately 14,000,000 now belonging to the Kyiv Patriarchate and 9,000,000 remaining in the Moscow Patriarchate (Chekan, 2010). The balance of people declaring religious affiliation belong to Ukrainian Catholic or Greek Catholic sects (more than thirty percent) with the remaining being of a variety of Protestant faiths. In 1991 the majority of these non-Russian related religious

groupings were found in the seven western regions of Ukraine. Following Independence, the West continued to rapidly expand in declared religious organizations while other regions were slower to collect themselves. Regions showing the highest population of Russian Orthodoxy remain geographically and otherwise closest to Russia (RISU, 2007; Yelenyski, 2001).

### **Economics**

Economics and economic differences are particularly important (and divisive) when they are linked with what appears to be institutional favouritism for particular groups. This type of divisiveness is evident in the East/West split in Ukraine and in the rural/urban separation. People in villages have little or no money — particularly in the West. Throughout history Eastern Ukraine, particularly the city of Kyiv and the surrounding area, has lived in relative comfort and prominence economically (Reid, 2003/1997/1985). Kyiv, built upon the Dnieper River, was for some time the most important city for Russia as it provided an avenue for transportation and sale of goods as well as a both a gateway and fortress in relation to the Europe of the West (Billington, J. H., 1970; 2004; Reid, 2003/1997/1985). Russia's economic base was situated in Kyiv for many years. Post WWII, the economic base for all of Eastern Europe shifted to Moscow with Soviet Russia ensuring no area could be economically self-sufficient. Each region produced one part of a whole which was assembled carefully under Russian supervision (Hayduk, 2002; Politkovskaya, 2007).

In the 1980s the Soviet socialist model weakened while individual enterprise and market economy surfaced in Poland, Ukraine, and other Eastern Bloc countries providing a huge and controversial paradigm shift for the people. The Dnieper River continued to serve as one border division with Kyiv playing a pivotal role for Russian business and enterprise (Reid, 2003/1997/1985) but connections from outside the territory could now be safely displayed. This change brought to clear visibility affluence for some that for years remained in the shadows in Soviet Ukraine. Meanwhile, well educated engineers, lawyers, and doctors, for example, were now running pawn shops or selling used goods on the open sidewalk (personal communication, Hayduk, N., 2008; Reid, 2003/1997/1985). With the loss of financial stability for males and females, Ukrainian women added more challenges to their reputations and roles as mother/provider (personal communication, Hayduk, N., 2008; Kennedy, 1997)

Ukrainians with a new window to countries west of them experienced a flood of fashion magazines, television shows and advertisements illustrating what they had been missing (Stavkova, May, 2003/June, 2005). This relative deprivation opened a yearning for goods available in a growing market presence from Italy, Germany, England, and the Americas as well as closer neighbour, China (Rubenstein, 2003). Meanwhile, many people living in rural and urban areas struggle to have food, clothing, and a roof over their heads. When these basic needs are not being met, it is very difficult to consider anything else (Burton, 1990; Maslow, 1987; Rubenstein, 2003). A democratic future

may be a luxury to be contemplated by those with a full cupboard from which to prepare the children's next meal.

### **Politics**

Ukrainian citizens consciously stepped closer to democratic autonomy in 2004 when the Orange Revolution, led by soon to be president, Viktor Yushenko, brought people from all over Ukraine to Independence Square (Majdan) in Kyiv for more than two weeks, until what was considered the full process of democracy proclaimed that Mr. Yushenko had been elected fairly. He took the reins leaving Ukrainians with hopes of becoming more economically solid, more autonomous, and being supported by an infrastructure that would support pensions, health care, while at the same time providing a better base to support true Ukrainian culture.

In the years that followed, Mr. Yushenko was not able to fulfill his mission. Perhaps leading with more of an executive style, he did not deal with the internal graft, corruption and bickering that succeeded in putting the country even further in debt, further away from desired (by some) European Union (EU) membership and further away also from the stability of infrastructure that is so needed and desired in this country (Marples, 2007).

With reference to political processes, the OSCEPA (OSCE, Oct. 1, 2007) noted that legal frameworks exist for democracy in Ukraine, but having gone from the control of one imperialist state to another, followed by membership restrictions as part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Ukrainian citizens miss the foundation

necessary for full participation in their own civil society (Piroshkov & Safarova, 2006; Zviglianich, 1998). Still, this fragile democracy must be supported but not pushed from either side (Ottaway, 2007).

Ukraine continues to experience pressure from Russia to become a Russian state (News, 2008; Posadskaya, 1995). This is in direct contrast with the encouragement from other democracy-focused ideas expressed during the Ukrainian Orange Revolution of 2004 during which a peaceful protest by the people of Ukraine overturned what was believed to be a Russian supported victory (Krushelnycky, 2006). Still, at the time of writing, as the government continues to flounder, there is little infrastructure or policy in place to support the establishment of a viable democracy, and civic involvement is in fact declining and its occurrence still not always on voluntary terms (International Institute for Democracy, 2009).

Present day political discourse has one clear advantage over that of the past: it has become more public. Examples of the increase in volume can be found in blogs such as Current Politics in Ukraine (Current Politics in Ukraine: Opinion and analysis on current events in Ukraine, 2007-2010) where scholars from around the world comment on their perceptions of the Verhovna Rada's actions and interactions with Ukraine's closest neighbours — Russia and the European Union.

During the initial phases of this study, in January – February 2010, — the first and second runs of the presidential election were held — the fifth since Independence. My first trip to Ukraine after a five-year absence was in January/February 2010 and

coincided with the Presidential elections. The first run occurred on January 17, the day before I arrived in Lviv. Candidates from the first run, moving to the final vote for presidency were Yulia Tymoshenko of the Bloc Tymoshenko Party and Viktor Yanukovich of the Party of Regions.<sup>14</sup> Both candidates were seen to be connected to big business and Mr. Yanukovich, in particular, to be much closer to Moscow than the country had been for the last five or six years (BBC News, 2010). Yanukovich continued to be seen as very pro-Russian and anti-West while Tymoshenko was seen as Ukraine's only possible connection to the European Union — the one remaining after what was seen as a great failure by Viktor Yushchenko (BBC News, 2010).

The final vote occurred on February 7, 2010, leaving Yanukovich declared Ukraine's new president (Euronews, 2010) even though as one of two candidates, he really did not win, having gained less than fifty percent of the popular vote — 400,000 less than his 'take' during his failed bid in 2004 (Petz, 2010). There was no Orange Revolution this time.

Post-election difficulties continued and grew within the Ukrainian parliament. April 27, 2010, members of the opposition pelted Yanukovich supporters with eggs and stink bombs over the vote ratified to allow the Russian Black Sea Naval Fleet to continue using the Ukrainian port in Crimea as their base — at least until the year 2042. This bill passed with 236 in favour out of a possible 450 seat member vote in exchange for thirty percent off the cost of Russian gas to Ukraine (Tsukanova, 2010).

---

<sup>14</sup> The Party of Regions is known in Ukraine for its pro-Russian focus. This includes supporting the use of Russian as an official language in Ukraine.

Yanukovych was seen as rough and uncultured and Ukrainophobic, certainly not about to do anything to unite Ukraine's in celebration of its rich and varied history. His cabinet ministers have commented openly that Tatars were banished during Soviet times because they collaborated with Nazis. Most members of cabinet close to Yanukovych have a history of serious corruption charges (Petz, 2010).

### **Psycho-cultural factors**

Social change tends to exacerbate emotional responses within and between groups. These differences when amplified can incite and fuel overt conflict (Byrne & Carter, 1996). Culturally specific experiences of Tatars, Jews, ethnic Germans, Ukrainians, and Russians are the most dominant contenders for equal inclusion in Ukrainian society. Tatars returning from banishment are reclaiming land stolen from them. Some Jews are finding their way back home. All seek their basic needs as humans on this earth (Burton, 1990).

In 2010 Ukraine, overt conflict is not as evident as are frustration and apathy. Ukrainians on both sides of the Dnieper River have spent most of their history as serfs to a variety of overseers (Marples, 2007). The totalitarian Soviet regime supported collective behaviour which in itself is not negative; however, as practiced under Stalin in particular, collectivism came at the cost of punishment for individual behavior or personal initiative. Along with this aversion to individual actions came fear of observation and support for reporting the 'wrong' actions of others (Berkhoff, 2004; Marples, 2007).

In spite of oppression, and contrary to the romantic idea that Ukrainians are a simple peasant people, the culture of Ukraine is as complicated and varied as the landscape. This is a culture rich in music, art, literature, and spirit — and it is a culture of deference to some differentially defined higher patriarchal power. Within this culture live diverse experiences and mini-cultures through which the world and oppression is seen and responded to in different ways (Black, 2003; Druckman, 2003). This rich complexity can provide foundational material for peace-building, or if differences are highlighted, cultural variations can serve to further divide the country (Avruch, 2003).

### **Women of Ukraine**

Communist ideology in the USSR insisted that women and men have/had equal status under the law along with equal demands upon them for contribution to the infrastructure of the country (Alsop & Hockey, 2005). In reality, history and politics reflexively impact women differently than men in their groups (Merry, 2006; Sylvester, 2002; Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994). Yes, women were expected to work outside the home and child-care was provided by the State; however, once home after work, women continued to bear the burden of household maintenance and child-care — a second more-than-full-time job (Draitser, 1999).

This has not improved post-Independence (Kis, 2005). For example, medical care which is no longer state provided, now leaves reproductive health and all of its expense back in women's hands along with the basic care required for any sickly relative.

Additionally, abortions which were once covered by the State are no longer sanctioned (Lissyutkina, 1993).

As in other countries globally, in Ukraine the numbers of men in higher positions of employment and/or authority in government continue to far outnumber women; however, women in Ukraine also experience the pressure of having to provide for families differently than those more economically fortunate (Lissyutkina, 1993). In order to feed their families, women who leave the country for almost any kind of employment continue to be one of the most trafficked cross-border 'commodities' (Hughes & Denisova, 2003; Malarek, 2004)<sup>15</sup>. While overworked and undervalued, women who were born and came to adulthood in Soviet times are powerfully positioned to influence not only their own families, but also their communities. Often primary income-earners, Ukrainian females in mid-life extend their spheres of connection far beyond their roles of wives/partners, mothers, and grandmothers to worlds where they are employees or business women, and neighbourhood volunteers.

Historically, as early as the late 1800's, women in Ukraine organized on the way to seeking justice and the preservation of culture and nationhood (Bohachevsky-Chomiak, 1988). Women were openly active as dissidents for a free Ukraine from 1989 (Pavlychko, 1997) but had already risked connecting with outside supports as early as 1918. With the emphasis on 'Ukrainian', rather than 'women', women's organizations

---

<sup>15</sup>Using any search engine on the internet reveals countless sites related to "beautiful" women from Ukraine and Russia. Some sites are related to "dating and marriage" while others are concerned with domestic workers.

also reached out for help around the time of the famine or *Holodomor* (Bohachevsky-Chomiak, 1988). Women supported the Ukrainian language in the organization known as *Prosvita* — formerly the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society — and set up the first charitable organizations which were NGOs to help orphans. Other reasons to establish NGOs included opposition to communism and totalitarianism. With Independence in 1991, women were finally able to speak out with a little less fear (Pavlychko, 1997).

Post-Independence, both Ukrainian women and men have been faced with identity dilemmas related to the national struggle. The Soviet system had worked to define and control gender relations through legislation and state control (Bureychak, in press). New narratives of Ukrainian femininity and masculinity seem to have reverted back to the traditional, leaving confusion and dissatisfaction all around (Bureychak, in press; Kis, 2007).

Ukrainian men, many who no longer have the steady or meaningful work that made them stalwart contributors to the strength of the USSR, now find difficulty assuming the strong protector/provider role traditionally required by family and country (Bureychak, in press). Ukrainian women, with little representation in government, continue to work both in both home and community while being honoured specifically for their duties and accomplishments as mothers, not only of their children, but of the nation (Bureychak, in press; Kis, 2005)

Yulia Tymoshenko, past supporter of now ex-President, Viktor Yushenko, exemplifies the multiple discourses about womanhood in Ukraine. Tymoshenko narrowly lost her bid for the Presidential seat in February 2010 to Russia-sympathetic Viktor Yanukovich. With her beautifully coiffed blond braid, fashionable attire, and chameleon-like adaptability, Tymoshenko may be seen to represent the two predominant models of heterosexual femininity in Ukraine: the *Berehynia* or self-sacrificial mother, and the sexy, charming, and beautiful consumer, *Barbie* (Kis, 2007).

Tymoshenko purports to come from Ukrainian/Russian roots, is a powerful businesswoman in her own right, and threatened the old guard enough to have been imprisoned earlier on in her political career. She does not present herself as feminist or particularly interested in women's rights to the extent that her party, *BYuTy*<sup>16</sup> voted against a bill for a women's quota in Parliament in 2003: neither did her party support a bill for women's rights in 2005. Tymoshenko seems to mold herself to the needs of the audience and the occasion, all with the purpose of playing a lead role in Ukrainian politics, ostensibly to build a strong and vibrant Ukrainian nation.

The "average" Ukrainian woman accessible through technology appears in a variety of forms. Any internet search engine will provide highly sexualized versions of "Ukrainian women." Television shows like "*Minayu Jinky*"<sup>17</sup> further portray Ukrainian and other Eastern European women as managerial commodities whose services are

---

<sup>16</sup> *BYuTy* is pronounced as it is spelled in English. The name represents a coalition of parties named *Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko*.

<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.zhinka.tv/>, last accessed November 11, 2010.

traded for the financial benefit of the family as well as the nation's entertainment. Like its American counterpart, *Wife Swap*<sup>18</sup>, this show highlights regional stereotypes as families substitute women from rural into urban settings and women from the east into west. The question remains, "Who are the women of Ukraine and what do they have to say about their real lives and dreams?"

### **Present day narratives in and about Ukraine**

In 2010, many competing narratives often noted in and about Ukraine continue (Berkhoff, 2004; Draitser, 2008; Himka, 2009; Hrytsak, 2009; Kappeler, 2009; Marples, 2007) although two main versions about Ukraine's national identity sift most readily to the surface (Marples, 2007). One story tells of a pro-European Union Western Ukraine with Lviv being a city leading in the promotion of Ukrainian traditions, culture, language, and open religious (primarily Christian) expression. The other story is of a land tied to more Soviet (at this time Russian) history, language, and culture with little formal religious expression. This Eastern story is most popular in Southern Ukraine (Crimea) and lands between Kyiv and Russia (Berkhoff, 2004; Bertelsmann-Stiftung, 2010; British Broadcasting Corporation, 2010; Marples, 2007; Reid, 2003/1997/1985).

Still, variations on these dominant themes and stories in between became quite clear when listening to people who were waiting for the results of the fifth Presidential election (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2010; *Kyiv Post*, 2010). There were/are both

---

<sup>18</sup> This is an ABC television network show and can be seen on line at <http://abc.go.com/shows/wife-swap>, last accessed November 11, 2010.

individual (Draitser, 2008; *Kyiv Post*, 2010) and collective narratives weaving information and experience related to the factors noted above (Marples, 2007).

Snapshots of two regions in Ukraine provide a variety of stories. The areas featuring most prominently in this study are Lviv, in Lviv Oblast, which is the western part of Ukraine, and Simferopol, Crimea— the southern “pearl” of what was once Russia. Lviv stories historically have been most influenced by the comings and goings of various European dynasties, and more recently by Soviet Russia with a brief but critical invasion by Nazi Germany (Marples, 2007). Crimean stories, on the other hand, are even more multi-ethnic in flavor including thicker chapters on Tatar and Jewish culture. Here the Soviet influence is stronger with the rich variety of the geography having provided an oasis for Russian soldiers and elites, and the Black Sea harbour continuing to house Russian submarines, to the surprise of many Western Ukrainians<sup>19</sup>. Still Russian nationalism has not taken a firm hold (Sasse, 2007).

Many people are working to combine the narratives or create new ones that allow or incorporate all stories without vilifying any one. For people who are of multi-national, multi-ethnic heritage in Ukraine, this is the way to come to peace with themselves and their families (Stavkova, 2010). This kind of narrative, a new master

---

<sup>19</sup> While visiting Simferopol, my companions from Western Ukraine and I were twice hosted on trips to Balaklava, near Sevastopol on the Black Sea. Balaklava was the ‘classified’ harbour for Soviet submarines until 1993 and still holds an air of mystery. The information had indeed been unknown to my companions from West and East, even though being an avid reader of Cold War, North American, and British-written spy novels, I had read of this secret place many years before.

narrative, a healing counter story (Nelson, 2006), is the only kind of story that may move Ukraine to a point where it is strong enough to build a healthy future.

What parts can and do women play in building and sharing a healthy peace narrative for Ukraine?

## **Chapter 2**

### **Gender, empowerment and social change: Women hold up half the sky<sup>20</sup>**

Two months before her sudden death in 2004, my mother asked and answered her most frequent and pressing question:

“What do I want for Christmas? I want peace in our world.”

Bucur (2006) could have been in conversation with my mother Charlotte and so many others when she wrote:

To begin with we need to pay closer attention to the overwhelming masculinist assumptions about what war, heroism, trauma, self-sacrifice and suffering mean. In the context of total war, women’s experiences (especially as civilians) will help us begin to re-evaluate the central role of subjective representations for constituting both the ideological constructs such as “heroism” and “patriotism” and the identity of historical subjects. This means nothing less than moving away from an analysis of war that privileges almost exclusively combat and diplomacy, and starting to engage questions about the social and cultural aspects of war. Gender is a central component of all of these approaches. (Bucur, 2006, p. 188)

So begins this study’s literature review which is divided into two chapters; one is focused on gender and the other on narrative. This first chapter explores the long-overlooked role of gender in personal empowerment and social change — in peacebuilding — for I believe that the only valid purpose for social change work is building peace.

The world is a multi-textured place woven with the lives and deaths of multiple species, cultures, and abilities. This is a world of constant change, facilitated and

---

<sup>20</sup> “Women hold up half the sky” is said to be a quote for Chairman Mao Tse-Tung, but reportedly is much older than the Chairman, being an old Chinese proverb dating back to the Tao and the concept of the complementarity of yin and yang (Spraker, 2009; Zhengkun, 2006).

accompanied by conflict that can be either constructive or destructive. Traditionally, from a male-centred point of view, work toward change has meant a focus on problems (Jeong, 2000; Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2003; Dunn, 2005; Sylvester, 2002). The field of Peace and Conflict Studies, coming from this way of thinking, has asked, “What is the problem and how do we fix it?” The focus has been on violent conflict — war — its origins and possibilities for amelioration.

The field of Peace and Conflict Studies, like most disciplines, has been led by male voices.<sup>21</sup> Feminist scholars are also now considered (Enloe, 2000/1989; Stephens, 1994; Sylvester, 2002) — voices privileged enough to have gone to university, made their marks in academia, and acquired positions considered powerful and elite enough to impart officially sanctioned wisdom that would influence subsequent generations. Like the parable of the blind men and the elephant<sup>22</sup> (Kazlev, 1998), conversations about peace and conflict continue to be incomplete — privileging some voices over others with still other voices not heard from at all.

While the voices have been primarily male, and the work of focus high-profile violent conflicts attended to by experts in international diplomacy, more attention is now being paid to the non-elite — those personally and directly impacted by destructive conflict (Kalunga-Banda, 2005; Van Tongeren, Brenk, Hellema, & Verhoeven,

---

<sup>21</sup> For a quick glance at some of these voices, see Dunn (2005). In Kriesberg’s (2007) review of the growing field of conflict resolution, as there are a few more women’s names, though they remain far outnumbered by male perspectives.

<sup>22</sup> In this parable, the Buddha tells the story of a raja who asked a group of blind men, each situated at different sites around an elephant, to describe the elephant. Experiencing the elephant differently though touching a tusk, a foot, the tail, etc. the men disputed the veracity of each other’s experience.

2005). This concrete, practical work being done at middle and grass-roots levels (Diamond & McDonald, 1996) is often performed by and for women who experience “the elephant” from totally different perspectives from the men in their lives (Enloe, 2010). Understanding and working ethically with these diverse perspectives requires looking at the world through a gendered lens — one that exposes the violence that is experienced differently, and in many areas disproportionately, by women across the globe (Merry, 2006). It follows then, that development, social change, and peace-building require women’s involvement at all levels of the process (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 2003).

This chapter begins with a further exploration of the reasons gender must be considered in any given context and, particularly, in peace-building. The next section examines the intersection of gender, power, and empowerment followed by a section on gender, knowledge, and social change. The chapter ends with a note on women and peacebuilding.

### **Why highlight gender?**

This study emanates from a belief in the centrality of gender in agency and empowerment, both elements being foundational in social change. To even approach some level of understanding in any situation, different voices must be heard, each coming with their own gendered perspective (Bock, 2006; Gilligan, 1982; Sylvester, 1992). To date, women’s voices have blended into the far reaches of the chorus if they were there at all. Addressing this vast deficiency, a functional understanding of gender

must be identified — an important act, since even in academic peace and conflict studies a gendered perspective was not much considered until the 1980s (Enloe, 2000/1989; Reardon, 1996; Sylvester, 2002). Confrontation can be uncomfortable, but is not in itself destructive (Abu-Nimer, 2003). The hope here is that through this process we move even slightly forward toward facilitating peaceful changes in our world — peace-building as social change and social change for peace building. We need to know where we have come from to have a good foundation from which to continue to grow.

The definition of gender is followed by an overview of the area of peace and conflict studies which has gone from a focus on war, to the study and practice of facilitating positive change, bringing us more recently to the discussion of peace as an interactive process — collaboration necessary to meet human needs and attend to all human's rights for women and men. Looking through a gendered lens, we see that gender is a critical factor in determining the ways basic human needs and rights are met and in the agency with which an individual participates in the world (Dominelli, 2001; Elshtain, 1987; Enloe, 2000/1989; Raven-Roberts, 2005; Sylvester, 2002).

The next section looks at the way different challenges to power and empowerment impact women and the ways women use their power personally and in community. Some experiences of women living in the Middle East, in First Nations Canada, and in post-Soviet Ukraine are shared to highlight the influence of politics on women's experience.

Moving from a necessary but perhaps uncomfortable challenge of the male-centred status quo, this chapter then explores the development of more realistic gender-sensitive knowledge necessary for peaceful, truly life-giving change and concludes with a look at some educational tools and collaborative research methods which can open up conversations about our world as it is, and our world as it can be (Cruikshank, 2000; Sprague, 2005; Whitney, Leibler, & Cooperrider, 2003).

### **Situating the author: Situating myself**

In the interest of ethical discussion and transparency, and in true feminist tradition (Sylvester, 2002), let me say that I am a woman who was raised in small Canadian prairie towns during the Cold War. I was born the second of seven children in our working class family — the second of four female children. Children in my family were encouraged to seek higher education. At that time, for “the girls,” this meant training or learning a skill that would provide us with a living wage “to fall back on” in case our spouses (read “husbands”) could not provide for the families we would have.

Our home evidenced collaboration and mutual respect between heterosexual parents who appeared to have equal power in their relationship and attempted to foster respect and power-sharing across generations, races, religions, and genders. This was a struggle. They also tended to follow more traditional gender roles although my mother did work outside the home in her chosen field after my baby sister started school. My parents modeled a love of fellow humans, and while planted in a traditional Christian religion, my parents’ philosophies leaned more toward socialism (Marx being

discussed at Sunday supper). Every member of the family had to be included in family activities — including the family newspaper where the three-year-old was the art editor.

We were also taught to question everything until we understood. This included questioning authority and power, fairness, rights, and — for goodness sake — why were there so few images of women on television!

Now a mother of three women myself, life partner to a male, and grandmother to two boys and a girl, I have been privileged to live, work, and study in a variety of countries with people of different races, religions, nationalities, gender-identities, and physical/intellectual abilities. My work has officially been under the auspices of client-centred social worker, therapist, community development worker, and university instructor both in Canada and in Eastern Europe. Still, in my world today the majority of what is considered scholarly or expert is male-authored and male-centred. This is demonstrated through choice of language, e.g. “all mankind,” spoken acknowledgement, or insinuation by subsumation. I continue to ask how we as a world can survive if we don’t invite and attend to the participation of everyone — including women.

My feminist perspective should be evident throughout this study. Some may wonder, “What kind of feminist?” Clarifying, I believe that efforts to truly understand the dynamics of any given situation require exploring the interplay between gender and power including the dynamics related to race, age, socio-economic status, physical, and intellectual ability (Ristock, 2003; Rosenberg, 2010). Perception also plays a role. For me

feminism involves an active commitment to respect for all forms of life. This means challenging any kind of oppression or domination, knowing that we can be part of bringing more enriching, life-giving ways into being (Kelley & Eblen, 2002). I don't accept oppression and domination as worthy human values. I believe that there are better, more enriching ways — *peaceable* ways to live (Boulding, 2000, p. 1), and I am convinced every person can and should be part of bringing these alternatives into existence. What is central to any feminist vision is a world of social justice that opposes patriarchy and gendered social relations wherever they are seen to be unjust. Post-modern feminist thought considers power not as existent or non-existent but in terms of degree according to the context (Dominelli, 2000b; Jeong, 2000; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Ristock, 2002).

### **Women hold up half the sky: Defining gender**

Men and women are positioned differently in every aspect/dimension of our lives (Enloe, 2000/1989). Much of the violence that takes place in this world is evidenced — or not evidenced — in seemingly small, isolated acts that go unnoticed because they are so commonplace (Merry S. E., 2006; Wingfield & Bucur, 2006). These acts go unnoticed as 'mass violence' because their performance is routine in the lives of those who benefit from or have learned to accommodate them (Francis, 2002, p. 5). While some feminist theory does not tackle elements of structure, much of feminist theory focuses on the need for structural change in order to address the systemic disadvantages experienced

not only by women, but by others who do not place within a patriarchal power structure (Hare-Mustin & Maracek, 1988; Merry, 2006).

*Gender* refers to the “cultural, social, and power implications of this biological definition (i.e. the beliefs about, expectations, interpretations, and experiences of women and men in our society)” (Keashly, 1994, p. 168). In short, gender is socially constructed, based on expectations associated with biology and social role assignment (Brock-Utne, 1985; Enloe, 2000/1989; Keashly, 1994; Merry, 2006; Sylvester, 2002). The concept of gender is particularly salient in a world that is patriarchal — hierarchical (Mazurana & Raven-Roberts, 2005; Sylvester, 1992; Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994).

In this study, I write about women — people of the gender “woman” rather than solely of the biological or sexually identified label, “woman.” To clarify, I use the term, *gender* rather than *sex* because it allows exploration of difference that is operational rather than static. Being socially constructed, the social roles that comprise gender are open to be challenged and open to be changed (Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994). These roles vary across culture, age, and stage of development (Merry, 2006). Sex is generally something that is genetically determined at birth — save physical/medical alteration — and is stable across the lifespan of the individual. Still, the naming of sex at birth accompanies the attachment of gender (Gergen, 2003) and assumptions of roles to be taken that go along with gender assignment. Because of the arbitrariness of gender categories, people must take great care to acknowledge and remember that the category and social construct, *gender*, in no way defines the totality or the individuality

of a group individuals making up half the world's population — women (Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994).

There appear to be three main approaches to the use of gender as a construct. One approach, labeled denial (Keashly, 1994) or beta bias (Hare-Mustin & Maracek, 1988) disputes the differences between male and female and seeks to find similarities between the genders risking androgenic analysis in the process. A second, somewhat essentialist approach<sup>23</sup>, focuses on the “inherent” differences between men and women (French, 1985; Gilligan, 1982) and discourages any acknowledgement of differences among women ourselves. The dichotomies easily arising out of this approach have been useful in naming the masculinisation of the world, but when left unchallenged can box people into behaviours that promote violence and abuse (Augusta-Scott & Fisher, 2001). A third, post-modern view of gender constructs, challenges generalizations and dichotomization and looks at patterns of behaviour in people acknowledging that there are individual differences and shades of difference according to a variety of factors including race, economic status, and gender-identity of the individual (Ristock, 2003). I write from this third point of view.

### **Searching for women in peace studies**

In this study, the terms *social change* and *peace-building* are synonymous. There is no other purpose for social change save for the improvement in life conditions for all living

---

<sup>23</sup> In this case, an essentialist approach is one positing that through biological determination, all women share a variety of characteristics. For example, “All women are nurturers and natural mothers.”

things. Harmonious life is peaceful life (Boulding, 2000) — a life of coexistence (Chayes & Minow, 2003).

Kelley & Eblen (2002) write about peace as not just an absence of war. Peace processes are voyages of adventure through which people develop clear intelligence and understanding. Adventures and growth usually involve conflict and struggle — in other words, change.

Rather than a state, peace is defined as an ongoing activity of cultivating agreements. People participating in this reality of peace act as cooperative participants seeking solutions rather than as combative opponents seeking victory. (Kelley & Eblen, p. 2)

Change for peace and coexistence involve individuals in community. Whether it is a faith community, a regional community, or a world community, the goal is peaceful coexistence reached through relationships and partnerships. Feminist social worker and community development educator, Dominelli notes the following:

Communities provide spaces in which people seek and gain approval, are reaffirmed in their interests or sense of who they are and what they stand for, participate in key decisions, and negotiate with others around issues of change and stability. A community to which an individual belongs is where he or she expects to be treated with dignity, show solidarity with others, experience the interdependent nature of relationships between human beings, and work with others in mutually beneficial ways. Dignity, reciprocity, interdependence and solidarity provide the ties that bind communities and disparate people together (Dominelli, 2004, p. 204).

A community development or social development approach requires critical assessment and analysis of the strengths, capacities, and needs of a community. Participation and inclusion of *all* stakeholders is an intrinsic part of the process of community development. Community development in its truest sense is peace-building.

### **Historical focuses on peacebuilding and social change.**

Even though 'peace' is much more than 'not-war', the bulk of academic research labeled as peace and conflict work has been focused on the study of war — and this from a male perspective. This approach reportedly originated with Quincy Wright during the 1940s (Wright, 1942) and was followed, in the post WWII Cold War period by the work of Lewis F. Richardson (1960) who developed mathematical models of the arms race and war as he examined the interactive processes leading to armed conflict. Games Theory developed by Anatol Rapoport in the 1960s provided a different perspective looking at the early analysis of conflictual interactions as a means of heading off nuclear war (Rapoport, 1960). Louis Kriesburg (1982) looked to processes of de-escalation of armament acquisitions as one tool in resolving conflict and diminishing the likelihood of further violence<sup>24</sup>.

Historically, war and violent conflict have been studied primarily for the purpose of resolution, and then for prevention. The most fundamental streams of peace and conflict studies are founded on the work of structuralists such as Karl Marx (Marx & Engels, 1897/1976) followed by Max Weber who joined Marx in seeing economics and power as being supported by class differences. Weber, identifying more subtleties in the relationships among power, politics, and social/economic status believed that power in society rarely comes from brute force but is generally granted through some social relationship such as traditional authority, legal authority, or charismatic authority,

---

<sup>24</sup> See Jeong (Jeong, 2000), *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction*, for summary and more detail.

and is instrumental in setting the stage for social change (Weber, 1977). Religious, racial, and ethnic differences may also serve as basis for conflict with a focus largely on identification of differences in privilege and in power (Schellenberg, 1996). Note, gender is not considered in this analysis.

Marx (Marx & Engels, 1897/1976) challenged the view that societal conflict was in any way about individual weaknesses. He saw societal structures as perpetuating inequities, usually through economic, political, and ideological institutions. In order to even the power dynamics, there is a need to “shake up” the structure of a society. Karl Marx saw conflict as the product of a highly stratified social and economic system using coercion to uphold group interests. Capitalism was a recipe for conflict (Marx & Engels, 1897/1976).

A neo-Marxist view sees power as being safe-guarded by authoritarian ‘knowledge’ which in turn is doled out only to convince those less powerful that their best interests are being served in the system they are maintaining. Arguably, many people have traded their autonomy for economic security including innumerable women who remain in abusive relationships to provide food for their children (King, 1999; Straus & Gilles, 1990). In today’s reality, there is little economic support for those who do society’s reproductive work (Neysmith, 2000; O’Connell, 1983) while production of goods, even those used to support conflict, continue to provide the machinations of most of the western world (Eisenstein, 1993; Sylvester, 1992).

Also post World War II, Critical Theory, developed by the Frankfurt School saw technology as an instrument of control by those most powerful (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1979/1947). In Critical Theory, technology and over-production of goods are ways to focus the masses on work and acquisition rather than on rights and emancipation. Economic policies maintaining the status quo in a society also maintain the associated power dynamic.

### **Gender analyses in peace and conflict studies.**

While not overtly acknowledging gender as a site of conflict, noted peace and conflict researcher Johan Galtung (1996) recognized that violence is indeed built into the very structure of societies. Still focused on the absence of war — negative peace — Galtung drew attention to human rights and economic development as sources of disparity noting that war and armaments are not the only causes of destruction. Galtung's work moved peace research to its more recent base (Sylvester, 2002). Multi-disciplinary or *trans*-disciplinary peace research now views peace in the wider social and cultural structures and uses various levels of analysis to identify commonalities in conflict and conflict resolution at individual, community, and international levels (Rubenstein, 2003).

Following Galtung's work, it was not until the late 1980s that gender analysis began to nudge into these studies. Sylvester (2002) asserts that the bedrock texts of international relations (IR) feminist analysis were Elshain's *Women and War* (Elshain, 1987), Enloe's *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases* (Enloe, 2000/1989), and Tickner's *Gender in International Relations* (Tickner, 1992). These texts centre on women's experience

rather than inserting women into a previously constructed conversation. This is not to say that women have not been active in peace-analysis and peace-building, but this work has remained largely under the radar of academia.

Still, in the mid 1990s much of conflict resolution theory, research, and practice neglected the role that context plays in conflicts and therefore should play in conflict analysis and resolution. The book, *Conflict and Gender* (Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994) came out of a conference at George Mason University in 1994 during which scholars acknowledged that disagreements are affected by gender and power as they are socially situated and culturally maintained. Gender informs expectations for conflict behaviour and for rights and responsibilities in conflict negotiations (Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994). Feminist theorists (Brock-Utne, 1985; Dominelli, 2001; Enloe, 2000/1989; Reardon, 1996; Sylvester, 2002; Tickner, 1992, 2001) identify the structures, institutions and ideals of a patriarchal society as fundamental in maintaining inequity not only between men and women, but between different cultural and economic groups in any form of colonization.

Conflict leading to real change occurs only when groups become conscious that indeed they are being controlled and their labour co-opted by those with more power (Friere, 1970; Guevera, in Jeong, 2003. p. 161). As such, change requires power — the collaborative work of empowered individuals (Bishop, 1994/2002; Friere, 1970). Constructive use of power involves access and ability to use information in concert with others (Arendt, 1970/1969; Homan, 2004). Without the contribution and alliances that

come with women's power our world is operating, at best, at half-power and more accurately, at cross-purposes — destructive purposes.

### **War and peace through a gendered lens**

Before, during and after overt violence, women experience the world differently from men. When looking at war and peace through a gendered lens, we find that *pre-conflict* — as a society prepares for violent conflict — women tend to be more adversely affected by violence than men living in the same context. This appears to be related to the fact that patriarchal values seem to strengthen when economies are under stress (Jansen, 2006). As such women, needed to care for children, usually experience increasing health problems along with the increased domestic violence that usually comes when men are preparing to go into protector mode. Resources go to war preparations.

*During conflict*, regardless of geographical location, women tend to face greater care-taking responsibilities that limit their mobility (Jansen, 2006; Jolluck, 2006; Kirschenbaum, 2006) and place them at even more disadvantage after violent conflict. Reportedly, women and children make up 80 percent of the world's 34 million refugees and internally displaced persons (Jolluck, 2006). Refugee camps themselves are not safe. Women are at risk of sexual assault, sexually transmitted diseases, malnutrition, and all the problems that accompany these trials. Additionally, the impact of war and post-war conflict can have a life-long effect on the mental health of women in

particular, whether or not they have been active participants (Jansen, 2006; Kuwert, 2009)<sup>25</sup>.

*Post-conflict*, intimate partner abuse (IPA) increases (Pankhurst, 2008). Post-conflict, women are actively involved in reconstruction, but even while UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 2003) calls for the equal participation of women in all peace processes, including post-war (Jolluck, 2006), women are not often represented in the decision-making at any level (Jansen, 2006). Before, during and after conflict, women do not have the same access to the basic necessities for healthy life as do the men in their demographics (International Centre for Healthy Society, 2003; WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, 2008).

Peace-building includes learning to treat differences of opinion as information to be worked with rather than opportunities to gain power over another or a situation. This is life work that does not wait for conflict to begin (Chinn, 2004). While these types of interaction are quite common in most women's lives, in the more formal peace-building arena in patriarchal societies, women's peace efforts are often unrecognized

---

<sup>25</sup> On July 16, 2009, Dr. Kuwert, a psychiatrist from University of Greifswald, Germany was interviewed regarding his research with women who survived mass rapes following the Russian advance into a crumbling Germany at the end of WWII (Kuwert, 2009). In what appeared to be the first study of the life-long effects of rape in war, Dr. Kuwert heard women's narrative accounts of their experiences. There appear to have been at least two thousand victims, but only those healthy enough in their latter years could speak. Dr. Kuwert noted his belief that the women's stories were previously not solicited out of a desire to protect the heroic picture of their liberation.

(Brock-Utne, 1985), left in the shadows as women themselves highlight the work of the men around them, leaving their own work in the shadows (Bucur, 2006)<sup>26</sup>.

When thinking about war and peace, there is a common misperception that women can be victims of oppression and brutality *only* at the hands of other nationalities (Mostov, 1995). In reality, on the domestic front, sexual assault by a stranger receives far more attention legally and socially than assault by an intimate partner (Klinic, Inc., 2000). Women are seen as the property of fathers, husbands, or brothers, and as national resources within some cultural and national groups. Notice that these narratives are still focused on men. A woman who has been raped is devalued property, signaling defeat for the man who failed in his role as protector (Mostov, 1995, p. 523).

### **It's not just the official wars: Intimate partner abuse (IPA) and women**

Many aspects of violence are gender-based (Englander, 2007). Unofficial wars continue day to day world-wide. When able to face the topic, discussions related to intimate partner abuse (IPA)<sup>27</sup> provoke intense feelings ranging from horror, to rage, and even disbelief. Everyone needs a home — a safe place to retreat from the outside world —

---

<sup>26</sup> Bucur (2006) reviewed memoirs, diaries, and autobiographical statements/interviews to understand women's experiences of WWI and WWII. She found that women tended to be more sympathetic to the troubles of all the people involved, and when interviewed with husbands deferred to their husbands' descriptions of events even when the husbands had not been present during the described events. In Bucur's experience women have come forward with their own experiences only since the late 1980s.

<sup>27</sup> I use the term *intimate partner abuse* (IPA) rather than "spousal abuse" or "family violence" to be clear of the reference to abuse by one adult intimate partner by another not necessarily occurring within a committed relationship. This term can apply to different or same-sex relationships. IPA is also clearly about adult intimate relationships rather than abuse perpetrated on parents by their adult children or children by their parents.

where there is the potential for personal growth (Burton, 1990; Maslow, 1954, 1970). Most people carry an internal picture of such comfort and security; however, many women around the world are safer on the streets than they are in their own homes (Boy & Kulczycki, 2008; Englander, 2007; Romans, Forte, Cohen, Du Mont, & Hyman, 2007; Ward, 2006). While the majority of family violence is directed at women and children, more than seventy-five percent is directed at the female spouse in a heterosexual relationship (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

World-wide, figures representing IPA are staggering. On average 36,000 women in the former Soviet Union are beaten daily by their spouses, and in Pakistan an estimated ninety percent of women are abused by their husbands (Boy & Kulczycki, 2008; Schuler, Bates, & Islam, 2008). While media reports highlight the frequency and brutality of street violence, more than fifty percent of the violent acts in North America occur within the home (Englander, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2005).

Even though IPA is not limited to any geographic area, income level, religious affiliation, or ethnicity (Roberts & Roberts, 2005; Schuler, Bates, & Islam, 2008; Ward, 2006; World Health Organization, 2005), the majority of the direct or first-level victims are women. While IPA is the number one cause of women's trips to hospital emergency rooms in North America (Harway & Hansen, 2004; Roberts & Roberts, 2005), a Canadian survey (Statistics Canada, 2005) found only thirty-seven percent of women experiencing IPA reported the incidents to the police. Of the twenty-seven percent of violent crimes reported to police in 2002 in Canada, sixty-two percent were by people injured by their

spouses: eighty-five percent of these victims were women. The enormity of IPA dawned with the realization that IPA will occur in one third (Romans et al, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2005) to two thirds (Schuler et al, 2008; Ward, 2006; World Health Organization, 2005) of all male/female intimate partner relationships.

Denial of basic human needs, including safety, security, and frustration of basic rights are primary causes of social conflict (Burton, 1990; Korostelina, 2009). In this case, conflict occurs when people without muster the energy to challenge those whose needs are being met.

### **Recognizing women in the process of social change — in peace-building**

Having identified some of the impact of official and unofficial wars on women, the focus now turns other roles women take on — assigned or chosen — related to war and peace. Planning social change involves having a picture of “what is to be” (visioning) and then taking stock of what is. “Women” and “war” do not go together in most ideologies. Conversely, “women” and “peace” *do* align — but not usually women and peace-building. That work tends to be assigned to educated men who are invited to enter the international arena and work their diplomacy. When women are mentioned in connection with war, it is usually as mother or wife of soldier, nurse or volunteer helper for the wounded, or most recently recognized, as victims themselves (Porter, 2007). Both the past assignment, and the present reality of women’s experience must be examined in order to work toward a more realistic and helpful future for women in peace-building and social change. This work goes beyond “not war”.

### ***Women's assigned roles***

Historically, women have been seen first as nurturers as in most religious contexts where Madonna or mother is the one who comforts and provides sustenance for family and community. For example, in most Christian contexts, church communities are still led by a male-dominated clergy<sup>28</sup> and parish or congregational boards who are supported by accompanying or complimentary women's guilds<sup>29</sup>. The women's guild may fund-raise and look after the food and social organization for church-related functions. Generally speaking this nurturing, or caretaking/giving, is seen as a virtue which sometimes obfuscates the role caregivers play in supporting war and warriors (Kaplan, 1996; Francis, 2002):

The cultural, structural, psychological and physical violence to which women are subjected are part and parcel of the culture of domination which women, alas, often help to perpetuate through the gendering and militarizing of their children. (Francis, 2002, p. 5)

Images from evening newscasts depict mothers, spouses, girlfriends, and children bidding soldiers good-bye as they go off to war, and greeting coffins when their bodies return (Enloe, 2010).

Some believe that women see peace differently from men and that we work toward peace differently. For example, Brigit Brock-Utne (1985, p. 37) notes that women have more concern for human life, especially for children, and that women

---

<sup>28</sup> To date, the Roman Catholic Church does not allow women to become priests, bishops, cardinals, etc.

<sup>29</sup> See for example the United Church Women's League (UCWL), the Catholic Women's League (CWL), etc. Interestingly, the CWL is 'supportive' of the men's organization known as the Knights of Columbus — just a hint of war language here.

work with more collaborative techniques tending towards trans-political, even transnational approaches when reaching across to the other camp<sup>30</sup> (Calvin, 2002; Kelley & Eblen, 2002). Still, an alternate and often romanticized portrait of women's relationship to war and peace is the picture of women as peace workers.

In contrast, some women who work actively for peace have been identified as such in more of a pejorative sense — troublemakers. In the former Yugoslavia women activists created networks and resources for women who had been impacted by war. Efforts to create such services were often seen as negative; in a climate where resources are scarce, women focused help “took from” resources needed to rebuild in a more generic way (Korac, 2006). Other examples of of peacemaking “troublemakers” include the work done by the Women of Greenham Common who handily disrupted implantation of cruise missiles in Wales, as well as the group of women who were eventually jailed during the American Pentagon Action in November, 1981. Also, the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo use regular silent protest to bring discomfort and attention to the reality of many “disappeared” people in Argentina (Brock-Utne, 1985).

In what is really a false dichotomy, women are often victims and targets of war. That is, women and children are often the “collateral damage” of weapons of mass destruction (Brock-Utne, 1985) such as those used in the bombing of Baghdad. It is this

---

<sup>30</sup> Calvin (2002) describes Sis Levin who met personally with as many people (usually men) as she could connect with to influence assistance in the release of her husband who had been taken hostage in the Middle East. Levin reportedly used metaphor to communicate, seeing the perspectives of Arabs, Jews, (and Christians) as members of a dysfunctional family. Her perspective was not that she should blame the hostage takers, but to seek her husband's return. Levin used *conflict management* rather than *conflict resolution*.

very victimhood that is used by some to seek vengeance — or peace and security. Post-war, women are unofficial but very real targets of sexual assault by parties working to mark their presence, shame their male opponents (by raping “their” women), or even dilute the genealogy of the “other” group (Jolluck, 2006). There are also reports of peacekeepers and other civilian occupiers assaulting women while doing “protective” duties as reported from the Balkans (Vandenberg, 2005). In contrast, women are known to be instrumental in grass-roots work in their own communities post-war (Jansen, 2006).

### ***Women’s roles and women’s agency***

Women’s voices and sense of self are often influenced by their relationships and subsequent roles; for example mother/daughter, wife/husband, employer/employee (Malin, 2001). Perception of identity and of self-value are wound tightly with perception and performance of agency (Pittinsky, Shih, & Ambady, 1999) and women’s gendered identities are intrinsically bound up in their political identities (Cupples, 2005).

Feminist discourses about social change and peace-building have moved beyond a debate of nature versus nurture (Enloe, 2000/1989; Reardon., 1996). Nurture, including socialization, has the greatest impact on an individual’s identity and sense of agency or self-efficacy. As previously noted, there are a variety of characteristics attributed to either male or female — yin or yang. Characteristics valued in men — aggression, decisiveness, powerfulness, dispassion — tend to be associated with authoritarianism (Keashly, 1994; Kolb & Williams, 2000; Tannen, 1990). Characteristics more often

named as women's are nurturance, collaboration, empathy, and care-taking (Keashly, 1994; Watson, 1994; Kolb & Williams, 2000; Tannen, 1990). When women are told that they have done a job "as well as a man" the intimation is that they have taken on more aggressive, competitive traits and are less empathic or caring (Kolb & Williams, 2000). The intimation is also that this is "better than" the job that a woman would do.

So, should a woman do a good job of performing womanhood or should she try to ignore being an effective female and work to take on what are considered to be male traits? The point is that male traits are more valued in the public sphere world-wide, and literally when push comes to shove, this is also the case in many homes around the world. With this reality, it is hard for many women to sense that they have much value other than in the area of reproductive labour (Neysmith, 2000). Around the world women have less access to land ownership, occupy lower status jobs, and have lower incomes. Women far outnumber men in the world's poor (Buvinic, 1997; People's Movement for Human Rights Education, 2009; International Centre for Healthy Society, 2003; Rural Development Institute, 2002-2007). In 2001 in Canada women earned approximately seventy-one percent of what men earned for both full-time and part-time work. While we know that education is a key to employment in many positions paying above minimum-wage, education had little impact on the wage gap (Morris, 2009).

The concept of women as a colonized group is neither heartening nor comfortable, but it does help us to understand the challenges experienced by women

all over the world. If we accept that patriarchy is the standard mode of operation world-wide, (Brock-Utne, 1985; Dominelli, 2001; Enloe, 2002/1989; Merry, 2006; Reardon, 1996; Sylvester, 2002), then we must consider that, in varying degrees, women are living a life similar to that of the colonized — dependent on a patriarchal system to grant them rights.

A simple review of the time-line for women's voting rights in many countries — a right to acknowledge women as persons under the law — provides evidence of oppression women have and continue to experience. Women in Canada were acknowledged as persons with the accompanying right to vote in 1918 (Library of Parliament, 2007). Women in Iran and Iraq gained this right, with caveats, in 1980 (Women in Politics: Beyond nations, 2000). In 2009 in Canada, there were no women representatives among the more than 600 leaders at the national level of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) (Jacobs, 2009). World-wide, men outnumber women in political parties 100 to one (UNIFEM, 2009). Merely acknowledging the disparities between men's and women's rights in mixed company creates conflict. In order to take a step forward, opening the possibilities for this conflict to become constructive, the different dynamics involved must be examined.

### **Gender and power**

While conflict can actually be useful in developing relationships (Snyder, 2003); violence and war are not. In constructive conflicts, parties show flexibility and are sometimes competitive. Each party stands for her own interests, not in spite of the other, but

believing that everything for both can be accomplished. A constructive settlement is one that is considered to be mutually acceptable to both parties, leaving both parties unafraid to continue dealing with each other and with a stake in a shared future (Jeong, 2005; Lederach & Moomaw Jenner, 2002). This kind of engagement involves power. If power is the centre of life and unequal power is the root of violence, then power must be examined more closely:

*Power*<sup>31</sup> corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. (Arendt, 1970/1969, p. 44)

This next section looks at the complex interaction of gender and power. Feminists conceptualize power as the capacity for exercising agency within a context that may have a limited amount of resources and advantages available to each party (Dominelli, 2001; French, 1985; Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994). In contrast, the concept of *power over* is associated with coercion, domination, and control of others. Power over requires the ‘othering’ of an individual or group and is also associated with suppression of another’s power — oppression.

Furthering the power of oppression to maintain inequities, the phenomenon of *internalized oppression* exists when the oppressed or disempowered no longer require the external control of the oppressor to maintain the status quo of inequities (Bishop, 1994/2002; Friere, 1970; hooks, 2000). Internalized oppression implies that the oppressed has absorbed the belief that he or she deserves, has, or is of less power and

---

<sup>31</sup> Italics in the original text.

value. An individual begins to accept his/her lot in life as natural. This belief becomes largely unconscious and integrated into both personal and cultural identity (Bishop, 1994/2002; Friere, 1970). Feminists insist that analyses of any dynamic must consider not only power, but also the intersection of power with gender in order to move toward emancipation of those who are disempowered — to social justice (Boulding, 2000; Dominelli, 2001; Jeong, 2000; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Merry, 2006).

### **Power versus empowerment**

So, how does a person acquire power or the capacity to exercise agency as noted above? First, a feminist analysis reveals that power asymmetry leads to conflict and thwarts conflict resolution (Taylor & Beinstein Miller, 1994; Boulding, 2000; Jeong, 2000). Control and domination thwart power and agency.

Women's experiences of power differentials have often related to having *power over* used to coerce services needed or desired by the oppressor/colonizer. Anne Wilson Schaeff (1981) offers an alternative concept of power to this traditionally patriarchal one. Replacing power over others as a way of getting needs met, Schaeff describes *power to* and *power with* — the ability to empower self and others. While I do not agree that one person can empower another, Schaeff's essentially pro-feminist definition allows that *power* is not limited to, nor does it require, dominance; however, in order to assist another to access power and resources, a resource person may be able to facilitate the empowerment of another.

Eight components in the process of empowerment are identified: self-esteem, self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, political awareness, political participation, political rights and responsibilities, and access to resources (Schwerin, 1985). Self-esteem and self-efficacy are based on attitudes and beliefs about the self and one's capabilities in her/his environment. Knowledge and skills include basic literacy which facilitates connection of the individual to the world (Friere, 1970), practical knowledge needed for survival in one's environment, and self-knowledge about personal values, limitations, goals, etc. (Shwerin, 1985). Political awareness or critical consciousness allows an individual's sense of social justice to develop through *liberation education* (Friere, 1970) or transformational education that helps people think critically about their relationship to political structures and authorities (Boulding, 2000). This involves asking, "What is and what should be?" Political participation, in the broadest sense, is another element of empowerment through which individual and community develop awareness of not only what should be (human rights) but also how crucial their participation is in facilitating change. Lack of participation is not neutral; it is action toward maintaining the status quo.

Through exercising political rights and responsibilities, individuals, and communities assume more control. The process of empowerment should also lead to increasing access to essential resources (Schwerin, 1985). Arguably, the process of individual empowerment facilitates community empowerment (Bishop, 1994/2002) which develops through collective, collaborative involvement in participatory

endeavours that increase community capacity efficacy (Barsky, 2009). In turn, communities fostering empowerment and growth do so not only for the group as a whole, but also for each individual within the group since the combination and collaboration of individuals is the strength of the group (Dominelli, 2004).

Without empowerment, if rebellion succeeds, the power hierarchy is merely flipped; the oppressed tends to become the oppressor (Bishop, 1994/2002; Friere, 1970). Instead, in developing a civil society, other forms of power must be used:

There are, however, forms of power which have nothing to do with the domination of others. The first is 'power-within'. This refers to one's own centredness, one's grounding in one's own beliefs, wisdom, knowledge, skills, culture, community. The second is 'power-with', or power exercised cooperatively among equals. The third is 'authority', that is, the wisdom, creativity, or expression of a group's energy by an individual that is recognized and agreed to by others as right at a certain time. (Bishop, 1994/2002, p. 42)

In other words the only way forward is an anti-oppressive approach to facilitating peace-building by facilitating development of a civil society. The means must justify the end or the end will not be a lasting peace (Feagin & Vera, 2008, p. 22; Galtung, 1996).

### ***Feminism and empowerment***

Even as we seek human equality and peace, we must each be mindful of our positions as seekers or inquirers. My own particular exploration of empowerment comes from a white Western feminist perspective which originally taught that we could empower others. As such, that definition and others I use here grew out of a male — largely white male — definition of power. These are definitions my own experience challenged. There are many other perspectives and experiences to be heard from.

Arising out of its root word “power”, *empowerment* is a word that brings its own baggage. *Empowerment* appeared first in common usage in feminist circles in the early 1980s (French, 1985; Russell, 1984). Feminist peace researchers (Enloe, 2000/1989; Reardon, 1996; Sylvester, 2002), feminist counselors (Russell, 1984), and other community development practitioners (Dominelli, 2001) challenge the “malestream” point of view conventionally describing power as “power over” and empowerment as that which those with power transfer or convey to others (Ette, 2007). Feminists in general see power as relational and multi-dimensional — social contextual. Power is from within.

Empowerment is generally seen as a transformative process through which people gain understanding of themselves and their world and, through this process, greater control over their lives as participants in the world. One might say that empowerment brings agency (Malhotra & Schuler, 2005), and self-awareness is accompanied by recognition that the self is not deficient, but human, with a right to live fully with some self-determination, connected with others (Schaefer, 1981; Schwerin, 1985). As such, empowerment is the stuff through which healthy identity is constructed.

### **Gender, politics and power**

“Peace and patriarchy are antithetical by definition” (Reardon, 1996, p. 37). So, why look specifically at *women* and empowerment? What does it mean to link empowerment and civic engagement? First, we acknowledge that civic engagement, otherwise known as “politics,” is not only a matter of governance, but also woven into

many more personal, day to day interactions. Second, while one political arena may declare an internationally agreed upon set of human rights, other arenas may ignore this same dictum — or interpret it in its own particular way, perhaps more in keeping with another culturally appropriate power structure (Merry, 2006). As noted, these have historically been male-led and male-focused discussions. What about anyone not male?

And what is “politics”? According to both the American Heritage Dictionary (Houghton Mifflin Co., 2003), and the Collins Essential Language Dictionary (2006), “politics,” a noun, is the “art and science of government” or “any activity concerned with the acquisition of power” often involving conflictual relationships among people. So it is that we see politics not only in government, but also in the performance of religion, culture, and other human interactions.

Both individuals and communities (global and grass-roots) have multiple bases of power that may be fragmented or shifted depending on a variety of dynamics, not the least of which is context, with some power relationships cemented by both perception and/or very real dependency. In the earlier-noted definitions of politics, power can be influenced by information, money, law, constituency, energy and natural resources, goods and services, network participation, history (Homan, 2004), and, not noted in most writing prior to 1980, gender (Dominelli, 2001; Merry, 2006). Religion, culture and geographical location (Byrne & Carter, 1996) as well as race should be added into the mix (Bishop, 1994/2002; hooks, 1990).

Speaking about liberation from oppression and the full participation of individuals and communities in civil society, means speaking about community development and politics (Kalunga-Banda, 2005). This also means speaking about the realization of human rights for each member of a society (Merry, 2006). In this process of liberation which involves civil engagement, we must beware of any assumption that the liberation of women will naturally follow the liberation of that society or nation (Condren, 1995). Along with the 'high politics' of nation-building and international development, comes the 'low politics' of local culture, family dynamics, and religious practices. Sometimes both high and low politics are inextricably intertwined (Merry, 2006).

That said, analysis of any situation or dynamic requires the use of a gendered lens for women and men are involved and impacted differently. Unfortunately, while reaching to have their basic needs met and for fair treatment as equal members of our world, women are often forced to sideline their own freedom for the 'greater good' of their community learning that if they ask for their own rights as humans they are asking too much.

### ***Women in different global contexts***

Women are not just one group among various disempowered subsets of society (the poor, ethnic minorities and so on); they are a cross-cutting category of individuals that overlaps with all these other groups. (Malhotra & Schulen, 2005, p. 71)

Women are often considered second class, or are set aside altogether within their own identity groups and communities. The following section highlights some geographically

disparate examples sharing the common experience of an oppression that further marginalizes women even from males within the same context. We have already acknowledged the disparities common to women globally including poverty, lower standards of education and family violence.

Since women's bodies have always been used in nationalist agendas, it is important to counter such uses by suggesting the historical contingency of gender formation — to claim that women are not victims but are persons whose agency is differentially constructed within formations that come not only from state and nation but also from geopolitics, economics, religion, sexuality, etc. The analysis of women's subject positions within institutional formations reveals the specific contexts that allow exploitation and help formulate ways to deal with these contexts. (Grewal, 1998, p. 516)

Consciously or not women's gendered identities are intrinsically bound up in political identities (Cupples, 2005). Gendered images vary in different regions and women's bodies, dress, and sexual demeanor are symbolic of national, regional, and cultural traditions (Sinha, 2006). Still, care must be taken to refrain from generalizing these realities to all women of any given cultural, national, racial, or socio-economic group.

Specific examples of challenges met by women have been highlighted to show that across cultures, across races, and across socio-economic groups, the inequities suffered by many women appear differently in different contexts and so must be approached differently both from inside the experience and from outside (Narayan, 2005). In some contexts, women may have a voice in the public sphere and be silenced in their homes. In other contexts, the reverse is true where women may indeed be

strong figures at home but not allowed access to voting rights and/or education (Mason, 2005).

### *Indigenous women in Canada*

While it was only 1964 when Quebec's Civil Code was amended to give married women full legal and property rights, Canadian women of Aboriginal or First Nations descent have had to battle for their rights not only to land, but to their very identity and the status that goes with it. Prior to the 1985, *Bill C-31 Act to Amend the Indian Act*, a First Nations woman who married a non-Aboriginal male lost her status as a First Nations person, including the right to live on band property (Parliamentary Information and Research Service, 2000). Any children of this relationship did not have status either. In contrast, any male who married a non-Aboriginal woman was able to keep his status, and his children continued with this birthright.

Regarding property ownership, First Nations women are still at a disadvantage, and this reality serves to keep some women in abusive relationships long after they would otherwise choose to leave (Petipas-Taylor, 2009). At this time, there is no applicable legislation or guideline for the division of marital property under the *Indian Act*<sup>32</sup>. Instead each band or First Nation may establish their own guidelines and for many this means that a woman has no recourse legally to her share of marital property as it exists on a reserve. If she leaves, her spouse automatically has the marital home

---

<sup>32</sup> The *Indian Act* (R.S. 1985, c.1-5) Government of Canada

(Native Women's Association of Canada, 2007; Whonnock, 2008). Neither can she ask local police to remove him from the place, even if it is for her own safety.

*Women in the Middle-East, North Africa, India, and Pakistan*

Muslim religion and culture was under scrutiny from the West long before the bombing of the New York World Trade Center twin towers September 11, 2001. Still, the interpretations of most religions are literally man-made, and fundamentalism in any form seems to result in hierarchies that are oppressive to women. With the overthrow of the Shah of Iran from a monarchy (not considered religious) leadership, in 1979, followed by a civic government, many Iranian women who had already benefited from the Shah's promotion of women's education, looked to greater freedom for all Iranian citizens (Iran Chamber Society, 2009; Smitha, 2007). This was not women's experience. Their rights to education were greatly curtailed, and a simple act of leaving the home unescorted by a male family member, or with bare head, became a matter for violent physical punishment and public prosecution (Armstrong, 2002; Nafisi, 2004). To challenge this restriction is to challenge family, religious community, and government, at risk of death.

Women in Saudi Arabia were heartened when their government signed the U.N. Covenant for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in September, 2001. Still, Saudi women acknowledge that they remain "third class citizens" in 2009 (Global Eye, UK, 2009), not allowed to drive or travel without written permission from a male guardian, relegated to their own neighbourhoods where even

there they may be detained by religious police (*Mutawwai'in*) for walking alone.

Women are discouraged from numerous professions that would put them in contact with men. Under Saudi law, a man may have four wives who may be from any religion while a woman must marry a Muslim. Should the couple divorce, she has the right, by law, to only three months of child support, and may have custody of her children only until they are seven or nine years of age, depending upon their gender (Global Eye, UK, 2009).

Being a woman in the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of India or Pakistan can be very dangerous (Apple, 2009). Valuation of women and men is starkly different in marital relations and societal expectations. Often marriages are arranged. If a woman chooses to enter a relationship not prescribed by her family, she may suffer the consequence by death — an honour killing committed by male family members to show their disapproval at their relative's disobedience or flaunting of the 'respect' given to male parental figures (Chesler, 2009; Gabriel, 2007). Additionally, a woman who is sexually assaulted may herself be punished for bringing this shame upon her family<sup>33</sup>. While not legally sanctioned, these acts are not usually challenged. That is, the woman has little legal recourse; any complaint on her part is not taken seriously.

---

<sup>33</sup> Fear related to women being violently sanctioned by family members for 'unauthorized' contact with males often accompanies women to their new homes when they emigrate. As a crisis counsellor into the twenty-first century in Canada I met several women who were terrified of having their husbands know that they had been sexually assaulted by a stranger. They told me that their families would consider their 'rape' as disgraceful to the family rather than very traumatic events for the women themselves.

### *Women in Eastern Europe*

This study's earlier context chapter highlighted some of the discrepancies experienced by women in Ukraine and other countries previously part of the USSR. While a gendered lens should be use to view any situation, since Ukraine is the specific context for this study, some cultural/linguistic specifics from Ukraine are shared here.

Religion, politics, and culture are reflexively entwined with language and the reality of internalized oppression as noted earlier may be witnessed in the experience and language not only in Ukraine, but especially in the experience of Ukrainian women. Ukraine became a country independent of the Soviet State in 1991. Perhaps because this independence was suddenly thrust upon the people, Ukraine did not move along to functional democracy as quickly as did countries such as Poland and Eastonia (Reid, 2003/1997/1985; Politkovskaya, 2007). There are still a number of factors in place that support what may appear to be a kind of ambivalence on the part of Ukrainian people. The Ukrainian language<sup>34</sup> provides clues into the shared psycho-cultural experiences of a people who have gone from historical domination of various countries over the centuries to more recent Soviet control which officially ended in 1991. Indeed there was no translation for the English word "assertive." The closest approximation was the

---

<sup>34</sup> I focus on the Ukrainian language because it is a language with which I became familiar when developing courses and facilitating social work education as an English speaker in Ukraine. Working with translators/interpreters who were themselves linguists and educators afforded opportunities for discussion of connotation and denotation both of which are central in conveying meaning — in efforts to communicate about important issues such as assertiveness, aggression, passivity, etc.

transliteration recently coined “*assertivniy*”<sup>35</sup>. When asked “How are you?” a common response is, “*mozjna*” (could be). In fact, in response to almost any question, the response contains “*mozjna*” (could be). “It could be that he will do this.” “It could be that [something] will happen.”<sup>36</sup> This is the language that deflects agency perhaps because it has historically been unwise to acknowledge or invite personal power (Figes, 2007).

Additionally, with more transparency than many cultures, people’s names reflect the patriarchal dominance evident in Ukraine. For example, a child’s name includes that of her father as in Svetlana Mikolaevna Pidwersky<sup>37</sup> or Svetlana, daughter of Mikola. Throughout her life, she will be addressed as Svetlana Mikolaevna in polite company. This is a culture rich in music, art, literature and spirit — and it is a culture of deference to some differentially defined higher patriarchal power. Within this culture live many different experiences and mini-cultures through which the world and oppression is seen and responded to in different ways (Black, 2003, p. 120; Druckman, 2003, p. 312)

Language continues to provide psycho-cultural clues as we note that the English word “assertiveness” can be shared only through transliteration. While teaching a Social Work class at the University of Lviv Polytechnic, Lviv, Ukraine in 2003 I tried to explain some of Friere (1970) and Bishop’s (1994/2002) teachings about oppression and the use

---

<sup>35</sup> The Ukrainian words and their translation or transliteration are included with reference to conversations with Dr. Nina Hayduk, Professor of Linguistics, Lviv Polytechnica University, Lviv, Ukraine. Dr. Hayduk is now the director of the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Lviv Polytechnica University

<sup>36</sup> See previous note.

<sup>37</sup> This name is fictitious and used only for example.

of assertiveness as a means of resistance and counteraction. My colleague and interpreter for the class, who is also a linguist, could find no word, and so we spent the rest of the course continuing to clarify the meaning of 'assertiveness' to people who had the words for aggression and passivity but not assertiveness.

With no words for assertiveness, perhaps there was no concept. If assertiveness is not a concept, how can people choose action other than passivity or aggression to counteract oppression? If people can't put their lived and shared experience into words, how can the colonized join to work against colonization and the colonizer (Amis, 2002; Bishop, 1994/2002; Fanon, 1963; Friere, 1970; Memmi, 1965/1991)?

### **Gender, knowledge and social change**

Social change requires knowledge. Overall, looking at gender as a construct cutting across all races, religions, cultures, and socio-economic groups, it is women who are most often lower, in any hierarchy of privilege and rights, than the men in their group. Power relations shaping gender identity and gender-based alliances are seldom taken into account when planning interventions for peace (Korac, 2006). Changing this reality requires challenging what many westerners have taken to be peaceful progress in our world. The challenge includes a process of collaboratively visioning for the future (Lederach, 2003; 2005). In this endeavour each gender must share knowledge about what is presently working in the world followed by a commitment to co-create new knowledge, moving it forward through different kinds of shared experience.

Tickner writes about the relationship between knowledge and power — understanding “knowledge” is at best partial — most often in history created by men and based on male experience (Tickner, 2006). In reality, understanding something — knowing it — requires gathering information from multiple perspectives. Even then, in the compilation of this knowledge there will be something missing. Studying a topic can provide information about what something seems to be — what it looks like from the outside, the surface. Knowledge of any depth requires information and insight from within, and communication of that knowledge negotiated through language and shared experience (Friere, 1970). Historically, if women have been acknowledged at all, what we want, need — even who we are — has been told to us, usually by men (Gilligan, 1982), and sometimes by other well-meaning women who think that they/we understand. Humans recognize only that which we know from our own experiences. We may indeed see or even know part of a reality, but we are not able to know it all.

An important part of knowing is realizing that *knowledge* in an academic sense is quite rare. Knowing intimates expertise. When one is expert, there is no need to acquire further information — to be curious and open. In contrast, the process of learning about, or getting to know, is much more accessible and realistic. Process connotes involvement and change — a dynamic venture including a commitment to be curious and alive within a variety of contexts. The process of learning is risky. It is not neat, tidy, and finite.

The process of getting to know and understand more about women and women's experience of social change may be assisted by different tools, some that are already available such as Social Cubism (Byrne & Carter, 1996), as mentioned in Chapter One, and some to be developed through the process of education as discussed later.

Knowledge exists not only in the structures and institutions of a society, but in the experience of its individuals and groups (Dominelli, 2001; 2004; Foucault, 1980; Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Of course, analysis requires information and learning that information — the process of gaining knowledge — continues to bump up against barriers like misogyny, ignorance, fear, complacency, silence — even culture — all factors which can be complicated by internalized oppression. A real picture is nuanced and multifaceted, and seeing this picture requires looking differently depending upon the placement of the viewer — her positioning in the facet-shifting multidimensional life she lives (Byrne & Carter, 1996)<sup>38</sup> — a unique position from which we must be careful not to extrapolate and generalize.

### **Gender mainstreaming on the path to peace**

To live in the world peacefully requires acknowledgment of *what is*, engaging all of our faculties in this process — “mind, hand and heart (Spelman, 2003, p. 135).” Humanity's common basic needs — the requirements for mere survival as human — provide a starting point. First, from a human rights perspective, and backed by the basic needs

---

<sup>38</sup> Social cubism (Byrne & Carter, 1996) offers a model of analysis that depicts the very real intersectionality of multiple influences in people's lives. No two lives are exactly the same.

identified by Maslow (Maslow, 1954, 1970) and Burton (Burton, 1990), we understand that even though there is an internationally agreed-upon standard of human rights — rights for each person — the reality is that the application of these rights varies drastically across nations, communities — and genders (Dutt, 1998; Merry, 2006).

Planning and collaboration with all stakeholders is a vital part of work that has any hope of having lasting positive impact in community (Byrne, Thiessen, & Fissuh, 2007; Homan, 2004; O'Brien, 2007). These vital steps can take many years to be carried out; however, working through a shared process is not only empowering but capacity building for a community (Barsky, 2009; Byrne, Thiessen, & Fissuh, 2007; Francis, 2002). Taking the hope for change to the planning stage, then actually carrying out the changes, involves many small steps guided by the shared vision (Homan, 2004; Kahn, 1991/1998)<sup>39</sup>. Unfortunately the visioning step is often missed when communities are in crisis. Once initiated, crisis work can continue becoming a way of living for an individual or a country.

Doing a complete community assessment assists a community to build on what it already has (Marti-Costa, 2001). Women's work must be included in community assessments. The application of Diamond and McDonald's framework of multi-track diplomacy (Diamond & McDonald, 1996) turned upside down illustrates that women are working together at number of levels, but often unknown to each other and to non-

---

<sup>39</sup> The literature often used for strategic planning in business and in community development offers some guidance for what can seem to be such an insurmountable task that the community becomes paralyzed into believing that nothing can change.

women. In fact, grass-roots or community-level work by women and men often goes unreported, unanalyzed, and unevaluated (Paffenholz, 2003).

This process-oriented work can develop organically by people in communities (Paffenholz, 2003) with input from expatriates, out of organized religion present in the area (Gopin, 2003), from the use of arts such as music, visual art, and drama as well as traditional arts and storytelling (Cobb, 2003; Cohen, 2003; Senehi, 2002) as described in the next chapter. While often not noticed as such, women seem to be particularly good at networking (Boulding, 2000; Ring, 2006), one of the fundamental skills of grass-roots leadership (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Homan, 2004). Sometimes informal initiatives grow to be life-saving NGOs that stir women to further social action<sup>40</sup> (Wesoky, 2008).

Practical creativity appears in various ways. Micro-economies support women to have their own sustainable businesses — businesses that support their families, and provide the women themselves with a sense of efficacy necessary to continue growing (Mason, 2005). Otherwise isolated women gather to educate themselves and those around them about gender inequality and the need for change (Paffenholz, 2003; Wesoky, 2008). Some of these efforts are accompanied by practical skill development and challenges to government statutes that keep women in submissive positions (The China Project: Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba, 2004). Other efforts involve creating resources post-conflict. For example, women have developed client-

---

<sup>40</sup> Wesoky writes of a Chinese women's magazine that engaged women from rural China to move from contemplation and completion of suicide to creating their own suicide intervention projects that also educated the populace about some of the challenges lived by rural women in China.

centred counseling resources for women who have survived sexual traumas in the former Yugoslavia (Mladjenovic, 2001). Still others, such as truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs), encourage healing while documenting atrocities suffered by women during and post-conflict (Bucur, 2006; DeLaet, 2006; Pankhurst, 2008). This process is described in the next chapter.

### **Educating for peace**

A culture of peace requires a genuine partnership between men and women, working together to illuminate conditions and causes of war and violence, and continually examining the ways that gender roles and all forms of human inequality are woven into cultures. Peace education must be resourceful and brave, drawing attention to any social structure or process that detracts from peaceable living (Fisk, 2000). This can be done in a variety of ways and at multiple levels.

The final session of the Hague Appeal for Civil Society Conference held in the Netherlands in May 1999 launched a Global Campaign for Peace Education — an initiative to lobby ministers of education world-wide. The campaign's foundational concepts identified violence as something that is often intentional and avoidable, and non-violence, the principle of doing no harm, is fundamental for human dignity. The campaign defined education in terms of cultural diversity, and *gender equality* not only in theory and principle, but in practice. These fundamental social goals are necessary for developing human capacity for humane societies all over the world (Reardon, 2001).

Education is a life-long process to be facilitated both formally and informally in a life-giving world (Minow, 2003). This work is done through teaching and modeling of attitudes, verbal and non-verbal communication (Anderson, 1999; Lincoln, 2002; Reardon, 2001), learning self-awareness, emotional (Goleman, 1995) and social intelligence (Goleman, 2006), and developing empathy (Gordon, 2005) and self-regulation (Geffner & Mantooth, 2000) as well as other skills necessary to grow and participate fully in a peaceful world. Conflict resolution programs and peer mediation courses are used to teach children how to breach conflicts (Lederach, 1995; Rothman, 1997). Even more proactively, some mainstream educational institutions offer in their curricula “healthy living” and other courses designed to develop empathy, such as the Roots of Empathy program developed by Mary Gordon (2005).

There are also creative leadership programs available for communities (Chinn, 2004; Evans, Evans, & Kraybill, 2001). Of course, the study of peace and conflict resolution has reached universities world-wide as a discipline unto itself (Kriesberg, 2007) with numerous academic journals supporting the work (see, for example, Dunn, 2005; Miall, Ramsbottom, & Woodhouse, 2002).

Facing almost overwhelmingly male-centred or “gender neutral” approaches to research done by men and women (Sylvester, 2002; Enloe, 2000/1989) many feminists who wish to avoid replicating the power imbalances built in to most traditional researcher-subject relationship, work to use participatory methods. These methods are intended to account for the values and structures reinforced in the process, and are

meant to include people whose lives are being studied in the choice of study subject, the exploration process itself, and the final depiction of what has been learned (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Chase, 2005; Cruikshank, 2000; Spelman, 2003 Sprague, 2005).

Informally, women and men continue to teach their children skills for living. Some of the teaching comes from sharing self-stories (Mahalingam, 2007) and challenging the myths that have been shared culturally over generations (Mostov, 1995) while in dialogue with their children and others around them. Sometimes the informal education takes place in forums such as therapy and healing groups where women learn to challenge the myths of self as being “less than” or worthy of ill-treatment, and learn about questioning societal and structural patterns that are oppressive to anyone (Herman, 1992/1997; Klinic, 2000). More about the use of narrative in gender-sensitive peacebuilding is shared in the next chapter.

Education for peace continues as women across age barriers and continents work in local, national, and international groups to challenge the status quo and advocate for human rights and needs fulfillment — for better lives not only for women, but also for a peaceful and just world.

Activism takes many forms. Examples are seen in women’s nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working behind the fronts at the United Nations (Merry, 2006), lobbying groups, protest groups and women such as the international group, The Raging Grannies, who use humour, song, and street theatre to bring to light inequities and challenge politicians to act with ethics and justice (Raging Grannies Without Borders of

Detroit, MI, and Windsor, ON, 2009). Sometimes individual women acting on their own can challenge international systems. Maude Barlow (Barlow, 2009) got herself a ticket to the fifth *World Water Forum*, and, along with other protestors, drew public attention to the impact divisive leadership was having on the accessibility of clean water for more than one billion people (Barlow, 2009).

More institutions working for social change are beginning to acknowledge the reality that gender must be considered in every aspect of our lives. Gender mainstreaming is defined as assessing the implications for women of any planned action including legislation, policies, and programs (Raven-Roberts, 2005; Sandole-Staroste, 2009). Strategies for implementing gender mainstreaming consider the impact of any given action on both men and on women. Gender balance in numbers does not ensure gender mainstreaming (Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, & Parport, 2005; Sandole-Staroste, 2009). The actual practice of gender-mainstreaming can be hampered by old attitudes of the practitioners, including the tendency to see women as either peace-makers or victims needing services (Whitbread, 2005).

Peace work also continues across societal structures vertically as well as horizontally. Barnes (2005) notes that while there are gaps in the literature about successful contributions of civil society in the areas of peace-building and conflict resolution, a web of relationships often exists between people's private lives and their engagement with state and market. She notes that civil society organizations (CSOs) are often involved in policy dialogues working on structural prevention and response to

conflict. Social justice and social change require a marrying of all tools at hand across 'tracks' with communication being a key to building societies that are congruent in their reach for peace (Apple, 2009; Calvin, 2002; Diamond & McDonald, 1996; Paffenholz, 2003; Reimann & Ropers, 2005; Westly, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2007).

Caution is vital in evaluating the efficacy of any processes. For example, grass-roots NGOs may be funded by state or have state-approved funding providing contingencies not accounted for in the parameters of development and service delivery (Grewal, 1998).<sup>41</sup> Care must also be taken to avoid complacency or be placated when some attention is paid to women and children while a great deal more resources are going to other interests such as, for example, the General Assembly and the Security Council (Grewal, 1998).

### **Re-searching for peace**

The above initiatives have been and are living attempts to learn about present-day realities and what must change for true peace to thrive. Friere saw education as an act of co-creation — co-discovery between those facilitating discovery and those traditionally considered the learners (Friere, 1970). The process of discovering, of learning is in itself empowering (Bishop, 1994/2002; Friere, 1970) and, as such, acts of

---

<sup>41</sup> One example of the contingency of NGO funding is the operation of a local Winnipeg health clinic which was founded by volunteer doctors seeking to assist youth living on the streets and/or overdosing on drugs in the early 1970s. The organization obtained some government funding for medical work, then with volunteers created a crisis line, sexual assault survivor services and the like. Originally self-proclaimed as a "feminist, gay-positive" organization, Klinik Inc. dropped this proclamation at the turn of the century (2000) when, in order to continue some of this work with provincial government funding, the agency shifted its focus to a more generic description of community health centre, i.e., no longer identified as feminist or gay positive.

research hold possibilities for emancipation and empowerment for all involved in the research.

Both feminist and Indigenous approaches to research bring broader and deeper possibilities and share the following: 1) naming the relationship the researcher/inquirer has to the research focus; 2) understanding the importance of acknowledging the power dynamics in both the research situation and the relationship; 3) understanding the importance of respectful inquiry, as well as; 4) understanding that the purpose of research is further emancipation/empowerment of the people involved; 5) the use of consciousness-raising to appreciate reactions to both internal and external oppression; 6) an appreciation of oral history; and 7) using narrative to find voices and history previously bound away; as well as 8) knowing the importance of attention to language in both conveying and understanding narratives and in documenting and otherwise sharing the process of the research; and 9) realizing the importance of reflexivity in sharing findings and conclusions with all involved in the research (Chase, 2005; Kovach, 2005; Potts & Brown, 2005; Smith, 2006/1999; Sprague, 2005).

From this point of view, the act of research itself is facilitative of social change (Flyvbjerg, 2001). In feminist focused appreciative inquiry, even though the responsibilities of research facilitator and others involved in the research may differ, the power dynamic should be equal (Chase, 2005). The respectful inquirer is curious and clear that what is being asked and shared is understood and acceptable to those who are otherwise participating in the process (Chase, 2005; Cruikshank, 2000). Are the

researcher's questions those of the participants? Do participants have other questions? Are researcher reports representative of the intent and content of what participants shared? This kind of collaborative research, done well, provides opportunities for liberation and understanding that continues to grow in the process and in the sharing.

### **Peace building: Women hold up half the sky**

The task of the twenty-first century is to strengthen the peace culture and to transform the warrior culture into a love of adventure and high energy but nonviolent exploration of the unknown... the ability to craft new social patterns and institutions and to create new ways of working together are also required. (Boulding in Kelley, 2002, p. 1)

Uncovering and addressing the reality of gender inequality provides a gift to all humans — even those who have so far lived with the privilege that has come with being recognized and respected. Since the second wave of feminism in the 1960s and the acknowledgement of gender inequality, humans have been prompted to address other inequities that exist within our world (Sylvester, 1992) — inequities due to race, physical and intellectual ability, and age (Sprague, 2005). With a gendered perspective on Burton's human needs theory (Burton, 1990), and the international acknowledgement of basic human rights (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2000; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 2003) people are challenged to open eyes, ears, and minds to see the disparities in treatment of peoples throughout the world.

This chapter has relayed that one half of the world — the group identified as being of the female gender — is at risk for ill treatment solely because of their gender,

and that this is true around the world with degrees of vulnerability varying by and within race, religion, demographics, nation, and socio-economic grouping. This ill-treatment, often violence, goes on in times of war and in times of 'not war'.

Women have long had to juggle multiple roles (e.g. mother, partner, provider, community worker, daughter) and the multiple and often disparate identities that go with the roles. Men have also juggled, and I risk saying that these roles have not required the same sort of chameleon-like energy women have shared. It is fine to be a strong, assertive, sexual, vocal boy/man — visible and active in one's communities of worship and work, and nation. It is not so fine in most cultures to be a strong, assertive, sexual (hooks, 1998), vocal girl/woman (Fusco, 1998) — or even recognized as a person at all in these same venues<sup>42</sup>. Women have had to hide body and voice even from the self — as if without the right to be, to live. As such, women's bodies have been prey to interpretation not only by males but by women ourselves who, perhaps in trying to understand and liberate our sisters, act to distance each 'other' with assumptions rather than join through conversations and listening.

Still, the world must take heart. A first step in peace building (Abu-Nimer, 2003) and in promoting positive social change (Dominelli, 2001) is acknowledging the disparities in our world. Discomfort and conflict, both internal and external, become fuel for change (Abu-Nimer, 2003). Peace-building then involves constructing sustainable relationships predicated on equalized power, and work that is action and

---

<sup>42</sup> Remember the variations in voting rights mentioned earlier.

development oriented. We have to see the inequities involving gender, race, socio-economics, health, and all other sites of power imbalance in order to address them.

Some believe that the role of the female peace activist is to challenge women's assigned roles, the meaning attached to the roles, and the ways that women are seen in general (Enloe, 2000/1989; Sylvester, 2002). Some believe that as women become more visible as economic contributors, political actors, and active participants in our own communities, with this agency, women are "the last hope" for peace (Mostov, 1995).

I cannot totally agree with Mostov's statement; however, I do see the importance of focusing on what women *can* do. First, *all* humans must challenge the hierarchical system that has made and fuelled wars. Second, as women challenge the roles and previous stories not our own, other stories are shared about courage, hard work, and peace-building. In this process, women must speak clearly and listen carefully, cautiously not taking change upon ourselves alone. Nor must we focus solely upon women, though we must start where the need is — start where we are. All must conscientiously continue to focus on the needs, rights, and responsibilities of all of us, doing the very best we can within our environments. Women must continue to do whatever we can, informed by our own lived experiences and the accompanying challenges and opportunities that open to us (Kelley & Eblen, 2002).

As women are able to break through the moulds into which we have been cast, broadening our experiences and our contexts, we will work with and influence the men and children around us to challenge the structures, values, and behaviours that

continue to threaten a living peace. Just how we proceed and develop will be revealed as we work with the open, respectful curiosity accompanying appreciative inquiry, recognizing the best in people and the world around us, nurturing and building upon those that give life (Whitney, Leibler, & Cooperrider, 2003).

As the Chinese say, "Women hold up half the sky."

## Chapter 3

### Finding our voices, narrating our lives

We are in the middle of rough times [...] The challenge is to draw upon the best of hopes and the best of learning skills, and the relationship building, networking, and coalition-forming skills that have developed in this past century, so that the long-term future may yet birth new cultures of peace. (Boulding, 2000, p. 257)

These *are* rough times — perhaps no rougher than previous; still, with instant messaging and other electronic possibilities, stories of war and destruction bombard and connect us world-wide and by the hour. Peace and conflict scholars search for answers with formal research (Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2003; Dunn, 2005; Jeong, 2000) and practical intervention (Bar-On, 2003; Kriesberg, 2007) and attempts at peace-making continue at all levels of diplomacy from grass-roots, community-based work to the ‘highest’ political levels internationally (Diamond & McDonald, 1996; Lederach, 1995). Much of the higher level work being done requires politically sanctioned invitations to recognized experts in problem analysis. Grass-roots level work seldom makes the news; yet, it continues because it must. People are working day to day to coexist. Some of this work can be read about in books like *Imagine Coexistence* (Chayes & Minow, 2003), *Setting the agenda for global peace* (Snyder, 2003), and *The enemy has a face* (Wallach, 2000).

The work of co-existence — living together at all levels, the personal, the political, and back — requires constant communication, and one of the finest, richest examples

of this kind of sharing is storytelling. The subject matter can be personal experience or mythic tale. Every time a story is told, a space is made for shared understanding.

Looking to create more spaces for understanding, I want to tell *you* a story. This dissertation is a story about building civil society with women in Ukraine. Within this story are many other stories, some of which are not mine to tell, and some of which will be shared on later pages. This story — this study — is being written to challenge the assumption that individuals have little agency for questioning master narratives and other stories that shape their identities.

Before moving to the details of the Ukrainian women's story, I want to tell you a story about story, narrative, language, and metaphor and the roles they play in the development of identity, social connections, research, and social change. Faithful to storytelling tradition, I will tell you about the sources of my story, a little about myself and why I tell this story, and a little about the story itself before I actually begin the tale. What these layers of stories mean to you will be yours to discover, during the stories, after the stories, and maybe much later on when you say "aha!" not even aware of the part these stories play in that "aha."

Alright.

You know, I hear this story up north. Maybe Yellowknife, that one, somewhere. I hear it maybe a long time. Old story this one. One hundred years, maybe more. Maybe not so long, either, this story. (King, 1993, p. 3)

First, the sources of my story about story — the origins, both written and otherwise lived — are more than I know or can even imagine. Pieces of the story came from my

own life experience and of course it is my voice you hear in the telling. In acknowledging the reflexive influence of language, identity, and power, I must again out myself as writer and narrator of this piece. In addition to what I previously shared, let me say that I was born into a large working-class family and raised in Western Canada. I am a life-partner in a heterosexual relationship, a mother, a grandmother, a long-time human services worker, and privileged to have some post-graduate university education. I came of age in the 1960s and 1970s — a time of liberation and questioning for women living in the West. My working life has taken me into First Nations communities in Canada and to communities in Eastern Europe. This work has also exposed me to languages other than English, of which Cree, American Sign Language (ASL), French, Ukrainian, Russian, and Mandarin provide the strongest memories at this time. The family narrative is that we are left leaning socialist worker bees of Irish-Canadian descent — vocal and challenging anything perceived to be unjust. All of my experience — my gender, my age, my exposure to different religious and cultural traditions, my assigned and chosen roles at any given time and place<sup>43</sup> and my health — influence my interests, choice of words, and stories.

Let me also be clear that even though I am narrating this story, the story itself is connected to numerous other stories. Where I can identify those who have gone before me I do my best to reference them. In so doing I show connection of ideas, all the while

---

<sup>43</sup> For another example of role shifting, see Pittinsky, Shih, & Ambady (1999) and their study of Asian-American college students. In this study the women demonstrated clearly that parts of our identity or identities are more salient to us in different social situations. This study also demonstrates the impact of stereotypes of people's performance (of self).

knowing that there are unknown and untold other voices that may speak from different positions. I do my best not to interpret other's words. If they can be quoted, let their words stand by themselves for your attending. Truth be told, many of my story's influences are not in my awareness. I was conscious of some voices prior to beginning this account; others have been purposefully sought out to endorse an idea. Still, there are voices whose words have not been written down. I reference them when I am able and, with apology, I thank them for all that they have shared consciously or not. I continue to have internal conversations with all of these influences, knowing that in the process of writing and telling, the story and the understanding continues to change, to evolve. I share this as an invitation to *you* to listen and to be aware of your own process as you read. Listen to your own internal responses, your conversations. How does my story fit with your experience and understanding?

Narratives do more than simply recount "what occurred" [...] They can impose coherence on events that may have felt fragmentary or chaotic as they were happening, helping us to arrive at an interpretation of our experience. We can also use narrative to question canonical accounts of the past and propose new interpretations. Through narrative, we draw on the past as a resource for the future, using our understandings of past events to provide a framework for shaping future actions. (Ochs, 2007, p. 41)

Each one of us has a particular way of communicating — of using voice. Whether through speech, song, sign, or the written word, we operate in a feed-back loop with our internal and external environments. How we share our world with others depends upon what we are able to create and send. Our sent offering is contingent on access to air, movement, and energy — our own particular power accessible for communication.

What is spoken or signed also depends upon whether or not there is a perceived recipient, an audience who will hear or witness our offering. Real communication involves being witnessed or heard — having messages received and interpreted for meaning. When a message is received, the receiver responds, whether consciously or not, with a slight movement, a lift of an eyebrow, a smile, a frown, perhaps verbal or otherwise more physical energy expenditure, or even a choice to ignore. Then the message sender responds to the response. Internally and externally something changes between us (McNamee & Gergen, 1999). Even choosing to ignore or turn away is a type of response or communication.

Humans are forever in relationship with our world and reliant upon communication for survival. Communities are constructed out of joint need and vision and this work is done through communication (Dugan, 2006) — the reflexive connection of language and story (Helsing, Kirlic, McMaster, & Sonnenschin, 2006). Conflicts are also constructed, fuelled, and escalated through the use of language — language and stories of power over, distancing, and destruction (Staub, 1989). Whether at ‘low’ level or highest diplomacy (Diamond & McDonald, 1996; Lederach, 2005), the use of language, narrative, and story has the power to spark the imagination and dialogue necessary to end conflicts peaceably and broker paths to peace (Senehi, 2002; Senehi & Byrne, 2006). Stories are also opportunities for dreams which are necessary for humans to first envision and later recognize as pieces of our lives as they grow in relationships within and around us (Duncan & Miller, 2000; Lederach, 2005).

Surrounding these dreams and visions are the practical components — the tools for breathing life into relationships with self and others. This chapter explores the connection between narrative, story, language, and metaphor in the construction of individual identity and social systems. This exploration also considers the relationships and importance of narrative and language in the process of research and social change.

This topic is vital for peacebuilding *pracademia*<sup>44</sup> — practical academics in search of person-connecting, peacebuilding methods with which to build relationships and promote the kind of tolerance that will motivate people to look first for solutions to problems, for ways to get along in the process of learning to live together, perhaps not always in harmony, but coexisting, allowing that each person, each living thing has a right to continue to live autonomously.

This topic is explored out of the responsibility each one of us has to contribute to conversations in life-giving ways. This is a story about the power of narrative, the responsibility associated with language and voice, and the work that is being done and must be done to facilitate conscious and responsible use of narrative and story as tools in peace-building — in positive social change.

---

<sup>44</sup> A *pracademic* is a practitioner who is also an academic. The word apparently first came into use publicly in the late 1970s and more recently has been used in mediation and conflict-resolution journals (See for example, Volpe & Chandler, 2001).

## Part One: Stories and narrative, language and meaning

### Narrative

This one is about Granny. Reserve story. Everyone knows this story. Wilma knows it. Ambrose knows it. My friend, Napioa. Lionel James. Billy Frank knows it, too. Billy Frank hears this story in Calgary. He hears it three times. Maybe six. Boy, he tells me, here comes that story again.

Sometimes this story is about Wilma. Some people tell it so Ambrose is all over the place. The way I tell it is this way and I tell it this way all the time.

Sometimes I tell you about those Magpies first. With those noses. Good noses, those ones. Magpies talk all the time, you know. Good gossips, those. Hahahahaha. Good jokes, too. Sometimes I start that way.

Okay. Here comes that story again. (King, 1993, p. 21)

The content of a story is seldom static; rather it is dependent upon the narrator and his or her interpretation of the story. Our exploration begins with talk about stories themselves, how we tell the stories (narration), and the language and metaphor we use in the telling. All these choices, reflexively initiated by the teller, influence the relationship possibilities between teller and listener. The listener or recipient in turn is hearing with ears and eyes — or some other sensory receptor — and through the filter of her own experiences and stories. In the deceptively simple process of storytelling, what goes before influences both teller and recipient on conscious and unconscious levels. Each brings their own story to this new story experience. Choices of and within story, narration, language, and metaphor also influence possibilities of future action on the part of all participants in the process — possibilities for conflict and for collaboration.

It is only through narrative that we know ourselves as active entities that operate through time. (Abbot, 2002, p. 123)

Narrative is the process through which we tell ourselves stories about our lives, providing meaning that influences our choice of interactions with self and others. Narrative and story are inextricably connected but are not the same. A story is a linking in time of events that already exist. A story usually has a beginning, middle, and an end. Some people believe that stories can exist statically<sup>45</sup> (Abbot, 2002) even though life stories and oral tradition challenge this notion (McLeod, 2007). Each time a story is conveyed through writing, sign, spoken word, it holds new possibilities. The process of telling or sharing that story involves narrative — a relating of events that can begin at the beginning or at the end (Abbot, 2002). To tell a story, to narrate, we must situate ourselves in relation to the story — able to receive or make distinctions within a story from our point of view (Champigny, 1972) either within or outside the story itself (Stanzel, 1990). A story can be offered through a first person narrative as in “This is my story” or “I know this to be true” or it can be shared from the point of view of the third person — “The fathers became angry when they saw....”

Whether witness or hearer, internal or external to the narrative, the recipient of a story is an interpreter, selecting from among possible meanings to come to some understanding of what is being conveyed (Champigny, 1972). In the process of receiving, the listener filters the story through his or her own experience and

---

<sup>45</sup> Some people believe that stories that are static are tales with unchanging beginning, middle and end. These stories must be written stories, static only because they exist upon a page and in this representation do not change. The question is, do these stories change in the reading as each reader intones and interprets the words presented with ever different emphasis and nuance? Does the story present the exact same picture to each and every reader?

perception. These processes of sharing and receiving — making meaning — involve intellect and emotion for both teller and listener (Minister, 1992).

### ***Narrative as internal and external dialogue***

Where we situate ourselves as teller or receiver of a story is dependent upon a number of factors, identity being one of the most salient. In their own reflexive way(s), our identity or identities depend upon and are based and created largely from the stories we are told and those we tell ourselves about our place(s) in the world. Part of identity is personal efficacy. Both identity and sense of efficacy, two basic human needs (Burton, 1990; Staub, 1989), influence how we see the world and how we relate to others; in other words, identity and sense of self-efficacy influence the stories we tell ourselves and other, and the ways we receive others stories.

The way stories are told — their interpretation more than the stories themselves — can either build up or tear down relationships. A later section on language and narrative will provide more illumination in this area of power. Suffice to say that engagement in any relationship requires a space of safety where we can share ourselves and receive others — a place where we do not have to be on guard or defensive (Eagan, 2002; Geffner & Mantooh, 2000). We need a place where problems exist outside ourselves as matters to be confronted and worked on rather than conceived of as an intrinsic deficit of the self (Anderson, 1997; White, 2003). As such, sustainable problem-solving requires mutual trust and confidence in interpersonal relationships (Rothman,

1997). In order to build interpersonal trust there must be a foundation of engagement, sought by each of us, daily.

While studying and working together, people converse about their day to day lives. We tell stories which affirm and change images of self and other (see for example Kelman, 1999<sup>46</sup>). A story cannot be contested when it is “my” story, “my” experience. Nothing but honesty and openness is required in this offering and nothing but openness is required in the receiving. My story does not negate your story. Your story does not negate mine. They are simply different stories. As a connector and builder, storytelling is low-tech, easily accessible, direct interpersonal communication (Senehi, 2002) that is available to all ages and abilities.

Storytelling provides the teller with agency and voice, both of which at individual and/or community levels may have been silenced over many years of fear and despair (Fanon, 1963). As a tool of empowerment, storytelling provides the opportunity for the narrator to stand firm and share a “truth” that can also be experienced by the listener in a non-threatening engagement. The listener is invited safely into the narrator’s world providing opportunities for recognition of self and other.

“Stories simultaneously engage mind and heart” (Senehi, 2002, p. 52). Peace-building — healing of any trauma or conflict — requires healing of emotion and intellect (Herman, 1992/1997; Senehi, 2002). Indeed, storytelling has become a way of

---

<sup>46</sup> Kelman’s (1999) study of Israeli and Palestinian peoples affirms the need to work practically with ‘enemies’ to help them find a common, transcendent interdependent identity that can still honour the best parts of their own, separate selves.

addressing historical trauma and has been key in the foundation of truth commissions. Able to cross time and geography from the past to the present and into the future, storytelling may be used to explore seemingly contradictory experiences in a non-threatening way. After all, they are ‘only stories’ — neither right nor wrong. Constructive storytelling offers the possibility of mutual recognition, creating opportunities for exploration, growth, and understanding. Through this understanding grows the possibility of ongoing relationships that facilitate problem solving and common visioning (Senehi, 2002). As a therapist I learned that people can move forward, heal, and change only when they have a vision, understanding that change is possible<sup>47</sup>. Sharing this understanding is sharing knowledge — one of the cornerstones and/or pillars of living, positive peace (Lederach, 1995). I prefer to call this *informational power* rather than “knowledge” as the word “knowledge” has so many connotations related to a static sort of expertise that becomes privileged over other information.

### **Narrating individual and collective identity**

Personal identity (motive, character, intentions, action) is a by-product of negotiation within a relationship. (McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p. 20)

Relationship-building, part of fulfilling basic needs (Burton, 1990; Maslow, 1954, 1970; Staub, 1989), is by definition finding ways to connect with another — an activity requiring energy on the part of those who are doing the relating. Further, a human’s

---

<sup>47</sup> See also well-known therapist/author, Mary Pipher (2009) who is joined by others who work from a cognitive behavioural or solution-focused perspective (Dolan, 1991; Duncan & Miller, 2000; O’Hanlon, 1989)

concept of self — his or her identity — provides the foundation and impetus for interaction or consideration of self and others. Even beyond the concept of gender identity as male or female, the subtleties for an individual and her Identity house a myriad of complexities. Each individual's sense of self houses a set of concepts including two main aspects: first, role constructs which are largely gendered (Malin, 2001), and second, a sense of efficacy within those roles (Ette, 2007; Lawless, 1993; Waters & Posadskaya, 1995). Both have internal and external aspects. That is, the individual has her own assessment of how she performs and the worlds around her judge her for themselves. The internal concept of identity is usually connected somewhat to the external performance of identity (Bishop, 1994/2002; Fosha, 2000; Gergen, 2003). The external world both responds to the individual and influences the individual in her construction and reconstruction of identity — of self. This is socialization.

Personal identities — who we are, and our life stories — are constructed over time through stories we have heard (stories others have told us) and stories we have told ourselves (McAdams, 1996) — making meaning of experiences both personal and trans-generational (e.g. Volkan, 2004). Our placement in the world, our rights, valuation of abilities, expectation of treatment, and our treatment of others relies heavily upon the stories of relationships we play out in our heads. We hear stories of our birth, of family, of our people, our cultures, and our nations. From these stories we construct other stories we tell ourselves about ourselves and the world around us. We look for stories to explain and encourage our process of living.

### ***The stories we are told and not told***

The stories we are told by parents and elders shape our individual and social identities (McAdams, 1996). From them we learn about relationship to others as individuals and also as members of larger groups. Some stories we are told — shared directly and indirectly — are pride filled tales of ancestors and their accomplishments.

Other stories — stories that should have been told — are stories stolen or hidden away from us, covered over in favour of a story more fitting a colonial story of ‘salvation’ and ‘civilizing’. Stories such as these replacement stories have eaten away at individual and collective identities of whole nations. One group of people now working to recover their culture and identity are Canada’s people of First Nations. Recovered, collective stories as noted directly by McLeod (2007), or more poetically by Cole (2006), tell of history that was. McLeod and Cole tell tales, prosaic and poetic, to confront and right historical wrongs — to uncover truths (Campbell, 1973).

Even when stories of the past are painful, they can sometimes be healing stories<sup>48</sup>. Even representational fiction stories may be crafted to illicit hidden sadness, anger (e.g. Robinson, 2000) and other feelings that must be confronted to allow healing, and evoke hope for a more integrated and healthy future (See for example, Armstrong, 1985/1992). Other tellings revive old legends reconnecting First Nations people to cultural truths and opening the door for understanding and respect for traditional ways

---

<sup>48</sup> See for examples, *An Anthology of Canadian and Native Literature in English* (Moses & Goldie, 2005). This anthology provides a variety of poetry and prose authored by First Nations people who are challenging old stories and ‘re-righting’ history.

of knowing. Still others are able to confront the realities of colonization using humour in a way that opens dialogue rather than alienate (King, 2005).

Stories are full of surprising possibilities. Once uncovered, stories of atrocities and violence committed against persons because of their race can sometimes lead to healing. For example, more than thirty years after the murders of three young activists in Philadelphia, townspeople opened a forum for individuals to share their stories and recollections of the time — breaking the old silence. People of colour joined with representatives of their previous oppressors collecting information about events through people's stories, prompting actual murder charges to be laid. Some people felt relief and community pride as they experienced the process of empowerment and then shared their experiences through civic engagement (Glisson, 2008).

In other settings, stories of pre-Holocaust relationships in Germany have been carefully and lovingly brought to light, providing examples and possibilities for successful relationships between Christian Germans and Jews. These resurrected stories had been buried as if to eradicate complete generations of harmonious relationships. Retelling these stories informs young Germans and keeps alive the memories of those who have gone before (Roth-Howe, Roth, Wenz-Haubfleisch, & Sternberg, 2008). Still other examples live in Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) formally initiated in South Africa (DeLaet, 2006; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2010). Here the focus has been to hear individual stories in the hope of highlighting truth and moving toward reconciliation or

at least peaceful coexistence for people who have previously found few peaceful connections (Pankhurst, 2008).

Alternatively, stories of past hurt or wrongdoing by others may be used to justify shortcomings on our part as we assume a victim identity. These stories of trauma may also justify aggression on the part of our own group (Hammack, 2009) becoming chosen traumas, rallying points supporting ongoing atrocities against the 'other' (Volkan, 2004). Challenging these stories becomes the hard work of individuals confronting their own beliefs and actions as they work to confront those of the group (Albeck, Adwan, & Bar-On, 2002; Bar-On, 2003; Wallach, 2000) as shall be seen later.

There are still other stories of oppression not told; stories hushed and lurking in the background. The choice to not tell these stories can also have a powerful effect on individual and community. One world-wide theme involves family stories of violence, witnessed either through direct observation or through sensing dynamics when one parent behaves abusively toward the other. These stories colour the emotional and relational dynamics of families for generations (Englander, 2007; Harway & Hansen, 2004; Herman, 1992/1997; Roberts & Roberts, 2005). Shadow stories also live in community settings, evidence of structural support for interpersonal violence focused most often on women and children (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Merry, 2006)

### ***Intrapersonal dialogue: The stories we tell ourselves for ourselves***

In order to relate and connect with others we must constantly bump up against who we are ourselves — characters who have agency (Abbot, 2002) — as we co-create our stories with our past and present selves and those otherwise engaged in our stories.

I am ready now. Travelling cautiously in reverse, I hold hands with two of the people I have been: the addled inmate in prison issue and the four-year-old girl whose pretty white dress is fanned out with crinolines. We three are looking under the beds and in the dark recesses of memory. We're determined to confront the monkeys. (Birkla, 2001)

Birkla's words exemplify the internal journeys we are all on. Birkla writes from a metaphorical and literal prison, where she begins to allow her child self who lived through experiences no child should have, to communicate with her present self, an adult woman in prison. The third person in Birkla's story is her narrative self, connected to both past and present, and removed enough to view both and see the connections.

Like Birkla, both consciously and unconsciously we all speak to ourselves — we narrate our lives as we go about our days (Dolan, 1991; Gergen, 2003; McNamee & Gergen, 1999). We speak words of encouragement, words of reproach, words sending messages to ourselves about who we are, what our actions mean, and what we can do. Stories we tell ourselves often echo those we have been told either verbally or otherwise communicated by our parents, friends, and other community influences. These stories can be constructive or destructive (Augusta-Scott, 2001; Campbell, 1973; Dolan, 1991; Herman, 1992/1997). Sometimes these stories are shared openly with others. Sometimes they remain internal, evidenced outwardly only by the clues given

through our behaviour — the ways we interact with and relate to others. Our inner dialogues display and support personal value systems and views of the world. Self-talk, or inner dialogue, creates and affirms self-knowledge and self-knowledge is a point of departure to facilitate dialogue with those outside ourselves (Mahalingam & Reid, 2007, p. 257).

As noted earlier, whatever stories we share, the narrative used has the power to illicit emotion that can either entrench the story in our experience or move us to consider other possibilities. The healing possibilities of narrative have been shown over and over in psychotherapy for those healing from trauma. Telling one's story, hearing it and having it heard can illicit emotion that has been buried — emotion providing necessary clues to the meaning we may have made of our experience (Dolan, 1991; Herman, 1992/1997).

Sometimes, as for many victims of childhood abuse, the voice sharing the story is a blaming voice — a voice continuing to re-victimize the harmed, creating a kind of internalized oppression (Bishop, 1994/2002; Friere, 1970; Herman, 1992/1997). Once shared, these stories can be confronted and retold from a different perspective (Epston, 1997; Hicks, 1997; Sanders, 1997). The same story with different narration provides a chance to experience different affect — affect that is necessary (Fosha, 2000) to internalize the new message attached to the story (Siegel, 2003)<sup>49</sup>, possibly now a story

---

<sup>49</sup> Siegel surveys some of the more recent findings in neurobiology showing, in part, the impact of trauma on the brain. In this review, Siegel notes the influence emotion has on “virtually all neural circuits and the mental processes that emerge from them” (p. 20).

of triumph and healing. From this new understanding and position of strength, comes hope, a requirement for beginning the process of visioning for a brighter future (Duncan & Miller, 2000; Lederach, 2005).

***Another kind of dialogue: Personal stories we share with others***

Sometimes the most powerful connections made with *others* begin with a story about self — opening a window into our lives, making ourselves vulnerable (Albeck et al, 2002). This opening invites the other to listen and then respond, perhaps by opening a window into her or his life.

A living example of this kind of story connection is the project *Hello Peace* which began with an errant phone call made by a Palestinian woman to an unknown Jewish woman. The conversation sparked a project that allows Palestinians and Israelis to talk with each other. Telling their stories and listening to each other, people make connections one dialogue or story-sharing at a time (Barnea & Shinar, 2005).

In another part of the world, a Chinese magazine, known as *Rural Women*, provided connecting stories for women (Wesoky, 2008). The editor, committed to narrative, promotion of human rights, and gender consciousness noted a disproportionately high rate of suicide among women in rural China. With active investigation and invitation, women began to voice their stories which were then shared in the magazine. Women writing to the magazine in response were also given voice. As a result of some of these connections, women from thirty-six villages collaborated to use dramatic performances in suicide prevention work within their

communities. The women's energies provide an example of grass-roots social action and "human heartedness" (Wesoky, 2008) all begun and spread through personal and collective storytelling.

Personal stories provide examples of the possible to those who might think otherwise. In the process of gathering people for collective action, the immediacy of the person-to-person galvanizes social action. Stories illustrate "how change comes not from outside qualities and quantifiers, but rather from the creation of a collective will" (Solinger, Fox, & Irani, 2008, p. 6). We situate the teller as expert, able to speak across barriers (Solinger et al., p. 8).

Empowerment narratives become linked to trauma narratives as individual plots become connected to collective plots through political action. Each narrative feeds the other in a loop that becomes ever wider as more individual and collective stories are added on and in (e.g. Breunling & Himelsten, 2008)<sup>50</sup>. The voices of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina started with slight numbers, and their voices and stories as well as their silences are now heard world-wide as they continue to demand accountability from their government for atrocities against its citizens, their family members (Boulding, 2000; Van Tongeren, 2005, pp. 127-132). Another example, Irish Peace Women was founded following the killing of three small children and the mutilation of their mother in Belfast. Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan spoke out in

---

<sup>50</sup> Breunling and Himelsten (2008) tell of the Neighbourhood Story Project — a collection of stories by students of the 9<sup>th</sup> ward of the city of New Orleans. Students collaborated with the community, one of the most challenged by socioeconomics and racial tension in the city, in writing down some of its stories leaving an invaluable legacy for the community later devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2007.

1976, marching through Shankill, bringing Protestant and Catholic women together for peace (Brock-Utne, 1985). Williams and Corrigan were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work.

Of course, there are always different accounts of the truth; however, without these stories there is no witness to what has been and no light for what is possible. The 'small' contribution of women's autobiographies and biographical fiction fueled the feminist movement of the 1960s (Fosi, 2008) with consciousness-raising, a life-giving requirement for any group that has been oppressed (Friere, 1970)<sup>51</sup>. Even on a smaller interpersonal scale, self-disclosure as a tool, whether used consciously or not, provides opportunities for connection that may encourage the listener in accessing some of her own power and understanding. Self-disclosure, a small bit of autobiographical sharing, is a tool often used in therapy done from a feminist perspective (Goodrich, Rampage, Ellman, & Halstead, 1988; Russell, 1984). In this type of work, the facilitator<sup>52</sup> (often called therapist or counselor) may share a bit of her own story to join the 'client' increasing a sense of intimacy and mutual confidence. The common ground provides space to co-create meaning and understanding across experiences and/or cultures (Mahalingam & Reid, 2007).

When healing or positive change is aimed at issues affecting larger groups of people, the same principles apply joined by additional challenges to move the

---

<sup>51</sup> Friere (1970) advocated shared exploration as a means of self-education and empowerment.

<sup>52</sup> I wish to be careful in my choice of language here. Much of the language commonly used in the helping professions support a power differential between the one who is seeking assistance to promote positive life change and the professional who is assisting or facilitating that work.

discourses and politics of everyday life — everyday conversations — to the larger political field. An example of this type of work is the healing and dialogue work of women's groups in Yugoslavia (Korac, 2006). In this setting, women who had themselves experienced atrocities began to talk about them and were able to join across cultures to identify common problems of oppression. Possibilities for this type of movement come when all voices are valued — none stigmatized or marginalized.

Stories that challenge mainstream stories told in different parts of the world open conversations that would not otherwise take place. For example, challenging the Western mainstream, The Great Ancestors Project works to recover marginalized Muslim women's life stories from the past and disseminate this information using a variety of women's voices (Shahed, 2008). The purpose of this project is to challenge the view that women from Muslim backgrounds are all living under oppression. These stories of empowerment assist Muslim women to enter conversations about their own and other's human rights as equals rather than as victims.

### *Missing stories*

Having acknowledged the reality that not all stories are told, the focus now shines more on stories not told, or when told they are discounted. As noted earlier, hearing and telling one's story builds identity and with identity a place of standing in the world — a place of power. Many who have strength do not perceive that they have power and therefore may not access it. Giving voice can claim power. Even in the act of using language to offer a listener encouragement, the act of narration is energizing and

empowering (Hochschild, 2005). Being aware of this power-accessing tool, we must be curious about whose stories are being heard in our own worlds, which stories are being shared, and which ones are hidden.

Traditionally, women's stories have been considered of less importance than those told by men. We speak with reverence about the wisdom of older men, our sages, while we ridicule the tales of warning from women as "old wives' tales" in English or "Bobbe Meises" in Yiddish (Seigel, 1999). Perhaps some denigration of women's stories is related to the strategic differences often found in the kinds of stories women and men tell and the way the stories are told. Most research into personal narratives focuses on men telling stories in public places, therefore legitimizing the stories while women 'just chit chat and gossip' (Langellier & Peterson, 1992). Women's stories are often performed in private and conversational contexts. They shift in telling and are often shared to show the typicality of an event of emotional interest. Often they are humorous accounts of the everyday.

Women's stories are often mixed into conversation or conversation is mixed into stories with an emergent structure. The telling is developmental, changing with input of comments and references from others in the group (Langellier & Peterson, 1992; Ring, 2006). Typically the point of a story is to discover or explore something rather than make a point and the story invites cooperation, comment, and participation (Grima, 2005). The gender of her audience is particularly important to the teller, as women tend

to reveal less of themselves to a mixed gender audience than to one of women (Grima, 2005; Langellier & Peterson, 1992; Ring, 2006).

There are other differences between women and men's storytelling. Women tend to ask more questions while men make declarations, giving examples of their higher levels of 'expert' power (Carli, 1999)<sup>53</sup>. Women tend to be facilitative in orientation (Ring, 2006) while men tend to control the floor. Women tend to acknowledge in some way the responses of the listeners while men tend to ignore them as they continue *their* stories. Women's self-stories also tend to be self-effacing and humorous told in the process of joining another or searching for a collaboratively held meaning (Langellier & Peterson, 1992).

I focus here on women's stories because often they are either not invited or voiced over in favour of men's stories. Curiosity about which stories are consciously omitted and why may lead us to investigate — to uncover or fan into full flame stories that need reviving and telling. Some stories requiring further investigation are stories of *culturicide* (consciously hidden/buried stories) and cultural master-plots (Volkan, 2004).

Stories placing one party in a position of authority over another are stories to be questioned. We must be cautious and curious about narratives of nationality — political and cultural narratives, often gendered in their assertions (Layoun, 2001). Often times, cultures in conflict will integrate into their story one of trauma experienced at the hands of others (Volkan, 2004). These are the stories of past destruction that fuel

---

<sup>53</sup> While here 'expert' power is based on perceived competence, men also are usually seen to have more 'legitimate' power — the power other's believe they have a right to exert (Carli, 1999).

further destruction of body and soul. Stories glorifying the colonizer and denigrating the colonized are also dichotomies that continue to feed division if they are told and retold without looking for a transcending story, one that can be constructed by all parties who work toward super-ordinate goals of coexistence (Kelman, 1999; Staub, 1989).

### **Language, narration, and dialogue**

As words function within relationships to name, direct, approve, correct, and so on, so do they acquire ontological and moral dimension. Local vocabularies come to represent a world of objects, individuals, actions, rights, values, and so on. In effect, language generates the sense of what is real and what is good. (McNamee & Gergen, 1999, p. 19)

This section explores the role of language itself as it is used in narrative and dialogue.

Language and narrative are instrumental in their influence upon identity and power and this influence too is built in a feedback loop. Whatever entitlements our stories hold out for us, the higher order needs for belonging and self-efficacy are connected to other more tangible needs such as food, shelter, and physical security (Burton, 1990; Maslow, 1954, 1970).

Across disciplines, there is some agreement that human connections are developed through, and facilitate, communication and collaboration. It is through these interactions that humans construct meaning. Once basic physical needs are met, humans then require safe and secure connections with others, creating a sense of belonging and self-efficacy (Burton, 1990; Maslow, 1954, 1970). Staub (1989) finds no hierarchy in these human needs: a sense of belonging and personal efficacy stand equally beside the need for food, clothing, and physical security; making meaning out of

our lives is just as important as eating and breathing in the process of human survival. The meanings we assign and the ways we tell our stories about connections provide the energy with which we act to further connect and understand or to sever and destroy that which seems dangerous or destructive to our *selves* (Galtung, 1996; Staub, 1989).

Stories are shared — narrated through the use of language. As in the case of many tools, language can be used not only for creating meaning and connection but also for erecting barriers, distancing, or controlling (Adler & Towne, 2002). Language that creates distance can be used as a tool of power, control, and silencing as seen in the gendered language often used to legitimate and naturalize worlds based on dominance and control such as that found in patriarchal structures (Confortini, 2006). Language can facilitate concrete action, like asking for food or building bombs. Language is also used to connect with others, perhaps co-creating a future shared vision and working toward shared goals — two processes that are staples of peace-building (Lederach, 2005).

Language, in all its varieties, in all the ways it appears in everyday life, builds a world of meanings. When you run into different meanings, when you become aware of your own and work to build a bridge to the others, “culture” is what you are up to. Language fills the spaces between us [...] (Agar, 2007, p. 23)

Here, language refers to the symbolic representation of ideas and objects for the purpose of communication about these ideas, reasons, the past, the future, and things not present (Adler & Towne, 2002, p. 177). The indirect linkage between language and idea or represented object can lead to confusion and misunderstanding and still create

space for understanding of thought and emotion — meaning that is richer than can be imagined.

Verbal/oral or purposefully signed<sup>54</sup> language communication makes up just a small percentage of person to person communication (Eagan, 2002; Agar, 2007). The remainder of that communication is performed through physicality such as body posture and movement, facial expression, intonation, observable autonomic physiological responses; physical characteristics such as fitness, height, weight, complexion; the physical spacing we use for communication; and even our general appearance, such as dress and grooming — qualities that are not necessarily consciously chosen by the communicator, but which still convey information about variables such as person, place, and reaction to interaction (Eagan, 2002).

Communication challenges exist whether using the same language or differing tongues. Do we understand each other? Even when the tools for communication — languages — share the same cultural or demographic origin, assumptions about meaning may be dangerous. For example, when I say the word, loyalty, I envision almost mindless dedication, following without question. When my husband uses the word, loyalty, he says he pictures loving and enduring commitment. Let's just say we have had dialogues about this!

---

<sup>54</sup> Here signed language refers to “a grammar that uses the three dimensions of space as well as stringing together separate components as happens in spoken language (and written and signed forms developed from spoken language)” (Monaghan, 2007, p. 411). I say ‘purposefully signed’ to indicate that we humans regularly use gestures and signing as a matter of course, without conscious purpose, and this type of gesture also communicates, sometimes in spite of our conscious intention.

The language of story creates verbal snapshots — pictures, shared metaphor. Chosen language colours and influences a story in immeasurable ways. Choice of language also implicates the speaker as to his or her own deeper values be they authoritarian or egalitarian.

Consider the relational language often used in narratives of war and conquest — the language of “peacelessness” (Jeong, 2000, p. 22) and of othering. Nuclear and other defense policies and practices use euphemisms and other language that obscures and misleads (Randall, 2003; Sylvester, 2002) to create illusions of possibilities rather than torture and death when talking of shields, collateral damage, water-boarding, and detainment (Staub, 1989). Soft-soaping violence does not change its reality. Only the language lies, hiding the true story. Of course, without being presented with the realities of torture and atrocities, it is unlikely that people who are lulled by ignorance will be motivated to work together against their practice.

### **Language, voice, power, and dialogue**

Language is an expression of self — one’s beliefs and values. Voice — that energy used to share thought and belief — is contingent on a sense of one’s own worth and power. The understanding or conception of self is constructed over time through the meaning we make of other’s actions and reactions toward us and of the self stories we build and rebuild to accommodate this meaning (McAdams, 1996). Relationship to environment, psychosocial adaptation, is also influenced by the stories we are told and that we tell ourselves about the meaning of connections and the expectations that come along with

these relationships. These “internalized integrative narrations of the personal past, present, and future” (McAdams, 1996, p. 295) provide intellectual and emotional material upon which we base decisions for future actions and relationships. Stories are conveyed internally and externally through physical and verbal language. The language through which we know and tell *ourselves* enters through cultures via cultures providing models for what we say and what we do not say (Gergen, 2003).

An examination of the language of patriarchal cultures and structures exposes a competitive social order comprised of authoritarian principles and coercive power that assumes all humans are not of equal value (Burrows, 1996; Reardon, 1996, pp.10-11; Sylvester, 2002). The oppressive structural power exerted by patriarchal systems is exemplified and exerted through language — language that conveys role expectations and valuation (Burrows, 1996, pp. 91-96). Considering the words themselves, war language is the language of patriarchal hierarchy. Even a definition of ‘soft power’ involves a definition of power as “the ability to affect the behaviour of others to get the outcome one wants” (Nye, 2007, p. 389) — not exactly the language of collaboration.

In contrast, more egalitarian language can still be confrontational calling attention to assaults and torture by using direct descriptive language, by acknowledging power differentials as they exist, and then working from there. Gergen explained the need to think critically when making meaning of stories told:

Since narrative is a way of transmitting culture and values, narrative as it conveys story should not be accepted blindly. It needs to be questioned or contested/tested against what we truly believe about the world. We need to look

not only at the content of the stories, but which stories are privileged, which are missing and how the ones we do hear are being told (Gergen, 2003, p. 66).

Language assigns humans' first mark of identity — gender — and with this naming, all the accompanying assumptions and beliefs. We are called “boy” or “girl” at the moment of birth, if not before (Gergen, 2003). These first assigned descriptors carry with them cultural meaning and expectations, which we will either accept without question or test and contest, internally and externally, throughout our lives.

Language is not neutral (Abbot, 2002; Burrows, 1996) and is inextricably intertwined with culture and belief (Agar, 2007). Without examining the full meaning of gender and role, humans can still acknowledge that men's and women's choices of language and voice accompany varied power expectations and allotments. In patriarchal societies, hierarchy is a given; however, the implications and eventual impact of the hierarchical relationships often go uncontested until we listen to the language we use in debates or discussions.

Consider the language in a discussion between two people who might well like and respect each other. One person tells a story or states an opinion based upon his or her understanding or experience. A very common response to any statement of “knowledge” is to say, at least in Western languages of English or French: “you are right” or *c'est vraie*. This response conveys the understanding that there is a correct opinion or understanding — that which is the privilege of the respondent. In other words, the respondent is ‘one up’ on the original speaker and the original speaker now has his or her approval. Some might call this a kind of joining; however, if it is joining, it

is joining with definite hierarchical implications. Expertise here is self-conferred, and while the response may be understood as agreement, a less hierarchical and more joining response would be, “I agree,” or “Very interesting. Tell me more.”

There are more examples of subtleties in language that exclude — eliminators of ideas and opinions. An example here is the use of the word “but.” “I agree with your opinion, *but* I have something else for consideration” provides a clue that the speaker who agrees is going to qualify or disagree with what the previous speaker has said. Perhaps a more joining response would be “I agree with your opinion and I have something else for consideration.” English speakers are so accustomed to patriarchal systems that we don’t realize when we are participating in the privileging often required for participation.

As language privileges some positions and voices, it also silences or eliminates others. Languages themselves can be and are privileged such that others are pushed to extinction (Johnson, 2005; Reid, 2003/1997/1985). As language is appropriated or stolen, so also is culture as has happened in numerous communities world-wide. Canada and Ukraine provide just two recent examples. In Canada, generations of Aboriginal children were taken from their communities to attend residential schools. In the process, children were shamed and punished when they used their languages. With geographical separation from parents and community as well as loss of language which contained cultural clues and a vehicle for communication with elders, children who returned home felt alien and lost (Armstrong , 1985,1992; Cole, 2006). Those who did

not return lost family and community connections; with these connections the knowledge of traditional beliefs and practices were also lost.

My grandfather did not speak of his mother, but when I asked, he said that she spoke Mokawk, but only when she was with her siblings, which was very rare. She never spoke it with her children or in the home. She never passed on any of the traditions. (Swager, 2006, p. 41)

Residential school experiences also left people ill-equipped for familial relationships, parenting being something little experienced. Young people's ingrained shame of culture and heritage is only now beginning to be addressed as lost generations speak about the abuse and neglect experienced in the isolation of schools far away from home (Armstrong, 1985,1992; Cole, 2006). With this storytelling, shame is being replaced by a renewed interest and pride in traditional languages which themselves carry stories supporting spiritual and emotional growth as well as clues for reclaiming community relationships (Joe, 2005; Johnson, 2005; McLeod, 2007).

So gently I offer my hand and ask,  
Let me find my talk  
So I can teach you about me. (Joe, 2005, p. 107)

For some, simple acts of living and sharing create new opportunities for connecting backward while moving forward, living examples for their communities.

As a bundle-keeper, I guess I am a role-model for the young people here. I am visible and active in the community, not just in my work as a social worker, but as a member of the community who is involved in the ceremonies and other aspects of community life. I guess this means the spiritual as well. I live a simple life and people like to visit our home. I respect other's points of view and right to make choices. (Houle, 2009)

A world away from Houle's Canadian prairie, people in Ukraine are reclaiming their own language hidden underground through generations of occupation. Following demographic splits caused by occupations in the East mostly by Russia, and with Polish, German, Austrian, and sometimes Russian occupation in the West, Ukraine was finally united under Soviet rule with Russian as the national language (Reid, 2003/1997/1985). Ukrainians had home and land appropriated. Russian became the official language. A popular song proclaimed "My home address is the Soviet Union" (Hayduk, 2002)! Second languages were supposed to be German or maybe English. Following a sudden independence in 1991, Ukraine is again unofficially divided with the Western part of Ukraine leaning more toward nationalism while reclaiming Ukrainian language and culture: Eastern Ukraine, still close in Russia's shadow and supported by many intermarriages supports Russian as the primary language. The country's political split, not restricted to differing languages, is reflective of this division (Piroshkov & Safarova, 2006; Zviglyanich, 1998 ) and will be more richly expressed by the study participants in their stories in later chapters.

Understanding that communication and language use are reflexive processes and reflective of culture and power, we must also pay attention to the choices of inclusion and exclusion in language. If I am not represented in language, where are my points of reference? Am I invisible or non-existent? What if I am represented as something I am not? First Nations people have pointed out distorted misrepresentations of themselves

in literature as the ‘noble savage’, ‘Indian Chief’ or ‘Indian Princess’, shown as such both visibly and verbally in spoken word and text (Cole, 2006; Smith, 2006/1999).

Across cultures, a whole gender has historically been left out of literary, political and religious reference except in the not-so-favourable dichotomies that sometimes pop up, such as Madonna/whore (Randall, 2003), good girl/bad girl, *Berehynia*/Barbie<sup>55</sup> (Kis, 2005) and others. Men are also sometimes similarly represented dichotomously (Augusta-Scott, 2001); however, their presence is undeniable in most matters of importance where women may not be — mankind, the “Lord God,” chairman, policeman, fireman, etc., etc. Woman-related language and representation tends to be in relationship to someone or something else (Malin, 2001) as in wife, daughter, sister including references such as nursing sisters and “Sister” from a religious order (Gilligan, 1982).

Until recently legal marriage ceremonies were clear about the status of women as women were “given away” by parents, usually fathers, and a ceremony was ended with, “I now pronounce you man and wife.” This language reflected the political reality in the democracy known as Canada where federally, women were not people until 1920 (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2009) when they received the right to vote. First Nations people did not gain this federal right until 1960 (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2009). Is it any wonder there is often underlying and obvious tension in

---

<sup>55</sup>As noted in the context chapter, Kis (2005) writes about what she considers to be the new dichotomy for Ukrainian women, both of which meet the requirement of keeping women in a position of less power. *Berehynia* refers to an ancient female spirit, once considered quite dangerous, now thought of more fondly as a kind of mother protector.

mixed gender and mixed cultural groups? In matters of language, culture, and power, both present and past must be taken into account.

On the path to social change, transformative peacemaking involves the empowerment of self and community through shared knowledge (Friere, 1970; Lederach, 1995) and through this *conscientization* (Friere, 1970) emerges collaboration and growth. Social process theories look at conflict as a process of social interaction between individuals or group (Schellenberg, 1996). The process of conflict resolution or transformation requires first the often uncomfortable acts of acknowledging that there are differences — that a conflict does exist and that there is a ‘critical gap’ between the realities as they are understood by conflicting parties. This critical gap can be seen as a distance due to language, experience, culture, point of view, and/or even physical distance. Here point-of-view is not necessarily a static chosen standpoint; it is merely the point or place from which one sees or experiences.

Point-of-view is reflexively connected with values and beliefs about power. We are reminded again about values and how they show up in our stories. Many of us believe in a scarcity view of the world — that there are a limited amount of resources over which we must compete for ‘our share’ (Covey, 1990). Some, fearing that there will not be enough resources to go around, act on this fear by using personal power to obtain what is desired or needed (Galtung, 1996). This is ‘power over’.

In contrast, an abundance mentality provides a polar opposite view of the world. In the world of abundance there are enough resources for everyone. There is no need

to exert power over anyone as there is enough for all. In a world of abundance everyone may have a voice and, ideally there is room for all to be heard. Indeed, voice and agency are critical in the development of community (Chinn, 2004). It is in the best interest of a functional, collaborative movement for potential members to not only hear what others have to say, but to join their voices with others to work toward common goals (Dugan, 2006).

Giving voice to oneself is an act of self-creation, a claim to authorship and authority that enables the writer to define herself through the power of language. Claiming a voice is an internal act that results from tapping into the authority derived from one's lived experience. It does not depend upon the external sources of power, whether institutional, cultural, or discursive; to the contrary, it often challenges them. The power of this process lies in its democratization; and the hope is that each new voice will enable someone else to achieve citizenship in the body politic. (Hewett, 2004, p. 719)

Finding one's voice is not a simple thing when language and accepted knowledge assign little importance to some voices. And using one's voice is the only way to make it stronger both physically and metaphorically. The process of vocal training itself can have healing powers as individuals move to more authentic expressions of personality and stronger sense of well-being in the very act or process of voice production (Wiens, Janzen, Mott, & Claypool, 2003). A strengthened sense of identity assists in building the confidence necessary to articulate ideas as well as questions. One study found connections between increased physical vocal strength and the ability to voice one's thoughts with confidence and authenticity. With this new confidence came an increased sensitivity to the voices and ideas of others (Wiens, Janzen, Mott, & Claypool, 2003). Further, research with adolescents (Evans, 2007; McBeath, 2006) articulates the reality

that youth develop a stronger sense of community in contexts where they ‘experience voice and resonance’ (Evans, 2007, p. 693).

## **Part Two: Possibilities with narrative, language and metaphor**

Every opportunity to speak and to listen, every opportunity to share stories and be engaged in relationship is an opportunity for a transformational encounter (DeFehr, 2009). Speaking can be risky — someone might interrupt or challenge. Still, giving voice, especially to one’s own story, provides opportunities for empowerment.

### **Narrative offers a safe place for dialogue or conversation**

As a vehicle for relationship-building, narrative offers a unique, tolerance-building avenue for dialogue. Dialogue as a concept has two meanings. First, in the cognitive area, dialogue is an exchange of rational “arguments” between persons of more or less equal power. Second, coming from the perspective of connection and inspiration, dialogue is joint action that two people create in the temporary world they experience together (Bakhtin, 1981; Riikonen, 1999). The enemy of dialogue is “knowing already”, while curiosity is its facilitator (Duncan & Miller, 2000; Rambo, Heath, & Chenail, 1993; Riikonen, 1999).

True dialogue requires self-awareness and tolerance of self and other, hopefully on the part of both participants. The creation of story and dialogue can themselves be facilitative of the openness required for communication and in these acts mutual respect may be taught and learned. Narratives offer a safe space to open to each other,

building tolerance for sharing the same air and similar mental pictures. Tolerance for discomfort and difference facilitate the growth of respect.

Tolerance for one's own uncomfortable feelings and thoughts is a beginning step to being able to hear the ideas and accept the emotion of another. When shared in the form of story, the information is about something that already exists — at least in the mind of the teller and in this place it may not be challenged. The listener has only to open and receive the story which provides a breathing space where it is actually important to suspend knowledge for awhile — to 'not know' what will happen next.

### **Narrative and metaphor**

The brain recalls a memory through visual images, organizing and locating the particular image and then associating or linking it with name, word, or idea. (Graham, 2003, p. 21)

Sharing metaphor offers opportunities to 'see' realities and possibilities that might otherwise be elusive. Metaphors free language to be used in less constrained ways, allowing the mind and heart to experience what the words themselves in isolation cannot reveal. Metaphors allow stories to be told from a distance, taking teller and listener to a place where the imagination conjures up new possibilities in ways that are neither threatening nor overly personal because they exist on their own and their interpretation is flexible (Lankton & Lankton, 1989). Whole stories can exist on their own — metaphors for life journeys and life lessons. Other stories and tellers may weave in metaphor to illustrate or punctuate meaning. Sometimes these narrative choices are made unconsciously, some of us being more steeped in this right-brain activity than

others (Graham, 2003). Narrative and metaphor may propel humans through experiences otherwise unavailable to the participants, teller and/or recipient.

### **Narrative power for healing power**

Let us, we and they, create it first in the theatre, in fiction, to be better prepared to create it outside afterward, to extrapolate into our real life. (Boal, 2002, p. 17).

Narrative is used internally and externally on a daily basis in person and community building. While this tool can be used as a matter of course, narrative is and has been used conscientiously in the process of healing and peace building. Beyond transformation of identity, per se, as noted earlier, the dialogic properties of narrative can be used to transform personal and cultural stories, contributing in an ongoing way to our identities and relationships.

There are many present day examples of narrative being chosen as a tool for empowerment, often challenging the status quo. Augusta Boal developed *Theatre of the Oppressed* (TO) in the 1950s and 1960s providing, literally, a forum for audience and actors to move through the fourth wall<sup>56</sup> and work collaboratively to deal with divisive and contentious issues (Paterson, 2002). This form of theatre has been further developed in Canada by David Diamond of *Headlines Theatre* (Headlines Theatre, 2009), one branch of which creates *forum theatre* allowing communities to create dialogue about important issues for them. This same form of theatre is being used around the

---

<sup>56</sup> The fourth wall refers to the “wall” between stage and audience.

world by the *Friends of Tibet*, a company that assists individuals to engage with each other for social connection and social change (Sarcar, 2007).

Healing through the use of narrative also takes place in some individual and group counseling settings. People who have experienced trauma tell their stories, discuss, and then retell them or *re-story* the experiences, gaining the opportunity to view themselves differently in healing relationships with themselves, able to continue their lives accessing their own resources and those around them (Herman, 1992/1997).<sup>57</sup> Sometimes as a trauma survivor tells her story — narrates her life — she provides an opening for outside acknowledgement which then becomes validation and encouragement to move forward, creating a vision and a story of the future (Anderson, 1997; Dolan, 1991; Duncan & Miller, 2000). In yet other therapeutic contexts, telling the story and then retelling it from another perspective becomes a process that allows people who have behaved abusively to see their actions differently and develop empathy and respect for those they have hurt, building foundations for new, more life-giving behaviours<sup>58</sup> challenging gender discourses of power and entitlement (Pare, Bondy, & Malhotra, 2006).

---

<sup>57</sup> See also Laskey (2003) whose book *Night Voices* tells the story of a Jewish woman who lived in pre-and post-war Poland. The story is told through her own words and from excerpts of interviews of people close to her.

<sup>58</sup> In a therapy group for men who behave abusively with their intimate partners, men use dramatic enactment of conflictive conversations precipitating violence. The men then use a variety of dramatic enactments as bridging tools between talking in abstract terms about violence and other behaviours and carrying out *in situ* conversations and interactions with their partners.

### ***Stories for truth and reconciliation***

A different kind of healing interaction is possible when stories are shared in formally sanctioned commissions established for truth and reconciliation. Since the 1970s truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) have sought out stories of atrocities, hearing from victims and alleged perpetrators as well as “neutral” witnesses. The purpose of TRCs is multifaceted: to allow victim stories, to acknowledge experience, to rewrite official history, to hold perpetrators to account, and to provide a base from which to recommend political and legal sanctions for justice (Nowrojee, 2008). TRCs are also intended to offer victims of politically instigated trauma such as rape, torture, and other atrocities, the beginnings of healing from their traumatic experience (Borer, 2006; DeLaet, 2006). Telling one’s story, being heard and acknowledged — validated officially — provides a channel for the anger and hurt. The process is also an opportunity for individual stories to be joined with others contributing to a public account of events that have often been portrayed from the point of the perpetrator or parties far removed from the reality of life in the conflict area (Jeong, 2005; Porter, 2007; Sluzki, 2003).

Many of those recounting stories of atrocities committed away from the ‘front’ of a battle-field are women. For some women who have been raped and tortured as a way of shaming a people, telling their stories can be a chance to see themselves in a different light — as casualties of war rather than as individual victims. While not usually healing in itself, this kind of narration allows others to bear witness. It can also allow

women to find therapeutic supports in their communities and join with other women of similar experience (Potter, 2006). Care must be taken, however, since being able to speak about the atrocities can be re-traumatizing (Colvin, 2008) even while the process holds the possibility of opening the door to self-acceptance, liberation, and perhaps a step towards retribution (Arbour, 2009), along with future structural changes (Jeong, 2005, pp. 163-165; Potter, 2006).

Narrative plays a role in all kinds of political struggles. The ability to tell one's own story is a mark of autonomy; still, liberation is not guaranteed by telling one's own story. Sometimes we tell stories in ways that demean and devalue ourselves. Those who have been oppressed find it difficult to speak in their own voices — voices that are not congruent with that which they have been told to believe about themselves (Perring, 2006) as noted in the stories of Canadian First Nations people, Western Ukrainians, Bosnians, South Africans, and many others who are finding their voices.

Narrative is playing a role for Aboriginal people in Canada as the devastation wrought by residential schools is slowly being acknowledged, with the last school being closed at the turn of the twenty-first century. Following a formal apology to indigenous Canadians by the Canadian government in 2008, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established. The job of this official body is to hear as many survivor stories as possible (Government of Canada, 2009). The TRC, paying attention to the significance of Aboriginal oral and legal traditions, aims to acknowledge people's experiences as well as the impact or consequences of these experiences; to provide a safe setting to witness,

support, and promote truth and conciliation events for individuals and communities; to promote awareness about the process setting the historical record straight; and, to produce a report with recommendations for all parties (Government of Canada, 2009). Similar processes have been necessary and helpful to deal with the impact of colonization of indigenous people in Australia and New Zealand.

The invitation to share one's experience — one's story — has had healing impact in a variety of other contexts. A listening project in Croatia invited people in the small, traumatized village of Berak to one by one tell their stories. Serbs and Croats were invited individually to not only recount their history but to vision for the future of their village. Finding commonalities, project leaders enlisted villagers to participate in activities requiring collaboration for the purpose of rebuilding the village. Over a period of five years the community, though still dealing with feelings of bitterness and other deep emotions, coexists in peace (Bloch, 2005).

Storytelling has additional uses in indigenous peoples' traditional healing processes — ways that are now being adopted by some as a means to social justice — even in more mainstream societies. As part of peacekeeping and reconciliation processes in Oromo society in Africa, elders hear the stories of all parties involved in a conflict before making a ruling to facilitate justice and peace among all parties (Tuso, 2000). Healing circles, sentencing circles, and peacemaking circles (Pranis, Stuart, & Wedge, 2003) are all used to build community in varying ways in Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and North America.

### ***Stories 'go public' for community-building***

While some communities hear as well as co-create stories for healing and community-building, others seek out stories to share through performance with and for the community as audience. Sometimes stories are carefully chosen for this kind of sharing because of the safety found in an artistic performance. Cultural stereotypes are challenged in a project that involves both truth-telling and dialogue: *Jerusalem Stories, Performance Exhibit, Dialogue* offers audiences and actors the opportunity to experience stories of individuals from both sides of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. Performers speak the stories, challenging both the tellers and listeners to reconsider their own beliefs about the roots of the conflict and their convictions about preferred outcome. Internal and external dialogues are challenged and built through the experience of the performance and the dialogue sessions following (Senehi, 2009).

Stories have been shared in order to educate and build civic involvement. One example was a national voter education effort in the United States in which women shared personal stories to show the personal impact of government decisions on people's lives. Their stories were recorded and shared through the internet. The project started with in-person story-circles after which women decided if they would further share their stories. In the process of learning writing and editing skills, the grass-roots project helped traditionally non-voting people make connections between government decision-making, the input in those decisions, and the power of the vote (Freidus, 2008).

Another example of education and civic empowerment is *The Workus*, a story-collecting, storytelling mobile installation that travels around Alberta, Canada, collecting and sharing stories about occupational illnesses and chronic workplace ailments (Workers Health Centre, 2009). This mobile circus tent provides opportunities for individuals and communities to listen to stories of workers from other places, to learn about potential hazards in workplaces, and to hear about common workplace illnesses and chronic illnesses associated with different types of work. The project also provides time and place and to share one's own story 'for the record' (Flaherty, K., 2009).

Media coverage — providing the stories behind events — is another form of storytelling that can compel attention to otherwise seemingly clinical or remote situations. Newscasters such as veteran Joe Schlesinger may go behind the statistics to the heart of a situation finding meaning for listeners by providing a context for otherwise incomprehensible human suffering as he did in Sarajevo. Mr. Schlesinger said, "To get to people's minds, you have to touch their hearts, too" (Schlesinger, 2009). Used constructively and creatively, media coverage has the potential to connect human to human, reaching behind the official story, finding meaning.

Even stories created for dreams facilitate possibilities and with them, empowerment. Think of the child who wakes terrified from a nightmare. Many parents have sat with frightened children, listened to the terror story, and then worked with the child to construct another narrative to combat the 'scary' one. Going back to sleep, the child learns to substitute the empowering, safe narrative for the one that previously

hijacked sleep with startling fear. Simple as they are, the dream stories teach children about visioning and facilitating change as well as confronting difficult emotions.

Stories provide examples of possibilities that may otherwise seem unimaginable. There are a many ways to foster and teach tolerance through storytelling and this vehicle for communication can and is being used with loving care through a variety of methods and venues around the world (Senehi, 2009; Simms, 2008; 2003). Storytelling festivals in Canada (Annual Storytelling Festivals in Canada, 2007; Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, 2009), and worldwide, offer possibilities for sharing community stories as well as passing on cultural and historical lessons from different communities. Another kind of collaborative forum for sharing stories is The Center for Digital Storytelling which now offers workshops around the world helping communities create “a living history, an awareness of a collective identity woven of a thousand stories” (Center for Digital Storytelling, 2009).

### ***Stories educating for peace***

Education takes place when there are two learners who occupy somewhat different spaces in an ongoing dialogue. But both participants bring knowledge to the relationship and one of the objects of the pedagogic process is to explore what each knows and what they can teach each other. (Stanley Aronowitz in Friere, 1970, p.8)

Storytelling holds a myriad of possibilities for purposeful education, facilitating learning through experience integrated more thoroughly than intellectual understanding (Sapon-Chevin, 1999). If lived experience supports or reinforces verbal learning, the learner is provided with knowledge that is incorporated on numerous levels. In this way it is vital

that we co-construct and carry out respectful, inclusive processes within and between ourselves in peace and development efforts. Stories offer space for shared experiences.

Education for social change requires dialogue and joint exploration of possibilities (Friere, 1970). Education takes many forms, from the guiding stories of a grandparent or elder to a child to formal education in a traditional or otherwise organized workshop or school system, from a theatre performance sharing the experience of living with bipolar disorder<sup>59</sup> (Maxwell, 2009) and other forms of mental illness<sup>60</sup> (Swadron, 2008), to a newscast intended to inform a broad audience (Schlesinger, 2009). Each of these forms has the possibility to influence, and each has some possibility to build peaceful, harmonious relationships within and between individuals and communities. Earlier sections have touched upon the power of unofficial and informal stories from elders and other members of a community. The section on stories and empowerment related examples of the power of theatre to inform, support and change narratives for dialogue and peace-building. Storytelling festivals are a parallel form of educational storytelling for community-building as well as entertainment.

Storytelling and narrative have a foundational place in the processes of education which themselves may facilitate community building. With this philosophy, Peggy Chinn (Chinn, 2004) conducts workshops and otherwise teaches about *every-logue* whereby

---

<sup>59</sup> Victoria Maxwell, often working in conjunction with the Canadian Mental Health Association, travels through North America educating people about the impact of mental illness and processes of recovery. Ms. Maxwell, a comedian and actor produces a play using humour and her own experience with bi-polar disorder to spark discussion with audiences, and to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

<sup>60</sup> Madness, Masks & Miracles is a Canadian professional theatre company whose cast and crew all have personal experience with mental illness. Their play uses both their own experiences and collected others to bring an approachable, human face to mental illness.

every person in a group contributes to a discussion and circling is a technique used to invite everyone in a group to weigh in on a topic. There is also room in these lively communities for “random ravings” and “sparking” so that different communication styles and thought processes are honoured in the process of decision making (Chinn, 2004, pp. 50-54)<sup>61</sup>. Other community conflict transformation processes taught in workshops around the world use storytelling and role-play as a means of dialogue and empathy-building on the way to problem-solving and community development as well as conflict resolution (Cobb, 2003; Evans, Evans, & Kraybill, 2001; Lederach, 2005; Rothman, 1997; Wallach, 2000)

Truth-telling and curiosity (Chopp, 2005) go hand in hand in the “dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student” relationship in which participants invest themselves in discovering more about their own interests (Friere, 1970, p. 92). New ways of using storytelling in formal education settings are being taught and explored in university courses for educators such as one being taught at the University of Manitoba, Canada. In this summer institute, teacher/storytellers discover what narrative means in their own lives and test out new ways to incorporate narrative and story into their classrooms and schools<sup>62</sup>.

---

<sup>61</sup> Chinn’s book *Peace and Power* (Chinn, 2004) provides simple guidelines, edification, and examples that are clearly presented with a touch of humour so that most self-directed communities can use and adapt her approach.

<sup>62</sup>The University of Manitoba offers a summer institute comprised of two intensive courses facilitated by educators and professional storytellers. This initiative is through the Faculty of Education, the Mauro Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and Storytelling for Peace and Renewing Community (SPARC). Interestingly, the courses are titled *Becoming the World: Storytelling for building tolerance in schools and*

### **Part Three: Storytelling and narrative in research: Continuing social change**

Every interpersonal exchange is a type of research that changes something in the way I experience the world. As a research methodology, narrative offers some of the most respectful and life-giving experiences people can share. As such, narrative has been recognized in varying degrees as a 'legitimate' form of qualitative research since the early 1900s.

So, what is narrative inquiry in research?

Contemporary narrative inquiry can be characterized as an amalgam of interdisciplinary analytic lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches, and both traditional and innovative methods — all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them. (Chase, 2005, p. 651)

Chase goes on to review the history of narrative as a methodology for research, citing the life history method used in the early twentieth century, and the personal narratives shared during the second wave of feminism and civil rights movements in the 1960s, soon followed by the interest by sociolinguists in oral history as discourse.

With choice of methodology somewhat dependent upon disciplinary origin of the researcher (*her story*), there are a number of different approaches presently used in contemporary narrative inquiry. Psychologists tend to focus on individual life stories and the quality of the narrators life within his or her particular cultural milieu.

Sociologists look more at the identities people construct for themselves within their eco-system; they tend to be interested in the processes of storytelling, a living

---

*communities and Beyond the beanstalk: Learning conflict resolution through storytelling, and Storytelling for peace and human rights.*

experience that is constructed differently within different lived contexts. Still others, those with more of an anthropological bent it seems, are interested in different kinds of ethnography: narrative ethnography<sup>63</sup> which pays more attention to the researcher and how her interaction with the narrator plays into the narrative, and autoethnography<sup>64</sup> which sees researcher as narrator and narrator as researcher (Ellis, 2004).

The relationship between researcher and narrator directly impacts the voice of the narrator and the ways her voice and story are represented in the research reporting<sup>65</sup>. Researchers as initiators of most research projects bring with them a kind of authority or power that can be facilitative if used as such (Sprague, 2005). Chase (2005) writes about the other end of the continuum of relationships being that of supporter to the narrator as in the case of auto ethnography. Somewhere along the continuum is facilitative supporter — a researcher who is able to use what power she has to access resources or help create spaces for stories to be shared. *Jerusalem Stories*, mentioned earlier, might be an example of this type of relationship (Senehi, 2009).

In all situations, the researcher must be fully self-aware and care-full regarding the power dynamic in the research relationship (Hertz, 1997; Kimpson, 2005; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Sprague, 2005). This is only possible when the researcher chooses not to

---

<sup>63</sup> See for example the work of Lori Ring (2006) who worked and studied with her family in a Karachi apartment block.

<sup>64</sup> In this 'novel' Ellis (2004) reflects upon her experience teaching a university communications course in auto ethnography, using this as an example of the methods and challenges of doing autoethnography. Chase (2005) notes this is an approach sometimes criticized as too easily leaning toward self-indulgence.

<sup>65</sup> See *Reflexivity and Voice* (Hertz, 1997) for more articles for researchers considering the use of narrative — considerations such as changing roles as research relationships change in familiarity, the location of the researcher as inside or outside of the community of study, as well as the multiple considerations about ways voices will be represented in the research write up.

be the translator or analyst of information (Geertz, 1973, p. 17) but rather a participant in a dialogue — creating a narrative as we go (Hertz, 1997, pp. vii-xviii). This work can become action research as narrators build new stories (Senehi, 2009). Sometimes the process of narrating becomes an act of dreaming/visioning (Broome, 2009) as individuals see possibilities for themselves and their communities.

As in storytelling, researchers of both Indigenous traditions (Cole, 2006; McLeod, 2007; Smith, 2006/1999) and third-wave feminism (Kovach, 2005; Potts & Brown, 2005; Sprague, 2005) agree, inquirers must identify where they are situated in relation to their work. Standpoint identification clearly states that the researcher has biases and will try to ameliorate them in her research. While attempting to privilege other's voices, the researcher indicates that she is hearing them herself from a particular perspective, and that there are other perspectives. This in itself is a radical departure from previous Western research which purported to be undertaken unbiased and value-free. Indigenous and feminist methodologies recognize that neutral does not really exist. Like Max Horkheimer (1937), they agree that indeed the personal is the political.

### ***Research as sharing stories: continuing social change***

There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. (Edith Wharton, American novelist and short story writer; 1862-1937)

As noted in the previous chapter, feminist-focused and indigenous-based research is about emancipation and empowerment for the people involved in the research especially when privileging previously oppressed voices which can assist in reclaiming

and honouring participants' personal histories. This work may also call attention to contributions that have previously been written over or buried. The reflexive process required to write/right history assists people to explore further historical understandings.

This work of narrative research, in itself, is facilitative of social change. As noted earlier, particularly for people who have been oppressed, the act of voicing their story in itself can be a changing experience. In the case of narrative in research, the narrator is part of her own audience and she has her internal dialogue to facilitate the process of change (Chase, 2005). For people previously silenced, sharing one's story with a researcher, having someone bear witness to the story can become a pivotal interaction. Hearing the story also creates new possibilities for the listener who is able to take another's perspective.

Research using narrative as a tool may offer the gift of adding stories into history — counter-narratives to those previously been told. In this practice, stories collected as evidence sometimes becomes part of collective stories that again give voice to those previously marginalized. The act also changes history. As a respectful inquirer, the researcher hearing and sharing stories reflexively assists the teller to explore her own story. These processes offer possibilities of empowerment, transformation, and peace-building within and across cultural groups (Cruikshank, 2000; Lederach, 1995; Potts & Brown, 2005; Smith, 2006/1999, p. 117). Maybe that is the real point of understanding — of research.

Opening to story is both privilege and responsibility for the researcher who engages in narrative as a research tool. Some cautions here. Since the process of research itself has the possibility of opening up spaces for previously marginalized narratives to be told, the newly opened space must be handled with care. Cognizant of perceived and actual power, inquirers must ascertain that what we ask is clear and acceptable to the other participants in the process. We must also be cautious of the ways we receive stories, the meaning we make of them, and how we directly and indirectly pass them along.

**Rights and responsibilities: Narrative for dialogue, relationship building, and social change**

“The truth about stories is that that’s all we are.” (King, 2003, p. 2ff.)

Humans exist in and come alive through narratives. We communicate through stories and we reflexively co-create our reality through stories — through narratives. Narrative provides possibility for power in the form of strength and influence — both internal and external and with power available to all humans, comes responsibility.

Since narrative is so powerful, we must be ever mindful about the stories we tell — how we author them, using what ‘authority’, knowing that as we open to share, a space shared with the recipient is also created. Each person has responsibility for her/his word — what is said, how it is said, and what is not said. While powerless to control the way another receives what is offered, we do have some responsibility for the use of the space in between us. Further, we have responsibility to each other as

potential recipients of story. What meaning will we make of the story? How will we share it, for share we shall since we have been influenced consciously or not by the stories we have heard and felt from others and those we have told ourselves. This relational responsibility requires consideration of the language we use and how it will be received and perceived. Because narrative is such a powerful and naturally available tool, it is something not only *through* which we teach our children, but also *about* which children must be taught. We must help them explore how to use this tool responsibly for present understanding and future relationship building. Narrative will be used and studied as humans continue to personally and professionally research the art and science of life-giving relationships. We must proceed with great care, ever aware of our role in the process and honouring the contributions of others. We will be using and adding stories as we go.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Methodology: Telling stories and sharing visions**

This study was a participatory action inquiry into the roles the narratives of individual Ukrainian women and their group visioning could play in positive social change – in peacebuilding. In this chapter the chosen methodology is laid out along with the adjustments that were made in the process of carrying out the study. The rationale for choosing the methods used are described in greater detail in the previous chapter on narrative.

### **Study participants**

This study was designed cognizant of differing experiences of gender and power (Enloe, 2000/1989; French, 1985; Gilligan, 1982; Keashly, 1994; Sylvester, 2002): methodologies were chosen with the intention of addressing these differences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Cobb, 2003; Minow, 2003). The participants were all female citizens of Ukraine who came to adulthood during Soviet times. These women had seldom been asked about themselves and what they wanted as individuals and as community members, yet in their ages and stages of life, they influenced many others as they performed their multiple roles including teacher, worker (of often more than one type of job), mother, and community member. Participants were each residents of one of the two regions of focus for this study. These specific sites are discussed in more detail below.

Beginning with present day contacts in Ukraine, a snowball approach was used to invite six to ten women from each district to participate in the study (Bogdan & Biklen,

2007; Sprague, 2005). Though larger participant numbers would be preferable, my own group work experience in both Canada and Ukraine suggested that discussion groups with a single facilitator should number no more than five to eight participants. The first participants invited to the study were women met during previous work in Ukraine and with whom I had a working, but not close personal relationship. These women were then asked to suggest and invite other women to join the study.

### **Study site(s)**

As noted earlier, my first visit to Ukraine was a working visit to Western Ukraine – Lviv, in 1999. Lviv introduced me to much of what I know and love about Ukraine and was an obvious choice to situate part of this research. As I prepared my proposal for the study, a colleague mentioned that she regularly communicated with women in Crimea. I read and learned more about Crimea, and the diversity in these two regions cemented my desire to work with groups of individual women from each of these regions.

Lviv citizens were fairly open about the area's leanings towards the European Union. As a signature pro-West, pro-national city, Lviv wears its history in its architecture, cobble-stone streets, artwork, and cosmopolitan air. The centre of the city, population about 800,000 at the time of the study, has buildings from fifteenth to nineteenth century influenced by Italy, Austria, Lithuania, and Poland. These buildings include a variety of Christian churches and one Jewish synagogue. The city's many squares have majestic statues of artists and writers, past hetmans and their steeds, and

a huge “wave”<sup>66</sup> monument in the city centre, dedicated to freedom and independence. In contrast to the majestic buildings in the city centre, the areas just outlying are populated with *Khrushchovka* — identical large square brick-like apartment blocks that are in various states of disrepair.

Lviv’s climate is similar to that of my home, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. There are four distinct seasons with winter being very cold and snowy and summer hot, sunny, green and lush. Lviv is situated approximately eighty kilometers from the Polish border and almost 100 kilometers from the Carpathian Mountains in a landscape that is hilly and covered with deciduous growth.

The second research site, Simferopol, was in south-central Crimea — about seventy kilometers from the city of Yalta on the Black Sea. While just verging on the Crimean Mountains, Simferopol itself is on a bit of a plateau. Simferopol’s streets are wide, paved, and lined with lower, flatter Soviet-style buildings — on average no more than four stories high and built of brick. There are numerous monuments to Lenin visible in the city — along with memorials to soldiers from “the Great Patriotic War” (World War II). Simferopol enjoys a humid sub-tropical climate with wet, chilly winters experiencing some snow, and hot, humid summers. The area is well known for delicious fruits and vegetables available for many months of the year.

---

<sup>66</sup> This monument to Taras Shevchenko was erected in 1995. It is a dark, very modern-looking structure that depicts much of the area’s history in its etched façade. The monument is a popular meeting point for visitors and citizens of Lviv.

According to the national census at the time of the study Simferopol had a little less than half of the population of Lviv, two-thirds of whom were of Russian origin — about 20 percent ethnic Ukrainian and 7 percent Crimean Tatars (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, 2004). Because of its climate and location near the seaside, Simferopol itself, and the entire region of Crimea, are popular retirement destinations for retired military personnel and their families (Ukrainetrek.com, 2010).

### **Other considerations leading up to the study**

Entering into this study as inquirer, I was an outsider, and I also carried some status referred by my previous work. Knowing this, I wanted to be particularly careful not to abuse the good will and nature of the Ukrainian citizens who facilitated this project and who took part directly as participants. Decisions about the project along the way were made as collaboratively as possible. (Future decisions about project material also will be made in consultation with participants.) My role was that of participant-observer-facilitator as this 'study' has practice elements. My voice in reporting is that of supporter, highlighting the women's voices, opening "possibilities of political and civic engagement on the part of the women" (Chase, 2005, p. 665).

The realities of communication in this study both challenged and provided opportunities. My knowledge of both Ukrainian and Russian languages was limited; however, my previous work in Ukraine and Russia was made possible through collaboration with professional interpreters, mostly female, one of whom volunteered

to work and travel with me in this capacity throughout this study. More about Sonya later.

Interviews were to be conducted in Ukrainian with English interpretation. They were audio-taped and the interpreted English words, as I heard, them were transcribed. Once a participant was suggested for the study, my first contact with her was through my interpreter — in Ukrainian and on the telephone. Women were told again in person, both verbally and in writing, about the study, and they were asked to sign confidentiality agreements written in Ukrainian prior to beginning.

### **Phases of the study**

The study was intended to proceed in four distinct phases as laid out in the original research plan noted below.<sup>67</sup>

Phase One: Each woman was invited to share her life story individually with the researcher. She was asked about life growing up in Ukraine, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and her day-to-day life today including who was important to her and how she filled her days. She was also asked to speak about her hopes and dreams for herself, her family, and her community/country. This interview was audio-taped with a copy of her interview given to each woman. Women were also invited to share their stories with a grandchild or another younger person close to them.

Phase Two: The women were brought together in regional groups. In these groups the participants were guided through a process of visioning for their own and Ukraine's future. They were asked to envision life in Ukraine when all would be "functioning as it should". They were invited to share/describe this vision in detail and the vision was 'mapped' or drawn as the women spoke. This important process (Chinn, 2004; Duncan & Miller, 2000) included reflecting upon/taking stock of the many activities the women were already using to foster peace and co-existence as family and community members.

---

<sup>67</sup> This plan was approved by the Ethics Review Committee at the University of Manitoba. Several adjustments had to be made to the process and these are described in detail in the following chapters.

Phase Three: The two regional groups were joined. The women were to be invited to meet in a comfortable place away from their homes where they could spend a weekend sharing stories and visioning together. They were asked to consider, if they chose, individual and/or group activities to further their vision(s) of peaceful life in Ukraine. The visioning process involved a physical drawing or mapping process through which the women combined their visions and identified the parts of their vision that already had seeds growing in Ukraine.

Phase Four: The material gathered from the study was brought back to the women for their further consideration. Following transcription of the individual stories and group interaction processes, the synthesized information was shared with participants in a reflexive process allowing consideration of adapted and/or additional collaborative work between individuals or groups of participants. I planned to meet with the women again at least in their regional groups, and hopefully in the larger group to seek their reflections on the process.

In addition to inviting and hearing individual narratives, the Phase 2 and 3 groupwork was intended to further possibilities for empowerment and collaborative community-building (Chinn, 2004; Lederach, 1995, 2005). For this purpose, I chose to use a visioning exercise drawn from community development and strategic planning practice. This exercise also echoed solution-focused counselling techniques. I had used both strategies independent of each other. I wondered how they might work in combination to facilitate participant empowerment and build better relationships between what was seen as two diverse areas of Ukraine.

I was tentative about the details of phase four in particular as this was meant to be a collaborative process with women who had spent many years with few choices offered. Practically speaking, many women in Ukraine worked two or more jobs in order to meet the family's basic needs (Harasym, 2009). Time away from work and family was scarce and time spent away for the study might not be a possibility.

## **The research questions**

This study was based on the understanding that Ukraine, a country still divided and struggling toward autonomy post-Independence required the energies of all her people to vision and work toward a common peaceful, healthy existence. *The study research questions centred on the role women's narratives can play in facilitating the development of civil society in Ukraine.* Questions included:

- 1) How can appreciative inquiry sharing women's narratives assist in building civil society?
- 2) What role can sharing narratives, dialogue, and group visioning play in individual and community empowerment and capacity building?
- 3) What role can sharing narratives, dialogue, and group visioning play in building bridges between diverse communities?
- 4) How can assisting women to share their stories facilitate peace-building within community and across diverse regions?
- 5) How do women who have come to adulthood in Soviet times in diverse regions in Ukraine see themselves as individuals and as community members in this Post-Soviet era?
- 6) What do Ukrainian women who have lived in Soviet times envision for themselves? For their families? For their communities? For Ukraine?
- 7) What are the common themes in the stories of women who have lived in diverse regions of Ukraine coming to adulthood in Soviet times?
- 8) Is there something more the women may want to do with this process to contribute to the development of themselves, their families, and their communities?

### **Changes in methodology: Accommodating realities**

The moment I landed in Ukraine in January of 2010, I realized that my carefully laid out methodology might have to be adjusted to fit the character of Ukraine and to honestly reflect the relationship that I already had with Ukraine and those of her citizens I already knew. What unfolded was a great example of the complicated relationship that, in reality, must exist between many researchers and participants. It would be impossible to completely separate myself as participant researcher from the other participants in this study. I had to reconsider the notion that I would gain a more 'valued' or 'true' picture by separating myself from the participants.

After five years absence, I returned to Ukraine in January 2010 to begin this work. January 18 is a Ukrainian holiday celebrated at home with family, and even though my plane was delayed six hours, I was still met on that frosty evening by a contingent of women and their husbands. Without knowing the plane would be delayed, my greeting party moved a traditional feast they had planned to share with me from one woman's home to that of her mother who lived closer to the airport. Because of the lengthy flight delay, the sit-down feast had gone ahead. Still, large portions of these delicacies had been saved for me and, along with a huge bag of other goodies, were brought to the apartment these friends had secured for me during my stay.

That very evening, after several toasts with cognac to friendship, health and “love”<sup>68</sup>, though everyone was exhausted, we sat and talked about the research plan. Questions and comments about the work flew; clearly the women were themselves interested in the project. The way they spoke indicated they also felt personally committed to the topic and the process.

The men were banished to wait in the living room while, in the kitchen, we women talked, excitedly. We began to brainstorm names of women who were diverse in background and who would add variety to the study. Some of the women I had met; others I had not. I was exhausted and shaking with anticipation when my friends departed.

As planned, the following morning, I met an expanded welcoming committee at their place of work. Though I was familiar with the place, my memory stalled and I had to be personally collected and escorted through the ice and snow to our meeting. Excitement, jet lag, and a five-year absence from this wonderful place had left me uncertain of my location.

Within the first day, as I met more women and they voiced their enthusiasm for the study, I was reminded of the snippets of stories shared with me during past visits — stories shared in casual conversation as we worked together on programs and projects created to help fill the void left by the withdrawal of the Soviet infrastructure. I began

---

<sup>68</sup> I have been told that the first toast is to be given by the host of a gathering. The second is often to the host or to health, etc., and the third is “to love.”

to fully realize that the study would unnecessarily lose if some of these women's stories were not included in this study.

So, with much consideration of the pros and cons, during sleepless nights, and in consultation with my advisors, I decided to shift the methodology slightly. *First*, more participants, some who already knew me were added. *Second*, realizing that many women were more comfortable speaking Russian than they were Ukrainian, Russian was included as an interview language if the women so desired. Sonya Stavkova, my interpreter and friend, was fluent and had worked in both. *Third*, as the study progressed we also realized that we would need to adjust our cross-regional meeting plans. These changes are described in greater detail in sections that follow.

### **Additional participants**

Several women in Lviv area were instrumental in making this project feasible. Working with them during my first postings in Ukraine opened me to their experiences. My initial intention was to not include these women as participants in the study, believing that I should have more distance from "the subjects." As well, not knowing anyone in Crimea, I believed that inclusion of known participants in Lviv would skew the dynamics and thus the results of the study.

The weight of these different considerations shifted as I continued to converse with women in Lviv. While they did not verbalize it, several women I had previously met appeared disappointed that they would not be invited to participate. Reviewing my criteria for participant inclusion and the purposes of the study, I began to understand

the large and unnecessary loss if these women's stories were not invited and included in the study. This was one of the reasons that there were more participants in the Lviv participant group. Another reason for the difference in numbers was directly related to time, circumstance, and ironically, my choices related to consistency in interviewing, both of which are clarified below.

When planning this study I envisioned that ideally I would use one interpreter for all of the work. This would provide consistency of experience for the participants and consistency in interpretation and understanding for me. With the huge distance between Lviv and Simferopol, I had thought this was a pipe dream. However, due to the enormous generosity of time and spirit, my interpreter and de facto partner in the project, Sonya Stavkova, volunteered to travel with me, making my vision possible.

The reality was that most people in Ukraine needed more than one job to survive. Sonya was permanently employed as a field instructor for the Social Work section of the Department of Sociology and Social Work at Lviv Polytechnic. During the period of the study, she was also in demand as an interpreter and, with international observers attending to the election proceedings, her time was tightly scheduled. This meant that our trip to Crimea was sandwiched in during a university break and between runs of the Presidential election. We had only one week to travel to Crimea and this had to be arranged with great attention to detail. The trip was arranged largely due to the efforts of a woman soon dubbed our "social director" — the very talented Halyna Harasym who, familiar with Simferopol, also travelled with us.

### **Additional languages**

Another unforeseen change was the language in which the interviews were conducted. My premise had been that even though some participants would have been raised with Russian as their native tongue (and all would have used Russian as their primary language of schooling), the participants would choose to speak in Ukrainian for their interviews. I knew that some of the women would also have some knowledge of English as well as perhaps German and even French.

As it was, many of the interviews were not completed in Ukrainian. Some women began their interviews speaking in Russian, noting that Russian was the language in which they could best express their more complex ideas and emotions. This happened most in Crimea. In both of the Russian-conducted interviews in Lviv, the participants asked if we minded their choice of language. Fortunately Sonya's facility in languages allowed her to adapt with no perceptible difficulty at all, thus allaying participant concerns.

This did, however, somewhat shift the dynamics between the participants and me because my knowledge of Russian went no farther than basic greetings and "please" and "thank you." The extra layer of understanding that would have come with the use of Ukrainian was not there. Additionally, as noted earlier, some participants felt quite comfortable adding in comments in English and three of the participants chose to conduct the whole interview in English. I conducted these interviews on my own. The perceived role of language will be addressed periodically in this document.

### **Adaptations to cross-regional meetings**

Once the first two phases of the study were completed and we returned to Lviv exhausted, the logistics related to getting the women together across regions began to loom large and heavy. Consulting a more realistic financial budget revealed that costs were considerably more than I had planned. I had also underestimated the amount of time women needed to take from their busy lives to participate in a cross-regional meeting. We began to question the feasibility of the original cross-regional meeting with the women travelling to a neutral place for a joint meeting.

First the meeting place came into question. A kind rector of Lviv Polytechnic University offered the use of a university camp outside Lviv free of charge. Reportedly, a similar arrangement was available somewhere near Simferopol. As we continued to search for the initial ideal neutral place somewhere between these two regions, I realized that I was again reliant upon my friends in Ukraine, women who were very willing to volunteer more of their time, and whose generous offer I could not accept. Further, funding was an issue. After revisiting the idea of both groups physically meeting somewhere outside Simferopol or Lviv, the decision about the joint regional meeting was left on hold as I returned to Canada to await funding information.

Back at home and upon further reflection, I also realized that the simple one-or two-day meeting initially planned realistically meant a minimum of four days away from home for participants who would have to travel. This would include forty-eight hours on the train — twenty-four hours in each direction. While the trip to Crimea in February

had been quite enjoyable, it was also exhausting! Was it reasonable to even request that the women make this kind of investment in time? The women's response was that very few indeed were able to leave family and work for that length of time.

In addition to the constraints of time and home responsibilities for the participants, I had to face my own financial reality. By the time the women realized that they would have great difficulty attending a regional meeting, I also realized that the bulk of the funding I had applied for was not coming through. On a positive note, after confronting the need to change Phase III, I was delighted to be informed that I had been awarded a grant through the university from a private donor<sup>69</sup> which supported my return to Ukraine. For this, I remain so very grateful.

With a more realistic framework in mind, I investigated the idea of a video-conference. The new plan was as follows: we would meet again with the regional group in Lviv, review our process, do a visioning exercise and prepare to speak with the Simferopol group via video conference. Immediately following the Lviv regional meeting, Sonya and I would travel to Crimea, review our process and findings with the women there, and have a group visioning meeting with the Simferopol participants. This meeting would be followed immediately by a video conference with the women in Lviv.

---

<sup>69</sup> The Iryna Knysh Memorial Scholarship provided huge support not only financially but for me knowing that the work was being supported by an award in honour of noted scholar and activist Iryna Knysh.

## **The interviewing process**

Interviews were arranged to allow for a period of time when participant and interviewer(s) could be undisturbed. All but two of the Phase One interviews were conducted with our interpreter, Sonya. The length of each interview varied, generally limited by the time the participant had set aside. All but one took place in one sitting over a period of a few hours. The other was in two sittings of a couple of hours each over two days.

Seating arrangements during the interviews varied little, despite the differences in venue which will be mentioned later. Usually, we sat in a kind of triangle with a table between us, with coffee or tea, snacks, and the small digital tape recorder on the table. Most often the participant spoke to me and I spoke to the participant. When Sonya spoke, she spoke in the first person (as the person whose words she spoke), and the participant and I continued to look at each other, as if Sonya was the voice in our heads. The only times we would address Sonya or Sonya us was at the beginning and end of the interview and if we needed clarification. During the visioning sessions in July, Sonya and I stood at the front of the room with a chart on the wall. At these times we bantered back and forth with all participating addressing Sonya more directly. Sonya continued to interpret as the speaker she represented at any given time.

I did very little talking during any of the individual interviews. I asked the questions noted in the appendices, and the women responded. Sometimes I did not

even have to ask questions, but might interject periodically with sounds indicating that the women were being heard — sounds associated with “active listening”<sup>70</sup>.

### **The writing process: sharing the women’s stories**

In representing participant involvement and experience, I have chosen to share women’s stories, as much as possible in their own words, and as interpreted from Ukrainian or Russian to English. I will not interpret their stories, but rather will share them in sections according to themed responses to the interview questions.

Identifying the participants in the study posed a challenge. While some of the women said that they would be proud to be identified, this was not the expectation of other participants or myself. The plan was for this study to eventually be translated back into Ukrainian and sent back to the participants as well as others in Ukraine. For confidentiality, I initially thought to ask women to choose a pseudonym; however, realizing that some of the choices might be duplicates, I chose names myself — hopefully names the participants will enjoy. In order to remind the reader of participants’ home regions, I added an initial after each, almost like a surname. Thus we have eleven women Yulia L. to Mariana L. from the Lviv region and seven women Alsu S. to Veronika S. from Simferopol.

---

<sup>70</sup> The term “active listening” is often used in communication skills literature to describe attending skills such as nods, sounds like, “uh huh” or “yes” and sometimes paraphrasing, summarizing, and such (Shebib, 2007). I seldom used summarizing except at the end of the interview when I briefly repeated the main topics that had been covered by the participant.

Also for confidentiality, I share the individual women's stories as they tell them as description rather than provide a description of each participant from my point of view. Follow a woman's name and the reader will get to know her as I did.



Figure 3. Lviv city centre in February 2010

Photo: M. Flaherty



Figure 4 Working off the grid: Beside the market Lviv, winter 2010

Photo: M. Flaherty



Figure 5 Lenin points the way February 2010

Photo: M. Flaherty



Figure 6 On the road February 2010

Photo: M. Flaherty



Figure 7. At the corner of Karl Marx, Simferopol, February 2010

Photo: M. Flaherty

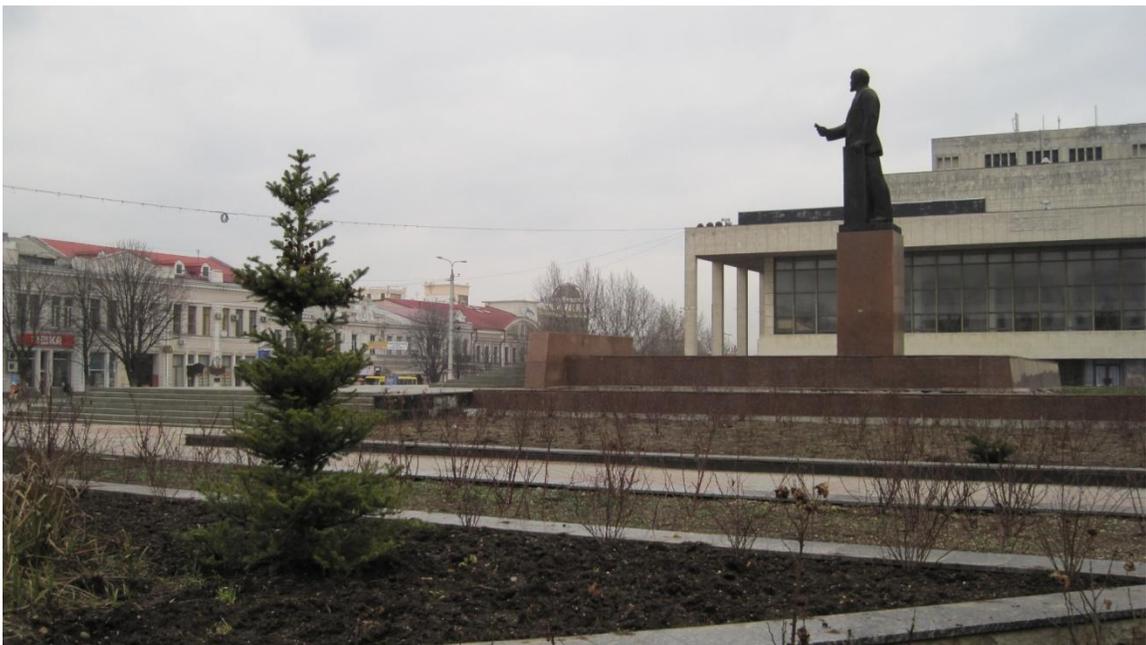


Figure 8. Simferopol city centre, February 2010

Photo: M. Flaherty

## Chapter 5

### **Uncovering stories beneath the snow: January/February 2010**

The evening I arrived in Lviv to begin interviewing participants for this study was the evening I first realized the methodology for the study would have to be adapted. The study had sparked more interest than I had anticipated. By the time I left Ukraine six weeks later, eighteen women had officially shared their stories and many others had opened parts of their lives to me in conversation. Eleven of the study participants were from Lviv oblast and were interviewed in Lviv. They ranged in age from forty to seventy-one years. Seven of the women were from Simferopol in Crimea — southeastern Ukraine and were between fifty-two and eighty-one years old.

While not by design, the women were matched well by age. Purportedly by chance, one participant from each area lived through World War II. One woman from each area had been a physician — both pediatricians who had moved from the field of medicine into work connected more directly with community and social sciences. Two women were mothers in family-type foster homes where they introduced us to their entire families. All of the women under the age of seventy continued to work as professionals and all in some area of human services. Five of the women from Lviv area and five from Simferopol were de facto grandmothers themselves.

Time and language appeared to be the only barriers to hearing more stories. Many times, between interviews or afterward, women approached me to begin a story or to tell me more. On my own, without my interpreter, I was privy to bits and pieces of

what could have been another in-depth conversation if my language skills were better. The women were all willing to share stories. Several times women told me that they would not have been so open if I had not been known to them by reputation from having lived and worked in Ukraine. Women who had not met me previously said it was important to them that I came 'recommended' by someone else they knew and trusted.

The study participants were all very busy women, my interpreter, Sonya, included. This reality influenced the timing of the interviews and the period that I/we were able to travel to Simferopol. The first run of the Ukrainian presidential election took place on January 17, 2010 — the day before I arrived in Ukraine. Sonya was a university instructor in the Department of Sociology and Social Work as well as an independently contracted English/Ukrainian/Russian interpreter. Her interpreting services were booked for some days at the beginning of my visit — and again in the middle — for the days before and after the final election — February 7, 2010. In between were university classes and other commitments. I wanted to keep all the interviews with one interpreter in order to maintain consistency of experience for both the participants and myself.

I had previously done in-depth work, including group facilitation and individual counselling with Sonya and knew of her gifts of empathy and expression that allow people working with her to feel her becoming an extension of themselves — a very unusual gift that made her both “disappear” into the conversation at the same time providing clarity for parties on all sides of the conversation. Sonya’s personality was also

such that she could make anyone feel at ease — and safe. Her professionalism left no doubt about confidentiality.

I had been concerned about the constraints on the study that would be imposed by my own lack of facility with both Ukrainian and Russian language. I was aware not only of my inability to speak Ukrainian well enough to have a meaningful conversation with someone, but also that the level of intimacy might be quite different with three as opposed to two people in a conversation. I worried about possible impatience and thought-interruption for participants working with an interpreter and was also concerned about the perception of confidentiality having a third party present. Some participants already had a collegial working relationship with Sonya. Was this going to change the level of comfort of the participants? How much might they censor themselves in their story-sharing? The “what if’s” will never be answered. Instead, noted here are the women’s responses in the interview situations as spoken and interpreted.

Some of the interview settings were less than ideal. Most of the Lviv interviews took place in a quiet room off an office in the Department of Sociology and Social Work at Lviv Polytechnic. Two interviews took place in participants’ homes and one more in a private rail car on the long ride back from Simferopol to Lviv. The Simferopol interview settings were also varied. Three of these occurred in quiet school offices and a fourth in the same large school but in a tiny office that seemed to be in the middle of a major

traffic loop. Two other interviews were in the participants' homes and the seventh interview was set in the living room of the apartment we rented in Simferopol.

As for timing, the interviews were not as well spaced as I would have liked. In Lviv we never did more than two interviews in one day and more often there was one interview one day then a day or more until the next. The interviews in Simferopol were not nearly as luxuriously paced. We had five days to spend in Simferopol and all interviews were jammed into that time with three per day on two of the occasions. This schedule was set by one of the participants who tried to help maximize our time there. Still, the feedback from the participants was that they did not feel at all rushed and in fact did not know how closely the interviews were scheduled. In contrast, Sonya and I agreed we felt cheated of the chance to really digest individual women's stories in Simferopol, having to put their interviews aside and quickly move on to the next. The impact of these stories was not properly processed until we left Simferopol. Both of us experienced dreams heavy with the emotion and pictures of the women's stories.

### **Lviv interviews**

Interviews in Lviv began two days after my arrival. They were leisurely scheduled — usually no more than one a day. The bulk of them took place in a small anteroom adjoining one of the professor's offices at Lviv Polytechnic University, Department of Sociology and Social Work. The building itself in its central location was often used for community meetings and training and well known to most Lviv participants. The

university was chosen by most participants for these reasons and because of its central location.

The room itself was chosen by default. In the unseasonably cold winter, the little anteroom offered several advantages: it was warm; it had a tea kettle, and it was relatively private. The room itself was big enough to hold a small cupboard and a table with three chairs. One person would have to leave the space if a fourth entered. A small space heater blasted throughout the time. There were no windows, a door that closed, and the room was relatively sound proof.

Other than this venue, interviews took place in two of the women's homes, a woman's office and one in my apartment. Women arrived with faces flushed from the cold, smiling a little nervously, and with open curiosity. Generally greetings were hugs with a kiss on each cheek, whether or not the participant was previously known to me. All but one of the Lviv interviews were conducted in late January and early February 2010 prior to the Crimean trip.

### **The winter train to Simferopol**

In the process of completing this study, Sonya, Halyna, and I made two train trips between Lviv and Simferopol, each trip worthy of a story in itself. The first was in cold, cold February. We left Lviv in minus-forty-degree weather and deep snow to follow a grey sky to Simferopol where the rain kept us damp, and still cold.

The train itself was more than twenty cars long — all passenger cars full of people of every age and stage imaginable. The three of us settled into a compartment for four

— with bunk beds not meant to fold up and a table kept full of food and drink brought from home. At the suggestion of one of my companions, once we toasted to our ‘safe journey’ we began to watch a rather subversive video documentary acquired by one of my companions, exposing some of the hidden stories of Stalin’s time. Our slight apprehension escalated when a middle-aged man suddenly entered our compartment and sat in silence until we turned off the video. We breathed huge sighs of relief when the man who shall be referred to as Mohammed told us he found the subject matter interesting; we proceeded to discuss all nature of topics for the remainder of our twenty-four hours together. Periodically Mohammed would get off the train for a cigarette or to buy us treats — and we would comment on the increasing number of statues of Lenin we noticed as the train proceeded east and south.

With little sleep, we tumbled off the train in Simferopol, tired and grubby. We were met by one of our participants who promptly took us to her place of work and fed us. Our interviews began within the hour.

### **Participants and their stories**

The women who agreed to participate in the study told us much about themselves before they even began to verbalize their stories. They invited us into their lives with such grace and generosity that this hospitality must be mentioned up front as a through theme in these interviews. When we were invited to meet people in their homes, tables had been set in anticipation and special food prepared to share with us. When we attended people’s workplaces we were offered coffee, tea, and sometimes even some

“medicinal” alcohol on a couple of very, very cold days. Women who knew we had to travel arranged to meet us in their vehicles and take us to our next destination once our interviews with them were completed. Several times we were invited to ‘stay awhile’ and share even more food and hospitality. In the two family-type homes we were treated to mini-concerts/sing-alongs with parents and children serenading us after the business parts of our meetings were completed.

The women’s life experiences and the ways they chose to share them were as diverse as the women themselves. In order to present the women’s stories in some kind of representational fashion, I have chosen to use the interview guideline as the main organizational framework for this section. However, some historical material provided by two of the senior participants prefaces the women’s introductions to themselves and their families. This is not meant to privilege some voices over others, but rather to set the scene for all of the interviews, and perhaps make clearer some of the references women made throughout the telling of their individual stories.

The next section — the women’s stories — moves between past, present, and future, as did our conversations. Following the participant-provided history lesson that took the women’s families back to WWII, in the sections following, the women introduce themselves. They describe their families of origin, their early home life, and the people important to them in these times. The women then speak about early school years to adolescence, secondary school, and professional training or post-secondary

school and into their adult lives. They then respond to a question about “what keeps [them] going” and their visions for the future as individuals.

### **A history of hard times**

History influences all of us and the women of Ukraine have lived very close to conflict and latent conflict all of their lives. For some women, like Ana S. and Kristina L., the women of the group with the most years, WWII was more than a story or memory lived through parental lives.



Figure 9 "I remember everything."

Photo: F. Beckwith

Ana S.,<sup>71</sup> just past eighty years at the time of her interview, lost her mother when

she was two-and-a-half years old. Her father remarried and Ana said they all lived together peacefully until 1939. She and her family were living in a village in Western Ukraine at that time. Her words gave more than any history book could offer.

---

<sup>71</sup> As noted later, during our winter trip many participants requested we take their pictures to include in the study – not to be faceless. All signed release forms in July.

So, I went to school and I was ten years old at that time when war started. It was 1939. In 1939 war started. And then, so war is not a good thing. Yes, yes — First Russians came. Then Germans came. You know how people survive in the war — I remember everything — everything!

So, the Germans were coming and my father, he was literate — he read everything... newspapers, books... And my father knew that the war would begin. And my father said that East will win West. We, with our father, we were like one. He told me everything. He taught me everything.

It happened so that when the war started on the Polish and Ukrainian border all soldiers were killed because Stalin didn't help Soviet soldiers with other military troops. So one person — from the whole border soldiers — only one soldier survived. Then my father, he realized that — He gave me the job to do and he himself went to the rayon. He came home and said, "Listen, Stalin doesn't help. He doesn't do anything. So the Germans would come without any trouble, without any obstacles on their way. It was a kind of a betrayal on Hitler's part<sup>72</sup>. Stalin was betrayed.

It was 1943 — and only mobilized military forces near Moscow. And in 1943 Germans came to Ternopil. When Germans ... [*She trailed off, thinking and began again.*] One evening the priest — One day people came to our home and among them was a priest, and they told — they ordered my father to become 'starosta'. 'Starosta' is a kind of monitor. You know? Monitor. And he didn't agree, but they said, "We order you." "And how long am I going to be this German monitor?" And they said, "We order you and we will dismiss you!"

So, my father worked as a monitor but he was always on our side. Once it was necessary to send people to work for the Germans. So, who? Young people, of course! So he collected them and told them, "You go to work. Don't be afraid — just go. And when you see a crowd of people, just disappear. Just run away." So three times he did this, and people just didn't work for the Germans. They escaped!

And then the time came to give meat to the German army — cows. And he began. He invited people to come to him and he told them, "I must do this. I have two cows; one is old and the other is a young one. I will go and I will give my cows. And you will go all together with a lot of cows and a lot of other people. Just try to escape and try to hide your cows." And he was the first to give his cows. He had to! Other people just kept their cows and managed to hide them, so their cattle

---

<sup>72</sup> Referring to the breach of the *Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression or Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939*.

were left for them. People were happy because, you know, it wasn't possible to be friendly with the Germans. (Ana S., 57 ff)

Ana continued speaking matter-of-factly, at times rising from her straight-backed chair to illustrate a point.

Yes. In 1943, autumn, the front was in Western Ukraine. There is a — station near Spurin in the Western Ukraine. There was a camp for Soviet prisoners of war. My father said to me, "Let's go and see. Let's go and discover what is going on there. Let's look at other people's destinies." So, we came there and looked around. We came. And the next day, my father said, "I will go to Spurin to buy something." He bought... The next day he bought a whole bag of those devices to cut the metal. We went to our field and we had sugar beets there. So, he showed me how to pick them up and cut them at the top and put holes and put all of those devices inside. [*She demonstrated.*]

"Yes," he said, "Let's go to the camp and, yes..." [*Ana stood and pantomimed this next part.*] It is a kind of a camp. There was a tower — huge! And there was a tower [*motioning in opposite direction*]. So, on this side and that side — He said, "Look, as soon as the guard turns his head back, just throw!" And those prisoners just collected the sugar beets and ate them. We had put mud on top of the sugar beets. So, those soldiers were walking like this... very slowly... very slowly... [*She demonstrated.*] That is how he was walking. And so, he turned his back. My father was looking at one and I was looking at another. And we threw those beetroots. Two days we did this. So, we had to choose the right times, so...

I commented that this must have been very dangerous. Ana responded:

Yes, because if they had noticed us they would have killed us. [*Pausing*] So, on the third day, they [prisoners of war] cut the wires and disappeared — on the third day. Yes. And they disappeared among the people. Probably there were people who died.

So, the guys came to our home and they said, "We are shoemakers and we need to stay overnight." And my father said, "Well, I know what kind of shoemakers you are." [*She smiled*] So he says, "OK, so you will stay with me and you to this neighbour and you take two of them!" So they just spread them out, and in the morning all the guys came to our home, helped us cut grass, grind flour, look after animals. And the neighbours told them, "You know where you stayed

overnight? You stayed at the monitor's home!" *[She laughed.]* And I was standing and listening to the conversations.

And the [Red Army prisoners of war] soldiers came back and my father said, "You stayed overnight. My hostess gave you good food. You slept at home, not outside. So, now you need to go. Not this way — but this way... You will find this village and you will find the right way to go." More than fifty years have passed, so I forget what village they were looking for. (Ana S., 107 ff)

Ana then described some of her experiences as a fifteen-year-old helping care for the wounded in the hospital nearby. After the war father sent her there to help.

Kristina L. was just a few years younger than Ana, and lived her whole life in the West near or in the city of Lviv. Kristina had her own memories of the war. The family had a small plot of land. Her father was a miller, and Kristina's mother worked in the nearby village — before collectivization — and before WWII. As she told her story she seemed to slip back and forth between present and past.

The war started in 1944. And all the males — the men — they were forced to go to the army. It was called "demobilization". There were two children in our family. My brother — I was seven and my brother — he was two.

My father was taken to the army, to the war. He came home one night *[choking back tears]*. And at that time already, the Red Army soldiers were in the villages and they forced men to go to the front. My mother was very much scared about my father, and she said, "You go to bed and I will tell them you are running a temperature and they won't take you." So, he is in bed. And soldiers come — men with machine guns. They come and they say, "Where is Bandera?" And my mother says, "My husband has just come home from work and he is not feeling well." They come up to him and grab him by his hair and they just take him from the bed.

*[She continued, weeping as she spoke.]*

He wasn't dressed. He had only his underwear and they do not allow him to put on his clothes. Again, they took him by his hair — he had long hair *[gesturing and nodding]* and they, so to say, they put his hair under his nose *[demonstrating]*

*pulling hair from back and drawing up under her nose]* and said, “You are Bandera!”

I put my arms around his neck and he takes me — but they take me — they just [*trailing off*]... And he has me in his arms. It was summer so they didn’t allow him to put on his shoes. He was bare foot, and a piece of glass got underfoot. He stepped on glass. And he started screaming! And he just put me on the road and was saying, “I have a piece of glass and I need to fix it.” They took a machine gun and with the backside of the machine gun, just beat his head and he fell down.

Then they took him under his arms and pulled him. And they took him to a yard — a back yard of a house, where they gathered all the people. And we didn’t see him anymore. He went to — he went to the front.

We never received any letters and when the military groups arrived to Dnepropetrovsk, the first letter came and he writes, “There is nothing to eat, no shoes. The frosts are severe.” They just put rags on their feet — pieces of cloth - and that is how they went to the front.

So, we stayed with our mom, hungry. There was nothing to put on to wear, so I used to put on my mother’s shoes — everything that I could find. We didn’t go to school. We didn’t go anywhere. That is how we lived with our mother. And it lasted until the end of the war.

Our father survived. He was in Berlin, actually. And after the war, in 1945, he comes home. When he came home here in this region, young men — in order to defend their country — they organized a partisan army. No one forced them. They themselves organized armies. But they went to the forests. (Kristina L., 86 ff)

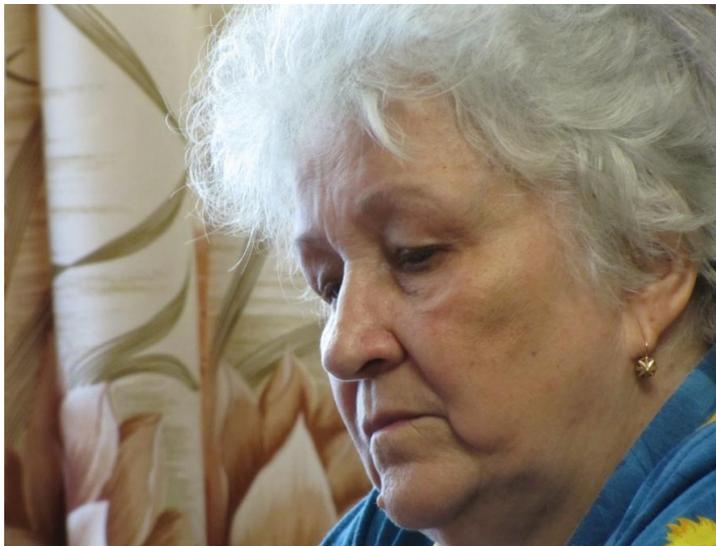


Figure 10 “Our father survived.”

Photo: F. Beckwith

## Family life in Soviet times

As a Westerner, I wondered how much I should refer to the reality that the women all grew up in Soviet times — and then moved to adulthood during Perestroika<sup>73</sup>. I did not want to impose the categories of curiosity that I brought with me to our conversations. I wanted the women to guide their own stories and decide for themselves what was important and what was not. As it was, all the women spoke about “during Soviet times” while telling their stories. Since this association was named by all of the women individually, I thought it would be important to include it here. In fact, speaking openly about Soviet times was apparently new for several women — something that they wished to be able to speak about as a very real part of their history — the good and the bad — and part of what shaped all of them. The acceptance of this past had become an open point of conversation and debate attached to the Presidential elections. Even if they chose to move away from a Soviet way of living — to distance the country of Ukraine from Russia, the women spoke about needing to acknowledge and not deny their past in order to move as whole people, a whole nation into the future.

So, instead of asking specifically about Soviet times, I asked participants to talk about family life around the time of their births, about their own growing up, school, experiences, coming to adulthood and life as an adult. I asked them their thoughts about Independence and how this impacted them. It was their response to the

---

<sup>73</sup> *Perestroika* refers to the restructuring of institutions that signalled the beginning of the end of the USSR. Perestroika followed a more or less stagnant period of leadership under Leonid Brezhnev (1964-1982). Successor, Mikhail Gorbachev, appointed in 1985, was a testament to the education system in the USSR. Gorbachev was also a proponent of *glasnost*, or open speech. (Billington, 2004)

Independence question that brought up more information about life during Soviet times. They remembered some of the considerations people had made while determining whether to vote for Dependence or Independence. I share here some of these background stories to provide more context to the women's lives growing up in Ukraine. Material directly related to thoughts about Independence itself and post-Independence life follows the individual stories of the women's lives.

While Soviet times were supposed to provide an equal footing for all Soviet citizens, this came at quite some cost for some families. For some the strength of ethnic community challenged the Soviet system. Whole cultural groups were banished, forbidden the use of their own language and cultural expression. Some people slowly returned to Ukraine during Perestroika — in the time of Gorbachev. Alsu S., a *Tartarka*<sup>74</sup> told of her family experience.

Our parents were exiled to far points of Russia — my mother first to Kujbysheva and my father to Kostroma. Later, they met and married in Uzbekistan and we lived there. And then we moved here to Crimea. For me it was a kind of nothing, but for my parents, it meant a lot. We kids were small and for my parents it was very difficult. So, all Crimean Tatars, and then later Chechen people were exiled. As Crimean Tatars living in Uzbekistan, we were on a register kept by the KGB [*trailing off*].

Our parents used to tell us a lot about Crimea, that we must return, that we must come back. "Crimea is your motherland and you should go back."

At that time, songs were not allowed but there were many songs in our home. With years, our parents passed the songs on to us, though it was forbidden. We were not allowed. There were no newspapers in the Tatar language, the songs were forbidden. When we returned here it was absolutely

---

<sup>74</sup> *Tatarka* means Tatar woman (Alsu S.).

impossible for me to find a job — they wouldn't hire us because we are Crimean Tatars. We were not hired. We couldn't find employment. (Alsu S. 40 ff)

For some, education and standing in the community created a threat to the Soviet system.

I was born in the family of the intelligentsia. Both my parents have their history — a tragic family history. My father was a member of the 'visla'<sup>75</sup> operation and my mother and the whole family, her family [was] oppressed during the Soviet times. We call it repression!

So, parts of my mother's family were either killed, they were shot because they were patriots of Ukraine and the other half of my mother's family were exiled to Kazakhstan. There in Kazakhstan my mother lost her only beloved brother who was sentenced to the top punishment — he was shot. He was 18 years old at that time. And out of the huge family we used to have in 1946, only two family members: only my mother and her mother returned from Kazakhstan. (Orisyia L., 67 ff)

While WWII impacted every country and culture differently, post WWII, there was a united Ukraine — a Soviet bloc country — East and West joined together as a one republic. Ukraine became united as a member of the USSR. The same tragedy experienced in Lviv area also occurred in Crimea where collectivization began around the time of the Revolution.

---

<sup>75</sup>In her interview, which took place later, Kristina L. saw a puzzled look on my face when she mentioned *visla* operation as well. She said that her husband's family had also been impacted by the *Visla* operation which was a time when Poland expelled Ukrainians living in what was considered Polish territory and sent them back to Ukraine, leaving behind everything they owned. She said, "They left everything there — big house, forest, fields — everything! They were just kicked out from their home... no choice... They were given one horse and a cart for four families to put all their stuff in. One cart! So, that is why people couldn't take everything — only children, some very necessary belongings they had at home, and the main thing they took with them was a cow. They would fix it to the cart because it was necessary... because a cow... she fed them. And they were forced to go to Ternopil oblast under bare sky. Some Jewish homes were left and they just placed them there. There was nothing to eat. It was May just after this. Local people didn't accept them there — a terrible thing. Polish people forced the move." (Kristina L. 190 ff)

When my father returned home in the fall of 1945, there was no work. Nothing. Collectivization had started years before. So, from the other side, it was started to [*sighing*] — to torture people, actually. They started to organize collective farms. People did not want to join collective farms. They forced people. They forced people. People were sent to Siberia — exiled! And when people had two things — a horse... they were called 'kulak' — 'kulak' — you understand? Rich! Kulak is this [*showing her fist*]! So it means very rich people — two cows, horse... And they were called 'kulak'... Everything was taken from them and they were exiled and killed. (Kristina L. 86 ff)

My grandfather was killed because he was considered to be a kulak. He had one hundred hectares of land [trailing off]. So, my father was from people who worked the land. My father was saved [from death] because he — he was rescued because at that time he was on military service in Kyiv near the government. He himself was born before the revolution — 1919. My father belonged to the wealthy family. They even had their own mill in Vinnitsa oblast. They had cows. They had horses... So, a very wealthy family... (Aida S. 78ff)

With collective farms came a change in what people could keep for themselves.

Nobody paid them but they had — they fixed a special schedule. They fixed all of their working days. They were called 'labour days'. So, the whole day a person had to work for this checkmark. Never paid anything... And at the end when people collected the harvest in the fall, then they were paid one kilogram or something — some small amount of grams, of kilograms for one 'labour day' so to say. (Kristina L., 145 ff)

Kristina spoke about the risks her family took to deal with this situation.

My father didn't join the collective farm. He didn't go. He went to Lviv. So, in order to go to Lviv and to be registered in Lviv — because the registration is obligatory — it was necessary to have a special certificate from the village administration. And nobody ever gave that certificate. You go to the collective farm or nowhere! But father managed to run away. He ran to Lviv and he worked on the construction site... (Kristina L. 155 ff)

Sasha's grandparents stayed in their village and joined the collective farm, in spite of the hardships.

Grandparents from both sides, they lived in the villages at that time and they practically had not money because at that time people who worked on the collective farms, they had no money. They worked for labour days, so to say, and that is why my parents had to help them. My father also had a younger brother and he was responsible for his education as well. (Sasha L., 48 ff)

Not everyone had the same thoughts about collective farms. The standard of living was supposed to be consistent across the USSR. The idea was that all would suffer similarly and all would share in the good times as managed by government heads. After WWII, Ana S. was still living in the West. In 1950 she married a young man she had known as a friend from their shared school days. They too were involved with collectivization and varying accompanying consequences.

We were friends, and in 1950 I got married. But I didn't live long with him. Three weeks and three days. One evening guys came and invited him for a conversation. So, he was imprisoned. He was in prison for more than a year. So, he was an accountant, but there were no grounds to... [*Ana stopped to explain.*] So, he worked as an accountant in the collective farm and the head of the collective farm was a guy who was illiterate actually. He could neither read nor write. My husband was educated. Because the head of the collective farm was illiterate, he asked my husband to sign different documents — and for that my husband was imprisoned. [*Ana said this in a matter-of-fact way.*]

The head of the collective farm could put only crosses, and my husband, he signed many documents... So, there were no grounds to the sentence. There was no substance to the sentence... And then, in a year and a half, they came to his prison cell and read him the sentence and they took him and said, "You go with us!" And he was exiled to — [muffled village name] Siberia! Without court! They came to his cell, read, and then put him in the car to the train... They had — so they had to make a plan. They needed a certain amount of prisoners. After Stalin's death, when there was amnesty in 1955, he was released. He wrote many letters in Siberia. His case was, so to say, 'reevaluated' and after that he was given just a clear passport and he was released. (Ana S. 186 ff)

Ana added that she became pregnant in the short time she and her husband were together and she gave birth to a daughter. She and her daughter lived in their own room, with her father and step-mother.

So, I worked and brought my daughter with me. I was happy. I was very happy! And he [husband] could write me only two letters a year. Collective farms were organized and I would put [daughter] into my hands. [*She demonstrated following.*] So, a towel to put her beside me on the field. And I worked on the field. Everything was necessary. Everything!

And that is how [daughter] was raised. When he came back, I said, “What are you doing here? I have a father already!” And I brought him and showed him the picture. [*She gestured to the imagined picture in her hand.*] “And you are a stranger.” (Ana S. 216 ff)

[*I commented that life must have been very hard. Ana S. responded with grace.*]

You know, life was not difficult because all people lived this way. Everything we had we gave to the collective farm. We could not steal! So, only the truth! Everything was fair. Maybe old people, they just felt some discomfort. But I was young. I could sew. No one ever taught me, but I sewed everything... knitting... [*She nodded at a rose coloured sweater she was wearing.*] Myself! Everything myself. And I knitted and sewed for other people. People loved me! They respected me and understood me. That is how I lived and survived. That is how I survived.

When my husband returned — probably a year we lived there [where she grew up]. And then we went to Crimea — both of us. It was 1957. We came to Crimea and this is the place where we lived. I had one more son there. I took him to Crimea and here in Crimea, I had [third child, a son]. [*She smiled as she said this.*] In 1956, I had [second child] and in 1957 we went to Crimea, and in 1959 [third child] was born. That is how we lived. We looked after the children, worked. My husband worked in the storage for grain and I milked cows. (Ana S. 218 ff)

Ana said that she and her husband continued to work on the farms, even after moving closer to the city — he on tractors and she eventually shifted to cooking for large

groups. When their third son was badly injured in a workplace accident, the family moved to Simferopol to be closer to medical care.

Through many of their stories, women spoke about having to be careful not to show any signs of nationalism as citizens of the USSR. The bulk of these references however came after the women spoke about Independence — almost as if they had to be reminded that it was/is now safe to speak about their country as a country.

Sasha L. shared her feelings about life in Soviet times — something she said she had thought about when considering independence. Sasha's dark and delightful sense of humour showed even during this serious consideration.

I remember that my father told me it was around 1980. So, we used to have *sobotniki*<sup>76</sup> — before the first of May... *Sobotnik* is the collective work. People would come together and do joint work together on Saturday before the first of May, or Lenin's birthday. But usually it coincided with our Easter and people wanted to clean because it was Easter, not the first of May.

So, my father worked in a small workshop and it was necessary to paint a fence. And there were only two barrels of paint — blue and yellow. And the boss called and he meant that the guys would mix the two barrels together and green colour will be there... But the guys, they didn't mix and didn't think. So, half the fence was blue and the other half was yellow.

So, for fifteen minutes they were painting. Their friend from the KGB worked close by and he called and said, "Would you like to go to Siberia? Please, what are you doing?" They said, "What Siberia, we are working for *sobotnik!*" "Look at it guys. Stand back and look. Your guys are painting a blue and yellow fence. You will all go there. Please!" So, they mixed the paint leftovers and they fixed the fence. (Sasha L., 506 ff)

---

<sup>76</sup> The word *sobotniki* comes from the word *sobota*, or Saturday, in Ukrainian.

## **Family history**

Family is important to women in Ukraine. Women began and ended their stories with references to family relationships — from their grandparents and further back through their childhoods and adolescence to their lives now where the women are often sandwiched in between parents for whom they are helping to care and children — some very young and some parents now themselves. We will look at the various roles the women play in their families a little later, but first we begin as the women began.

Almost without exception the women began by identifying the city or oblast where they were born.

“I was born in Simferopol.”

“I was born in Odessa oblast.”

“I was born in Lviv.”

“I was born in Russia.”

“I was born in Donetsk oblast.”

“I was born in the city of Dubna.”

“I was born in the village of...”

“I was born in Western Ukraine, Ternopil Oblast.”

“I was born in Lviv region.”

“I was born in Lviv, the city where I have been spending all my life.”

From their place of birth, the women moved into their stories by identifying their parent’s cultural/national histories. Quite frankly this surprised me.

My mother was Greek. (Ekaterina S., 47)

My father was a Jew and my mother was Russian. (Darya S., 33)

My mother's mom was, so to say, rooted. She was from Crimea, not from one generation. (Aida S., 27)

I was born in Lviv — in a multi-national family, so to say, if it is possible to say about the Soviet Union and Ukraine. So, my father was Russian and my mother is Ukrainian. I say 'was' and 'is' because my father passed away 23 years ago. (Sasha L., 36 ff)

I was born in Lviv. I am a very typical representative of the city — sort of cosmopolitan, if it is possible to say so because different nations and Slavic nations are all mixed up here. My parents met each other at a very famous Ukrainian resort in the city of Truskavets. My mom came to Truskavets for the treatment because at that time they lived in Moscow. At that time it was not only a Ukrainian resort. Actually, at that time it was during the Soviet times, so at that time, Truskavets belonged to the country of the Soviet Union.

My father actually is — he was — born in Lviv oblast and he is Galacian — a Galacian person. It was easy for my parents to find a common language, though my mom lived in Moscow. But her roots were not Russian. They were partly Bulgarian and partially Polish. Why my mom lived in Moscow? It was a period of repressions that was spread on Poles who had lived in these territories since Rzecz Pospolita. The Polish influence came through Ukraine and the family moved to Moscow. In the time of Holodomor, this movement to Moscow actually saved their lives. (Leana L., 44 ff)

Leana went on to talk about her parents being also from two different cultures — rural and urban cultures. She said "What united them was their attitude to the Soviet Union — that both of them did not accept the Soviet Union." (Leana L., 62 ff)

As Alsu S., a *Tatarka*<sup>77</sup>, began to describe her family of origin she also mentioned the Soviet influence. She spoke about her family members being banished far from their home in Crimea, the taboo on the use of language and expression of culture and, even after Perestroika, the near impossibility of finding employment when they did return to

---

<sup>77</sup> *Tatarka* in Ukraine refers to a woman of Tatar heritage.

Crimea. And of course her family was under permanent watch, noted as such on the KGB registry. (Alsu S., 40 ff)

### ***Growing up***

#### *Parental occupations*

From geographical location, the women moved to speak about to parental occupation.

Occupation was closely tied to education which was also seen to be of great importance historically, in the present, and looking to their own futures and those of their children and grandchildren.

My childhood was spent in a family of teachers. At that time my father was the director of schools but then he quit because he said that he was dissatisfied with some positions in the organization of schooling. He then became a plain teacher of mathematics. Before the war, he graduated from two high military schools, both with honour — a general military school and a military flight school. He also graduated from a pedagogical institute and he finished four years of university studies.

My mother also graduated from a pedagogical college. And his [father's] desire to undertake studies, ongoing process of learning was inherited by his children and his grandchildren. [*Nadezhda S. then went on to list the various educational achievements of a number of her aunts, uncles and other relatives.*] (Nadezhda S., 47 ff)

My mother worked in a military hospital. She was a medical nurse there. My father, he was a driver. (Alsu S., 112)

My parents were pharmacists. They were very honest and very decent people. (Orisyia L., 106)

My mother had problems finding a job when she... After graduating from the medical university, she had to go — she was sent to work for three years. It was the directory so she couldn't say... And my father, he worked at the university. He was a teacher and he worked as a teacher in the time of war. (Mariana L., 77 ff)

[Father] taught me about, and to love, science — science and education. He was a good example for me. He was very much involved in scientific activities, as his background is physics. Gradually, many changes took place in his career. And his last occupation — he was a professor — the head of the pedagogical department of [large university]. (Nadia L., 66 ff)

My mother was born in Veransih district in Russia, and during the Second World War their house — it was burnt. And 3 out of 14 people were left. So she [mother] could leave her school and she had the gold medal with honours, but she had to come to Ukraine, to western Ukraine and help here. One year earlier than my mom arrived, he [father] actually came to Lviv. They built the Lviv fat plant — margarine factory — and that is where they met. And I was born in 1950. And in 1949 they got married and I was born in 1950. I think I want to specify that they were used to work from childhood. My mother worked in that plant for fifty-seven years. (Zoya L., 56 ff)

My father was a worker and my mother lived in the village. (Kristina L., 80)

Both parents worked in the scientific research institute. My mother was involved in developing the first medical video telephone in the USSR. (Tamara L., 77)

I was born in Lviv into a family of doctors, medical doctors. (Yulia L., 55)

My father is from people who worked on the land. My father was saved [from death] when his father's land was claimed during early Soviet times, because at that time he was on military service in Kyiv near the government. When my father was a soldier during the Second World War, he was in the concentration camp [trailing off] ... My mother was a teacher. She was seventeen years old when war started. She was a medical nurse at the front. Actually she educated soldiers. She taught them literacy during and after the war. (Aida S., 80 ff)

My mother taught mathematics at school and my father, at that time, was a student of a law faculty in Kharkiv University. (Ekaterina S., 35)

My mother and my father, they both graduated from the same institute. It is called Zo Vet Institute — veterinary. (Klara L., 44)

According to the Soviet classification my parents would have been considered to be workers. Both of them have secondary education. Both of them graduated from technical college. Both of them were from very, so to say, poor families, and

they didn't have the possibility to enter the higher educational establishments and that is why they had to earn their living. My mother started when she was not almost sixteen — fifteen and a half. After finishing the eighth grade she went to study to evening school. After the ninth class, my father went to Lviv from Ternopil Oblast and he became a student of the crafts college and he also worked... My father also had a younger brother and he was responsible for his education as well. (Sasha L., 40ff)

As the women's stories later explain, not only work, but education continues to be an important focus in the lives of the women in this study, whether their own further education and/or the education of their children and the children of Ukraine.

#### *The central role of grandmothers*

With parents both working, grandparents — grandmothers in particular — played an important role in the upbringing and nurturance of most women. In a number of cases, their young parents were sent to work outside the cities where they lived. Some went quite a distance and grandparents were called upon to be full time caregivers for the first years of children's lives.

When I was born, my grandmother moved to Lviv to look after three grandchildren — after us. She lived with us in our apartment. And my cousin, she lived in the same building, but in a different apartment. So, every morning she would come to our apartment because she only stayed overnight in her flat. Our granny would look after the three of us. (Sasha L., 196 ff)

As far as I remember, in my early childhood I was raised [*trailing off*] ... was raised by my granny and I lived at her place. I don't think my parents were very much busy — I think it was very much easier for them to live like they lived. So, until five years I lived with my granny. It was a wonderful life — many impressions! So, I lived in the village... (Nadia L., 43 ff)

My grandmother, my mother's mother was still alive and I was brought up at home. I didn't go to the kindergarten or anything like that. She was living with us. She lived with us, and she taught us different kinds of home work like doing perogies and verenky<sup>78</sup>. I didn't go to school when I could do this. I helped her with that [*chuckling*]! (Mariana L., 57 ff)

All my childhood is closely connected to my grandparents. I knew for sure that my parents worked. (Yulia L., 62 ff)

[My parents] worked outside Lviv. That is why my grandparents looked after me. I stayed in Lviv and I went to the kindergarten. And it was like one week I was looked after by my father's parents. So, it was a kind of absolutely different experience. As I mentioned, my father was Russian and his parents, they spoke Russian — so Russian is actually my native tongue. But at the same time when I was looked after by my mother's parents — my grandmother and my grandfather — it was a totally different experience. They spoke Ukrainian. They were very much pro-Ukrainian and they were against Soviet. (Klara L., 47 ff)

This grandparental involvement continued to the next generation in this family with the women's parents again taking central care-giving roles in many families

Anyway, so we moved. We moved. My mother still looked after [child], though [child] lived with us. Well, he mainly lived with them because I worked at school and [husband] worked. So we took him for weekends... Two grandmothers, one grand-grandmother, two grandfathers and attention — attention was concentrated on this small god. (Klara L., 410 ff)

Grandmother was truly a life-saver for one woman. Her grandmother moved in to care for Tamara L. and her brother after their young father died suddenly.<sup>79</sup> At this time, the children's mother had been hospitalized for an undetermined period of time

---

<sup>78</sup> *Verenky* and *perogies* are two names for similar dishes — 'verenky' being the common name and 'perogies' the more anglicized name for small pockets of rolled dough stuffed with a variety of fillings such as potato, potato and cheese, sauerkraut (or sour cabbage as it is often referred to in Ukraine) or even sweet fillings consisting of fruits such as plums or cherries.

<sup>79</sup> Tamara L. explained that her father was electrocuted while trying to fix a household appliance and died immediately in their apartment.

following 'a clinical death' due to a mysterious medical condition she developed months before her husband died. At the time of her husband's death, Tamara L.'s mother was in the hospital, reportedly in a coma.

Tamara's father had been fairly prosperous and had saved some money. Tamara said this money was stolen by a relative who tried to place the children in an orphanage. Their elderly grandmother saved them from this fate, moving in from the country to keep the children together. Because the children's mother was still alive, or because her own health did not allow her to complete the task, Tamara's grandmother was not able to register for the children's pension that would have been available to them. Instead they managed on their own.

It was a very difficult time for us. Our granny was quite old. She couldn't even register for the pension after father's death and mother was in the hospital. And there was no money at home... we survived on granny's pension which was 20 Russian rubles. So we, my brother and I, we learned how to survive. We [*looking down hesitantly*]... we actually kind of cheated kids [*looking up*]! We would buy the silver paint used for batteries, and put it into small packages which we sold to other kid calling it "eye-shadow." (Tamara L., 125 ff)

In spite of her near death experience, Tamara L.'s mother now is an integral part of Tamara and her husband's home. The three of them live and work together as a tightly knit team raising ten foster children and two biological children in a family-type home just outside Lviv.

Aneta L. spoke about her grandmother's courage and determination not only for her own children, but for other children in need.

Holodomor.<sup>80</sup> She [grandmother] is the one that survived this with six kids. Even, when the neighbours died — the whole family — there was a kid that was left, that survived. She... Yes, well they were kind of well-to-do and they had some gold and she walked to Kyiv with that gold. It is far. It takes five hours to go to Kyiv by train! And she walked to sell the gold and save the kids. She did it!

My grandfather had actually passed away before Holodomor, and she was the only one to take care of the children. And she said if she could manage to rescue them, so she would — and to help her children get higher education. You know, she was somehow thinking that would be the way to save the lives of other generations — to be educated to deal with the problems — to know how to survive. (Aneta L., 78ff)

Grandmothers were also known for other kinds of community support. At a time in the early 1960s when many people were given passports to be able to move from the villages to the cities, many older women moved closer to their children to help raise the next generation. As noted eloquently by Sasha L., this influx of grannies provided another layer of support to her family. Here she spoke of their role in the community.

So in our building, in our house, was a kind of “*Baba Rada*” — “*Baba Council*” — because many women at that time came to the city from the villages with their children. And there were twenty of us children running around. It was a kind of a gang. And women spoke a lot about their lives — about their history and we listened, we children. That is why I remember many stories of our women — women who lived in our house.

My granny would say, “Listen, where do they find time to sit and to chat. I never have time to do this!” All the time she was busy. Near our windows there was a small plot of land where she grew flowers — and two apple trees — and she looked after all this. Besides, she was either cooking, knitting, embroidering, whatever. She was reading. She read in Polish, Ukrainian. Sometimes she read in German.<sup>81</sup> She spoke Polish. She spoke Ukrainian. She understood Russian but she never spoke Russian. (Sasha L., 205 ff)

---

<sup>80</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>81</sup> In a later, almost casual conversation, Sasha L. mentioned that her granny had worked as a nanny for a German family during WWII, and this is where she learned German. She kept this information to herself

Speaking about the influence of grandmothers was one of the few times the women mentioned religion in their interviews. During the time of Stalin and the years following, religious involvement was greatly discouraged (Figes, 2007). Minimally, religious involvement could close off chances for better education. During the times of Stalin, religious involvement could mean losing your life (Berkhoff, 2004; Figes, 2007). Still, some grannies took the risk to keep the religious convictions alive in their families, believing that the risk was worth it. Sometimes they kept the connection through the generations even without the knowledge of their family members.

By the way, when I was being raised, we were not used to having kids baptized because of the hidden religion. Well, my grandmother came to Lviv when I was born and, well, it [religious involvement] was prohibited. My parents would lose their jobs. My mom was holding a job with the city administration and she was a doctor and, well, they could have both lost their positions — both of my parents. So my grandmother had me stolen, so to speak (laughs and continues). My guess is that... there was one church people used, and it was downtown near the city hall. There was only one church. So, what I am sure about is that I am Roman Catholic. I was baptized as Roman Catholic because my grandmother gave me a foothold in the traditions of the faith as well. (Aneta L., 238ff)

Aneta went on to say that a generation later it was still not safe to baptize a child. Her first child was born in the mid 1970s and Aneta and her husband were of different religious expressions. He was Greek Catholic. They were creative.

It was still forbidden [to baptize children]. So, I was invited as the mother and he [husband] was invited as the dad. We were invited to this house... So, you were invited — no grandparents because you wanted to keep it very quiet. I was graduating the same year. I was 21. Everyone was scared that it would be

---

until just before she died when she told Sasha. She also told Sasha that she should learn as many languages as she could because with each language she would have a greater understanding of humanity.

revealed, so it was done right in the middle of the room by the priest in the house. He was Greek Catholic — no Roman Catholics then as such. (Aneta L., 251ff)

Aneta mentioned that she openly attended a family baptism in the 1980s when “it was looser — I was no longer scared.” (Aneta L., 259)

Grandparents may have also been central to child-rearing in the Simferopol women’s lives but it was not mentioned as such. Still, the participants from both regions who are now grandmothers themselves were proud to mention this. These proud grandmothers are Yulia L., Orisyia L., Kristina L., Aneta L. and Ekaterina S., Ana S., Aida S. and Nadezhda S. while Darya S. is a surrogate grandmother for her niece’s child who lives with her.

#### *Close conditions, close relationships*

Yulia L. spoke about her experience of growing up in Soviet times with one small example identifying both the challenges and the security that came along with membership in the USSR. Her experience came almost forty years later, and in the city.

And even negative things that happened to us, events like the buns we were given at school — white buns we were given at school but at the same time there was not bread at home. So, we perceived this as something wrong, but temporary. Even in our home, my grandfather allowed himself to speak about Khrushchev and he would say, “Well, he is a very limited person, but it will pass. And our life will become better and this will pass, so...” (Yulia L., 103)

Living conditions were challenging for most, though none of the women complained about their experiences growing up. Often young parents — young adult professionals — were either absent for awhile, or took their children with them when

they moved to assist with development in satellite countries of the USSR. There conditions were not ideal — and, as noted earlier, sometimes grandparents had to come to the rescue.

After my birth, both my mother and father went to Kazakhstan to cultivate virgin lands. So, it was the calling from the party, an invitation for volunteers to go there and to cultivate virgin land there. I was just two or three months old when they took me with them there. And my first memories... So, I remember just terrible cold and bad, it means in the house, bad... living conditions — poor living conditions. I stayed there not for a long time because my granny came and took me to Lviv. (Yulia L., 56 ff)

Then there was the amount of actual physical space to contend with for families who did value multi-generational living.

So they [parents] entered a kind of cooperative and we moved there. It was not for a long time for me because my brother was born. The apartment was very small. Smaller than these two rooms together [*indicating a room and anteroom which together would be about 8 ft. by 8 ft.*]. I went to School Number 56. I moved to my grandmother's. So, the official reason was that it was closer for me to go to school from my granny's. But now I understand that it was difficult to live all together. My mother had to work, and besides, this nanny was living with us — my brother's nanny. (Yulia L., 139ff)

Even in tight quarters and trying times, multiple generations often lived together in relative harmony.

Mommy, father, grandmother, grandfather, [husband] and I — we all lived in one apartment. Five years in my mother's place. It was a terrible time in my life — three generations and three different perspectives! (Klara L., 290 ff)

Klara mentioned later on that she gave birth to a child while living in this multi-generational home and the small child also in this apartment for five years.

Kristina L., born a generation earlier than Klara, moved into Lviv when housing conditions were even more difficult. Her father was in Lviv technically without permission. He had not been able to get this “passport” from the village council after the war, but he moved anyway to find work and support his family who stayed behind in their village. He had no grounds upon which to complain.

And then in Lviv, my father was given a small one room flat — tiny, very small and without utilities — just nothing. Just plain walls. And then my father takes me to Lviv and the two of us, we lived in that small room. And later he takes mom [and brother] to that small room. So, four of us actually reside in this small room.

Ah, wait! In 1956 I get married and I invite, so to say, I take son-in-law to that small, tiny room! [*She laughed.*] But at that time mainly all people were very poor. We were in love and, actually, at that time people were not looking for wealth. We were in love and he moved in. No place. One bed! So, my mom and my dad — they gave this bed to us. There was a small sofa. My brother was 15 at that time. There was a table. So, we took — we used to take the door and put it on the table, and it was my brother’s sleeping place. But we lived in peace. We never argued. Never. (Kristina L., 162 ff)

Kristina continued, saying she met the young man, who soon became her husband, upon his leaving army service. Then, he worked as an electrician for the building department in their city and registered them for an apartment; but even when the couple was granted one, they could not move in right away. They had a baby and no money. Goods were scarce, at any rate.

We didn’t have anything. He [husband] lived alone in this flat [*where we held the interview*] because I was with a child. So, I couldn’t just immediately start living with him in this apartment. So, he receives his wages and says, “It is necessary to go to the store and buy something. We don’t even have plates — nothing!” So, I am with child. He is alone. That is how. We went and bought stuff... a blanket... a

pot... no furniture. Forget it! We had a thick mattress and he alone made the legs for the bed! It was a kind of sofa. (Kristina L., 307 ff)

On the other side of the country, things were no better for young families.

When I was four, my father graduated and we moved to Simferopol. It was so difficult to live and to find jobs. So, our family was unemployed and we didn't have a place to live. So my father's colleagues gave us a corner in the prosecutor's office<sup>82</sup>. Those investigators, father's colleagues, gave us a small corner in their office. And the kitchen — we used to have on the first floor where proofs of crime were kept — in the lab. It was a kind of a lab where all this stuff was stored. So it was... Relationships were great! People treated us very well. The only problem was lack of living space, and only after three and a half years we were given an apartment. (Ekaterina S., 44 ff) [*Note: Ekaterina mentioned later that during this time her grandmother was also living with the family.*]

In spite of all the hardships and even tragedies in the participants' lives, all of the women spoke of their childhoods 'with sweet memories'. There were tales of mischief and trouble-making as children, quarrels with siblings, and punishment for wrongdoing. Still, the women spoke of being well loved by their families — not so much romanticizing their experiences, for they spoke of disagreements with parents, different modes of discipline, and other home challenges. However, relationships overall with families of origin were reported to be good.

Orysia L. said that after her family tragically lost so many members during and after WWII, the children were particularly special to them.

We lived very modestly. But I think that both my brother and I — because I have a brother — we lived very modestly, but we were surrounded with a very warm love. So, in my family, I was the so-called 'Golden Child'. (Orisyia L., 110 ff)

Nadezhda S. echoed these sentiments.

---

<sup>82</sup> Her father was a lawyer.

The relationships in our family were very close. My childhood was very similar to the childhood of many Soviet kids. My parents lived through the war [WWII] and they suffered a lot of hardship and that is why the most essential thing as my father saw them — and he placed it in the first place — was the children’s health and good nutrition. (Nadezhda S., 75 ff)

Klara L. spoke about being “stuffed like a goose” by her grandmothers — and about her place in the family as the only child and grandchild on both sides.

So, I was small — round face, blonde hair, blue eyes — and I sang songs. So, I remember that I was the middle of the universe — this belly-button of the universe for both families, and they treated me with love, despite whether my Ukrainian grandmother loved my father [*with Russian heritage*] or not — because she really didn’t like him. But, you know, they liked me. And this is the sweetest memory of my childhood. (Klara L., 95ff)

Darya S., with very little extended family near, found her parents to be enough support.

I was often sick — often ill — in my childhood, but my mom was nearby always. I could feel my mother’s and father’s love constantly. Always — I don’t remember a case where there was something wrong with this — always, they loved us. (Darya S., 44 ff)

Family time was treasured time. Some women (Leana L., Tamara L., Klara L., Mariana L., Ekaterina S., Aida S., Nadezhda S.) spoke of going on vacations and travelling with parents and/or grandparents. Some (Nadia L., Sasha L., Klara L., Ekaterina S., Aida S., Nadezhda S., Aida S.) spoke of spending summers or other extended periods of time out of the cities with their grandparents. Some spoke of particularly good relationships with one or more parent(s).

So he [father] was an inseparable part of my life. I could never imagine my life without his presence and support in everything I did. When he got sick it was

impossible for me to think about when he would not be there. And when he died [*trailing off*]... Soon there will be an anniversary.

And now I feel that he is here, and he is with me. Especially when I sleep, when I am puzzling over a situation, when I have to make a complicated decision in my life — When I see my father in my dreams, I see that he is supporting me when I make a decision. (Nadia L., 102 ff)

Darya S. spoke about how she had relied upon her mother's presence for comfort when a child. When speaking about present day struggles supporting her multi-generational family, Darya did not mention family. I commented that Darya, herself, seemed to be the foundation of her struggling family. Her response was, "First, my mother was... Three years ago she passed away..." (Darya S., 187)

When asked about who she could talk to in the present, Darya S. replied, hesitantly, "To open my soul — no — nobody... I had my mother for that." (Darya S., 200)

### ***Early school years***

#### *Fitting in*

The women spoke about transitioning from being fully cared for by family — usually including at least one set of grandparents — to being cared for and shaped by their school experience. This new form of socialization and learning usually began at age seven with entry into kindergarten. There were different kinds of struggles and pleasures associated with school.

So, but I don't think about school with nostalgia — just studied and graduated. (Leana L., 104)

I wanted to go to school very much. Because my last year of the kindergarten — I remember this very well — I was so tired of doing nothing! But finally I, with great pleasure, went to school! And during my first year, I liked everything very much. And everything was fine and I was a good pupil there. And at the end of my first year at school, I received the lowest mark — 2 — D. Yes, [*responding in English, nodding*] and when I came home and told my parents about this it was a kind of a volcano! (Yulia L., 174 ff)

The system in which they grew was structured such that children would enter school with a group of children with whom they would study until they graduated together from the eleventh form or grade. This could be advantageous if one enjoyed one's group-mates. It could be less pleasant if a child found herself struggling to fit in — for whatever reason.

An underneath competition existed in our class. There were two, so to say, 'gangs' in our class! One of them was directed strictly to education. The other 'gang' so to say was concentrated more on after-school activities. The paradox is that I belonged to both of them, because having some features — I possess some features that allowed me to be a part of the first so to say 'gang' but another group consisted of a group of people who sang — an [*searching for a word*] ensemble. So we sang English songs and we were very proud of this. I was in between groups and it was quite difficult [*sighing*]. (Yulia L., 238 ff)

I was a good pupil at school, but I didn't have a lot of friends at school. That is why I don't have — Well, I usually don't go for reunions where former schoolmates meet. I don't like that much, because I didn't have friends at school. I don't know why. I was very shy. Very quiet and [*trailing off*]... (Mariana L., 65 ff)

### *Special interests*

The women readily volunteered to speak about their favourite subjects in school. Some (Orisya L., Leana L., Aneta L., Klara L., Mariana L., Nadezhda S., Aida S.) spoke of their preference for the humanities in their studies.

When I graduated I had four B's in my certificate. It was mathematics — algebra, geometry, physics and chemistry. I can still physically feel how I hate this — I am not still very friendly with mathematics but, thanks God, there are smart people who invented those counting machines and calculators so I can survive! And for me, I wanted to become a philologist — an English philologist. (Klara L., 211 ff)  
Others (Nadia L., Sasha L.) spoke of their love for mathematics and sciences. Yulia

and Sasha said much depended on the teacher. Some said that they felt constrained.

I was a good pupil, a good student, but I remember that my favourite — I preferred the humanities to something else. But what I remember was that I liked to write compositions, actually. But even philosophical topics were limited by the communist ideology and that even when writing compositions we had to say, “The Party said [*training off*]...” Probably there were people who didn't feel this, but those are my subjective feelings... (Leana L., 109)

It seems that children went to school six days a week during Soviet times (Figes, 2007) — sometimes even on the seventh day, depending on the State response to whatever holiday might be coming up.

But in fact every Easter on Sunday, children were — we had to go to school. Just spend time in school, go to the cinema — anywhere not to be at home. It was stupid because we had our Easter breakfast and then we went to school. (Mariana L. 609 ff)

In spite of this small amount of time away from school and Young Pioneer or Komsomal activities which will be expanded upon later, many of the women spoke about having been involved in other extra-curricular activities. Mariana L. studied the violin for many years. Nadia L., with her wit spoke of beginning with ballet lessons and then shifting to piano — something more for her soul.

I was sent to ballet school... Really, I was the ‘ballerinda’ [*laughing, with cheeks puffed out and arms stretched to show a broad figure*]. Ballerinda! I was big — and my parents wanted to see me very slim — delicate. Well, they paid, but ballet is

not really my area of interest. But I survived. The next step was music. I went to music school. Again it wasn't my decision, it was my parents'. It was popular, and kids from the intelligentsia families had to be busy with music and other things. But at the same time it widens the horizons... (Nadia L., 147 ff)

Nadia's love of the piano was almost stifled by the system, but she found a way to make music her own.

In music school, I liked to play what I preferred and not what they obliged us to play. And in the school it was very hard Ukrainian/Russian composers. That was what was required — it was a Soviet music school! I was fond of going to the shops — to the music store — and for hours I could sit and choose some musical pieces — but only those that I liked. As a rule, there was a piano in the store. It was possible to sit and play something. I could play popular songs. I loved this! When I had free time, I played. (Nadia L., 160 ff)

Some of the women's childhood interests are still a source of joy in their mature lives which as will be seen later.

During children's school years, children were expected to become more involved in the community and, in doing so, they began to learn more about the Communist Party. The women advised that upon entry to school, children became members of the October Children<sup>83</sup> (Figes, 2007). This was followed with more responsibility and honour when one became a Pioneer for grades three to eight, and later, if fortunate enough, the Young Komsomols. Study participants shared mixed thoughts and feelings not only about party membership itself, but about the both the methods used and the expectations attached to belonging to this succession of 'clubs'.

---

<sup>83</sup> Children became October Children (*oktiabriata*) when they entered school. Membership in this 'club' provided an opportunity for children to be officially introduced to 'Uncle Lenin' and the heroic deeds of the revolution.

So every child had to join the Pioneer organization. And only the kids who were poor pupils or they misbehaved were not allowed to become Pioneers. So I was sitting at one desk with a boy whose name was [boy]. Every time, he knew what to say and every time, he was spinning like a top. When we were writing this oath of young Pioneers [*laughing*]... So he was very — well, he looked around. He couldn't sit still. And the teacher would say, "If you will behave like this, you will not become a Pioneer." His answer was, "Why do I need this red shmata<sup>84</sup> on my chest?"

It was a minute of silence. And I started laughing because it was a very witty answer. We were in the third form. And the teacher said, "[Boy] will not become a Pioneer and Sasha will not because she laughs and [another name] because he is a poor student — he has only twos." So, we were not allowed. We didn't join Pioneers as everybody else did in an atmosphere of holiday.

I was afraid to tell my parents about this because it could have become a black spot for the rest of my life! And at that time, I thought that because of this incident, my career would be ruined and I wouldn't be able to reach anything in this life! Because the influence that — if you are not a Pioneer or a Komsomol member, you will not reach anything in your life. All that you can be is a worker. (Sasha L., 150 ff) [*Note: Sasha said previously that both of her parents were workers.*]

For Mariana L., one of only two participants who spoke openly about her young adult choice to join the Communist Party, the situation was a little different.

Pioneers, then Young Komsomol League — it was, well, not obligatory, but if you wanted to get a university degree, you were supposed to be. And I was planning to enter the university so I had to be... It was not something too contradictory with my — views or values. It was OK because it was not too bad about that [*trailing off*] — I remember when we were elected to — there was a monument to Lenin — and we were selected. We were sort of a guard. There were four of us — Pioneers — standing at each corner of the monument for — I don't remember — for, like, 15 minutes or half an hour. We had to be still! It was an honour. Well, the best — I was not the best because I had not only excellent marks, but good marks... (Mariana L., 166 ff)

---

<sup>84</sup> "Shmata" is Yiddish word for "rag."

Nadezhda S. was even more involved in Pioneers — a Pioneer leader and a monitor in her class at school — and more fervent in her youthful belief, at that time, about what it meant to be a ‘good Communist’. When we reviewed the interviews during my second trip in July, Nadezhda stated that she wanted to be clear that it wasn’t Communism that was of particular interest to her, but living with humane principles. That was what Communism, as taught to young children, represented to her at the time. Here is her story from childhood:

An interesting story. As long as I remember myself, my father never punished me. He never beat me — only once. Because I told the director of the school that he was not a real Communist! We were collecting metal... So, after the war, it was easy to find many metal things in the fields. So we found some things. We brought this stuff to school for a competition but we didn’t win, the other class won. They won because the class master — the director — brought something from home.

It was supposed to be the children collecting. I thought that it wasn’t fair! My father slapped me on my face and said I had no right to say this — to talk to adults like this — to disrespect adults. So, he told me that I had to be very accurate with my words. So, it was alright to confront him, but be very careful what I said. (Nadezhda S., 110 ff)

As the women noted earlier, becoming active in Young Komsomols was quite important to eventual development of a professional career with any kind of promotional possibilities. A decision had to be made to join, first of all<sup>85</sup>. Then one made an application, signed official forms and paid a small fee to become a member. In speaking about her enjoyable and intense experience attending Moscow State

---

<sup>85</sup> The women from Lviv spoke more openly about this part of their lives. I have no evidence as to why this might be. I speculate that it might be that some of them had met me before so were more comfortable speaking about this aspect of their lives to a Westerner who would not have any personal knowledge of Soviet life. Another thought is that women from the West have had more opportunity to question or reflect upon the Soviet system and how it may have influenced their lives.

University as a youngster, Yulia also found Komsomol membership an additional richness in her student life where she lived in the dormitory with many other young, curious and energetic students of the prestigious university. She spoke about their frequent gatherings.

We had just tea, and it was absolutely normal to discuss things — not only studies. And besides, there was the Komsomol life, by the way. And it was very intense in Moscow! We participated not only in formal Komsomol meetings. Even at that time, we felt ourselves as the beginners of, so to say, Komsomol style. At that time, when I was growing, I would say that, on one hand, it was not a purely political organization.

So, the Communist party consists of adults who deal with adult stuff but in order to prepare people, this political upbringing started with children's and youth pro-Communist organizations. Step by step. It was obligatory to join this Komsomol organization. In order to be a good Communist, people should have participated in this small October organization, then Pioneer, then Komsomol organization, then Communist party. (Yulia L., 362 ff)

Realizing that I likely did not know any more than what I might have read about the Komsomol organization, Yulia explained, from her perspective, the role of Komsomol membership for young people in the USSR.

On the one hand it is a kind of formalized relations. On the other hand it is a type of organization of young people. It is a chance for a young person to feel oneself a part of something bigger and to feel the potential of this unity — community. They didn't exist like an educational group. They were doing something all the time. They adopted programs to cultivate virgin lands, to go by cart and to build a railway... Speaking about us, every autumn we — our Komsomol teams — would go to collective farms. We gathered potatoes, beets [*shaking her head and smiling*] ... red stuff... So, we also had concerts there — discussion together with local people where we were. We watched films...

Yulia then spoke about the more personal importance of Komsomol membership in her life.

We were philosophers. We were considered to be the most conscious part of the university. So, I remember two times when we participated in a demonstration on Red Square, and the kind of feeling we had of unity — so, memories about those demonstrations [is] a feeling of unity, another thing connected with the Komsomol organization.

When I studied, there was a military conflict between Vietnam and China. Nobody obliged us, but it happened that we all — we stood near the Chinese embassy and we demanded them to leave Vietnam in peace. And we had these ink pots. We threw inkpots at the wall of the Chinese embassy. The strength of youth! The strength of a mass of people! And this is what is preserved in my memory. (Yulia L., 391 ff)

So, Komsomol membership could be a powerful experience on many levels.

Komsomol life was followed by adult choices about official Party membership. Two of the women spoke openly about this choice<sup>86</sup>. Not only did Zoya L. become a Party member, but she also went on to become quite active in the Party in her own way.

When I was 18 years old, because I liked social activities, party activities, I became a Party member. And I was very much involved in the public activities. And when I graduated, I worked as an engineer— only for half a year. I was elected the Deputy Secretary of the Komsomol — ‘Big Boss’ of the whole plant. The secretary of the Komsomol committee of the whole plant! (Zoya L., 110 ff)

Zoya also spoke about her many travels around the Soviet Union in her young adulthood, during which she enjoyed connecting and working with people in a variety of contexts. She also spoke about the two years of intensive training she was subsequently involved in for this work, learning “about history of the party, political science, law,

---

<sup>86</sup> I did not ask directly about Party membership but waited for women to volunteer this information if they felt comfortable. As noted, only two women mentioned their membership as young people.

public speaking....” She said she very much enjoyed the people she studied alongside — most of them older than she was. She graduated from the ‘high Party school’ when she was twenty-seven years old, was referred to an oblast committee of Komsomol, and there was ‘head of the Department of Party Youth’. She went on to speak about the role her involvement in the organization played in her life.

We were in Komsomol organization — an organization we helped build. We worked together with them and we also shared our knowledge in this sphere — what we had studied at the school, our own experience — what we had learned — and we also borrowed their experience. So, at this time, there were different forms of work with youth. (Zoya L., 173 ff)

Eventually, Zoya became the vice director of a technical college and continued most of her working life in that position.

### ***Post secondary school — into young adulthood***

All of the participants, save Kristina L., Alsu S., Ana S. and Darya S., emphasized the importance of education both in their families of origin, their own youth and the present day. The women expected that they would work hard in school and they would succeed, for good marks might earn a gold medal and the possibility of a scholarship into university or other higher educational system.

[Sister] graduated with the gold medal. I also had all A’s, and our smallest girl, she also graduated with a gold medal. I graduated from the medical institute. My middle sister graduated from a technical institute and the youngest graduated from the pedagogical institute, Biology department. (Ekaterina S., 134 ff)

So I graduated from school with a gold medal and at the university I had a diploma with honours and I was just told — I was predicted to have a wonderful career, but [*trailing off*] ... (Orisyia L., 113 ff)

After school I became a student of the institute. Again it was interesting. I finished school with a gold medal and I had the right to pass only one exam. (Nadezhda S., 178 ff)

Technically, university education was funded. In reality, university entrance into one's program-of-choice was not a given, regardless of marks and status upon finishing the eleventh form or grade. Nadezhda S. went on to talk about her challenges getting into a fairly prestigious school where she wanted to study in Kyiv. She was told that her marks were below the entry requirement, in spite of having achieved a gold medal earlier. She remained determined.

So, I applied to see the rector [of the university]. I came up to him and said, "I am a daughter of a school teacher and I finished school with a gold medal and I live in a small town and the guys will never understand and will not support me and will say that my gold medal is false because I failed. I am here not just by chance. I am here to support my dynasty!" (Nadezhda S., 211 ff)

Even though she had technically achieved all entrance requirements, accessing entrance to university was a struggle not only for Nadezhda; Klara L. spoke about challenges she faced trying to get into a faculty she dearly wanted to enter.

And when I graduated it was almost impossible to enter this department — to become a student of English philology — because all the places, so to say, were 'occupied' and mainly by the children of big Party boss. It was not an issue of who was rich it was a very political issue. This was a very popular faculty because people started to realize, at that time, that knowing languages is always good, and when you know a foreign language more roads will be open to you, and well

[*trailing off*] ... I was very firm and my belief was that I will become a student — but it was almost impossible to do!

And my mother had a friend whose husband occupied a very high Party position. And my mother says that she “devoted ten years” of my school life — devoted to this woman. And in the end, the husband called the department —and there was a mark next to my name. So, my parents didn’t belong to the Party echelon. They were not Party members. But she [mother] said “I was a servant to her.” She did everything she asked her to do and she is still alive, thanks God. Actually, she and her husband, they helped me to become a student of the faculty, though I studied of course. And at the same time, I had a green road because the rector put the sign in front of my name. (Klara L., 216 ff)

Sasha L. had a slightly different experience.

So when we were finishing school, it was such a stupid time when citizens of Lviv had very little chance — quota — to enter higher educational establishments in Lviv. So, we could go to Moscow — to Russia — or to any other place, but not to Lviv. I wanted to become a student of the Trade Economic Institute and I was told that there were only four places for students to enter this establishment from Lviv. One place was just — from the rector — his quota. So, a university Economic faculty? No way! (Sasha L., 289 ff)

Yulia L. worked diligently to first enter, and then take all her post-secondary studies at the prestigious Moscow University, which was well known for its scholarship and therefore very competitive in its entrance requirements. She completed her first degrees there and then applied for the PhD program there.

My major department had given me the diploma with honours and at this [entrance] exam they evaluated me and they gave me the lowest mark — 2 — D. but the most interesting thing is that I didn’t get lost. I took my documents and went to the ministry immediately after this. The most interesting thing was that I was accepted the same day and they obliged [*with emphasis*] — the rector — so, the rector and the dean — to organize a submission, a re-examination. And after two days, I passed the next round, so to say. And they gave me C — 3!

So, the explanation was that they didn’t have the right to give me more because my previous mark was 2 [*looking up knowingly*]. So, I became a PhD

student. But, it was not my native department. It was the left-over, actually; — it was the Department of Communist Upbringing [*looking at me, smiling*]. (Yulia L., 435 ff)

Studying at the Department of Communist Upbringing was certainly not Yulia's program of choice; however, work in this program did eventually lead her to the work she is now doing as head of another university department — one that is more liberally focused in sociology. She is now studying for the next highest degree — the highest education one can acquire!

Most of the women acquired higher formal education as young women. Several either continued to study immediately following highschool, or have gone back to school to earn one, two, or even three higher degrees. Though she would have been considered a worker, Ana S., now a woman of eighty years, as a young woman of fifteen was encouraged to further her education by the nurses she worked alongside in the hospitals following WWII. She had her reasons for refusing the offers.

They actually wanted to send me to study. I was, you know, I was very sorry for my father. I didn't want to leave him. But later — later I felt sorry that I didn't go. I was a young girl and I was scared. There were soldiers everywhere. I was so scared I didn't know what was in their heads. (Ana S., 163 ff)

Kristina L., in her seventies at the time of the study, graduated from a financial college before marriage. Following the birth of her first child, she stayed home for some time before beginning to work in a store.

## ***Adult life***

### *Starting a family*

While attending university and technical college, several of the women married. For the sake of convenience, and because this is the language used by the women as translated, I have chosen to call the women's life partners their husbands. In fact, all of the women with life partners indicated that they married. Marriage at that point in one's life was fairly common and besides challenges related to living accommodations, young people were met with serious decisions about how they would deal with the legal and spiritual aspects of the wedding itself. Most people chose to celebrate their marriage in a civil ceremony which could be quite beautifully completed at the local 'Wedding Palace' — a state building in the city centre that was supported by the state. Sasha L. and her husband, both from fairly religious families wanted a church ceremony, and chose to follow their desire by being married in a somewhat clandestine wedding at a church in addition to their civil ceremony. The priest agreed to provide them with a marriage certificate but not to register their marriage with the church as both of the young people could have lost their positions as university students if this choice became known.

Despite her future in-laws' wishes, Klara L. and her husband chose to limit themselves to a civil ceremony. On their twentieth anniversary, more than ten years post-Independence, the couple, along with their nineteen-year-old son celebrated by having a church ceremony. Klara L.'s mother reportedly congratulated and thanked her

son-in-law following this event, telling him that it is not often that a man asks a woman to marry him after twenty years together. She said that most men would be looking for someone else!<sup>87</sup>

Fairly soon after their marriages, many of these young students also became mothers with the attending challenges. Nadia L., Aneta L., Sasha L., Klara L., and Aida S. spoke a bit about these challenges noting they continued on to finish their degrees and go to paid work as well. Darya S. and Leana L. had children with major physical challenges and stayed home to manage with the help of their parents. Nadia L. and Ekaterina S. became pediatricians while Yulia L. and Nadezhda S. immediately went to finish another degree. By the time she was working on her PhD, Yulia L. was also a single parent, as was Leana L. when she went into her post-secondary studies.

The women spoke only in passing about the difficulties that came with raising young families and keeping households in cramped quarters, while at times wondering where the next meal would come from. It was a juggling act into which their own parents — grandparents to the small children — became invaluable allies and participants echoing the women's own experiences growing up.

All of the women managed multiple roles as young adults. All married and had children relatively early on, except Mariana L., the only participant who never married, who, nonetheless lived with and cared for her mother along with working more than full-time. Several of the women — all good students — still did not manage to earn

---

<sup>87</sup> This anecdote was shared with me in a later conversation in July 2010.

scholarships into the post-secondary program of their choice or assignment — and continued to work to support themselves as well through school.

### *The world of work*

Early in adulthood, Yulia L. was a university instructor; Nadia L. a pediatrician. Zoya L. worked as a Komsomol organizer and then vice director of a large plant. Both Klara L. and Sasha L. taught school. Sasha also did a short stint as a teacher until she realized that this was not the work for her. The women filled many roles and did not overtly mention that their work might be fairly onerous until the visioning meetings. Each woman was in turn — or at the same time — worker, homemaker, partner, mother, cook, daughter and community member. None of the women commented on the extra burdens of home with work though it was clear that, as women, especially when parenting children with special needs, they carried the bulk of the load.

As noted earlier, most of the women married in their early twenties. So, in addition to being workers in their own right as adults, most also became life-partners and took on all the responsibility that came with that kind of committed relationship. The husbands did a variety of paid work. Yulia L. married her high school sweetheart; he left when their daughter was quite young. Leana L. also married young and divorced young as well — shortly after the birth of their child, who was born with a relatively severe disability. Leana L. indicated that he did not want to raise this child.

Kristina L. married an ex-soldier turned construction-worker not long after WWII. Nadia L.'s husband was a Komsomol leader who eventually went into private business.

Tamara L. was quite young when she married a man who worked first in his family business, and then on his own following perestroika. Zoya L. brought up her daughter on her own until marrying an ex-military man when her child was an adolescent. Sasha L. married an engineer; Klara L. married a young man just out of military service. He was a philosopher by temperament and education and continued to work in a variety of jobs.

Further east, Alsu S. married a man who worked as a driver. He spent much of their married life working away and died at a young age. Ekaterina S., Ana S., and Nadezhda S. married military men or former military men who retired in Crimea. As noted earlier, Ana S. married her school mate and after a number of years of separation when he was sent to Siberia, they lived and worked together on collective farms. Aida S.'s husband, formerly in the army, was working in a plant when she met him. Darya S. did not mention her husband's occupation but noted that he developed a drinking problem after the death of their first-born. She divorced him when she found he could not responsibly parent their second child with her.

Both Tamara L. and Aida S. saw their vocation and their work lives tied with that of their husbands — even more so than in more traditional work/home relationships. Tamara L. and Aida S. both have chosen to work together with their husbands to provide strong “family-type” homes<sup>88</sup> for up to ten children. Both families see this as a

---

<sup>88</sup> In 2005 more than 97,000 children in Ukraine were registered as orphaned or neglected (Press Service of the Accounting Chamber, 2007) but of these only forty percent were being raised in foster or boarding homes. In Ukraine, the “family-type home” is a type of foster care by an individual family who is willing to

real calling for them and have involved themselves in training and certification to do this work. Tamara L. and her husband are particularly active in lobbying the state for changes to improve the lot of children, particularly those living in institutions — in internats<sup>89</sup> — in Ukraine. More about them later.

Most of the women had also experienced quite drastic changes in their work lives. Some of the changes came in direct connection with Independence, some came before and after. Both Nadia L. and Ekaterina S. studied medicine and worked many years as pediatricians. Both worked under harsh conditions — Nadia L. travelling to distant villages to tend to families while at the same time working at the hospital in the city.

So, I was offered much work for nothing — kindergartens, schools — to work as a doctor. I worked as an outreach doctor, far away — remote villages one has to visit. And in five years, I was sent from the villages to work also in an infectious unit in Lviv. I did.

Occupational issues were challenging. Imagine! No transportation and I had to go to the remote villages. I am a very responsible person and I knew I had to do this, so I walked in winter in heavy snow. I walked to the villages to provide service to my patients. And people in the hospital laughed at me. They said, “She is crazy!” The same things my mother-in-law was saying. “Do you want a tombstone for your work?” They also made me feel bad about being a parent. My son went to kindergarten because I was working at that time. (Nadia L., 253 ff)

---

take on five to ten children including their own. As of April 2009 there were 423 family-type homes in Ukraine where 2,735 children are raised and 2,590 foster homes where 4,300 children are being raised (Child abuse and neglect in Eastern Europe, 2010).

<sup>89</sup> ‘Internat’ is the name given to government run boarding homes for children in Ukraine and other parts of Eastern Europe. The system of institutionalized care is differentiated according to age and physical ability of children and structured to provide homes for children without parental care from birth to adulthood (Dobrova-Krol, 2009; Groza, Komarovna, Galchinskaya, Gerasimova, & Volynets, 2010). The system plans for two transfers for most children — from one age group internat to another as he or she grows.

Nadia L. continued with professional development as well, every chance she got. She spoke about being pulled in many directions with little support from her husband who was involved in his own demanding work. She said her father noticed she was losing herself, and he suggested that, in spite of the additional work, she begin to study something that would be of particular interest to her.

Everything I was doing at that time, I was doing for somebody. But I just wasn't satisfied with what I was doing. I also wanted/needed to do something for myself. It's like when I was forced to play the obligatory stuff [*referring to her childhood music lessons*], and I wanted to play what I wanted to play — something expressive! And the idea to be involved in scientific work [*referring to research*] lay on my soul, even though it was — I had to do additional work — and this work I was doing ONLY at night. So it was from one o'clock in the morning to three or four in the morning. Still, it was a time when I was sitting and feeling, "Oh, here I am. This is me!" (Nadia L. 292 ff)

Nadia continued to work at the hospital, to teach classes, and to study. She eventually obtained a PhD in her chosen field and continues to study — and to teach in the field of social services and community health. She is now officially 'retired' from her medical work, the difficult circumstances in which she worked having made each year officially count as two.

Ekaterina S. married a military man and his postings took them to exotic places where she was often the only civilian medical person — and certainly the only pediatrician for miles around. They lived on remote bases in the Far East and Far North of Russia without complaint; rather seeming to revel in the nature and the challenges of these areas. She shared a few anecdotes evidencing her resilience and sense of humour in difficult and unusual circumstances. With her husband's failing health and with his

military promotions, the small family — the couple and their child — moved several times, each time requiring Ekaterina to give up the career she had built for herself.

So, my husband was growing his career, but at the same time he was sick all the time. So, I myself had to look after him and to go step-by-step after him. So, this is my moment in my life — this moment in my career, I am only starting to climb up and we have to move — again. (Ekaterina S., 353 ff)

Still, Ekaterina managed to work into a “very responsible position” in a hospital responding to tremendous challenges; she was eventually promoted to a senior position in the hospital. With her husband’s continuing ill health, the couple moved to Simferopol where he officially retired. Their son chose to attend a well known military school and as Independence drew upon Ukraine, Ekaterina found herself studying once more and then working with children with disabilities. This work moved her to earn a graduate psychology degree so that she could better assist children and their families.

Yulia L., Orisyia L., Leana L., Aneta L., Sasha L., Klara L., Mariana L., Nadezhda S., and Aida S. experienced the most dramatic changes in vocation — and these changes came about as a direct result of Perestroika and then Independence. These will be explored in the section on Independence.

### *Children and families*

Besides work, and in spite of all grandmothers’ assistance in many cases, children also had a major impact on the women’s lives — some more dramatically than others. All of the women except Mariana L. had one or two biological children. As noted earlier, Tamara L. and Aida S. with their husbands parent large families with older biological

children, and now younger children, in large family-type homes. Leana L., Alsu S., Darya S., and Veronika S. had children who were either born with or developed fairly severe disabilities, requiring the women to stay home with the children for the most part, working full-time as caregivers, along with other paid work. Darya S. is also caring full time for the daughter of her niece. This same young woman who was raised by Darya is now living and working in another European country. She 'temporarily' migrated more than four years ago to provide money to contribute financially for her daughter's care.

Both Leana L. and Darya S.'s husbands left the women upon discovering the severity of their children's health. Leana L. has since remarried. She and her husband both have dedicated their personal and professional lives to the social inclusion of children with disabilities. Both Leana L. and Veronika S. have returned to school and earned graduate degrees in psychology and are very active in their communities, working for changes for children with disabilities across the country.

Yulia L., Orisya L., Kristina L., Aneta L., Ekaterina S., Ana S., Aida S., and Nadezhda S. are all proud grandmothers. Darya S. is a de facto grandmother who is raising her niece's daughter in her absence.

Having experienced the day-to-day influence of their grandmothers in their own upbringing, all participants with children spoke of their indebtedness to their own parents for the invaluable contributions in the care and upbringing of their own children. Both Leana L. and Tamara L.'s parents share their households, playing crucial roles raising the children.

Without exception, the women spoke of family, particularly parents and children, as focal points in their lives. During individual interviews, and in the visioning meetings, participants all spoke about children — young people — as the future of Ukraine and the reasons that they continue to do what they do — to have hope for Ukraine and for their children.

### ***What about Independence?***

Coming into adolescence in North America in the 1960s, I had a rather romantic view of what ‘must’ have happened to Ukrainians approaching the time of Independence. Reading, in-depth conversations with people, and especially, the participants’ stories, taught me that my assumptions did not reflect the complex realities of Ukraine. As I asked the participants about Independence, I was interested to find that many of the women had not thought about Independence, per se. Instead, they commented on changes in their work lives and in the freedoms that they enjoyed following Independence. They also spoke about post-Independence experiences of more poverty and hardship than they could have imagined.

Regarding the anticipation of Independence, Ana S., the most senior of the women — the woman with the most life experience — sensed something was coming long before the actual declaration. Her awareness came in the shape of a dream.

I had a dream. We count with [son] that it was sixteen or seventeen years before Independence came. I don’t remember exactly the year, but we assume [*trailing off*] ... So, I came back to my home in Western Ukraine — my father’s home. And the doors of our home look West. I came in and I can see my step-mother. She is

in bed. She is ... And I say, "Mom, are you alone?" So she said something, but I didn't understand. It is dawn, only dawn. "You may sleep."

And this is the eastern part [*gesturing*]. And I say, "Listen, there is no wall on the eastern part of your house. There is a statue of Lenin there. Where have you taken it from?" And suddenly, without any explosion, without any shot, I saw that monument just destroyed! And, that monument was destroyed into pieces — bigger and smaller — not dust, but stones, rocks! And I said, "What is going to be?" And I woke up!

At that time I worked in a garden, collecting grapes. I went there to the garden. I came up to some girls who were working in a team, and I said, "Why you don't work?" And she said, "We are telling our dreams to each other." And I said, "OK, I will tell you mine."

So, I started telling my dream, and one woman said, "It is impossible that the Soviet Union will be crushed — destroyed!" And I got scared. And I said, "Oh, my girl, I didn't say anything and you didn't hear anything" because I am from Western Ukraine, and we also were not loved by people. And nobody ever told my dream anywhere, because —

And in 1991, I remembered my dream. No explosions. No shots. Everything just destroyed. And there was not dust. But all those stones they symbolized countries, big countries, small countries... (Ana S., 363 ff)

Many years later, some women noticed changes around the time of Perestroika, even if they did not know exactly what was happening. Usually soft-spoken, Mariana commented.

Yes, it was Perestroika and we watched the first sessions of the All Union, how to say, like meetings and deputies — yes — coming and it was people saying about Afghanistan and, yes, about politics. Like Sakarov. And it was a revelation that we could hear these topics discussed.

It was awful sometimes. It was like the Party leader established his own rules in his, like town or village, and nobody could say anything against him.

*[I observed that it must have been rather shocking to suddenly have this information. Mariana L. responded.]*

And about Stalin! [*She nodded.*] Yes. So that is when all this stuff started to come up again.

And I remember the elections to the Ukrainian parliament. And I remember watching our parliament. It was better than any movie! People speaking about something and the majority speaking Russian! And our poets and famous writers — I remember the elections and how they covered this party, and the OSCE people [*showing one hand*], they wanted to prevent — they wanted to prevent THESE people [*showing other hand*] from being elected. And the combination of yellow and blue — those colours! [*Nodding*] It was something forbidden earlier. (Mariana L., 550 ff)

I observed to Mariana that I noticed when she was speaking about these times I saw the excitement in her face and heard it in her voice. She nodded in response. I asked her if she felt that way at the time or if things were just frightening then. She eloquently responded.

No, it was not scary. It was something, ahhh — that is difficult for me to express. It is like you were in a room. It was a convenient room, but you didn't see. You didn't know what was going on outside and you were TOLD what is outside. And now you could see it. And you could see that it was not exactly like they said it was. And you started understanding a lot of things and finding out a lot of things. (Mariana L., 582 ff)

[*She sighed, continuing shortly after.*]

At first it was — it was like some fresh air — and some great expectations! My uncle — my mother's cousin — he was sent to Siberia for his political views — because he was in the Ukrainian Army — Ukrainian National Army. And he was sent to Siberia. And he —

Well at first it was, "Oh, now we will have our state. We will have what we were fighting for and what we were waiting for — for so many years!" And then our people — local people, and Ukrainians — they were elected to the local bodies of state powers and [*sighing and shaking her head*] — and nothing changed — because it was — I guess it was — our mentality or... [*trailing off*]

So, a person is used to what is going on. "Sausage is the most important, more important than spirituality or independence. Everything we need is sausage!" And sausage is a kind of symbol because people said, "Our koubassa ... that is what we need. And if we have it, we don't need anything else." (Mariana L., 618 ff)

In a later conversation, Mariana spoke about the shortages of “everything” after Independence. That frightened many people. She said that people would line up for hours to get food — koubassa, or sausage, for example. Reportedly, a line would form near a store and people would wait for hours without even knowing what they were waiting for. If it appeared that the material that had arrived might be a rationed item, dispatches would be sent home for other family members to join the queue so that the family could acquire its allotment.

Mariana mentioned that this had been a time of particular concern for a people who were used to being told what to believe. Never before, had there been a concern about which conflicting news report to believe. Following Independence people “did not know what was right and what was wrong” and there was no one in charge to tell them. Many of those who had previously been the leaders were now saying, “It is not my problem.”

Nadia L. spoke about Independence as follows.

It’s funny, but initially, I had a premonition in 1989 and then it happened in 1991. I just subconsciously felt that those changes would be good for Ukraine. And Independence was declared in 1991. It [the idea of Independence] didn’t have just clear boundaries but it was an idea in my mind.

So, actually this is the result of talks I heard in the pedagogical circle — scientific areas. I heard my father talking to his friends. So, it was a kind of a shape in my mind that something was going to change. Probably, that was the time when I started to identify myself as a Ukrainian — my national identification! At that time I was thirty. I knew that I was a citizen of the Soviet Union, a huge country, but I knew that Ukraine was a part of the republics of the Soviet Union. And at the same time I knew that it was one country and we were citizens of the country — so no identity, really.

What influenced me? In 1989, I went to the United States — the first time in the States. Due to my visit in the United States, I understood who Ukrainians were [*laughing at the irony*] — In America! [*She laughed softly, and shook her head.*] Near the house of my uncle, my father's brother, I actually saw a Ukrainian flag — for the first time. The first time! In the United States! Blue and yellow!

[*She continued.*]

There was an accident at school when I studied. So, the director was dismissed because one of the students drew this — triumvirate — the sign of Ukraine — the symbol of Ukraine — and put a yellow and blue flag. So, the director was dismissed because it was during the Soviet times and the director of schools was dismissed! And I heard this from my father when he was talking secretly about this with some of his friends. It was not allowed even to speak loudly about such things. And in the States [*opening arms wide*] — a flag — the Ukrainian and American flags! (Nadia L., 405 ff)

Nadia then remembered another incident that was related to Independence, but occurred eight years later.

It was on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, 1999. There was a kind of chain between West and East Ukraine, when people stood together and hands. [*Holding hands out, Nadia demonstrated.*] And it was like one long chain — East and West together— from Lviv to Kyiv! We started it not in Lviv, Zhitomir, Lviv, Rivne — it started in Ivano Frankisk! And in this chain I had a feeling of changes: I felt that things would change! It was a very cold winter day [*said quietly, thoughtfully*]. (Nadia L., 385 ff)

When I ask if this change was a hopeful or frightening change, Nadia replied.

Joy! Joy! Trembling! It was a prediction. Yes. On the level of some physical — something must change! Something must be better! If you ask me about my attitude to this event? So, it is positive! [*Said emphatically, followed by a quizzical look*] It is funny, but initially I had an anticipation in 1989, and then it happened in 1991, and I just subconsciously felt that those changes would be good for Ukraine. (Nadia L., 395 ff)

I asked Orisya L. what hopes or thoughts she experienced related to Independence, prior to the declaration. She had already spoken about her family being very pro-Ukraine.

I lived in a Ukrainian family. So, like many other Ukrainians we preserved our traditions. Besides, my mother helped members of the Helsinki Union, so our home was a kind of a safe place where we hid literature — not always, but there were times when we hid it.

I am not going to say that during the Soviet times we were active political fighters. We were just Ukrainian citizens. But with the first signs of change in this society, we all went to the NGOs. My mother became a member of the Ukrainian Women's League. I went to *Ruche — Prosvita*. My husband became a *Ruche* member and it actually helped him to climb [in work]. My kids went to Ukrainian scouts — All those organizations that I have mentioned, they were forbidden here at certain times...

My feeling? So, mainly we used to work in the university. We had very strict rules. It was not possible to step left or to step right. Church was forbidden. And one day — it was 1988 or 1987 — I felt myself being a free person. I wasn't scared to be thrown away from my job. And I told myself that I would never ever in my life lose this feeling of freedom. And this feeling of fear just disappeared.

It's a different thing. It's a kind of — when you have a kind of alternative from living in fear and accepting everything that you are told to do. And when you just free yourself from this fear and you understand what you do, you do right! One day we told ourselves — we watched our children. In this society they are not scared any longer that we will be just thrown away from our jobs — kicked out. (Orisya L., 247 ff)

Orisya L. continued, saying she understood that the economy is not stable, and that people live in poverty, and she herself could be without work; however, she added that she felt she would be able to handle that — that she had some input into what happened to her now — and that is freeing.

Sasha L. said Independence was something she and her husband had been dreaming about — that it would happen in their lifetime.

We thought we were dreaming about miracles, and we thought that when it happens, it will be something very special. Everything will be different! We will live very well! All people will support and help each other and will be honest and smart. Nobody will oppress us.

In Latin it is a *Phantom Organa*. It is when things appear— when people walk in the dessert and they see — a mirage. This is a kind of miracle — a mirage that everyone was waiting for. But in reality, it is a lot of work — plenty of work and a lot of self-sacrifice. But to some extent more freedom. Probably not the freedom of actions, but the freedom of thinking, freedom of feelings — feelings of self-disclosure about what people think. In what people wear, even. How people behave.

I remember 1991 when we had to make a choice. Dependence or Independence — and many people would come and say, “Independence.”

So we were fed up at that time. Especially in the Western parts of Ukraine. Eastern parts of Ukraine? They were hesitating between Russia and Independence, but then they finally said, “Russia is associated with wars. Our children would go to Afghanistan, so we don’t want this. We want Independence.” And for Western Ukraine it was something people were waiting for — for a long time. It is a time to speak aloud your native language, in your own country. It is an opportunity. It is a chance to have the yellow and blue flag, and symbol of Ukraine — the trinity symbol of Ukraine — those things that in the past people had been sent to Siberia for. (Sasha L., 483 ff)

Kristina L. spoke at length and enthusiasm about her life-long dreams for Independence. She connected these thoughts to her history — always knowing about Bandera and the “Ukrainian Rebellion Army” — people who had “lived in the forest” risking life and limb for a free Ukraine. She spoke about the dawn of Perestroika.

When Gorbachev was going to be pushed out of his position — this ‘pooch’ took place. And when Gorbachev started the period of melting, so to speak — of Perestroika — and then, in 1992, the referendum was organized here. Despite

many nationalities living in Ukraine, 90% out of 100 people living in Ukraine, they voted for Independence.

And heroes appeared! People were no longer scared of anything! Many people, political prisoners were released. They came back. They didn't have to fear at that time. (Kristina L., 458 ff)

Ana S., was born in the West, and moved to Crimea as a young parent. She shared her thoughts and feelings years after her dream, as Independence drew nearer.

I was frightened. Yes. I was frightened. I didn't believe in anything! I understood — it was clear there would be changes, but not soon. People will be lost. People will have debt. I understood and I understand now. (Ana S. 443 ff)

Burdened by the day-to-day demands in their lives of family and work, some of the women barely noticed Independence. They just kept placing one foot in front of the other. More than a decade after the birth of her first child, and following a very difficult pregnancy, Aneta L. gave birth to her second child. At the same time, she was caring for her ailing elderly parents, both of whom died during the few years surrounding Independence. Her work life also changed quite drastically following Independence, as did that of many other women.

Tamara L. worked to move children out of internats into family homes before Independence and hoped this would be easier once Independence was declared. She said that this is still her mission.

### ***Life after Independence: A study in contrasts***

Life following Independence was supposed to be good — very good for those who wanted to sever Soviet ties. There was the new-found legal freedom of expression, and

with this freedom came responsibilities for which people were ill-prepared. Some families had been waiting, working, and praying for an independent Ukraine for literally centuries. Others just lived their lives, placing one foot in front of the other, working, looking after their families, and getting by with no expectation or vision of a different life.

Some of our participants, not having thought much about Independence, still found their lives — especially their work lives — drastically impacted. Some found these changes interesting and life-giving. For others the changes were threatening and anxiety-provoking. Many women continued to experience changes to their work lives. At the time of the study, none of the participants worked for the government, the state. Those who work for NGOs continued with piece-meal grant funding. Most employment was shaky.

There was one marked change with Independence noted by the women: people began to speak more openly both about the past and their wishes and fears regarding the future.

Sasha L. shared another story about the impact of Independence and the contrast to the often unspoken rules and fears associated with Soviet life.

I remember that in 1991, a grandfather of my friend came to a swamp, and took a gun out of his pocket, threw it away and said, “Now it is time. We no longer need this.”

Many funny stories happened at that time! We found out that people were keeping guns because they wanted to struggle — to fight for Independence — and this man’s grandson was very much surprised. And then he was angry! He was

more practical, and said it was a stupid thing to do because he could have sold the gun. [*She laughed.*] (Sasha L., 526 ff)

Yulia L., who had been teaching courses related to political pedagogy at the university, knew that change was coming, but;

So, now I have a different vision of what was going on at that time. At that time I thought that it was a kind of evolving of the condition in which we lived. So, at that time we just were used to living as we lived. Life was kind of in balance.

So, then — we were short of information, but then we received that information. We were short of freedom. We got freedom. We discussed new stuff in newspapers, in magazines. So, what was new, what was interesting that people could see and have —

And then some shocking things happened I would say — it was a period of student protests and meetings. It was a wave of protests. We had discussions at lectures with our students — I remember how students were standing near the main building [of Lviv Polytechnic] with a demand to get rid of Scientific Communism as a subject or course. They demanded, actually, that we introduce a new course — Political Science. In fact, it was the first department in the whole of Ukraine [*adding in English*] the start of Political Science. (Yulia L. 522 ff)

This new course was only the first change of many for Yulia who went on to lead her university and, through this work, Ukraine, in new sociological perspectives.

Nadezhda S., who had worked so hard to live by humane, fair principles, through her youth noticed things changing — some instability during Perestroika. When Independence came, for her things were even more difficult. Everyone who had been employed by the State, as she had been, now had no wages. Those who had savings lost them.

It was a kind of default. We didn't receive wages. We didn't receive wages for years — all of us. So, I even don't know how we managed to survive. I remember how I was. I was a group leader, and people would go to Poland [to train]. I had a

chance at that time. I was crying in Poland... So, first Poles, and then Ukrainians. They [Poles] bought our gold, electrical devices, our cotton stuff which was good quality.

I remember a period of time when it was economically very difficult in Poland and money was — so, they [Poles] over-lived this stressful time. But their recovery happened very quickly, and circumstances changed in both countries. We went to Poland to sell stuff — and people in my group, they had many things with them and they sold them in Poland. (Nadezhda S., 419 ff)

Many women said they noticed that leaders themselves, most of them left over from the old guard, were not prepared to lead the people, and were more often out for themselves, leaving citizens to fend on their own.

It was a period of time, this Independence period, when there were very smart people who managed to make huge money. But this money was made on the backs of everybody else. And this ‘indecency’ so to say, it split the society. Those processes lead the society to local competitions. (Nadezhda S., 442 ff)

And then people voted for Independence. But actually old guys, former Communist members, started to rule the country. So, they don’t know how to rule correctly — the country. They didn’t know what to do, and quarrels started to happen between the authorities, the government members. Kuchma<sup>90</sup> — during Kuchma’s time again Communists were still there. They were ruling, actually. And there was no choice. Because we had to vote — either for Symonenko, the main Communist or for Kuchma who was a Communist but not the main one. There was no choice. (Kristina L., 467 ff)

So, money has become more and more pressing as we have become free. People, they ignore morals very often. (Nadia L., 513)

With Perestroika, goods and services from outside became increasingly available, bringing more variety to people’s lives. But with the fall of the Soviet system and

---

<sup>90</sup> Leonid Kuchma, a Communist Party member, became the first President of Ukraine.

nothing concrete to take its place, people were left on their own struggling to have some of their most basic needs met as Nadezda noted above.

Ana S., who had dreamed of change, had not believed it would happen in her lifetime. Still, her humour and wisdom prevailed.

[*Laughing*] I am sure that I will not live to see this all happen. But it happened in 1991. This change happened. It was very difficult to find food. We had to stand in long lines for bread.

I was standing in the shop in a long line on the street — Karl Marx Street<sup>91</sup>. There were bread shops there. I was standing in line for bread. All people together in a row [*smiling, shaking her head ruefully*]! People say different things. Some say, “In five years, everything will be different.” Others say, “No, ten, fifteen” and I say, “You know what guys? Allow me to say what I need to say.” [*She laughed softly.*] “My opinion? Nothing will happen in five or ten years. Remember, fifty years will pass and only then — only then will things be really different.”

A man came up to me and put his hand on my shoulder and said, “How do you know? You are right, but how do you know?” — If you want to know what will happen, just think about your past. (Ana S., 422 ff)

A young school teacher and mother at the time, Klara L. shared her thoughts about Independence, which drastically impacted her own and her husband’s career paths.

You know, as a citizen of Ukraine, I am very much proud that Ukraine is an independent state. And you know, hard to say even now, I think a lot about this, you know — Soviet Union and Ukraine. Probably on the map of the world, the Soviet Union was a dangerous thing. You know! Like militaristic! I didn’t feel this because we, just average people, we were taught to live in peace with all others, you know. Hard to say —

---

<sup>91</sup>The Karl Marx street she referred to here is a street that still exists as named in the centre of Simferopol, Crimea. About a block away stands a huge statue of Lenin that has been there for many years.

When we separated, for me definitely, life became much more difficult. I mean not only for me, but for many people because — you know better than I do — that this interruption of social connections is a very dangerous thing. You know, it is even worse than infrastructure — the break of infrastructure — though infrastructure broke and the result of this is turmoil — is high rate of unemployment because people lost jobs. Even my [husband] lost his job at the plant because the plant — due to these changes — the plant stopped working. It was not profitable to produce TV sets. It was much more — it was cheaper to buy them abroad. That is why he lost his job. He worked for a whole bunch of other organizations before he started working as an electrical engineer again.

And for many people it was a terrible catastrophe because they lost connections with their relatives, their friends — the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was made up of fifteen independent states. Countries became independent. New borders. New governments. New rules and regulations. New laws. New philosophies. Everything is new! It was very easy to travel because we traveled in our country [*with emphasis*] and now we all live in different states with different governments and different presidents. Everything is different. (Klara L., 717 ff)

Klara then gave examples of how people used to travel vast distances on inexpensive air flights for holidays at the seaside, for example. Now, she said, travel costs were much higher; there were different currencies, and borders had to be crossed in order to connect with relatives, and activities that before were much more accessible in Soviet times since they took place in the same country. Still, there were mixed blessings.

I was very happy when Ukraine became independent. I was happy, you know, because it is pride for the country. And now we have our own country. But it lasted a very short period of time. It was a kind of pleasant shock. And then it's a kind of acute crisis point, you know — these four to six weeks — and then in order to reach balance —

And we didn't reach this balance because the infrastructure is ruined. Connections are ruined. So, there are crises in every part of our lives — political, economical, spiritual, ethical. Everywhere you go, it's a survival thing — and people stop thinking about other things. (Klara L., 754 ff)

Sasha L. spoke about what she believed were people's expectations — and why Ukraine flounders.

So, Independence was something that was accepted as fresh air — freedom. “It will open doors.” Everybody was expecting a kind uncle or auntie who would come and do everything for us. But in reality, this is our job and it is a lot of work, and as my friend, says, “The President will never come and clean your backyard, so —” (Sasha L., 534 ff)

Alsu said that she and her family had longed for Independence and as it approached, she and her family moved back to their homeland – to Crimea. They were part of a group of people who petitioned the government and who have also claimed land for themselves<sup>92</sup>.

For our people, for Tatars, yes of course, life became better — of course. So, for ten years we worked hard on this. We had to fight for this. I don't know how to say — it is very difficult — [*Her bowed head tilted upward.*] So, looking at my family — now we have three houses we have built from zero. (Alsu S., 312 ff)

Leana L. had been raised with a focus on “national and spiritual ideas” (127). She also remembered Independence as a powerful time for her on many levels.

So, Independence — When Independence happened — now I recollect this —and it is an absolutely different quality of life! In the period from the 1980s to 1990s, a very significant personal — it was a very significant personal time for me. A very important event happened in my life. I got married and I had a baby boy. But in nine months he became seriously ill [*with autism, we discover later*]. And now I am the mother of a severely handicapped son who is an invalid of the first, so to speak, group. (Leana L., 132 ff)

---

<sup>92</sup>In addition to regular houses built by Tatar people, throughout Crimea there are small huts in clusters strewn throughout what is considered state property. These huts are about a third of the height of a one story house and have a door and at least one window, apparently making them ‘houses’. Tatars are reclaiming their land

Leana stayed at home for eight years, and with the help of her parents worked for the health of her son. Her husband left. With her parents help, she was able to return to studies that eventually led to her present work which includes teaching and developing university courses related to psychology and children with disabilities. While she did not credit the State with any help even after Independence, Leana L. acknowledged that it was only with Independence that she had the freedom to do the kind of work that she continued to do at the time of the study.

Veronika S. gave birth to her only child in 1991 — when Ukraine was still part of the Soviet Union. It became clear in the first year of the baby's life that she also suffered from a disability and, as she aged, this disability proved to be quite severe. Veronika paid little attention to Independence at the time, stating, "My country lived its life and we lived another" (Veronika S., 494). In the last number of years, following additional formal education in psychology and social work, and after many trials advocating for her daughter and other children with disabilities, a quietly determined Veronika was much more aware of the realities, demands, and needs related to civic involvement.

We are used to thinking that there is someone who decides for us all the time. Even now, once in five years we participated in that election. So it is in general. And we fulfill our duty and we think that is all we must do. And may those 'smart uncles and aunts' think for us. We do not — not all, but probably many people — do not have a sense of responsibility — that much depends on us. So it is difficult even for me, I know — when I know how the system works. I know how it works from the inside. I wish I didn't know this. (Veronika S., 389 ff)

Darya S. was the mother of a child with special medical needs and at the time of the study, the de facto grandmother and main caregiver to her niece's child who also

had a disability. Darya was in Moscow seeking treatment for her child when Ukraine declared Independence, which then provided particular challenges due to changes in currency, citizenship, right to medical attention, and other serious life issues. Darya spoke about the impact of Independence with some bitterness. Her niece, like many people of working age in Ukraine, unable to find gainful employment in Ukraine, had been living abroad for several years, sending money home for the care of her child.

[*Sighing*] So all my life I was thinking about Ukraine and to see it evolve and develop. I never wanted to see Ukraine in the condition it is now. What we are having now — no factories, no plants. So, where are the working places for our children? I remember — I recollect those years. Soviet years. There was a chance for free days to go to Baltic countries, to Georgia — and it was free. I would take [children] and we traveled a lot. And now with [child] I cannot take her anywhere! My dreams were different — absolutely different. They did not come true. (Darya S., 289 ff)

While Sasha L. acknowledged many challenges, she was clear that her welcomed move to study Psychology would not have been possible during Soviet times — or, if possible, the practice of her profession would have been extremely limited.

It was an interesting time when the Soviet Union started to melt — to get ruined. In a year, I had a son and I left for maternity leave. When I was on maternity leave, I realized it was necessary to change something. At that time there was a new program at the university for people with high education and it was Psychology specialization. I had some connections in the Education department. I asked for their permission and in two days I organized all the papers and I became a student.

So, when I came up to the director of the school to sign the documents, he asked whether there were vacant places at the department. [*The implication here is that the director was angling for a bribe.*] So, I was very straightforward and I answered, “Well, this is none of your business. I asked you to sign — sign! The rest is my business”! [*She laughed.*]

I liked Psychology very much. It was something that didn't exist when I studied.<sup>93</sup> I started working for the Narcological<sup>94</sup> clinic. (Sasha L., 311ff)

Sasha, who had learned Polish from her granny, was also sent to Poland for further training in psychotherapy. Eventually, she became involved in the just-developing social work program at Lviv Polytechnic University. She continued to work as an instructor and facilitator in both of these areas and said none of this would have been possible prior to Independence.

The women who knew Western languages — English in particular — faced many challenges. All said that these were changes now enjoyed, but they came with much risk for all of the women. First, the women spoke about some challenges and advantages that came with knowing English as the Soviet Union was coming to an end.

It was 1991 when my mom died — the time of Independence for Ukraine, you know. [*She paused.*] So, the shift of focus — previously we were not supposed to talk to people in English. Then the situation changed so dramatically and everyone was saying it is the communication in English that is needed! "We don't need any manuals or text books of the old kind with the Communist Party and Lenin and stuff in there. We need — the absolutely different situation!" And the new approach was to be introduced in place of the old one.

And so the expectation — the whole expectation was on our centre — on us, and for the head of the programs. So, people were afraid to reveal having no communication skills whatsoever, you know, and still this is inside people. This makes it hard. No one was telling that they didn't know [*how to converse in English*] even because after all these years of having no experience whatsoever of even seeing an English speaking person in front of you. (Aneta L., 656 ff)

---

<sup>93</sup> In Soviet times, psychiatry, and later psychology were used to control rather than as agents of therapeutic change for the individual — "punishing instruments for people who had a different way of thinking" (Sasha L. 344). Sasha L. said that previously psychology was divided into Military Psychology and Scientific Psychology with only three universities in the whole Soviet Union that trained psychologists (Sasha L. 339 ff). Sasha noted that she was taught Clinical Psychology and Psychological Assessment.

<sup>94</sup> Much of the psychiatric service available in Soviet times was dedicated to helping people with alcohol addiction. The Narcological Clinic was a place with an outpatient area and inpatient wards. The Narcological Clinic in Lviv was one of the first to introduce psychotherapists to work with individuals and families as part of their treatment team.

Overcoming the obstacles, Aneta L. developed a new program of study for her department — and then through volunteer work she interpreted for people who visited Ukraine in the mid-1990s to develop social services in Ukraine. This led to Aneta L. eventually giving up her very stable and fairly prestigious position to go to Canada, completing further graduate studies in a totally different profession. At the time of the study she was the head of a new university program and continued to work toward the development of social services in Ukraine. While acknowledging that she had not been thinking about politics or Independence at all prior to the declaration, Aneta L. spoke about the impact of Independence on her life.

I was mainly involved in teaching, reading, books, and you know — different authors — so not politics. But, when all this happened and I found myself in Canada, I started thinking about history all of a sudden, and what the change was all about — and trying to assess the situation.

So, I had never considered my life from a historical point of view, you know. This was something new. In fact, it was one of the side effects of finding myself beyond the boundaries of Ukraine. I started thinking about our country, you know — the huge change — the collapse of the Soviet Union, I guess.

I started thinking maybe it is worth letting people know how a Ukrainian, a person from the former Soviet Union, would start looking at the country from a side — from a different perspective. Having got exposure from Great Britain, Canada, and the United States, I started considering things, and I came to the conclusion that Ukraine is sort of located in between those zones — like East and West —and so it suffers a lot.

But it was —this is my own — it has got a sort of a mission, you know. To reconcile between those two sides. And you know it is sort of torn — it always has been torn in between the two pieces. It has always been a battle zone. This is how I started thinking. (Aneta L., 1019 ff)

Like the wise Aneta, Klara L. also took huge risks when, following some volunteer work interpreting for visiting workers in the social service sector, she left her job as an English teacher in primary school and started to work on contract for different social development projects, first as an interpreter, and then as a manager. Remember the work her mother had facilitating her entrance into her desired university program.

Of course this was a project, and I had to decide. I asked my mom. She said, “You are insane! You are nuts! You have nothing in your head! You have a state job for which we bribed! We paid 1000 rubles for that job!”

I came home and [husband] said, “You decide.” I said, “Very good, you support me.” He said, “You decide.” I said, “Listen, you sit near me and we will decide because if I quit, you will feed me if something happens!” He said, “OK, go quit school.”

And you know, for me at that time — this ideology — school, then university — it is a kind of a portrait of a girl from a decent family. A well-bred girl — just well fed, looked after, polite — goes to school— goes to university — has a good job. Because, being an English teacher was a very good job at that time. So, she has a family, a child. She has a separate apartment. So, I had everything!

And I said, “OK, I quit!” (Klara L., 558 ff)

Klara L. continued to do some contract work with visitors in her chosen field, while her main work was instructing in human services at a local university. She still wondered, at times, if there would be a cheque for her on payday. Working as a university instructor and surviving meant that the individual must have at least one other job, a supportive life partner, and/or take bribes — not acceptable to any of these women.

Around the time of Independence, Mariana L. was working for the Foreign Languages department at her university, and doing contracted translation for scholars — and then her department sent her to England to learn some of the new teaching

purposes and methods. She found herself, like Aneta, uncertain, nervous and questioning her abilities. However, when she let herself go ahead and make mistakes with language — just focus on communicating — she found a new freedom!

Mariana L., like Aneta L., was asked to consider leaving her work, study in Canada, and then change careers altogether. At first, Mariana refused the offer: she and her sibling were the sole supporters of their mother. This was a huge gamble. Still, when she was asked a second time to take the same position, she “thought it was fate” and took the challenge. At the time of the study she continued working in the field in which she was a pioneer.

Ekaterina S. had not said much about anticipating Independence or any sudden changes related to the declaration of Independence; however, there were many changes in her life, including another shift in her husband’s work requiring the family to move again, a change in her medical focus, and reconnection with extended family.

It is wonderful that it is an independent state because when people are independent they are more certain of their abilities. But I cannot say that when Ukraine was not independent I was restricted in some way. (Ekaterina S., 630 ff)

Ekaterina added that she was always able to work, travel, and occupy a good position even with the family moves. She was always able to fulfill her duties at work as well. She said she had been quite satisfied with her life all along.

***“What gets you through hard times?”***

Once participants indicated they had told their stories to their satisfaction, and they had spoken about their experiences for Independence and hopes for the future, which will

be covered later, I asked the women what they did to get through tough times — including what they might do to find some comfort and relaxation. While a number of the women spoke about attending theatre or musical events, some mentioned also being involved in these productions. Most spoke about spending time in nature or reading — usually pursuits done on their own or sometimes with family members. Almost all participants said that they treasured time spent with family — moments that were few and far between. They said family was “the most precious.”

Leana L. responded to the question as follows.

You know, I am a little bit boring. I like philosophical discussions to entertain myself. I am surrounded with young people — volunteers. I like, well-organized-in-advance performances — parties — but not with alcohol. And I very much like — what I like the most, but unfortunately it is a rare occasion when my husband and my children or just my husband and I — when we — spend time in nature and talk about something. Or just be there. (Leana L., 315 ff)

Aneta L. said that she also seized moments when they came — sometimes reading English books for her own enjoyment or sharing literature with her grandchild. Most important to her were moments spent with family, especially because she constantly felt pulled away from them by work responsibilities.

Sometimes I feel that I — that I am not as much as I am supposed to be as a mom and as a wife. I am trying to trade roles. I am trying to make that up. So it is not maybe about relaxation per se; it is just trying to fill in the gap which I feel exists sometimes.

And I think that sometimes [husband] is stretching himself too much you know — with home duties and that stuff, but I try to support my children as much as I can.

And so, what they find to be relaxation and they see my involvement is worth it — going to theatre, going to exhibitions, going to the countryside, say —

When I see I am — I can provide the family with the chance to have me, I am trying to do this as much as I can.

And so over the recent summers — over the five years — I try to spend the summer time with [husband] specifically. You know, I need this. He needs this and I need it too! And I am trying to make up those — those times when I was unable to share the time with him. So, this is how I am trying to do it — so, this is relaxation for me. (Aneta L., 964 ff)

Aneta repeatedly mentioned that, without the full support of her husband children, she would never have been able to make the huge shifts she had made for herself and I must add (though she did not mention it herself), for the development of social services in her country.

Sasha L. and Klara L. also spoke about spending quiet time with family. They had spoken together about this. Sasha, who had heard about some of the questions people were being asked, was clear about what got her through the hard times.

I was thinking about this. I just live. I do something to overstep those hard times. I work hard, look around — look for something good. And it helps me. I have many friends with whom I can communicate. I am an optimist in my life. Sometimes, I use very specific black humour. [*She grinned wickedly.*]

But I know that if I do not do this, nobody will do this! It is a kind of grief from wisdom. I know for sure that when I start crying, or when I have pity for myself, *Kaput*<sup>95</sup> will be for everybody! I think that I am a warrior, and I think it helps me. I know that a human being in life has two callings, so to say — to life, and to death. So, life prevails. (Sasha L., 467 ff)

Alsu S. simply said, “Without family, nothing can happen.” (Alsu S., 449)

Nadezhda S. echoed Alsu S.’s sentiments as follows:

Support from my dear people — their participation — looking for an exit, for the way out — optimism... (Nadezhda S., 483 ff)

---

<sup>95</sup>*Kaput* means “the end” or, “it is over”.

Darya S., who had no extended family living near her, spoke about the flip side of life with family — the sense of responsibility that kept her going. She spoke slowly, with some tears.

I manage because I have this wish to help my children — to help them to rise to their feet — to help [daughter] with a child — a future child and [niece] with her daughter. This is the sense of my life. I think that I live in this world only to suffer — to help others. Sometimes I think that in my previous lives I was, God-knows-what, that I have to pay such a precious price in this life. But I accept everything as it is. Only my children are OK. It is possible to overcome disease. [Daughter] managed. (Darya S., 365 ff)

Later, Darya mentioned that in the last several years she and her daughter had begun to attend church services and this also helped her.

### ***Hopes for self, family, and for Ukraine***

After speaking about their lives, past and present, the women were asked about their hopes for the future — for themselves, for their families, and for Ukraine. Some of the women said that they were actually afraid to hope. They called the recently elected government “criminals,” “liars,” and “thieves.” They knew that they wanted a good life for their families — their children. They wanted their children to be able to find work to sustain them and their future families. This seemed the most important and the clearest wish. If their children and their senior parents were cared for, then they would be alright. Of course the women in their fifties and older also mentioned concerns that they would receive enough of a pension in their old age so that they could live without being a drain on their own children.

Other women spoke a bit more boldly — about daring to be optimists and, indeed, warriors for their families, and for Ukraine. They spoke about a Ukraine where people continued to be free to express themselves and to make choices for themselves as well as live in a country that was respected for honest and open relationships with other countries. Some focused on Ukraine being well connected to the West, while others wanted Ukraine to be comfortable with the West and with Russia.

All of the women said that they wanted to be able to hold their heads up as Ukrainians. They wanted to live in a country that had a place for people of all cultures and religions and that all people could live together peacefully, speaking their own languages without shame or censure. They wanted Ukraine to be respected as a country of integrity in the world. Many of the women asked me to be careful not to write anything derogatory about Ukraine, saying that things were bad enough with their shame about their just elected government.

I want to live normally — that we respect each other like in a family where there is a firm but yielding leader that keeps everything together and moving — a government that can see a real perspective of itself. As my husband used to say, “In each occupation, governance, governance, governance,” — and we should follow the laws we vote for, not break the laws! (Zoya L., 577 ff)

Zoya said she believed that since Independence and the lack of direction for the people, the youth in particular were taking less responsibility for doing their jobs well; this must change for Ukraine to survive as a viable country. Along with many other women Zoya advised it was vital for elected officials to model this responsibility, not use their

positions “to take from the state for free and to make it personal ownership for nothing” (Zoya L., 600).

Women from both Crimea and the Lviv area wished to express their cultural diversity, their spirituality, and their histories openly and freely without criticism. They voiced a desire to be able to speak their own languages, whether Russian or Ukrainian, and still be considered a full citizen. Some of the women from the East said that at times they felt criticized when speaking Russian or reminiscing fondly about Soviet times.

Women from Crimea in particular said that they wanted to acknowledge all of their history as they had experienced it.<sup>96</sup> This sentiment was echoed by women from Lviv area as they spoke about the relief they felt now being able to tell family and community stories without fear of reprisal. They still spoke softly, however.

Ana S. provided an example of citizenry that might be a model for all of us. She spoke freely and without rancor about her husband’s incarceration for doing his job on the collective farm — and for his subsequent banishment to Siberia. She noted some of the things that she enjoyed in Soviet times — for example her work in the fields and her sewing for neighbours. Ana S. clearly enjoyed the simple pleasures of life — family, hard and satisfying work, belonging to a community, and pride in children’s accomplishments. At the same time she was critical of what she saw as inappropriate

---

<sup>96</sup> Ukrainian history is contested over and over and justifiably so with information having been hidden from citizens by Soviet powers and by different areas of the country having had such different experiences (Marples, 2007).

and often immoral behaviour on the part of present-day leaders — and she still had a vision that she was willing to share of a Ukraine that is hard-working, prosperous, and free — able to support a healthy living for all of her citizens, no matter what their age or ability.

The women spoke of the need for all citizens of Ukraine to take some responsibility for the health and well-being of Ukraine — not to wait for some unknown but hoped for “auntie or uncle” to come along and take care of things. They admitted that life was hard now and people were discouraged. Still, as they told their individual stories, most of the women remained cautiously optimistic, continuing to put one foot in front of the other as they went about their days doing what they could to participate in their communities as well as continuing to work directly for the well-being of their families. They saw this work as integrated<sup>97</sup>.

***“How would you describe yourself — inside and out?”***

My final question, as the interviews came to a close, was prefaced by a summary of topics covered in the interviews. I then asked each woman to spend a few moments describing herself — as if to a stranger they wished to know her well — “inside and out.” Each woman’s response was a gift to me, the listener. I felt suspended in a magical place while women were speaking from their hearts thoughts they may not have shared previously, even with themselves. Although these pages cannot focus proportionately

---

<sup>97</sup> I am not sure if eighteen other women would have the same response. Most of these participants were in some way connected to social service provision. Still, even those who were older and not directly in human services, shared similar sentiments.

on each response, I hope that, through tracing the stories together on these pages, the unique qualities of each life story will be even stronger through the power of connection with sister stories. I proceed with the utmost respect for each woman.

This question seemed surprising and unusual to many participants, as it was to Kristina L., one of our senior participants who looked incredulous upon hearing it.

I have never been thinking like this! I have no idea. Personally? About myself?  
*[After some thought, she began slowly, quietly, her voice and demeanor exhibiting more strength and passion as she spoke.]*

I am sensitive. My nature is very sensitive. I am a romantic. I love very much my motherland. I love my language, but at the same time I am open to diversity. I love all people! You — you for me are so dear as if you were native *[tearing up]*.<sup>98</sup> I have no hatred for anyone.

I am happy with my children. I am happy with my grandchildren. I want to teach them the same love that I have, but they are adults and they have their own lives. I lived life and everything was so interesting to me *[intake of breath]*. Everything was interesting — culture, politics, church — everything is interesting. (Kristina L., 595 ff)

Ana S., the most senior of the participants, at first said she didn't understand the question. Then, after some thought, she responded.

The same! Inside and outside! *[She laughed.]* I am very honest. I cannot — I like when everything is clear, fair — and I cannot betray people. This is me! So, people would say one thing — do another. Or do one thing and say another. I cannot. I am shaking and trembling with this. I don't like this. I like everything to be honest — fair. That is how my father taught me. *[Ana went on to talk about her faith in God and how this faith was experienced when her son was almost killed in a workplace accident.]*

Yes, I am grateful to God. I was happy with everything *[tearing up]*. I never argued with people. When people are saying something about me, OK, let them talk. God just keeps me alive!

---

<sup>98</sup>Several times women used the word translated as 'native' to mean a blood relative.

Yes, my dear. This is my life. Life is not like crossing the road — It is a saying. “To live is not the same as to cross the field.” It is better to live through everything and to be grateful to God. (Ana S., 458 ff)

Sasha L., a generation younger, shared *her* self-description with a little more ease, after pausing to reflect a bit.

It is a kind of very simple question but in reality it is a difficult one. I am sexually female because sex is gender, so my sex is female. I don't know how I am — I just live! I work. I want everything which is around. I want everything to be pleasant, comfortable, convenient. I want myself to be a student in this life! I want to feel myself comfortable, cozy — in my family, in my work, with my friends. [I am] a working horse. OK — horses — horses — like sheep — no... [*She played with the words in Ukrainian and a bit of English.*] Sometimes I can't [work hard]. Then the other day I looked at myself and I thought, “I work hard...”

Black humour, white humour — all kinds of humour because sometimes when I look around and notice what happens in my life — in life — outside life, so, I am in despair. And I know for sure the minute I sit and start pitying myself, this is the end.

Once there was a song, “If not me, then who? Who, if not me?” So, it helps. It keeps me moving. And it is from day to day. Probably I don't dream or I don't think about long term perspectives. I just do today. I know that it is impossible to change what happened yesterday and I know that I am absolutely unaware about tomorrow. But there is today and it is necessary to live today — to live in a way that will be pleasant to think about and I won't be ashamed. This is how I live. (Sasha L., 610 ff)

Orisya L. had spoken with passion about her wishes for Ukraine. When asked to describe herself, she seemed quite surprised to change to this focus.

Who? [*She thought for a moment.*] So, the main thing I have in my soul is love. That is why I suffer so much. I love my kids, my grandchild, my parents, my friends. And I love life. I love life in general and I work on this — to be happy with the smallest thing that God gives me. I work on this. This is very important. I woke up this morning and the coffee — the taste of life! [*She paused*] I am impatient. I

am easily irritated. But I know for sure that never in my life — I *never* will betray a person.

*[Orisya continued, speaking about the sudden and difficult divorce she experienced five years previous and how concerned her friends had been for her welfare.]*

I realized that we people, human beings, we do not realize what a great power we have inside...

Speaking of my life, I am not sorry for anything. I am not sorry.... In the last five years, I have actually had another life. It's a different life — an awesome life. My friends call me “maximalist.” *[She laughed.]* So, actually a very important reassessment came to my life, and for me spiritual things are the most important in my life — probably because I very easily rejected every material thing in my life. Because, to tell the truth, a person doesn't need a lot. Actually, this is the outcome of my personal tragedy...

And the last thing I want to mention is that the less I think about material things, they come to me. (Orisya L., 293 ff)

Nadezhda S. thought for a moment and then spoke.

Who is Nadezhda? A person who likes — or loves — life! I am taking every minute of my life. I share myself with all my close people and I want the same. I think that I am successful in my life. I think that people respect me and that I can communicate. I can hear every person. Not only listen to, but hear — and be helpful when needed — when people need me. I like to get acquainted with other countries — people — even when I don't understand the language. When I see their eyes and I feel that they want to communicate with me *[looking at me and gesturing]* — this is me! This is my personality — me as an individual — some bad features — Accept me as I am! (Nadezhda S., 291 ff)

Yulia L., an articulate woman who had taken on numerous changes and challenges in her life, many of them as a pioneer in her field, looked surprised when asked how she would describe herself. After some pause, she responded.

All the time I say to my husband, “I feel myself being a dilettante” — someone who is innocent and doesn't know what to do — who knows nothing and just doubts all the time — the beginner — dabbling like a beginner. And I don't think

that this is bad, I think that this is quite OK. I am trying to rationalize this — because it won't be very interesting to deal with only one thing. So, but to change from time to time — to change interests... (Yulia L., 723 ff)

Yulia allowed that while she was “afraid” she would not let anything stop her from continuing to investigate life.

Mariana L., who also worked in social sciences, spoke about herself as follows.

Thinking about different social or gender or different aspects... First of all, I think a person first of all to be a human being. So, first, I am a human being! Then I am a woman. And then maybe a Ukrainian. In this direction, because I guess there are some things that unite all women so gender aspect is important, I think — and a Ukrainian. That is what I am. And what else? [*She thought for a moment.*] Nothing special — just a person... I don't know whether it is good to be an idealist, but I don't lose hope, either. (Mariana L., 730 ff)

Klara L. spoke about herself as a study in contrasts.

On the surface, I am very easy going — on the surface. Deep inside I am not. On the surface, I am very ... relaxed and smiling, you know and how to say — funny, probably. Deeper, I am not. So, I am much more serious and much more thoughtful and I analyze things all the time. I analyze my relationships with people, with students, and — everything I do, I analyze. I am very much critical toward myself. And sometimes I am more critical even more than needed. Yes. And it makes me depressed sometimes. All the time I say to myself, “This is wrong and that is wrong. You did this and that.” (Klara L., 913)

Then there was Nadia L.

[*Thinking*] I have passion — so much! [*She laughed.*] At different times, different dispersions. In general? About my social characteristics? I will say this about myself — it is sort of an anecdote about a crow who decided to follow the swan to warm countries, and she said, “I am so strong, I am so irresistible, but I am such a fool!”

So, I do what I promise. Sometimes I easily trust people because hopes and dreams I treat as something already fulfilled. Yes, I have optimism — I wish well to people, and I am not offended when people do something another way.

I am emotional and sometimes it spoils my life. Sometimes I am spontaneous in spite of obstacles — so to keep balance in some tense situations — on the edge of threat, for example... I panic easily. [*She laughed softly.*]

This just came to my mind. My sister — In 1999 I had surgery. I had radiotherapy. It was St. Nicholas Day, and my sister gave me a sculpture. It was a big angel. At that time I had white hair and I looked like this angel. The eyes were up and the halo... Near the angel was a black sheep. And my sister said, “This symbolizes the two of us.”

[*She paused to reflect.*]

— An anecdote about our relationship, not only with her but with others near me — an anecdote about Lenin who speaks to his wife, “Nadusha, you are always with me when I am not feeling well. You are a good luck Baba, Nadka!”<sup>99</sup> (Nadia L., 511 ff)

Tamara L., young and vibrant parent to twelve children in her family-type home, answered the question about who she was without hesitation.

I am a warrior who cannot be still and wants more and more and more. So, I cannot just sit still! I am moving to a higher level. For my family — old traditions, education, order — love —

But this is not enough for me. I want other people to feel good — to feel better and I try to do this... But without my husband, I am not able to do anything.

Sometimes we do have losses. But you know when we have losses in our life for some short period of time we become immobile. But then, again, we rise up and move forward.

It is my firm belief that helping others, we will change Ukraine, and I try to teach my children that helping others is a good thing. And even at their age, I think they understand this. (Tamara L., 586 ff)

---

<sup>99</sup> Sonya (the interpreter) asked me here if I saw the difference between Nadusha and Nadka — referring to the term that showed closeness at the beginning and closeness but less respect at the end — Nadka. In this anecdote, Lenin is supposed to be speaking with his wife, Nadjezda Krypskaia. Children in the USSR were taught that this pair was the ideal couple — examples to all about close marital relationships. In reality, as they later discovered, Lenin was known to have had numerous affairs.

The woman warrior theme continued. Even though they did not name themselves as such, some women's self-descriptions gave them away. Alsu S. started by saying she was patient.

I am very patient. I am very, very patient. I am shy. I am modest. I want to be able to live peacefully with people of different nationalities. I am quiet. I am patient because with my child — with my girl — it is necessary to be very patient with her. I had to teach myself.

*[Alsu then spoke about the need to constantly advocate for services for her daughter and to push through obstacles for children with disabilities.]*

So, I need to go everywhere myself because no one else will do this for you. (Alsu S., 366 ff)

Leana L. who also had one child with disabilities and another younger child at first looked quizzical and then responded, mentioning the warrior theme without a suggestion.

Leana is a romantic woman who dearly loves her children, loves her family, and who loves her home — I am not a warrior!

*[She paused and I asked her if she is not a warrior, if she considers herself a defender. She responded nodding.]*

You know what I will be? Whatever — everything or anything — only to defend my children! So, I am not a warrior and then something else. I am a mother, and then I am something else — but in the framework of the norms of life in a country — and in the framework of wisdom, so to say. And in the framework of my personal life safety. But I am not a person who is afraid. (Leana L., 282 ff)

Darya S. was particularly quiet when asked to focus on herself. She smiled slightly with her head down and then looked up.

So, it is better when people describe someone. *[She thought for a while.]* I think that it is easy to be with me. When my relatives come, they like to stay at our place. They rest. It is easy for them. But I am different! It is necessary to cook for

everybody, to be pleasant to everybody. They take me to the seaside and everywhere, but after their visit, I have to have a rest from my guests.

What else can I say about myself? I am a very responsible person. If I say, I do. People can rely on me — reliable. I don't like all people, but I try to fulfill all of my duties — duties for people who are alive and my duties to those who are dead already. I think that it is my duty to look after the graves of my relatives — to go to the cemetery — to put flowers — to make those monuments. And all duties for people who are alive — as long as I am alive, I want to make the lives of my children easier. So, I cook for them, help in everything... When I was working, I tried to do my best so that other people wouldn't have to redo what I had done. (Darya S., 404 ff)

Darya S. then spoke about her belief in the importance of bringing up children well, working hard, studying well and being disciplined in what they do.

Aida's response also came after some thought.

Not fat nor thin. Not dark or blonde. I smile all the time — almost all the time — I am not angry inside. I like to listen. Everybody would say that I am a good companion and it is easy to communicate with me. I play the guitar. I like to play with the kids.

Oh! I like to solve crosswords! Sometimes I like to sleep. So, I seldom have a chance to sleep, and that is why I like to sleep — and I am simply fond of roads! Sometimes I lose patience. I need brakes, and [*laughing*] my husband is my brake. I have a lot of energy, my own energy... (Aida S., 357 ff)

Aida S. added that her life was much intertwined with her husband's; they worked as a team, balancing each other out — especially with the children.

Ekaterina S., doctor/psychologist, mother and grandmother, was at the point where she and her husband had their own apartment, and lived semi-retired. Her self-description and the activities she described showed her community involvement.

I am very active. I am a mother. I never forget this. What else can I say? I have a job that I love and I am happy with this. When I can show my abilities, and when

there is a chance I try not to lose it. You know, when I want something very much, or expect something very much, it happens. I don't know how to describe myself.

*[She paused to think.]*

I live — How to describe myself? I live and everything that comes to my hands I try to do my best. If I can, I do. Some people say that I have a taste, that I — People remember me. Many people are not remembered, but I am remembered. People remember me. Elections are coming and I hope that I will participate in the elections — to the local councils. That is what I think — as a deputy. For two periods I was a deputy of regional council, so I have my personal — my special program — a program of how to improve the life of people.

You know, when I am responsible for something, people will ask me about my responsibility. This is for sure! People ask me different questions about stuff about school — ramps, children at school — so, to a specialist. Others have senior parents living with them and they are wherever they turn. So, every day, playgrounds for children, a swimming pool — we actually have two of them! On days off in, in the library I carry out a hobby club. Family readings on my days off... (Ekaterina S., 677 ff)

Zoya L., a woman who had been a strong Party member, a Komsomol leader and vice-director of a large plant — and a woman who brought food for me when she came to be interviewed — struggled to describe herself, saying this was a tough question.

Not just positive things... I am hard working. I am honest. I am tired. I was doing something because I decided to do it. My father would say, "Do this because... it is honourable."

I think about my relations — in my age, I would prefer to have some comfort, but still, I want to run! My husband asked me to retire and not to work, and I couldn't agree with this and there would be an argument... "Stay at home. Keep the kitchen [throwing up her hands and laughing]!"

I believe that I will meet a man who will become my friend. And we will go outside the city and see something together. I will put my head on his shoulder. *[She laid her head on Sonya's shoulder with a sigh.]* So, I haven't put the cross on my shoulders so to speak *[throwing back her head, miming being dead.]* It hurts me to be alone, but with this person... If he is not mine, it is better to be alone... *[She paused.]*

I am still interested in many things. If I am offered to study I would agree. Though my memory is not the same, my sight is not the same... Sometimes I am told it is not OK to have so many friends. My main, so to say, weak point is that I am not home much and it would be best to stay home! (Zoya L., 477 ff)

Zoya then went on to say that she still looked after her mother, and that she had looked after her mother-in-law for many years. She was not bitter about this. She ended by softly saying this about herself.

So, [Zoya] is a good woman. You may speak with her about anything you wish and she will never judge you. (Zoya L., 519 ff)

### **A preliminary group meeting in Simferopol**

In my original plan, the groups of women in each region were to meet, share thoughts about their experiences, and begin discussing their visions as a group shortly after they had shared their individual stories. The women from Simferopol gathered in the evening for a meeting of connection and group visioning, and to share some initial ideas about a meeting with the Lviv group. This meeting, held at our temporary apartment on Karl Marx Street, lasted a little over an hour. Frankly, I was surprised at how conscientious the women were about arriving on time, after a full day's work and with very little notice.

When they arrived, they understandably seemed a bit trepidatious. This air changed within a few moments of hearing from each other. The women spoke at first about how strange it had been to be asked to tell their stories and their surprise at how rapidly they had moved to a place of comfort, sharing their stories in "almost a stream

of consciousness.” Once reminded that each woman had been asked exactly the same questions, they spoke even more.

First, there was discussion about how difficult it is to dream, or vision. Aida’s statement summed up the group sentiments.

It is a very complicated task. We are so much trained to live today so that very often our dreams just disappear like balloons. In the Soviet Union, we were led from our birth to our grave — and now we have to solve everything ourselves. (Aida S., 140 ff)

They spoke in more general terms about their picture for Ukraine as they had shared in their individual interviews. Many of the women noted that they would like the factories and plants to be functional again — where many people could work as they had before. They wanted the farms to be rich and viable once more with people having access to the machinery necessary to carry out farming on a grander scale than they were now — perhaps even through collective agreements — voluntarily collective agreements. At the same time there was a wish for clean and healthy air, water, and food for all people — for a healthy environment.

Nadezhda S. reminded the women of their strengths as mothers — and the ways these strengths can make a difference for the future of Ukraine.

You know if we ripen and understand what we want for our children, we will for sure make the right choices. And we will follow the main law. Imagine, all we women take one another by the hand and we go to this clear future, this light future, because our children and our men are standing behind us. We will go there very slowly...

So, each of us, we will treat our own world around us — a very positive world. And then this positive world will grow like snowballs and we will all go this

way. I remember times when we were not paid — when we did not receive wages — and we survived, and we protected — and we saved what we had — all those good things that we had! I am sure of one thing — we will become one of the best European countries. [*All women laughed and nodded agreement.*] (Nadezhda S., 169 ff)

In this meeting, the women agreed first that the health and well-being of children and people of all abilities — and seniors — was of critical importance for a healthy and vibrant Ukraine. Having a place for people of all abilities in a functional society was important. The women agreed that people of all backgrounds in Ukraine were generally hard-working and it was necessary that all people contribute and know that their contribution to a functioning society was important.

The women agreed that the patience and continuing efforts of motherhood will be vital assets as they continue to grow a vibrant Ukraine for their families, and themselves. During this meeting, the reality that they, the participants themselves, were already contributing to the health and growth of Ukraine seemed to be a quiet revelation.

### **Preliminary visioning meeting in Lviv stalled**

Sonya, Halyna, and I returned from Simferopol intending to have the regional visioning meeting with the women in Lviv upon arrival. This plan was changed. As we travelled across the country on the train from Simferopol, Sonya was in regular contact with her mother who had endured ongoing health problems. Sonya encouraged her to see a doctor. By the time we arrived, she was desperately in need of a doctor and was rushed

to hospital where she stayed. Many expensive tests were done and efforts made to assist her ability to breathe properly; the fear was that she had cancer.

In February 2010, health-care in Ukraine was largely the responsibility of the individual, though medical personnel did what they could. It was necessary to take testing materials physically by the patient's family (if she was lucky enough to have one) from one doctor or specialist to another. Consultation among specialists took considerable coordination by the patient's family. Sonya, an only child, was consumed with worry and the concrete tasks required in support of her mother's health.

I considered having the Lviv meeting with a different interpreter and I knew of several other competent women who could have done the job; however, I was concerned that a change of interpreter — moving to someone who had not been involved in the individual narrative collection — would change the dynamic intimacy established with Sonya.

Back in Lviv, we waited, hoping that things would improve enough for Sonya to interpret for the visioning meeting. There was some respite in sight just two days before my flight was booked back to Canada — and then we discovered that half of our regional group was not available to meet, at least two having left the city for work related tasks. I decided to wait until my return to Lviv in July to go ahead with the Western regional visioning meeting.

### **Other changes**

Returning to Lviv from Simferopol, I also reconsidered the idea of gathering the women together for a weekend. As noted earlier, the plan changed. When I left Ukraine in February, I still planned return in July and meet with each regional group for visioning and celebration. We would then attempt a video-conference so that the women could talk and pass on any messages they might wish to each other. With the help of several people who offered their talents and time, this is just what we did.



Figure11. The train between Lviv and Simferopol, July 2010

Photo: F. Beckwith



Figure 12 Vendors on the platform in Southern Ukraine, July 2010 Photo: F. Beckwith



Figure 13 Another stop on the way to Simferopol. July 2010

Photo: F. Beckwith



Figure 14. An evening stop along the way

Photo: F. Beckwith



Figure 15 July 2010 Time for reflection Photo: F. Beckwith



Figure 16 Fields of gold

Photo: F. Beckwith

## Chapter 6

### Return to Ukraine: July 2010

I returned to Ukraine July 5, 2010 – during one of the hottest summers in a century.

The purpose of the trip was to conduct regional visioning meetings (Phase 2 of the study proposal), have the women connect across region (revised Phase 3 of the study), and consult with the participants about the way the study was rolling out as well as their levels of comfort with the inclusion of their stories as I had understood them (Phase 4). Early July was selected because it was the end of the school term and prior to the exodus from the city to the countryside made by those who could take the time either at a nearby dacha<sup>100</sup> or perhaps driving into the countryside to “spend time in nature”<sup>101</sup>.

As it was, Orisya L., Tamara L., and Veronika S. were away at the time of the visioning meeting meetings and sent their regrets. Unavailable in person for the duration of my stay, both Orisya L. and Veronika S. sent greetings and communicated that they were comfortable with me using any part of their interviews in the write-up of the study. I was able to connect with Tamara L. in person upon return from Simferopol this second time.

We planned and were able to have the first regional visioning meeting and group consultation in Lviv, followed by a celebratory meal for the group and then travel to

---

<sup>100</sup> A dacha is a small home or cottage outside the city where a family usually has a garden. Duchas, like most North American cottages often do not have the amenities of home but are places where a family may retreat from city life and spend time closer to nature.

<sup>101</sup> This was phrasing used by many of the participants as they described going outside the city.

Simferopol, once again by train, for that more formal regional visioning meeting, group consultation, and celebration. Individual consultations were held around the group meetings. This chapter begins with a review of the themes found in the women's individual stories. I shared most of these observations with the women at the beginning of their group visioning meetings. Themes not shared at that time were commonalities in vision and self-evaluation.

The subsequent section goes on to detail the processes of both regional meetings, including in as much detail as possible, the women's words. This choice was made to highlight the importance of vision in peace-building. Visions and dreams are part of lived stories; speaking them may be a way of addressing some of the yearning, that, left un-shared (even with the self), may fester and undermine life-giving movement toward rich and peaceful co-existence.

### **Themes from life stories**

While the women's stories spoke for themselves, following is a summary of some of the major themes throughout including the importance of family, the value of education, women's determination in spite of obstacles, resilience in the face of challenges, concern for way Ukraine and Ukrainians are perceived abroad, the use of humour as a coping mechanism, and shared hopes for the future for themselves, their families, and a united Ukraine.

## **The importance of family**

All of the women spoke about the centrality of family and family supports in their lives. Grandmothers featured strongly as nurturers and teachers. Fathers, sisters, mothers, grandfathers, and some brothers also held special spots. For the participants themselves, the welfare and future of their own children and grandchildren was the main impetus to choose Independence and to keep going when things seemed at their worst.

While grandparents were the supportive heroes from the past, the well-being of children provided motivation for present and future generations. Though grandfathers were acknowledged, grandmothers' care during their formative years stood out in women's minds. This care first appeared as practical support; grandmothers fully accepted the responsibilities of bringing up children whose parents were called away whether a few or several thousand kilometres to fulfill their work assignments. Yulia L., Nadia L., Tamara L., Sasha L. and Klara L.'s grandmothers provided the most necessary basic care during their formative years as the children lived with their grandmothers and returned to their parents when they reached school age. In some situations, as with Yulia L., grandparents became protective buffers in disagreements between parents and children. Grandmothers' homes, sometimes in country settings like Nadia L. and Veronika S.'s grandparents' provided a calmer, cosier style than the urban bustle of parental homes. Klara L. had two sets of grandmothers to fuss over her — a Russian granny and a Ukrainian one. She was close to both, and as a small girl was privy to many

overheard conversations; trips with her granny provided Klara L. with a broader sense of the country's history.

In the participants' stories, grandmothers carried the history for both family and nation. This theme was most evident in the stories of the women from the West. Aneta L.'s grandmother told stories of the past, of Holodomor, and of her family's struggles. She also safe-guarded the family's religious history and ensured, despite the danger to all concerned, that the children would be baptized. Sasha L.'s grandmother, who lived with the family in Lviv, carefully and quietly shared stories of family and Ukrainian language and culture. She taught Sasha the culinary and religious history of the land. Sasha advised that she learned even more of history and even the politics of the day (as much as could safely be spoken) by listening in on the conversations of "the Babas" or other grandmothers in her apartment block.

The women also spoke about other family members. Many women did not have sisters, but those who did spoke about the importance of these relationships, both in the past and the present. Nadia L., whose sister was not born until Nadia herself was almost an adult, shared stories about her relationship with the sister she now considers her best friend. Ekaterina S., who has two sisters, made frequent reference to these women, both as mischievous companions in childhood, and as friends and supporters in adulthood despite the challenges of great distance.

Women also spoke of their own mothers, now themselves grandmothers, and the vital commitment they have made to help raise their grandchildren — the participants'

children. Yulia L., Orisya L., Kristina L., Aneta L., Ekaterina S., Ana S., Aida S., and Darya S. are now all de facto grandmothers who take these roles as the dearest to their hearts.

### **The importance of education**

Education was of great importance to all of the women. All but four had completed higher education and spoke of the difficulties and rewards along this path. *All* participants spoke of the important role education should play in the lives of Ukraine's youth, stating a broad education must include critical thinking to be instrumental, first in facilitating necessary changes in the ways Ukrainians view the responsibilities of government, and, second, in learning attitudes and skills to actively challenge policies while working their own jobs in ways that are more empowering to Ukrainian citizens.

Both Aneta L. and Sasha L. spoke of their own grandmothers' certainty that education would be the key to helping citizens of Ukraine gain more efficacies. Despite the reality that during Stalin's time many well educated people were relegated to Siberia or dark and controlled corners of the university communities, parents and grandparents pushed for their children and grandchildren to achieve as much as they could educationally.

Throughout history in Ukraine, education was a key to upward mobility, for acceptance in the "upper echelon" of society — until Soviet times (Figes, 2007). During Soviet times, officially the intelligentsia were suspect, and being of the proletariat, the more "common" worker, was a position to be honoured. In reality, men with education were the decision-makers. The path out of the fields, though not guaranteed, was

education. Some men of letters worked the fields by choice or by state orders. Nadia L. supported Figes (2007) in his claim that those who were not as well educated had to apply for passports and approval to work away from their home areas.

The women in this study who did not mention struggles for their own higher education were Alsu S., Darya S. and the two most senior participants, Ana S. and Kristina L. Ana and Kristina were raised during Stalin's USSR by parents who were not well educated and designated as 'workers'. Alsu was born into a family banished with no expectation of rights.

Additionally, the primary employment of all but four of the women was connected in some way with the educational system in Ukraine. All of the women spoke about assisting children to make the best of their educational opportunities not only for the children themselves, but for Ukraine.

A sub-theme related to education was the concern about demands to bribe school officials while growing up mentioned by Yulia L., Sasha L., Klara L., and Nadezhda S. While still a concern in Ukraine today, Yulia, Nadia, Aneta, Sasha, Klara, and Mariana L. all independently mentioned that the educational departments they were personally involved with were well known for not accepting bribes.

### **Adaptability**

Although the participants did not speak directly about their need and ability to adapt to a wildly swaying life landscape, this was a through theme in the women's lives – in their stories. All of the women survived major changes in the ideology of country, leaders,

and accompanying expectations. With Independence, every participant save Kristina L. and Ana S. underwent major changes not only in employment, but also in career and, subsequently, their work identity, as did other members of their families. Nadezhda S. and Ekaterina S. adapted to their situations by becoming more entrepreneurial.

All of the women had to make major shifts in expectations of themselves and their family members' roles in society. Before Independence, children with special needs, reliant on the State for their basic care, would not have been considered viable prospective citizens of their country. The women would not have been likely to take on the active roles that they did post-Independence not only in their children's care, but in the advocacy and service development for their own and other children. The women navigated challenging landscapes, managing and in some cases thriving in spite of the challenges. Participant adaptability is echoed in the theme of determination and perseverance.

### **Resilience**

Their stories repeatedly illustrated the women's efficacy through hard times, again and again coming through for themselves and their families. Participant stories spoke about not only their own resilience, but also that of whole families — and perhaps Ukraine as a nation. People have survived hardship after hardship, one breath after the other, one foot placed in front of the other. When I commented on this, several women said that perhaps they are like the phoenix rising out of the ashes. Leana L. noted that while she too saw this resilience, she hoped that Ukrainians will not have to rise too often.

## **Determination and Perseverance**

The women's stories illustrated their determination in spite of many, many historical and present-day obstacles. Perhaps the resilience of the women in this study arose from the determination to survive — not necessarily for themselves, but for their children — for the children of Ukraine. The women's individual stories highlighted this determination, this peaceful warrior-like spirit over and over again. The women told stories about their decisions as adults to vote on the side of Independence in 1991 because of the fear that if they stayed with Russia, with the Soviet Union, that their children would once again be sent to war.

Women who had children with disabilities found ways to get their children's needs met. Without money, accommodation, or other support, Darya S. risked a trip to Moscow just after Independence in order to access the necessary medical treatment for her daughter. Other mothers such as Leana L. and Veronika S., with the support of their own parents, returned to school and took up different careers in order to educate not only themselves, but the rest of the nation on the needs of persons with disabilities. They continue to struggle to have an inclusive world for their own and other children.

Also going beyond adaptation, Yulia L., Nadia L., Leana L., Aneta L., Sasha L., Klara L., Mariana L., and Veronika S. made drastic and risky career changes contributing in rebuilding and reshaping the infrastructure of the country. As pioneers, their work left them and their families economically and socially vulnerable; still, their efforts are building a base of empowerment for Ukrainians through creating and maintaining

programs that educate professionals to provide services within a neophyte social service sector. Prior to Independence — the USSR reportedly had “no problems”<sup>102</sup> that could not be fixed without medical expertise (Sasha L., Mariana L., Ekaterina S.). These women’s strengths perspective had the physical and emotional support of their families.

### **Concern for Ukraine’s reputation**

The women all spoke, individually and in their groups, about their concern for the way Ukraine and Ukrainians are viewed abroad. They commented on Ukraine’s continuing struggles with corruption at all levels of government and the public spectacles officials make of themselves and the official business of the Verhovna Rada. Criminal records of government officials and official gaffs of the President were cited. This public face of Ukraine left the women concerned that Ukraine will ever become a functioning, respected member of the world community.

Both regional groups and all individuals except Alsu S. and Ekaterina S. mentioned that they feared the world sees Ukraine and Ukrainians as poorly educated, ill-mannered, untrustworthy, backward, and at best “quaint”.

While the women spoke with great pride about their personal and familial histories, they commented that they were embarrassed by the way their government behaves and the fact that Ukraine is not “getting its act together.” They spoke about the

---

<sup>102</sup> Several of the women mentioned in passing that the medical model prevailed in Soviet times as it still does throughout much of the world. The reference in this case, however, was that counselling, or social help of any kind was not offered by the State.

beauty and riches of their country — the resources, the cultures, the hardworking people, the intelligence of writers and other artists, the craftsmanship of workers. The women said that they were afraid not only that this heritage will be lost if their children have to go abroad to work, but they were also afraid that Ukraine and Ukrainians will not be respected abroad.

The women's pride in their country and culture was sometimes subtle and touching. Outside the interviews and visioning meetings, women expressed curiosity, interest, and delight when this visitor to the country made simple attempts to adapt to life in Ukraine. Whenever I attempted to use the Ukrainian language, dressed in anything with Ukrainian embroidery, independently bought groceries at the market instead of an indoor store, took the tram, commented with humour about an awkward situation, and carried my own toilet paper, the highest compliment I received would be a Ukrainian native smiling at me — mentor to prodigy' — saying, "You are local."

### **Coping with humour**

One of the major coping mechanisms that women in this study used and continue to use is humour strongly bolstered with irony. In groups the sometimes sarcastic banter about history and hope was peppered with quips and laughter. Individually, as well, there were many examples of quick wit.

For example, Nadia L.'s self-deprecating picture of her "ballerinda" child-self provided a fitting counterpoint to her description her family's membership in 'the intelligentsia'. Mariana L., a quiet rather serious woman described her child self running

for a train struggling with a huge, precious, watermelon. Ekaterina S. gave a hilarious account of almost burning down the family apartment while at five, left in the care of an ailing grandmother, she and her younger sister “helped” her mother, then away at work, with the family ironing. Klara L.’s description of her “round self” being stuffed by both grandmothers, her son being “a small god” and her account of the family discussion related to her change of profession exemplify the humour that is part of every-day conversation.

Outside the interviews, Aida S., laughing, launched into old songs about Lenin as she and Sonya discussed changes in Ukraine’s landscape. They continued together through several verses challenging each other with nudges and sometimes raucous laughter. During a walk with me on a dreary day in Lviv, Halyna pointed up to the top of a building at a gorgeous statue noting that “only in Lviv the Statue of Liberty has the right to sit.”

Sasha L. noted that if she does not laugh she will cry and just stop functioning. By using humour and irony in their lives, women are able to shake off some of the weight their worries and of the work they are doing, look up, take a breath, and keep going. The humour used by the participants was often an intelligent and dark humour that might not be appreciated by those who have not seen the hardships Ukrainians have experienced. Still, the saving grace of humour painted vivid pictures for the listener — pictures to help see situations as often absurd. And if it is possible to acknowledge absurdity, sanity also might be at hand.



Figure 17 “Only in Lviv does the Statue of Liberty have the chance to sit.” Photo F. Beckwith

### **Optimism/Hope**

When I shared my observation that their stories and individual visions evidenced optimism, the women said they had not previously thought of themselves as optimistic, noting this viewpoint shifted as they shared their stories and thought about their personal values supporting the choices made along their life paths. If they did not believe somewhere deep inside, that their lives could get better — that Ukraine’s future could be brighter at least for their children, why did they continue to work so hard?

The optimism of these participants cannot be portrayed as light-hearted, but rather a sometimes grim determination arising from knowledge that, despite all obstacles, they will do whatever they can to make the world a better place for their children and grandchildren. Perhaps this optimism facilitated the openness and

collaborative work of these women as they move far beyond individual and familial survival.

### **How the women saw themselves**

In their own words, the women said that they seldom reflect upon themselves and how they are seen in the world. Sasha L. and Klara L. spoke a bit about the struggles they have to “keep going”; still, they both noted that they are seldom wont to describe themselves to themselves or others. Even though they did not casually volunteer the information, the stories of women we met in Post-Soviet Ukraine described them as strong and vital, innovative, hard working, perseverant, adaptable, and important to their families. They value their humour and share it generously. When they did stop to consider themselves and their contributions, they could acknowledge them; however, they struggled to see themselves as people able to impact the structure and mechanisms of the government which is supposed to serve them.

### **Visions for a brighter future**

Without exception, the participants spoke with passion about their hopes for a brighter future for themselves, their families, and Ukraine. Details about their shared visions follow in this chapter. In summary, they agreed that they wanted a united, free Ukraine where every person is valued: all spoke about the need for inclusion of all persons of all abilities, ages, and cultures. They spoke about the need for infrastructure to support each person having gainful employment within an economy that legitimately supports

its citizens and a government that is accountable to the people. The women wanted their country, Ukraine, to be strong enough to manage without so much outside assistance and become known again, not as a victim, but as a country of many resources, not the least of which is her people. They wanted Ukraine to be respected on the world stage as a country of integrity and positive action.

The women acknowledged that each person must do her/his best to contribute to Ukraine, advocating for self and family first of all. Yulia L., Nadia L., Orisya L., Leana L., Tamara L., Zoya L., Kristina L., Aneta L., Sasha L., Klara L., Mariana L., Ana S., Nadezhda S., and Veronika S. all spoke at length about the importance of working together for the good of all individuals — and for the common good. All saw the youth of Ukraine as the future, needing to be better educated about civil society and responsibility as well as learning ‘new ways’ to work with people and community.

### **Regional meeting in Lviv**

The regional meeting in Lviv had been organized prior to my arrival. The morning following my landing was chosen in order to gather the maximum number of women. The timing meant that my level of alertness was not optimum; however, it also meant that nine of the eleven participants from this region were present.

The meeting took place in a comfortable classroom in the small building housing the Department of Sociology and Social Work, at Lviv Polytechnic University. The venue had been suggested by several participants and agreed upon by all. On this hot, summer morning, women arrived in their bright summer attire as if for a special occasion.

Following kisses on both cheeks, lots of hugs, and gifts of flowers, we began the official meeting with introductions. Even though many of the women knew each other from the human service/university communities, several had not previously met. Very few had met our most senior participant, Kristina.

As the buzz in the room settled, we reviewed the day's agenda, previously shared with the women. Responding to some of the participants' inquiries in January, I asked the women if they were still interested in having some of the visioning meeting and relaxation time together photographed. With very little discussion, the women all signed confidentiality forms and were introduced to the photographer.<sup>103</sup> While some women said that they would like their names included with their photographs, I noted that the women would not be identified by name to maintain some confidentiality. With some women missing and others not wishing to be identified, group members would still more easily, by default, be identified.

The women agreed to audiotape the session understanding that with the pace of discussion, speakers' names might not be attached to various comments/quotes noted from this meeting.

I told participants of my appreciation for their openness and commitment to the process. Acknowledging their interest in hearing about themes I had noticed in their

---

<sup>103</sup> I was concerned about how the group dynamic and level of participant involvement might change by introducing another person, an 'observer' into the mix. Another concern was introducing a male into this female group. Once introductions were made, however, the photographer faded into the background and the women later told me that they forgot that he was there. I wonder if they felt that because he was my husband, they could more easily trust him.

interviews — any possible connections with their Crimean sisters, I proceeded by sharing some of these details which will be noted in the next section. The women were very quiet, and seemed not to be surprised, but rather a little taken aback to find they had so much in common with each other and with their ‘sisters’ in Simferopol.

### **Focusing exercise**

In order to bring the focus back to the task of jointly visioning for their country, I wanted to help each woman first consciously reflect upon what was important to her personally. For this purpose, the women were invited to participate in a short grounding exercise beginning with each being given two differently coloured pieces of construction paper cut to fit into each other. Women were asked to reflect upon their most treasured values — to think about these values as attributes to which they aspire, perhaps. They were then asked to write one value on each piece of paper and then to put the papers somewhere safe so that they could take them home when they left at the end of the day. The room was quiet enough to hear breathing during this exercise.

### **Visioning: The PATH process**

Following focusing exercise, we launched into the PATH process which guided the visioning section of the project (See the *Appendices*). Four of the women had previously experienced a similar exercise used while constructing a strategic plan for their

workplace several years earlier.<sup>104</sup> An experienced participant volunteered to note the women's comments on the large chart that I had brought with me for completion as part of the exercise.

### ***Women from Lviv region's<sup>105</sup> vision for Ukraine***

During animated brainstorming and discussion, the women from the Lviv regional group included the following components as necessary parts of their vision for Ukraine. Rather than summarize the vision, the women's carefully painted picture for Ukraine is expressed below, as much as possible in the words of the participants themselves.

These are the words used to describe the future Ukraine as if it already existed:

We have freedom and independence.

Mutual understanding between different regions of Ukraine — in different professions, religions, because Ukraine is a multinational country — tolerance (interpersonal and cultural).

There is acceptance of diversity.

Ukrainian language accepted as the one national language of the country

All children are born from parents who want them.

Respect for individuals.

All Ukrainians have wealth and people improve their lives.

---

<sup>104</sup> In 2003, as the CIDA-funded project, Reforming Social Services: Canada-Ukraine, was wrapping up, people involved with the university education component of the project gathered to map out a vision and a plan for those who would continue working in Ukraine without aide of the CIDA funding.

<sup>105</sup> Rather than summarize their visions, I am including as many quotes as possible from the audio-tapes of both regional visioning meetings to honour their visions and to show the slight variations in the ways the two groups did their work.

Well developed civil society where NGOs have an influence on the development of the country. There are wealthier small businesses and entrepreneurship and everyone really works.

Everyone can be financially rewarded sufficiently to survive.

Each person can find a certain place and realize him or herself — use their whole potential.

People feel safe — know where to go and ask for help when they need it.

The women continued to describe their dream(s) with a growing excitement and what appeared to be fierce determination. The dream kept growing and we added on paper at the end of our diagram in order to accommodate.

[We will have] respect for persons of all ages and abilities. [*Sasha L. shared an example from the morning. She said that a marshrutka<sup>106</sup> driver refused to take a pensioner who would of course travel for free — driver not compensated. Sasha said that she had confronted the driver about his behaviour.*]

Education is seen as a foundation for a better life. No bribes will have to be paid to receive this education.

Young people who study should be able to find jobs/work within Ukraine.

Every person should find a proper place in his or her life — respect for older people and jobs for younger ones — pensions and jobs.

Open world — without borders and obstacles — people can travel. Now borders are open but people cannot afford to travel.

Children and other people with special needs are included in all aspects.

---

<sup>106</sup> A marshrutka is a small bus or van that picks up passengers along a regular route. These vehicles are often crowded well beyond safe capacity. In Ukraine, pensioners – people fifty-five and over may use public transportation at no cost.

Ukraine is respected in the world and Ukraine will deserve this respect. All people, including business people should be able to be proud of being Ukrainian rather than seen as ignorant and corrupt.<sup>107</sup>

Every person takes care and is responsible for herself; and people are conscious and respectful about their own health.

In addition to achieving Independence, there is an awareness of the national legacy of the whole country. There should be no denial of history.

Every mother is singing lullabies in Ukrainian. That is, she should be able to sing lullabies in Ukrainian because Ukrainian will be the national language. People who have other languages will be encouraged to use them; still the public sphere, government administration, schools and such should conduct their business in Ukrainian.<sup>108</sup> In Ukraine the language should be Ukrainian in the formal environment, but informally people can use whatever language they choose.<sup>109</sup>

Strong men and women have a chance to develop and look after their children instead of one having to manage it all — or even the family having to manage alone. Families need rely not only on themselves, but on the support of the country. Women should not have to feel like the pushing force that is managing everything. The world is wonderful and beautiful and women have time to enjoy it.

People are able to enjoy the many wonderful things that are around, like concerts and other cultural events because they are accessible financially and physically.

Our choices in the elections are clear and responsible and resources are left in Ukraine for Ukrainians and not transferred abroad.

---

<sup>107</sup> Here one of the participants said that Ukrainians should not have to vote for a president who “two times was in prison” and a prime minister who doesn’t know the language and spoke about abolishing business people who are at their mother’s breasts (said more crudely) instead of “blood suckers.”

<sup>108</sup> Women noted that Tatars and other people had been exiled from Ukraine and other areas of what was the USSR. They had not been allowed to read papers in their own language, to sing their songs, and to express their culture because it was seen as a threat to the unity of the USSR.

<sup>109</sup> Someone shared an anecdote that goes as follows: A Russian moved to Germany and complained that he was not able to understand anyone. In response he was told that he needed to speak German. The Russian retorted that Germans needed to speak Russian.

All people should be able to stay in Ukraine — all possibilities are here. They can go abroad if they want to but they don't have to go abroad to survive.

It is important that people in Ukraine are happy. We all need different things and the happiness of one should not make others miserable. Need to find some ways of living in harmony.

Conflict is a reality in our lives but does not need to be destructive.

*[The room fell quiet following this statement. Gradually the women continued.]*

Nature is taken care of to assure its development and preservation. There is love for all aspects of the country.

These are the colours for a healthy Ukraine<sup>110</sup>: green, the Ukrainian colours of blue and yellow, the embroidery of Ukraine in red and black, the yellow of sunflowers, the wreaths that women wear on their heads when dancing, brown of the earth, red poppies, white — I just look better in white, *[laughing]* all bright colours — no grey, different colours.

Music — lots of music — traditional, jazz, folk songs, classical, lots of singing particularly a resurgence of Ukrainian singing for young people.

There are many different talented people in Ukraine — modern, operas from Ukraine are often with a happy end. The music of the Ukrainian Rebellion Army empowers.

The smells, the smells — tea from a particular tree, bread cooking, kalena [red berries], honey flowers... *[Honey is also associated with now ex-President, Yushchenko]* — salo [bacon fat], wood stove, autumn smoke when people burn the stubble in the fields, dry leaves, cows in the village, cows eating wet grass, the smell of the pavement.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup>One woman started sharing the colours the Ukraine envisioned and others started to chime in as noted. The smiles and energy were palpable.

<sup>111</sup>Here one woman jokes that she likes the smell of the pavement, that she is a city person. Another joined her in being a “pavement person”. Participants noted how different the market smells here from

Group members then spoke about the difference between a vision and a dream noting a belief that visions can actually happen. I explained that some forms of therapy believe that it is important to vision — to picture something, in order to accomplish it (Dolan, 1991; O'Hanlon & Weiner-Davis, 1989). Participants nodded in agreement, acknowledging that most of the time women don't allow themselves to think about what they want — they just try to survive.

While still constructing the vision, the participants were asked their opinions of the process so far, a wise voice responded:

We always have to start with ourselves. We can reach all of this. Starting with the first step. We have Independence — and then again, the role of civil society — [*Voice not identifiable.*]

I shared with the women the reservations I had when considering the appropriateness of the exercise in this setting. I noted how hard they all work and my concern that, if we used this exercise, participants might believe I thought they needed to work even harder — that they would see it as their job alone to change their world. Rather, my intention was to facilitate a step back to consider what they want. I wondered aloud about what it was like share hopes with other people. I also wondered what it would like to hear each other's pictures — maybe find some commonalities. I did not share that I had not anticipated there would be this much richness.

---

anywhere else. "Here the tomatoes smell like tomatoes, apples like apples, even the sweat under people's arms — natural. Small strawberries — wild strawberries, mushrooms, the combination of strawberries in the pine trees, fresh cow's milk — warm."

Following the description of the vision itself, I asked the women to come back to present-day Ukraine and identify parts of their vision already in existence. I noted this is one way of connecting the present with the future. The women had already said that there were more steps to be taken to get from 'now' to 'then', as in the time when their dream for Ukraine will be fully actualized. They agreed, though somewhat skeptically, to talk about steps that have already been taken.

### ***Elements of the vision present in Ukraine***

The women were quietly thoughtful before beginning to identify elements of their vision already present in Ukraine.

Ukraine is Independent.

We have beginnings of everything we have identified.

Peace — or at least no war.

We are safe. We here don't live in fear all the time.

The colours — blue sky.

During Soviet times we were dependent on the state and now we are dependent on ourselves. We can at least do something.

We have freedom of religion.

Some people are willing to share some of their wealth. [*A privately sponsored scholarship was mentioned.*]

Ukrainian language is spoken openly and official acknowledged.

Children are more in love — openly.

Diversity is more accepted.

Education basics are here.

Even though corruption is something that is shared, everyone talks about it — still there are instructors [*at the university*] who do not take bribes. This is the beginning of a free and supportive education system.

There are people who have acted with integrity all of the way through. [*People had told me that previously corruption was expected, but now when corruption is uncovered, people may be more disappointed than before, thinking that this behaviour should have changed.*]

People now are at least able to communicate openly about dissatisfaction.

We have some of the basics of civil society.

Many citizens of Ukraine now have a positive attitude about Ukraine and want to share this feeling.

The fact that you [*nodding at me*] are here and that we are all speaking about this openly.<sup>112</sup>

There are still some natural resources — forestry, etc. This is positive even though it may be due to the stagnation of industry.

We may not have money but the food is natural!

The young generations that were born in independent Ukraine have no fear, no restrictions. These children are coming to adulthood now. [*Several participants have children who fit into this category.*]

Children know the language and can speak it. Our kids know not only Ukrainian language but other languages and the more education they have, the more they achieve. We cannot go back to what was before.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Someone commented that this type of study would previously have been inconceivable. People would have been arrested for sharing their thoughts.

<sup>113</sup> One of the women's children is a well-known novelist. She never mentions this herself; still, his novels are published in more than six languages and so his stories are spread around the world.

There are people who are working for the best for children with disabilities. Some of those people are in the room. Parents are working for inclusion of their children — in regular schools, etc. Kids with disabilities are now mainstreamed in daycare — even though these workers are sometimes without salaries.

There is optimism.

We have a sense of humour.

We have honey!

There is folk music. [*Women, with voices overlapping, began to list off varieties of music they enjoyed.*]

We are in relatively good health — and we need to take more responsibility for our health!

We care about our own integrity and must care about it more than our politicians. We are actresses in our own lives.

Women who are in this room represent women who work for the future of Ukraine, even when we speak a different language at home.

We are proud to be Ukrainian.

Figure 18 Visioning in Lviv

Photo F. Beckwith



The above 'present day' section was completed more soberly than the first. We then moved on to look at 'the next steps' which is the section where participants identify what needs to happen next to move yet closer to the vision. I was careful to remind them that some of these might be their steps as they had noted themselves, but not all. I asked participants to consider what practical steps are needed to move forward. One woman said, "You have said that you are not here to encourage us to work harder, but as [a local activist in the disability community] says, no president will come to clean up our houses." This echoed the sentiments shared by Sasha L. during her individual interview.

### ***'Next steps'***

Lviv participants identified the following as the next steps necessary to move Ukraine towards its envisioned future.

We must continue to do what we are doing — continue personal responsibility.

We have to invite young people to this conversation — and to work.

We will work practically to have the laws become properly representative of the constitution — practiced and enforceable.

Education should be better connected with practice — not just theoretical.

People need to share their experience more.

Increase in grant programs for our young people — all areas.

Cooperation among people as has been started.

We have to support empowerment of communities such as the disabilities community, and the foster parent communities so that they can continue to work and grow in strength and become encouragers to other communities of interest.

We must change the way of thinking to more of a resource model rather than a deficit model. The strengths must be mentioned more in the mass media — more than they are now.

Each person must continue to respect each person, and acknowledge everyone — every person — and now put more pressure on government to do the same, following with policies in these areas — for example, with pension improvements and such.

We have to continue to support people to reflect on their values.

Women spoke the words above with energy and conviction – until we realized that our allotted meeting time was almost up. The bus to take us out of the city to our celebratory meal had arrived. We spoke briefly about the plan to connect with the women from Crimea via video link in about a week’s time.

I summarized what had been done in our time together, and presented each woman with a memento of the project and their participation. I noted that the small, silver, tree medallion<sup>114</sup>, reminded me of the strength of the women and the reality that they are the roots of Ukraine. The women said they would be observant when meeting women from Crimea area, knowing that any woman could be a ‘sister’. They asked me to also wear a medallion.

---

<sup>114</sup> At the group visioning meetings, participants were each presented with a small silver medallion of an oak tree (represented on the front page) strung on a green silk chord. The medallions were designed and made by metallurgist, Krista Reid, of Winnipeg.

Following this meeting, we all boarded a small bus hired to take us to a restaurant in the countryside. This oasis on the outskirts of Lviv was a collection of buildings set apart from a small village. On the property were fish ponds and separate areas where people could sit together in brightly painted shelters cooking, eating, and visiting. There was a swimming area reached by a bridge from the restaurant garden.

When we arrived, the air was warm and misty. We spent almost an hour exploring outdoors and then a couple of hours eating and talking together in a large private dining room. As evening came upon us, we quietly piled into the bus and drove back to the city where the participants went their separate ways. I arranged to meet with the women separately to get their final approval for use of their stories, now translated and put into a context with the other participants. The women would meet again once more for the video conference with their fellow participants in Crimea.



Figure 19 Lviv celebration

Photo by F. Beckwith

I was emotionally and physically exhausted, full of gratitude. This day seemed initially to be the beginning of the end of a long journey for me. Then the women reminded me that they want their stories to be shared as far and wide as possible. They were not sure what would happen during the video connection with the women from Crimea, but they were clear that something was shifting in their lives and the way that they were looking at themselves.

### **Summer train to Crimea**

The thousand-kilometer train ride to Crimea was another twenty-four hours across country; in contrast with February, the trip was in full sunshine. Unfortunately, even with temperatures in the upper thirties, the air-conditioning on the train was often

turned off to accommodate the demands of young families. The expressed belief on their part was that air conditioning blowing on their children would cause illness. We slept as we could with our compartment doors open. It was an adventure.

In the warmth and sunshine of July – and maybe to escape the heat of the train, passengers were frequently tempted outside onto the platform during our many stops. The farther south and east we travelled, the more interesting and enticing each platform became. With increasing numbers and variety, freshly cooked delicacies were made available by local villagers who made their living selling their wares to travelers. July was the season for warm, freshly cooked corn, vereniky, baby potatoes swimming in butter and spices, smoked fish, and a huge array of fresh fruit sold by the bushel. We did not get a lot of sleep but we ate very well on this journey.

The farther the train took us south and east, the less we heard the Ukrainian language. This was strikingly so during one train stop. A travelling companion, bargaining for some berries on the platform, called the berries by their Ukrainian name. The man selling them ignored her and continued to hawk the berries using their Russian name. My friend confronted the salesman saying that these were indeed [Ukrainian name]. He told her she should learn proper Russian to which she responded that they were living in Ukraine and promptly ended the conversation, frustrated and upset.

Our destination this time was farther than Simferopol. A couple of the participants, knowing the area well, had thought it best that we stay at the seaside and for Simferopol women to drive out together for the visioning meeting. They believed

that the city women would see the trip to the seaside, even for the day, as a treat. So, we were booked sight unseen into a three-year-old modest family resort built on the edge of the industrial town, Nikolaiva, which itself is nestled into a coastal crook of the Black Sea. Since we had not known the details of our destination, we had decided to give ourselves a day to find things before hosting a meeting with the women. Once on site we scouted out a venue for the meeting, ordered some food, and settled in.

The family friendly resort was owned and operated by a collection of Turkish and Russian business people. This we learned from the man who drove us back to Simferopol a few days later. He was one of the owners. License plates on most cars were Russian, and Russian was the language of commerce and companionship. My 'market' Ukrainian was very obviously foreign.

The Black Sea was a mere few hundred meters from our accommodations. People were in bathing attire with children playing everywhere. A happy place, this resort was built as a business with its target population an emerging middle class wishing to escape the cities for a week or two. This was the attempted compromise between the present dearth of time and space for family 'rest' and the old Soviet tradition of sending families away for a couple of weeks in the summer to a state-run sanatorium or rest spot. My companions said the rates were such that the average family could save for a vacation and enjoy the spot once every year or two. My companions also bristled the few times they attempted to speak Ukrainian and were ignored.

## **Regional meeting in Crimea: Visioning in Nikolaiva**

The Crimean participants met in Simferopol and travelled together for an eleven o'clock meeting at the resort. They arrived in a yellow mini-bus driven by Volodya, Nadezhda S.'s driver from the school. Ready for the extremely hot, sunny day, women were dressed as for a special occasion — celebration clothes for summer — light but modest pastel dresses — except for one participant who wore a pair of white pants and black shirt with bright red and gold appliqué.

Ana S. was with the group. Ana, who originally did not attend the smaller gathering in February, told us she believed this was a very important meeting that she would not have missed for the world. By the time the group arrived, the women seemed to have incorporated Ana S. into their midst. Unfortunately, Veronika S. was not able to join us.

The meeting was held in the rather plush basement banquet area of the resort's main building. We had secured the space for the afternoon. We struggled putting up our visioning poster, but managed to do so by holding it over a couch. The women crowded together around a single table in one large, amply cushioned booth, though there was plenty of other room besides.

All chatted animatedly as we prepared to begin. We reviewed what had happened in the project so far, including the fact that the women from Lviv had completed their visioning exercise a few days prior. We reminded the participant that we would attempt a video conference with the Lviv women toward the end of our session. When asked

about picture-taking, the participants reacted similarly to their Lviv counterparts: all signed the release forms, noting that they were not used to being asked — that others would just take the pictures. The photographer's presence was noticed much less than the periodic entrance and exit of servers bringing water and light refreshments.

We asked what thoughts participants had about their individual stories and the process since we last saw them. Their frank and surprisingly moving comments are indicated, along with the feedback from the Lviv group, in the next chapter.

I thanked the women for their openness as we moved to talk more about what I had been doing since I last met with them. I shared more about my program, my writing process, and some of the common themes in their own and the women from Lviv's stories, noting that while they shared many things, their individual stories were just that — individual! Aida S. commented that living in the Soviet Union people all had to be similar. "They even had to wear the same clothes. They tried to lead us in the same direction."

I reminded participants about the phase in study wherein I would review women's stories with them individually to be certain they felt comfortable with the ways their stories were being represented. Though the women all dismissed the need for this kind of clarification, I insisted that I needed to complete the process to be sure. At first some participants understood this step to mean that I questioned the veracity of their stories. When I insisted once more that the process was meant to ascertain that each was

comfortable with the ways they were represented in the study, the women were incredulous – surprised again that someone would care.



Figure 20 Visioning in Crimea

Photo: F. Beckwith

While we proceeded with the visioning exercise, Halyna, who had come as a kind of trip advisor and technical support person, worked diligently in another room to secure an internet connection.

### **Focusing exercise**

As in Lviv, the women were provided with two pieces of paper which were different colours, and which fit together. They were asked to write down two qualities that they saw and nurtured in themselves. Some people struggled to name their own values and chatted with each other. I noted that the purpose of the exercise was partially to remind people of who they themselves were and what they were bringing to the visioning process.

### **Visioning: The PATH process**

At first, the women were slow to talk. I referred to the small group meeting some had attended in February, noting this day's process would be an extension of that conversation. Reminded that the women in Lviv had just completed the same exercise, and that we would soon be speaking with them, the participant's resolve to put away shyness and dig into the work seemed strengthened. As they warmed to the process, it became hard to keep pace with the lively discussion and banter back and forth. As in Lviv, this conversation was audio-taped and the responses of the women are captured below. These responses were also recorded on the large wall-chart. Names have not been ascribed to most of the comments because voices were not consistently identifiable.

### ***Women from Crimea's vision for Ukraine***

Following are components of the vision identified by the Simferopol women as captured during their audio-taped visioning meeting. Periodically there were side conversations that were not translated as voices overlapped. In some cases comments were repeated by different people and have been noted only once here, still in the order the pieces were spoken. This time, Sonya wrote furiously to keep up while continuing to interpret.

This was the women's picture:

There must be economic stability.

We will have material wealth or at least stability for all people.

There is sufficient work in Ukraine so that people don't have to migrate.

And ecological purity!

We will develop our spiritual culture and there will be better, more pure relationships between generations.

There will be mutual understanding between different generations!

We will have inclusive education.

All parents are responsible for their children — fulfilling their parental duties.

The State takes appropriate care of senior people and children

Freedom is guaranteed by the constitution

Ukraine is known, respected, and seen as a decent place in the world arena.

The international potential of Ukraine is seen — Ukrainians are valued in other countries as contributors.

We have free education and child care. [*Someone commented that this was going backward in a way because education and child care was 'universal' in Soviet times.*]

There is open and honest communication everywhere.

All people are valued from birth.

Accessible rest/vacation for everyone!

There are opportunities to travel abroad – and people can afford to do this.

We have more kind programs on television instead of violence!

We have better roads.

Crimea is seen as the pearl it is.<sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> Someone commented that Crimea is a pearl, but it is not seen as such because the roads no longer are good enough to attract anyone. Reportedly the access was much better in Soviet times.

We have a clear and kinder future with better relationships between people.  
There is no more aggression which is being promoted by mass media.

No more will our politicians consciously divide us because it is not beneficial to them for us to all get along.

We get rid of corruption in all spheres. We have good laws but people read them as they wish.

No division! We don't want Crimea to go to Russia! We want Crimea to be part of Ukraine. We think that people in Ukraine have the best life of former Soviet republics.

To get rid of Mafia who are in all spheres of life.

To get rid of white slavery — trafficking!

There are equal rights for men and women.

We need to live in light instead of darkness —to thrive!

We lose our energy dependence so that we don't have to rely so much on Russia.

Inland resources should belong to people not to private corporations — should belong to the state for the people. [*The participant noted she was speaking of a state made up of the people.*]

Forbid the government to sell land out from under the people.

Professional scholars and scientists are able to freelance.

### ***Elements of the vision already existing***

As in Lviv, the women in Crimea were asked to identify the pieces of their vision that already exist in some form in Ukraine. This is how they responded.

We already there are some rights; more need to develop. We have the constitution but things need to be in legislation.

We have some cultural expression.

We have freedom of choice.

There is some care of seniors and children [*Women noted that they are part of challenging and developing these systems, especially for children with disabilities.*]

We have some medical care!

Education — it is not perfect, but we are not Africa!

Many talented and well known professionals, artists, writers are here.

We have pretty good development of science.

We have everything. We have preserved some things, but not all is developed.

A good road leads to Simferopol.

Some borders are open, and people can actually connect with anybody.

People from abroad can visit.

We can talk to our ministers in government even if they don't listen to us! We can go to the offices and ministers will see us.

All religions are now welcome here.

At this point, we received word that the video connection should soon be available.

Because the connection was to be tentative at best, we forged on to the next section of the exercise, trying to look at some future steps before conversing with the other region.

### ***'Next steps'***

The women in the warm basement in Nikolaiva then identified the next necessary steps toward their common vision.

The legislation base must be changed. We have a constitution but the legislation is not always reflective or followed.

We need investment in industry and agricultural complex.

Here a discussion broke out related to wishes for some of the lost industry and agriculture and which areas the country should focus on first. The women then asked whether their visions and thoughts were anything like their sister group in Lviv. I responded that, indeed, there were many, many commonalities.

One notable side conversation went by rather quickly, seemingly unnoticed by most of the group members. While agreeing that Crimea should “be recognized as the pearl that it is,” Ekaterina S. said that she wanted Crimea to again become a part of Russia<sup>116</sup>. Ana S. passionately responded saying if this happened she would gladly return to Siberia! During the video conference, all participants said that they wanted a united Ukraine.

---

<sup>116</sup>Most of Ekaterina S. family members live in Russia and whereas during Soviet times travel within the USSR was very easy, since Ukraine declared Independence, this travel has become prohibitive in expense. Thus, in person connections with family members are now considerably limited.



Figure 21 Celebration in Nikolaiva, Crimea

Photo: F. Beckwith

### **Cross-regional video conference**

Our visioning exercise was tapering off when we discovered that we had a functioning internet connection with Lviv where people were ready to speak with us in Crimea. By this point, there was no particular agenda for this conversation other than to meet and greet each other.

Halyna brought the computer in with a good connection and we set it on the table in front of the women; the room became very quiet. In Lviv, Kristina L.'s son had brought her to the department of Sociology and Social work where the meeting was held. There she was joined by Aneta L., Nadia L., Mariana L., and soon, Zoya L. Missing participants were out of the city on business or rest as it was Saturday.

Aneta L. opened the meeting with greetings in Russian. Aida S. responded in Ukrainian. Aneta continued addressing the women from Crimea mostly in Russian, saying that it was a great pleasure for all of them to be able to speak with each other.

The conversation continued in a mix of Ukrainian and Russian with both groups moving out of their comfort zones. It seemed easier for the women from the west to accommodate the language differences, also having been schooled in Russian. Alsu S., fluent in Russian, was not so familiar with Ukrainian, having lived much of her life away. She was encouraged to also offer greetings in her native tongue which she very shyly did. Ana S. noted that she was originally from western Ukraine, from Ternopil region. She immediately wished all women the best. Nadezhda S. spoke about how dear the women in Lviv were to her especially knowing that they are all working toward the same future.

I told the women of my appreciation for all of their work — their contributions— and mentioned that the group visions shared many commonalities. I asked if they would like to offer any messages or thoughts to each other.

The air became electric as we continued. With little silence other than allowing responses, a conversation began. First, the women from Lviv wished their sisters “good health,” happiness, etc. The Crimean women responded with similar greetings adding that there should be no more floods, no rain, but that people in Lviv should be able to

see the water<sup>117</sup>. They noted that they had been watching the news and seen some of the devastation in the Lviv area.

The Lviv women said that they wanted all Ukraine to prosper, and for all to have everything that they need. They said they wanted to be able to communicate with the women in Crimea, and wished them beautiful things, and positive experiences always. They wished them all the best — joy, that they find happiness, and all their dreams come true.

During this conversation, Zoya L. rushed in apologetically joining the Lviv participants. Speaking in Russian she said her wishes for all of Ukraine include political and economic independence, good health, happiness and joy for all Ukrainians in general, and study participants in particular. She said that she believed that women, beginning with this particular group, need to “unite [our] souls not only in Ukraine, but in the world, so that [we] can live together better.”

Nadezhda S. noted “We need to develop a project — civil action of women — heard not only in the kitchen, but to be seen and heard by every member of the community. It is time to become politically active.” She said that their families must continue to be healthy and strong to continue to support/allow women to do what they need to do.

---

<sup>117</sup> There had been massive spring flooding in Western Ukraine in particular with some loss of life. Additionally, the women in Crimea had told me before our official meeting began that they were sorry the women from Lviv were not able to visit them at the seaside.

The women talked back and forth, focusing on how important it is for women to look after themselves. The wish was for “good health so that there can be self-organization.” There were wishes “that every woman feel herself fulfilled,” that women’s families “allow them to be fully themselves to be able to access and combine their abilities to be useful.”

Someone said she wanted “every one of you to know that your lives are multi-coloured” that all participants should live their lives with satisfaction in what they are doing. Another said that life is wonderful and rich knowing the others are there. Both groups said that they “will not let politicians spilt [us] or split Ukraine.”

Participants agreed that they were in “a unique situation, in a position to communicate” and that they were “grateful to everyone — to each other — for participating [in the study].”

Sasha L. said all participants had “put efforts in and all can continue to put efforts in to continue this type of communication.” Another voice responded, “Let this road lead us!” The women went on then to thank me for starting “this.” They were extravagant in sharing what their participation in the study meant to them. Some of these comments are shared in the following chapter.

I said that it was an honour to be working with them, that it was a very special thing that they shared their stories — and that they agreed to participate in this way — that this was OUR project and I would do my best to reflect the work and to honour

their stories. I said I hoped they would also continue to honour their stories and to seek ways to increase understanding between people as they do themselves.

After about half an hour there was some concern about the wavering, notoriously unstable, internet connection. As the conversation began to wane, women made a pact to connect with each other, to keep in touch, and to think about something that they could do together in the future. They spoke about possibly starting women's "civil society working groups" — small groups enlisting other women in each community.

With all the emotion, further words seemed inadequate. Thinking about a good way to say goodbye, I asked the women if they would like to sing a song together. After very little consultation they began to sing one song — a cheery song but one that was difficult to sing in unison with the time lag on the internet connection. Everyone laughed and then someone suggested a melodic folk song, "*Cheremshayna*"<sup>118</sup> and so the singers began and continued in unison. As their voices became quiet, I again thanked them all, and people softly and sweetly said good-bye.

During the silence that followed, hot lunches were brought out a bit prematurely and placed at the back of the room. I wanted the women to enjoy this part of the day as celebration so I moved more quickly than planned to present the women with their

---

<sup>118</sup> *Cheremshayna* is a love song, a courting song (music by Vasyl Mykhailiuk, and verse by Mykola Yuriychuk). The translation of the chorus is the following: "The bird cherry tree is everywhere luxuriantly flowering. The guelder rose is dressed as if for marriage. The sheep are in the garden, and the girl is there in a quiet corner, waiting, waiting..." The guelder rose is one of the national symbols of Ukraine, and the tree *Cheremshyna* has also become associated with Ukraine, partially due to this love song. The transliteration of the chorus is: "*Vsiudy booyno kvitne cheremshyna, mov do shliubu vbralasia kalyna. Vivchara v sadochku, v tykhomu kutochku zhde divchyna, zhde...*" (Hayduk, 2010).

silver oak trees. The women expressed their appreciation and, fingering their medallions, stood for a bit sharing their thoughts about the symbolism of the oak tree.

A meal studded with toasts followed, after which Sonya and I interviewed the women individually while others conversed and walked by the sea. One by one, participants approved what had been written with only minor clarification. Several women elaborated on their stories, excited at the prospect that others would hear them.

Ana S. was open in sharing her appreciation for the process, as she repeatedly thanked us for including her. She said “This storytelling was something absolutely different [for her] — kind of liberating.” Unused to reflecting upon herself the process “gave [her] a kind of comfort — a kind of gift to be able to do this.”

Later, while others milled about outside, Ana sat quietly alone. Periodically, she arose to walk away and touch the flowers in the nearby hedges. As we walked hand in hand to the bus, Ana took me over to a rose of deep ruby colour growing beside the path. She gently touched the rose and then my cheek. Holding the same rose on its branch in my hand, I returned the gesture. Just prior to boarding the bus, Ana S. stepped aside once more and gave me a blessing in Ukrainian. We kissed and hugged again.

## Chapter 7

### **Reviewing the Process: What has this got to do with peacebuilding?**

This study was embarked upon as participatory research — appreciative inquiry as to the role Ukrainian women’s individual narratives and shared acts of visioning might play in building understanding and peace between two diverse regions.

Like all stories, the stories of the study participants come out of, and must be considered within their own cultural context (Chase , 1995). My researcher/co-participant response was also coloured by experience.

Participants in this project told their stories at a time when their country was on the brink of, and then just past, a presidential election. During the eighteen months prior, Ukraine’s economy had tanked again and people were once more scrambling for subsistence. In conversations prior to the elections, Ukrainians often told me they didn’t know how to vote and that their votes would not matter anyway.

It had been almost twenty years since Ukraine declared independence from a Soviet system that had met the basic material needs of its citizens — at least in theory. In 1991, Ukrainians voted against a Soviet system they had intimately experienced as oppressive. The alternately chosen picture of “not Soviet” was unclear. Bringing that alternate picture into focus continued to be difficult. Even though Ukraine itself had the autonomy that comes from having clear national boundaries, many families continued to live in poverty and were divided by distance and nationality — physically, economically, and politically inaccessible to each other.

Still, in spite of an independent Ukraine's shaky journey toward empowerment, since the Orange Revolution pride in Ukrainian culture and freedom of expression had flourished all over the country. People of all abilities were being included in society and the general colour of the country, including the colour in the clothes people wear, is much brighter.

This study invited women from two diverse regions of Ukraine to share their individual stories in January and February of 2010. At that point, Orange Party leader, incumbent, Viktor Yuschenko was no longer a contender in the presidential election. Instead, his previous running-mate-turned-critic, Yulia Tymoshenko, and the vocal Russian-identified Viktor Yanukovich were pitted against each other for the top seat in Ukrainian parliament.

Participant group visioning followed the election. The streets of Crimea were relatively quiet while citizens in Lviv articulated the irony of having to accept a president who spoke better Russian than Ukrainian. He shared neither the experience nor the identity of their Ukraine (Kuzio, 2010). Despite an environment and history much different from their Lviv counterparts, participants from the South previously assumed to have divergent values from their Western counterparts, showed a different side of themselves in this study. Both individual and regional group hopes and dreams for Ukraine were far closer than anyone had imagined.

This chapter first reviews the process of the study, beginning with evaluative comments by the women themselves, followed by my own reflections on the process.

The second section examines the study's contributions to the tool-chest of resources helpful in community-building and peace-building with diverse populations.

### **Part A: Participant review of the process**

Embarking on this study, I noted that the work of democracy involves purposeful participation which comes through empowerment. Throughout and as we ended I wondered about the impact of the study on the participants. How had it felt to tell their stories – particularly to a stranger who did not speak their language and used an interpreter? What was it like to meet with other women involved in the same process and to speak with them about both the process and their dreams? What was it like to share this experience with women thought to be different and perhaps in opposition to their own thoughts and beliefs? Did they feel stronger and more connected with each other? Had study participation made any difference at all?

The study took place in two distinct time periods allowing some processing for all participants during the months in between. The first part of this study, in January – February 2010, invited women from the regions of Lviv and Crimea (Simferopol) to share their personal stories with me. This left a period of four months before the second, third, and fourth phases of the study.

Reconnecting with the participants in July 2010, I asked them what they had thought about the project since our previous meeting. First, women spoke about “pleasant feelings that people are interested in Ukraine” and said this knowledge encouraged them to continue the work they were doing as parents, in human services,

and in education. They said they felt hopeful that the write-up and sharing of the project would help non-Ukrainians gain a more realistic understanding of Ukraine and Ukrainian women, thus counteracting stereotypes they feared the antics of their government leaders spread.

Individually, most of the women commented that they were surprised at how they felt telling their stories, this being the first time anyone had asked.

So never before did I share my life experience – only my mom was the person who knew everything. But frankly speaking I got relief when I spoke out everything I had on my soul. And of course such meetings are very seldom in our life, and there should be more of these meetings because it becomes easier. In our lives we are busy with household things and this is absolutely different. Such meetings are for the soul. It is a kind of a confession. Thank you. (Darya S.)

Women expressed wonder at their level of comfort, the extent to which they shared, and how emotional the process was. Participants spoke with pride about how different they felt about themselves – that the process had changed them. Having someone listen made a difference. Aida S. said she had been thinking about the process.

Who do you tell stories to? Some will be critical, some won't understand and some say, "Why should I listen to others?" And I realized that it is very important to have someone who listens. It is a great value when there are people who listen – people who know how to listen. (Aida S.)

Many women said they had never thought about their lives "from the beginning". When invited, they had spoken "almost as a stream of consciousness," without much interruption. They were thankful not only to the project for being asked to participate, but also to themselves for their honesty and self-reflection despite their anticipatory

anxiety. They said they had taken a unique opportunity to consider their personal values and life choices.

One participant noted her interest in being able to review her life “in a kind of systematic way” after which she had taken “a kind of side look” at her experiences. She saw the process as a new resource to her.

Other women said that storytelling and sharing their hopes had given them “more optimism,” “inspiration” and, “along with some painful memories more positive, sweet, memories.” Women said they were interested in what would come next in their lives. Some women were quite specific about the impact of participation for themselves and others in their lives.

My self-esteem has increased because, in detail, I have never before told my story to anybody. In May I turned 50 and my life is so good that I am happy with myself. But when I look around, I see that I am really wonderful because I have realized that terrible things did not touch me. They went beside me. Or it could be how I accept life — I accept only good things and I hide or forget about bad things. It is easier to live. (Aida S.)

Alsu S. listened quietly to others and, smiling, added “After I talked to you, I got some hope and I felt so much relief. Even I became confident in myself.” (Alsu S.)

Darya S. who had shared how powerless she sometimes felt, said that, following the small gathering in February, she had made herself and her children collages, and ‘maps’ of their life visions. She said that the invitation to hope, think, and work toward concrete change had become important to her and something she was now trying to

teach her daughter and grand-daughter. These comments were made prior to the PATH exercise.

Relationships to other participants had also shifted for some. The already diverse Simferopol group noted that relationships between women who had met prior to the study changed after that first small group meeting. At the beginning of the July regional meeting, these women spoke of their new, shared respect and bond of affection. They said they felt supported by each other and that the hierarchy that is common to most supervisors/supervisees, teacher/parent relationships had been considerably leveled. Even though participants had not heard each other's stories, Nadezhda S. acknowledged that their group had a Jewish member, a Tatar member, and women from different locales and generations of Ukraine and this mosaic representation of Ukraine was important.

In this small group, it was almost a family environment when we interacted. I realized that every one of us presented a historical piece from the history of our country — the history of her people because we here are representatives not only of ethnic Ukrainians; we represent here our ethnic history, and our families in this. Everything that united us still unites.

So, one common desire for all of us is to create better conditions for future generations, so that they do not suffer in the future as we once did. Our ethical capital and our life experience — capital or assets — we leave to future generations. With dignity I leave this for my children. I keep telling my grandchildren about myself, about my parents, their parents, and about those periods of life that we all had.

And I want to say, "Thank you" to everyone here, and I ask everyone here to be a group. I feel some responsibility for all of you and it is very pleasant that with such an easy heart we can communicate here. (Nadezhda S.)

Nadezhda said she thought the process of the study was a kind of spiritual or therapeutic service — very important to women in particular because “women are emotional and keep things very close.”

After the visioning meeting in Lviv, Leana L. said she noticed not only her own resolve, but the strength and integrity of the other women as well. The visioning meeting had been a chance to reflect upon her beliefs and to hear them out loud — her voice joining those of the women around her.

Despite the earlier noted relatively low evaluation of self-efficacy noted by Ukrainians when discussing their role in civil society, the participants in this study acknowledged that reaching out to each other and working together on a common vision might be of benefit not only for themselves, but also for the communities, and the country of Ukraine itself. In their cross-regional video conference, the women suggested they explore conjoint development of small discussion groups in their regions for other women to begin to talk about Ukraine’s future and help keep each other engaged in the process of building both communities and nation.

We need to develop a project – civil action of women – heard not only in the kitchen, but to be seen and heard by every member of the community. It is time to become politically active. (Nadezhda S.)

In summary, though not all have been quoted in this section, all of the women in this study individually spoke of their involvement as being very positive, having found value in all aspects of the process. All who attended the regional meetings said that they felt more hopeful, connected to the women in their own region, their regional

counterparts, and the world outside Ukraine. All said that they had a more positive view of their country and increased hope for its future. Several said that the experience for them was “life-changing.”

### **Part B: Facilitator/participant review of the process**

In this section, I share some of my own observations of the process and at least the short-term impact of this study. The participants in this project all had stories to tell and telling the stories of their lives connected the women to themselves, their families, communities, and country and to past, present, and future. Women spoke about the importance of safely reaching into their own experiences and, once fortified, extending themselves to others, sharing their own hopes for the future, and encouraging others previously perceived to be different, to do the same. The end focus was on what could be done together as they began to trade their certainty of deficit for practical strategies towards abundance.

#### **Relationship to self: ‘Being seen’ builds agency**

Civil society by definition is a community of individuals functioning, uncoerced, with shared interests, purposes, and values (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2010). Civil society typically refers to institutions which are neither family nor state, but function between and with both entities, and when operating at best, support the health of both. Participation in civil society is one of the components and one of the signs of empowerment (Schwerin, 1985).

Working with survivors of trauma, I learned long ago that the act of participation necessary for any kind of relationship is almost impossible if an individual is not able to relate to herself. The roots of empathy are planted in a sense of self-worth and self-efficacy (Gordon, 2005). Embarking on this study, I did not know how the women involved in the study valued themselves. Asking them to tell their stories was a rich way to open discovery not only for myself, but also for the women themselves.

### **Creating a safe space ‘to be’ and to share**

Appreciative inquiry in itself can be empowering if the subject or topic of the inquiry is considered positive. Used here, appreciative inquiry was collaborative, inviting women to share their stories — to narrate their lives. As with the TRC’s (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2010), a safe space was created for women to step away from their daily lives and spend time in self-reflection. In this case, no forgiveness or retribution was being sought. Instead, the women were told that their stories might assist in “building peace”. All participants said this was the first time they had been asked to tell their stories. That invitation was powerful in itself.

First, being asked to tell her story indicated to each woman that she was important in the here and now. What she had to say was of value.

Actually, it is a kind of two fold feeling. So, first of all it is nice to think that what you are saying could be of importance. And on the other hand, it was nice to be able to review my life. Somehow I haven’t had another chance before to review it in a systematic way, so it was a nice way to have a sight of my experience. I found it to be very helpful. It is a kind of resourceful way – a new resource for oneself. (Aneta L., visioning meeting)

Second, sharing her life story was an opportunity to use her voice to anchor herself before joining others in a larger context. Like Birkla (2001), each woman said she felt safe to move backward in time through her own history and in the telling, bring it safely into the present.

Participants said that they felt important — recognized. This new self-valuation was reportedly further underlined because the inquirer was from away — from another continent and culture. Perhaps the fact that the stories had to be translated increased the sense of importance. Further, once they realized that I was not questioning their stories but rather checking my own accuracy and understanding when I asked them to review my writing choices with me, participants held their heads a little higher.

In the process of telling their stories women also reacquainted themselves with their own values and strengths. The process went from self-story to self-reflection, to sharing in small groups. My questions guided participants to tell their stories “from beginning to end,”<sup>119</sup> reflecting first upon contexts — their pasts with connection to family and community life. Questions gradually became more personal in that they focused on the individual woman’s experiences. Here was the opportunity to address challenges of the past, even trauma, and acknowledge strengths — how they got through, and who supported them. Then, being asked about their hopes for the future reminded women that there is a future. Having already spoken about coming through trials, reminded of internal and external supports, it became safe to look ahead.

---

<sup>119</sup> Several participants used this phrasing when telling me how valuable they had found the process.

And when we started talking I found out – so it was a different experience – actually I found out it was a different thing. It was like a flow of conscious and I didn't even try to stop myself and I even saw you looking at your watch and I wanted to talk and talk and talk – I wanted to talk with myself – I didn't even need the presence of other people. And when we finished I realized that it touched my very deep hidden memories. This meeting gave me more optimism, more inspiration and very positive memories. And then I had an interest in what would happen then. And even now I have this interest. (Nadia L., visioning meeting)

### **Relationship to others: Creating space and reaching out**

In both the individual and group visioning processes participants managed to take themselves further out of the day-to-day to move unhindered into a future of possibilities. While they did not know the details of others' lives, participants knew that each woman had been asked for and shared her individual story. Discovering that their visions were shared with others thought to be different from them, the women sought to highlight their commonalities rather than their differences. There appeared to be a shared sense of responsibility throughout the discussions. As they joined/shared their visions for Ukraine, the women began to speak about acting together, further creating community for their future rather than being acted upon as had so often happened in their collective histories.

We always have to start with ourselves. We can reach all of this. Starting with the first step... We have independence. But then again, the role of civil society... (Sasha L., visioning meeting)

### **Making connections: Finding commonalities**

Initially I thought that one of the most powerful pieces of this project might be women sharing their personal stories with each other in their own groups and with women in

the other region; however, as the study rolled out, no space was created specifically for story-sharing within and across groups. Interestingly, no one seemed particularly interested in these details. Instead, individually and in both groups, women asked about common themes. Some thoughts as to how this developed follow.

First, participants said that just knowing women were being asked to be part of the same process — to tell their stories — drew them to each other. Each knew that she had spoken about her experience, that her story had been *heard by someone*, and that her group-mates' stories had also been heard. Maybe this knowledge took the pressure off the participants to compare experiences. Instead, with their stories acknowledged and safely held, the women were able to reach toward a common future. In the process they did share some likes and dislikes and swapped some recipes! I mention the recipe swap during the first small group meeting in Simferopol because it exemplifies what often happens in women's conversations. As the meeting was ending, women spoke about things they enjoy, two of which were food and gardening. Discussion then moved to different ways of making baklava, with the Tatar recipe apparently of greatest interest to the group. This conversation brought the quietest group participant to a position of sage as she shared cooking tips from her oft-maligned culture.

Being asked to vision and then share that vision was also a joining exercise and it provided a sense of hope in addition to personal and group responsibility. Participating in parallel processes, having been told that their individual stories were indeed individual, yet shared common themes, the regional groups were drawn together.

Women, accustomed to working in relationships, used their conversation to draw out a sense of good will such that they endeavored to go outside their everyday comfort to speak the other's languages, to complement each other, and to speak about their joint future working together as Ukrainian citizens.

### **Asking questions: Guiding and framing intentionality**

This study originated out of curious optimism about a group of individuals and how they might set an example for building bridges. Many elements nurtured the sense of importance of each individual as well as the sense of commonality, unity, and willingness to work together. Some of the elements may have been circumstantial. Others, managed by the facilitator, include the order of the study phases, the questions that were asked, the way questions were asked, and the facilitator response to the questions all of which are mentioned further below.

The sequence in which the elements or phases of this study were carried out telegraphed the values and beliefs behind the study. First individuals were asked about themselves in a way that highlighted the individual's central role in the study. Individual stories once acknowledged were put away for safe-keeping and the individuals became members of a regional group. In the second phase, regional group meetings were constructed not only for convenience in group size and location, but also because joining a regional group meant that the individual was part of something more than herself – that she belonged in a group that was accessible to her. Meeting cross-regionally expanded the group while participants, who acknowledged their individuality,

were willing – in fact, eager – to communicate with each other. They saw they could positively connect with each other even in simple ways such as quite literally speaking a common language, and wishing each other well. The fact that there was a plan to have a cross-regional meeting related to ‘peace-building’ announced the facilitator’s belief that participants would, at minimum, get along.

Questions themselves highlighted and supported participant efficacy. Once introduced to each other, relationships in this study all began with an invitation and then a request: “Please tell me about yourself.” The message was that the individual was important and she had something worth sharing. While this may initially seem like a one-way conversation, the tool of narrative moved the communication from one-directional inquirer and respondent to the more interactive narrator and audience. The element of narrative also shifted the power dynamic, moving the control from the inquirer to the narrator, and the space in between them.

Being asked, “What gets you through?” underlined the inquirer’s belief in the agency of the participant; the participant managed somehow — she “got through” difficulties. The question, “What do you wish for?” reminded the individual that she had a right to dream, that there would be a future, and that what she wanted mattered.<sup>120</sup>

The way questions were asked also influenced the responses given. At the beginning of each individual session, the participant was told the topic area and, briefly, what questions would be asked. She was also told that she could choose not to respond

---

<sup>120</sup> These questions are common questions in solution-focused counselling partially for the reasons noted above. See for example, Duncan & Miller (2000).

to a question if it made her uncomfortable. The questions were limited in number and open-ended in the way they were phrased. Thus, the topic was suggested and guided while the respondent/storyteller chose how much she shared and where she focused. This really was her story and she was in control! Being asked some clarifying questions<sup>121</sup> revealed my genuine curiosity and made room for participants to be the teachers that they were — experts in their own lives and experiences.

In visioning groups, the grounding exercise was done individually and responses not shared unless individuals did so spontaneously. Again, her values were a woman's own to speak about — or not. Most women quietly put their notes away. During the PATH exercise the main questions were asked and then prompts were simply, "What else?"; "Anything else?" providing time, space, and encouragement for additional responses from all group members.

### **Challenging identities: Reconstructing meaning**

The processes of this study offered women the chance to reaffirm their own identities including what was nearest and dearest to each of them. The intricate construction of self is reliant upon reflection about self – valuation through the interaction and treatment by and with others in "confrontation" acknowledging the individual and helping her value herself.

---

<sup>121</sup> Referring to the Interview Guide in the appendices, note that the questions are fairly general and open-ended. By clarifying questions I mean questions that would facilitate my understanding of the participant's experience. For example, in some cases I asked what "Komsomol" meant in general and for the individual. A frequent question was, "Could you tell me more about that?" being careful to interrupt the participants story as little as possible.

Most of the women said they had “never” or “seldom” thought about “who [they] were”; that is, they had not thought about themselves as individual women, which is not to say they had not acted as individuals. They were simply unaccustomed to being asked about themselves, their lives, and their opinions.

When we were speaking I had never had a chance to speak about my life from the beginning to when we began to discuss my life. When you speak and you tell something about your life story you can sense or evaluate the path that you have. I was grateful to you, Maureen, and to myself because I had a spare chance to evaluate my way and to make some conclusions. I had a chance to evaluate my values and to think about them one more time. Thank you. (Zoya L., visioning meeting)

Having identified some of their values and strengths through their stories, women came to the regional meetings, being assured — if they trusted the facilitator — that being invited meant they shared something with other group members and would be able to work together. Stories had not been contested; selves did not need defending; rather, they were celebrated. During the regional meetings, women listened to and supported each other, working on a common future. The atmosphere and subject matter were challenging, perhaps, though non-threatening: they were people who could get along and work together. This identity and good-will accompanied the participants to the cross-regional video-conference.

### **The function of hope in peace-building**

Hope was critical for all participants in this study, including the facilitator. At the beginning of this project, most of the women said they believed they could not

influence what happened in their lives politically, as individuals, and as community members. Some had participated in the Orange Revolution, and in that endeavor had experienced the power of civil action. In ensuing years, what gains that had been made were overshadowed. The pre-election polls reminded them of the differences between regions and dampened hopes people had for a Ukraine that could flourish and support all her citizens. Women also feared that Ukraine and her citizens were of little consequence to the rest of the world. The women indicated that they had some agency of sorts within their homes and within their jobs, but only some felt that they had a voice/agency within their own country, Ukraine. This was despite the fact that all participants were living in ways influencing the face and the body of Ukraine itself.

The women in this study knew what they did not want — they had plenty of experience in that area. Beyond desiring a safe and healthy future for their family members, participants had not had much time or encouragement to think about what they did want for their country. If you can't envision it, how do you know when you have part of it?

The visioning exercise (PATH) provided the opportunity to safely explore and build a vision. The PATH process allowed people to go beyond concern about "how to." Women had begun to think about what they wanted when they told their stories individually. The women from Simferopol who had not experienced a visioning exercise before had an introductory taste of it in their informal small group meeting in February.

Most of the women from Lviv had some previous knowledge of the process and, in their July meeting, launched their joint visioning with great gusto.

This was an exercise not only in community building, but in hope. The shared experience allowed women to support each other and elaborate upon each other's visions. There was room for disagreement without punishment. Both of the groups named the importance of acceptance of all people and the need to reach out and support the positives in each other in their visioning. Perhaps that is what made it so easy to share the hope and support across regions. Singing together was another common experience. This act also provided a kind of ritual for both joining and celebrating.

### **The facilitator's role**

The processes of any study are influenced by human action and interaction. The facilitator in this study was the instigator of an inquiry into hopes, dreams, and the ways people move themselves to involvement in building civil society. Some of the essentials in the facilitator tool kit for this project included being able to work with a capable interpreter; knowing trustworthy, supportive individuals at the study site; having some familiarity with the culture; enjoying some facility in interviewing and group facilitation; believing in respect for women of all ages and experiences; and coming from a non-expert place of genuine curiosity — not knowing. In this context it was also helpful to have an appreciation for cognac and fine chocolate as team de-briefing aids for even though there was one official facilitator; none of the person-to-person research was

done alone. The facilitator also needed humility — a deep understanding that doing this work, being invited to share in people’s lives, is a great privilege.

Trust was important and I believe in this case trust was initially based on the recommendation of one person who knew another. I was trusted because people had worked with me before in Ukraine; I knew something about the culture, but did not have my own “growing up in Ukraine” story to get in the way of hearing theirs. The people who had worked with me and knew me initiated contact with other people. Upon meeting each participant, I then had to continue to earn her trust. This was done by being transparent about my intentions and process. Participants said trust was reinforced in the way the questions were asked, the way responses were received, and the ongoing encouragement for individuals to respond in their own ways, with their own thoughts and feelings. I openly expressed my gratitude to the women for not only agreeing to participate, but also for being so accommodating and generous with their thoughts and time.

Flexibility, creativity, openness, and a sense of humour were also helpful in this study, and likely in any other. It was sometimes difficult to balance between the need to direct the processes of the study and the realization that there were many things beyond my control — things such as people’s health and general availability, the weather, finances/funding, the election processes and outcome, and most of all, people’s overwhelming generosity that sometimes shifted my picture of what was to happen, usually making it better than I could have imagined.

## Chapter 8

### Peacebuilding informed by women's work in Ukraine

Outside my window the snow is falling on the grey and cold Winnipeg streets. Similar temperatures and scenery this time last year were the background to excited conversations with my friend and interpreter Sonya, and our “social-director,” Halyna as we planned my first trip in five years to Ukraine. Since then, the Lviv snow and cold, the Simferopol rain and damp, have also come and gone, and come again. In between, the sun shone brightly upon us warming our bones and our hearts, and it will again. In between, I met and worked with eighteen women who generously agreed to share their individual stories and vision together for their own futures, for their families’ and their country, Ukraine. The purpose of the study was both practical and theoretical: how might these processes inform and move forward the development of civil society in Ukraine, specifically, and peacebuilding, in general. I was and am supported by these thoughts:

*Peace*<sup>122</sup> is both intent and process. [...] *Peace* requires that you know what you do as and individual when you interact with others. *Peace* requires that your chosen values guide your actions. *Peace* is the means *and* the end, the process and the product. (Chinn, 2004, p. 7)

This study came from a gendered perspective and was anchored in narratives found in peacebuilding and community development. It also combined practical elements in ways that may be common practice somewhere, although as such, not

---

<sup>122</sup> Italics are found in the original.

readily found in the literature. Like much of women's work, this study was grass-roots, low budget, inclusive, and participatory. The combining of individual storytelling and multiple-group visioning as bridge-builders is what appears to be different. This work was made possible by helping individuals acknowledge their personal histories, focus on their self-identified strengths, and then use these strengths to collaborate with others who were seen as "other", yet indicated that they shared a common desire. While the past was acknowledged, this was done through narrative in a way that diminished contesting. Stories were not shared by participants, but common themes were identified and shared.

The techniques used were gleaned from a variety of sources including narrative therapy (Anderson, 1997), solution focused counseling (Dolan, 1991; Duncan & Miller, 2000), social work community practice, and strategic planning (Chinn, 2004; Homan, 2004). Practical elements were also influenced by the work of Jean Paul Lederach (2003; 2005) who reminded us that peacebuilding happens in spaces people create around problems, and the work of Johan Galtung ( 2004) who reminded us that dialogue is based on questioning. Lederach (2003) also emphasized the need to learn more about the ways people navigate around the boundaries of problems to a common super-ordinate goal —finding places where they can create change. I hope this study contributes to that knowledge.

I consider myself to be a practitioner – a grass-roots worker, and not a theorist; however, while working on this study, hearing the women's voices over and over as I

wrote about their stories, I began theorizing about process and what had made this approach work. Again, I believe that there is nothing new on this earth, and more than likely there are practioners who are well aware of the model shared here. Still, I would like to share these thoughts in the hope that they may support others working to facilitate peaceful living. Perhaps these ideas, informed by participant observation, can add to another model for our community and peacebuilding.

Going into this study, I wanted to hear about the lives and dreams of women in Ukraine. I wanted to know what kept them going in the face of many challenges historically, and today. While I had no idea what impact, if any, this study would have, the sequence of elements in the study did telegraph the values and beliefs behind the study. Individuals first were asked to speak about themselves in ways that focused on the importance of each participant. Individual stories were spoken, heard, and then tucked into a place of safety and honour. Then, having acknowledged their personal values and strengths as well as supports, individuals consciously became members of a small group and then a larger one.

### **The role of narrative: Opening to self, and others**

Who do you tell stories to – some will be critical, some won't understand and some say, why should I listen to others, and I realized that it is very important to have someone who listens. (Aida S., visioning meeting)

Throughout the study, women spoke about how unusual and surprisingly powerful it was for them to be asked to tell about their lives. First, the invitation gave women permission to step away from the everyday and reflect upon what was and is important

to them. The message for each was that what she had to say was of value and she was important in the here and now. Women said that they felt important — recognized.

Actually it is a kind of two-fold feeling. So first of all, it is nice to think that what you are saying could be of importance. And on the other hand, it was nice to be able to review my life. Somehow I haven't had another chance before to review it in a systematic way so it was a nice way to have a sight of my experience. I found it to be very helpful. It is a kind of resourceful way – a new resource for oneself. (Aneta L., visioning meeting)

Second, the invitation to tell their individual stories, gave the women the opportunity to acknowledge personal and family histories without having to defend their choices. This came at a time when histories in Ukraine are compared and contested, if spoken out loud. Particularly around the time of the presidential election, during a period of economic, political, and personal strife for Ukrainians, being able to tell one's family story without challenge or criticism might have felt like a secret luxury.

I was positive with everything because you are very gracious listeners, patient listeners... Whatever I would say, you understood and this helps to communicate. You know, when I was speaking about my parents, about my childhood, it was a bit of sadness, of course. It is a good occasion when people let you speak out. Very positive, of course – positive emotions... When I was telling you my story, some episodes, they were so deep in my subconscious that I was never thinking about them – they just appeared. So, thank you. (Ekaterina S., small group meeting)

Third, from a practical perspective, the process of individual storytelling provided the opportunity for women to anchor themselves as individuals and community members, creating safety for participation in the group visioning exercises. Their

individual stories also reminded women of their own capabilities by reviewing their histories of years and years of hard work.

### **The function of identity: Questions about values, questions about strengths**

I believe that human action and interaction is value-driven, though these resources for engagement are seldom reflected upon in our day-to-day whirl of activities. Some questions in the individual interviews and the small grounding exercise in the visioning meetings were designed to help participants reflect upon their personal identities and values.

While narrating their life stories, women were asked to describe themselves, and to speak about what “gets them through”. Particularly for the Ukrainian women in this study who have had neither the time nor the encouragement to consider themselves, these were unusual and difficult questions. While many women struggled to respond, they acknowledged that the question was important.

When you speak and you tell something about your life story you can sense or evaluate the path that you have. I was grateful to you and to myself because I had a chance to evaluate my way and to make some conclusions. I had a chance to evaluate my values and to think about them one more time. (Zoya L., visioning meeting)

Identifying personal values and strengths also reminded women of their own characters and, I believe, supported them in being able to reach out to each other and to participate in the group from a place of confidence and calm.

*[Speaking about the individual interview]* And when we started talking I found out – so it was a different experience – actually I found out it was a different thing. It

was like a flow of conscious and I didn't even try to stop myself and I even saw you looking at my watch and I wanted to talk and talk and talk – I wanted to talk with myself – I didn't even need the presence of other people. And when we finished I realized that it touched my very deep hidden memories. This meeting gave me more optimism, more inspiration and very positive memories. And then I had an interest in what would happen next. And even now I have this interest. (Nadia L., visioning meeting)

These powerfully simple practices can provide the connections more commonly associated with spiritually focused practices – and in therapy

In my soul, I was overwhelmed. I am grateful that you listened to me... it became easier on my soul [*said through tears*]. (Alsu S., small group meeting)

### **The container of riches: A foundation of acknowledgement and trust**

The proposal for this study included group story-sharing as a step I had considered crucial to connect participants across regions. This step did not take place. Instead, women's individual stories were shared only when spoken outloud to myself and Sonya. Sharing one's personal story requires trust.

[I had] a feeling of trust. If I didn't trust you, I would never say a word. I trusted you that everything that I have said will never be pointed or directed against me. (Nadezhda S., small group meeting in Simferopol)

The women heard their own stories as did we. Themes from the stories were summarized and shared with them in the visioning groups: I did not mention details of individual stories and to my knowledge the women did not tell their stories to each other. They spoke only about the impact upon them of the process of sharing their stories. So, how did this work?

First, participants said that just knowing others had been asked and agreed to participate in the same process drew them to each other. By the time we met in groups, each woman had told of her life and her life story had been *heard by someone else* – the same person who heard and held safe her group-mates’ stories. Each woman and her story had been received and acknowledged. Perhaps knowing this took away the urge or internal pressure to share and compare experiences. There already was a common shared experience of stories told and held safe.

### **The role of visioning: Painting a picture anchored in the present**

With several months between individual interviews and the visioning meetings, the visioning meeting first opened to comments from the women about their experiences of the time in between. Then, the grounding exercise focused the women inward on their own values, bringing them to the challenging work of co-constructing a vision for their future. Even considering the future brought challenges.

It is a very complicated task. We are so much trained to live today so that very often our dreams just disappear like balloons. In the Soviet Union we were led from our birth to our grave and now we have to solve everything ourselves. (Aida S.)

The PATH process provided an opportunity to vision in a non-threatening way. I was careful to explain that the exercise (as used in this study) was not intended as an addition for participants individual “to do” lists. The exercise was about building personal and community empowerment with elements including hope. The shared experience allowed women to hear from each other, support each other, and expand

upon each other's ideas. There was plenty of room for diversion of opinion without punishment. Both groups voiced the importance of accepting all people and the need to reach out and support the positives in each other to reach superordinate goals. They agreed that their positive thoughts and much of their visions seem to coincide, that their goals are essentially the same. Participants said that, for them, this study was "not a mere exercise"; they named their desire to work toward a future together and to involve others in their process.

We need to develop a project – civil action of women – heard not only in the kitchen, but to be seen and heard by every member of the community. It is time to become politically active. (Nadezhda)

### **Creating a collective narrative without privileging any "one"**

When individuals have been acknowledged by themselves and others, they are better able to use their individual stories as part of the richness and strength that builds communities. With intention, individual voices can be united to form a life-giving choir that privileges no voice. Each and every voice is needed.

This study began with conversations that invited individual stories which, in the telling, reminded women of their values and strengths. Their stories acknowledged and uncontested, women strengthened with their own values were able to step further out of the tumultuous day-to-day with hope, to a place where they could open themselves to collaborate with people previously considered very different from themselves. Their common purpose was a better future for all.

Individual experiences cannot be generalized across genders, cultures, ages, or geographies: each interaction is unique. Many women in this study, while having family members once in the military, were themselves involved in the spheres of social services and education and may have been more open to collaboration than many other groups. It will be interesting to see how this approach may be used with other groups – with other groups of women, with men, with youth, with other ethnic groups and combinations of groups. As with its major component, narrative, or storytelling, the approach doesn't cost much and each encounter offers so many possibilities. There is little to lose and much to be gained. As Aneta L. stated early in the cross-regional video conference:

It is not just occasional that we are together. It is time to resolve the painful past...  
This meeting is more than symbolic.

## Appendices

### Letter of Introduction (in Ukrainian and on university letterhead)

#### Вступний лист

Моє ім'я Морін Флаєрті і я аспірантка в Університеті Манітоби, Вінніпег, Канада. Зараз я працюю над дослідженням для моєї дисертації, яка є завершальним етапом в отриманні мною ступеня.

Я вперше приїхала до України наприкінці 2000 року в якості соціального працівника. Маючи нагоду регулярно повертатися до України протягом року, мене дуже зацікавили перспективи жінок, які виростили до проголошення Україною Незалежності. Мене цікавлять ваші життєві історії, сподівання і мрії, які маєте особисто для себе, ваших сімей та України в цілому.

Цим листом я запрошую вас взяти участь у дослідженні, яке відбудеться в три етапи. Перше, я хочу особисто зустрітися з 6-10 жінками з західної України, а потім з цим самим числом жінок з Криму для того, щоб вони розказали свої життєві історії. Ці зустрічі можуть відбуватися протягом однієї або більше сесій півтори години кожна до вашого задовільнення оповіданим. Я попрошу кожну жінку розказати про те, як вона виростила, її життя в дорослому віці і зараз. Я також попрошу розказати про сподівання і мрії. Ці інтерв'ю або сесії-оповіді будуть проходити за допомогою перекладача та записані на аудіо плівку. Я надам вам копію плівки. Я також занотую сесії та буду зберігати нотатки в безпечному місці. В нотатках імена зазначатися не будуть.

Друга частина цього дослідження запросить вас й інших учасників дослідження вашого регіону зустрітися разом щоб поділитися своїми історіями протягом керованої вправи з візуалізації, яку я проведу. Метою цієї вправи є запрошення жінок до роздумів про те, щоб вони хотіли для себе і своєї країни та визначення сильних сторін присутніх у вас і наявних у вашій країні. Цю сесію також буде записано на плівку та підсумковано в нотатках. Нотатки не будуть включати особистої інформації.

Після цього, я повернуся до Канади і синтезую зібрані матеріали. Через декілька місяців я повернуся до України (приблизно у червні) щоб зустрітися з вами ще раз для третього і четвертого етапу дослідження. Протягом третього етапу дослідження ми запросимо вас й інших членів зустрітися в нейтральній атмосфері з групою з іншого регіону на сесії з візуалізації, яка триватиме один день (можливо протягом вихідних). Цю сесію також буде записано на плівку і підсумовано в нотатках. Після

цього, відразу починається четвертий етап протягом якого я поділюся з вами результатами нашої праці та запитаю вас про ваші міркування і зворотню реакцію. Цю сесію також буде записано на плівку та підсумковано в нотатках. Я з радістю надам вам заключний варіант цієї роботи, якщо вам це цікаво.

Якщо вам цікаво бути частиною даного дослідження вам перш за все треба підписати згоду, зазначивши, що ви розумієте процес і згодні взяти у ньому участь. Без вагань запитуйте мене про все, що стосується даного дослідження.

Ви можете звернутися до мене за електронною адресою [flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca), або по телефону за номером \_\_\_\_\_ та через перекладача Сою Ставкову. \_\_\_\_\_

Д-р Джесіка Сенехі - мій радник. До неї можна звернутися за адресою [Jessica\\_Senehi@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Jessica_Senehi@umanitoba.ca) або за номером (204) 474-6052.

Дякую за розгляд цього запрошення,

З повагою,

Морін П. Флаерті, МСР, РСР  
(204) 661-4440  
[flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca)

**Letter of Introduction** (on university letterhead and translated into Ukrainian)

My name is Maureen Flaherty and I am a doctoral student at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada. I am presently working on a research study for a dissertation that will complete the requirements toward this degree.

I first came to Ukraine as a social worker in late 2000. Returning periodically throughout the years, I am very interested in the perspectives of women who came to adulthood before Independence was declared in Ukraine. I am interested in your life stories and the hopes and dreams that you have for yourselves, your families, and for Ukraine as a whole.

With this letter, I am inviting you to participate in a study which will take place in three parts. First, I would like to meet individually with six to ten women from western Ukraine and the same number from Crimea to share individually their life stories. This individual storytelling can take place in one or more sessions of about an hour and a half until you are satisfied with what you have shared. I will ask each woman to talk about her life growing up, her life as a young adult and her life now. I will ask her to talk about her hopes and dreams. These interviews/story sessions will be conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and will be audio-taped. I will provide you with a copy of the tape for your keeping. I will also transcribe the sessions to writing keeping the transcription in a secure place where no names will be associated with the notes.

The second part of this study will invite you and the other study participants in your region to meet together to share your stories as you wish and to participate in a guided visioning exercise which I will facilitate. The purpose of this exercise will be to invite women to think about what you want for yourselves and your country, and to identify some of the strengths already present in yourselves and in your country. This session will be audio-taped and I will make notes summarizing the session. The notes will not include any personally identifying information.

I will then return to Canada and work to synthesize the work we will have done. I will return to Ukraine after a couple of months time (in June) to meet with you once more for parts three and four of the study. The third part of this study will invite you and the other members of your group to meet in a neutral setting with the group from the other region in the study for a day long/ week-end storytelling and visioning session. This session will also be audio-taped and summarized in writing. Immediately following is part four during which I will share with you my understanding of our work and ask for your feedback and opinions. These meetings will also be audio-taped and summarized in writing. I will be happy to provide you with a final copy of this work, if you indicate interest.

If you are interested in being part of this study, you will be asked to first sign a consent form indicating that you understand and agree to participate in this process. Please feel free to ask any questions that you may have.

I may be reached by e-mail at [flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca), by telephone at \_\_\_\_\_ or through my interpreter Sonia Stavkova  
\_\_\_\_\_

My advisor for this study is Dr. Jessica Senehi and she may be reached at [Jessica\\_Senehi@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Jessica_Senehi@umanitoba.ca) or telephone (204) 474-6052

Thank you for considering this invitation,

Sincerely,

Maureen P. Flaherty, MSW, RSW  
(204) 661-4440  
[flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca)

## Consent form for Participants (on university letterhead)

### Згода

#### Підписується учасниками дослідження

**Дослідницький проект:** Оповіді про минуле з метою візуалізації майбутнього: розбудовуємо громадянське суспільство з жінками в Україні.

**Дослідник:** Морін Флаєрті

Дана згода, копія якої буде надана вам для посилань й обліку є тільки частиною процесу інформованої згоди. Вона повинна надати вам інформацію про дослідження і вашу участь. В разі, якщо вам необхідна додаткова інформація, без вагань звертайтеся до мене. Ознайомтеся будь ласка з усією інформацією, яка супроводжує це дослідження.

Я проводжу це дослідження, тому що мене дуже цікавлять життєві історії жінок, які були дорослими до і після проголошення Україною Незалежності у 1991 році. Мене також цікавлять сподівання і мрії, які ви маєте для себе, своїх сімей і України в цілому.

Погоджуючись брати участь у цьому дослідженні, ви даєте згоду на особисту зустріч зі мною з метою обговорення вашого життя та матимете нагоду зустрітися з невеличкою групою жінок з вашого регіону і пізніше зібратися разом у групі з жінками з обох регіонів та обговорити ваше бачення майбутнього України. Наше дослідження відбудеться в три етапи. Перше, я хочу особисто зустрітися з 6-10 жінками з західної України, а потім з цим самим числом жінок з Криму для того, щоб вони розказали свої життєві історії. Ці зустрічі можуть відбуватися протягом однієї або більше сесій півтори години кожна до вашого задоволення оповіданим. Я попрошу кожну жінку розказати про те, як вона виростала, її життя в дорослому віці і зараз. Я також попрошу розказати про сподівання і мрії. Ці інтерв'ю або сесії-оповіді будуть проходити за допомогою перекладача та записані на аудіо-плівку. Я надам вам копію плівки. Я також занотую сесії та буду зберігати нотатки в безпечному місці. В нотатках імена зазначатися не будуть. Нотатки будуть знищені наприкінці дослідження.

Друга частина цього дослідження запросить вас й інших учасників дослідження вашого регіону до зустрічі разом щоб поділитися своїми історіями протягом керованої вправи з візуалізації, яку я проведу. Метою цієї вправи є запрошення жінок до роздумів про те, щоб вони хотіли для себе і своєї країни та визначення сильних сторін присутніх у вас і наявних у вашій країні. Цю сесію також буде записано на плівку та підсумовано в нотатках. Нотатки не будуть включати особистої інформації.

Протягом третього етапу дослідження ми запросимо вас й інших членів зустрітися в нейтральній атмосфері з групою з іншого регіону на сесії з візуалізації, яка триватиме один день (можливо протягом вихідних). Цю сесію також буде записано на плівку і підсумовано в нотатках.

Після цього, я повернуся до Канади і синтезую зібрані матеріали. Через декілька місяців я повернуся до України (приблизно у червні) щоб зустрітися з вами ще раз для третього і четвертого етапу дослідження. Я поділюся з вами результатами нашої праці та запитаю вас про ваші міркування і зворотню реакцію. Цю сесію також буде записано на плівку та підсумовано в нотатках. Я з радістю надам вам заключний варіант цієї роботи, якщо вам це цікаво.

Участь у цьому дослідженні є добровільною. Ви не будете витратити свої власні кошти на цей проект і не отримаєте фінансової винагороди. Участь у дослідженні вимагатиме трьох або чотирьох годин бесід з дослідником та чотирьох-годинної розмови у вас вдома. Також ви будете брати участь в одно-денній сесії (приблизно вісім годин) для зустрічі з учасниками з іншого регіону. Дослідник покриє кошти на проїзд і проживання в рамках третього етапу проекту.

Ваш підпис на цій формі показує, що ви розумієте значення вашої участі у цьому дослідницькому проекті. Ні в якій мірі це не віднімає від вас юридичних прав або звільняє дослідника або задіяні установи від виконання своїх юридичних або професійних обов'язків. Ви можете у будь-який час без застережень відмовитися від участі у дослідженні і/або утриматися від відповіді на те чи інше запитання або участі у вправах. Ваша участь у дослідженні повинна бути інформованою, як і у випадку з підписанням цієї згоди. В разі, якщо вам необхідно мати більше інформації або роз'яснень, звертайтеся до мене за електронною адресою [flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca), або за номером телефону в Україні \_\_\_\_\_ та через перекладача Соню Ставкову.

\_\_\_\_\_

Це дослідження було схвалено на Етичній Раді Досліджень Університету Манітоби. Якщо у вас є якісь занепокоєння щодо цього проекту ви можете звернутися до Д-ра Маргарет Браун з Секретаріату Етичних Питань Університету Манітоби або мого радника Д-ра Джесіки Сенехі. До неї можна звернутися за адресою [Jessica\\_Senehi@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Jessica_Senehi@umanitoba.ca) або за номером (204) 474-6052.

\_\_\_\_\_

Учасник/и	Підпис	Дата
-----------	--------	------

\_\_\_\_\_

Перекладач	Підпис	Дата
------------	--------	------

\_\_\_\_\_

Дослідник	Підпис	Дата
-----------	--------	------

\_\_\_\_\_ Надішліть мені будь ласка письмове резюме результатів дослідження:

\_\_\_\_\_ (електронна адреса/поштова адреса)

## **Consent Forms for Participants** (on university letterhead and translated into Ukrainian)

**Research Project:** Narrating the past to vision the future: Constructing civil society with women in Ukraine

**Researcher:** Maureen P. Flaherty

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

This study is being conducted because I am interested in the life stories of women who lived as adults both before and after Ukraine declared independence in 1991. I am also interested in the hopes and dreams that you have for yourselves, your families, and for Ukraine as a whole.

By agreeing to participate in this study, you are agreeing to meet with me individually to talk about your life and then to meet with a small group of women from your region and later a combined group of women from both east and west Ukraine to talk about your visions for Ukraine's future. Our study will take place in three parts. First, I would like to meet individually with six to ten women from western Ukraine and the same number from Crimea to share individually their life stories. This individual storytelling can take place in one or more sessions of about an hour and a half until you are satisfied with what you have shared. I will ask each woman to talk about her life growing up, her life as a young adult and her life now. I will ask her to talk about her hopes and dreams. These interviews/story sessions will be conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and will be audio-taped. I will provide you with a copy of the tape for your keeping. I will also transcribe the sessions to writing keeping the transcription in a secure place where no names will be associated with the notes. Notes will be destroyed at the end of the study.

The second part of this study will invite you and the other study participants in your region to meet together to share your stories as you wish and to participate in a guided visioning exercise which I will facilitate. The purpose of this exercise will be to provide women with the opportunity to think about what you want for yourselves and your country, and to identify some of the strengths already present in yourselves and in your country. This session, to take several hours in one evening will be audio-taped and I will make notes summarizing the session. The notes will not include any personally identifying information.

I will then return to Canada and work to synthesize the work we will have done. I will return to Ukraine after a couple of months time (in June) to meet with you once more for parts three and four of the study.

The third part of this study will invite you and the other members of your regional group to meet with the others regional participants in the study for a day long story-sharing and visioning

session similar to the first group meeting. This session will take place in a neutral setting and will also be audio-taped and summarized in writing.

Part Four, will be the final part of this week-end, during which I will share with you my understanding of our work and ask for your feedback and opinions. This session will also be audio-taped and summarized in writing. I will be happy to provide you with a final copy of this work, if you indicate interest.

Participation in this study is voluntary with no cost to you and no remuneration. If you choose to participate in all phases of the study, you will be asked to spend three to four hours with the researcher and approximately four hours in a meeting in your home area. There will also be a day of approximately eight hours work in a cross-regional meeting in addition to the time it takes to travel to the meeting location and home. The cost of travel and accommodation associated with participation in Part Three of the study will be covered by the researcher.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to be a participant. In no way does this waive your legal rights or release the researcher or involved institutions from their legal or professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions or participate in any exercise at any time without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you would like more information or clarification of any of these points, please contact me, Maureen Flaherty, at (phone contact information in Ukraine) or [flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:flaherty@cc.umanitoba.ca). I may also be reached through my interpreter, S. Stavkova at \_\_\_\_\_

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns about the project, you may contact Dr. Margaret Bowman of the Human Ethics Secretariat at the University of Manitoba, any of the above-named persons, or my doctoral studies advisor. My advisor for this study is Dr. Jessica Senehi and she may be reached at [Jessica\\_Senehi@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Jessica_Senehi@umanitoba.ca) or telephone (204) 474-6052

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant/s Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interpreter's Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_ Please send me a written summary of the results of the study:

\_\_\_\_\_ (e-mail or mailing address)

## Confidentiality Agreement

**Угода про конфіденційність** (підписується всіма учасниками групи і перекладачем)

**Дослідницький проект:** Оповідаємо про минуле з метою візуалізації майбутнього: розбудовуємо громадянське суспільство з жінками в Україні.

**Дослідник:** Морін Флаєрті

Я розумію, що підписуючи цю форму, я погоджуюся поважати і тримати в конфіденційності всю інформацію, якою будуть ділитися зі мною інші учасники цього дослідження. Я розумію, що моя інформація в рамках цього дослідження також буде триматися в жорсткій конфіденційності. Це включає інформацію стосовно ідентичності інших учасників, окрім їхньої згоди на зворотне. Я також розумію, що з огляду на задіяну кількість учасників, досліднику важко гарантувати повну конфіденційність кожного з учасників.

Метою цієї угоди є сприяння вільній і відкритій дискусії між всіма учасниками на наших зустрічах в рамках даного дослідження. Я розумію, що я, як дослідник можу вільно говорити з третьою стороною про моє особисте залучення у цьому дослідженні.

---

Підпис учасника

Дата

---

Підпис перекладача

Дата

---

Підпис дослідника

Дата

**Confidentiality Agreement** (to be signed by all group participants and interpreter)

**Research Project:** Narrating the past to vision the future: Constructing civil society with women in Ukraine

**Researcher:** Maureen P. Flaherty

I understand that in signing this form I agree to respect and keep confident and private all information shared with me by other participants in this study. This includes information about the identity of the other participants, unless they specifically agree otherwise.

I understand that while the researcher will keep confident and private all information I share with her and the interpreter alone, I also understand that due to the number of participants involved and the reality that we will participate in group sessions, the researcher cannot guarantee my confidentiality.

The purpose of this agreement is to facilitate free and open discussion with each other in our group meetings associated with this study. I understand that I am free to talk about my own involvement in the study with whomever I please.

---

Participant's Signature

Date

---

Interpreter's Signature

Date

---

Researcher's Signature

Date

## **Guide for Individual Interviews**

This first instrument was an unstructured, narrative interview during which women were asked to share their life stories in as much detail as possible. Guiding the process, the facilitator/interviewer asked the following open-ended questions as a guide with the understanding that the interview could take place over more than one session.

a) Could you please tell me about your life, beginning with where you were born, the circumstances of your family at that time, your place in the family, etc.?

b) Please talk about your childhood, your early school years, family, friends, and interests. What was life like where you grew up?

c) Could you talk about your adolescence? What was of interest to you? What did you want to do when you grew up?

d) What were things like when you came into adulthood? What kind of work did you do? What were your interests? What was important to you?

e) What did you think, feel about independence when it was declared? How has it impacted yourself, your family, and your friends?

f) Could you describe your life now? Who and what are important to you? What does a day in your life look like?

g) What kinds of things do you do to cope with hardships?

h) What do you do to relax, for entertainment?

i) How would you describe yourself to someone who wanted to know you inside and out?

j) What hopes and dreams do you have for yourself, for your family, for your community, for Ukraine?

## **The PATH Process**

### ***The vision***

The facilitator will have already put a large drawing on the wall. This is a long rectangle ending in a large cloud-like shape. The rectangle will have been divided into at least three vertical sections which may be subdivided as the exercise continues. The facilitator reviews the present situation of concern to the group and invites the group members to comment in non-blaming terms. The facilitator then asks the participants to begin to brainstorm about what they would like to have if the problem did not exist — if participants didn't have to worry about how they arrived at this desired end result. People are advised that there is no need for agreement on any of the contributions. As individuals talk, the facilitator or a volunteer writes down the ideas — or even draws pictures in the cloud like section of the 'map'. This part of the exercise, the visioning part should take an hour or two, depending on the number of participants and their mood. It should not be rushed.

After this part is finished, it is a good time to have a break of some sort, including refreshments and stretching. When the group reconvenes, the facilitator or a volunteer reads aloud the ideas that have been documented on the 'map' and people may comment or elaborate. Relish the moment.

### ***What do we already have?***

The next step is to have the participants reflect upon what pieces of the vision are already in existence — even if they are very small fragments. These should be noted in the column at the extreme left of the rectangle in the drawing. (This is the usual starting point in most discussions.) If the group is having difficulty with this part, or even with the visioning section, they may be invited to form smaller groups so that they can discuss more freely and then bring their comments back to the larger group.

### ***What do we want to have done/in place in 5 years time?<sup>123</sup>***

Using brainstorming as noted, the group is then asked to think about what they would like and think could be possible to accomplish within 5 years time. (Note that this is not necessarily what the group members will accomplish, but what is possible in general.) As suggestions are written or drawn, discussion and comments are encouraged, keeping the atmosphere as collegial as possible. If participants decide to ‘think big’, that is fine. If possible, the end of this section is a good time to break for the day.

It will be very important in this research exercise to encourage people to focus on the larger picture for what they want — and on small **achievable** steps for their part in the process. For example, with the already heavy responsibilities women carry, the focus in this section might well be choosing changes in the way people think about their

---

<sup>123</sup> Normally at this point in the exercise, people spend time thinking about what should happen in five years time. Once that has been discussed, the question becomes, “What do we want in one year? What do we want in one month? Then time is spent discussing who should do what and when, who should be enlisted, etc.

own voting or the way they talk to themselves and others about their hopes for Ukraine, the ways they treat each other, etc.

***Celebrate and acknowledge the hard work: Debrief***

The last hour of the gathering is best assigned to group reflection. One way to do this is to have a 'check-out' or talking circle. Seated in a circle, the participants take turns sharing how they are feeling at the moment. The facilitator may summarize and invite people to refer again to the papers with their qualities on them — and to take them home and post them somewhere they are in easy view.

At the end of the regional group visioning meetings, the groups all spent time having dinner together and talking about the process as well as their hopes and fears.

## Works Cited

- Abbot, H. P. (2002). *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Abu-Nimer, M. (2003). Toward the theory and practice of positive approaches to peacebuilding. In C. Sampson, M. Abu-Nimer, & C. & Liebler (Eds.), *Positive approaches to peacebuilding: A resource for innovators* (pp. 13-23). Washington, DC: Pact Publications.
- Adams-Westcott, J., & Dobbins, C. (1997). Listening with your "heart ears" and other ways young people can escape the effects of sexual abuse. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adults* (pp. 195-220). New York: Guilford Press.
- Adler, R., & Towne, N. (2002). *Looking Out/Looking In*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Afzali, A. & Colleton, M. (2003). Constructing coexistence: A survey of coexistence projects in areas of ethnic conflict. In A. Chayes & M. Minnow (Eds.) *Imagine Coexistence* (pp. 3-22). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Agar, M. (2007). Culture blends. In L. Monaghan, & J. Goodman (Eds.), *A cultural approach to interpersonal communication: Essential readings* (pp. 13-24). Victoria, Australia: Blackwell Publishing.
- Albeck, J., Adwan, S., & Bar-On, D. (2002). Dialogue groups: TRT's guidelines for working through intractable conflicts by personal storytelling. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 8(4), 301-322.
- Alsop, R., & Hockey, J. (2005). Post-Communism, Pro-natlism or Pro-choice? The political context of women's reproductive lives in Central and Eastern Europe. In M. E. Thorne (Ed.), *Women in Society: Achievements, Risks & Challenges* (pp. 109-119). New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Amis, M. (2002). *Koba the Dread: Laughter and the twenty million*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Anderson, H. (1997). *Conversation, language, and possibilities: A postmodern approach to therapy*. New York: Basic Books.

- Anderson, P. (1999). *Nonverbal communication: Forms and functions*. Mountainview, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.
- Apple, B. I. (2009, March 5). The Current. CBC Radio. (G. Findlay, Interviewer) CBC Radio One.
- Arbour, J. L. (2009, May 19). The Current. *Power, privilege and the human condition: Interview with Justice Louise Arbour*. (A. M. Tremonte, Interviewer) CBC Radio One.
- Arendt, H. (1958). *The Human condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arendt, H. (1970/1969). *On violence*. San Diego, CA: A Harvest Book: Harcourt Brace & Co.
- Armstrong, J. (1985,1992). *Slash*. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books.
- Armstrong, S. (2002). *Veiled threat: The hidden power of the women of Afghanistan*. Toronto, ON: Penguin Canada.
- Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice. (2009). *Storytelling for peace and renewing community*. Retrieved June 19, 2009, from University of Manitoba: [http://umanitoba.ca/colleges/st\\_pauls/mauro\\_centre/sparc/](http://umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_pauls/mauro_centre/sparc/)
- Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice. (2009, April). *Winnipeg International Storytelling Festival*. Retrieved June 9, 2009, from University of Manitoba: <http://www.umanitoba.ca/storytelling>
- Atlantic Council. (2009, April 14). *Gas at Gunpoint*. Retrieved October 13, 2010, from New Atlanticist policy and analysis blog: [http://www.acus.org/new\\_atlanticist/gas-gunpoint-ukraines-energy-power-struggle](http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/gas-gunpoint-ukraines-energy-power-struggle)
- Augusta-Scott, T. (2001). Dichotomies in the power and control story: Exploring multiple stories about men who choose abuse in intimate relationships. *Gecko: A journal of deconstruction and narrative ideas in therapeutic practice*. Adelaide, Australia: Dulwich Centre Publications , 31-52.
- Augusta-Scott, T., & Fisher, A. (2001). Dichotomies and dominant masculitiy in work with men who choose to abuse in intimate relationships. *Unpublished Article*. Bridgewater, Nova Scotia .

- Avruch, K. (2003). Culture. In S. Cheldelin, D. Druckman, & L. Fast (Eds.), *Conflict: From analysis to intervention* (pp. 140-153). New York: Continuum.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. (V. Leapunov, M. Homquist, Eds., & V. Leapunov, Trans.) Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Barlow, M. (2009, March 20). Interview with Maude Barlow about the World Water Reform. *The Current*. (J. Boyden, Interviewer) CBC Radio One.
- Barnea, A., & Shinar, O. (2005). Building trust, promoting hope: The families forum Hello Peace Project in Israel and Palestine. In P. van Tongeren, M. Brenk, M. Hellema, & J. Verhoeven (Eds.), *People building peace II: Successful stories of civil society* (pp. 495-500). Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers.
- Barnes, C. (2005). Weaving the web: Civil-society roles in working with conflict and building peace. In P. Van Tongereen, M. Brenk, & M. & Hellema, *People Building Peace II: Successful stories of civil society*. (pp. 7-28). Boulder: Lynne Reinner.
- Bar-On, D. (2003). How light pierces darkness. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 9 (4), 383-386.
- Barsky, A. (2009). A capacity building approach to conflict resolution. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 213-223). New York: Routledge.
- BBC News . (2009, 1 1). *Russia shuts off gas supply to Ukraine*. Retrieved 09 13, 2010, from BBC News Europe: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7806870.stm>
- BBC News. (2010, 01 18). *Ukraine elections: Orange leader Viktor Yushchenko out*. Retrieved 04 27, 2010, from BBC News: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8464816.stm>
- Berkhoff, K. (2004). *Harvest of despair: Life and death in Ukraine under Nazi rule*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Bertelsmann-Stiftung. (2010, September 14). *Ukraine Country Report*. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Bertelsmann Transformation Index - 2010: <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de/158.0.html>

- Billington, J. H. (1970). *The icon and the axe: An interpretive history of Russian culture*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Billington, J. (2004). *Russia in search of itself*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
- Birkla, N. (2001). Three steps past the monkeys. In W. Lamb (Ed.), *Couldn't keep it to myself: Testimonies from our imprisoned sisters* (pp. 112-141). New York: Regan Books.
- Bishop, A. (1994/2002). *Becoming an Ally: Breaking the cycle of oppression in people*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.
- Black, S. (2003). Identities. In S. Cheldelin, D. Druckman, & L. Fast (Eds.), *Conflict* (pp. 120-139). New York: Continuum.
- Bloch, C. (2005). Listen to understand: The listening project in Croatia. In P. van Tongeren, M. Brenk, M. Hellema, & J. Verhoeven (Eds.), *People building peace II: Successful stories of civil society* (pp. 654-660). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Boal, A. (2002). *Games for actors and non-actors*. New York: Routledge.
- Bock, G. (2006). Women's history and gender history: Aspects of an international debate. In S. e. Morgan, *The feminist history reader* (pp. 104-115). New York: Routledge.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education: An introduction to theories and methods*. 5th ed. New York: Pearson.
- Bohachevsky-Chomiak, M. (1988). *Feminists despite themselves: Women in Ukrainian community life, 1884-1939*. Edmonton, AB: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta.
- Boivin, M. (2007, March). Class presentation. *Class: Feminist Perspectives in Social Work*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: William Norrie Centre, University of Manitoba.
- Borer, T. A. (2006). Truth telling as a peace-building activity. In T. Borer (Ed.), *Telling truths: Truth telling and peace building in post-conflict societies* (pp. 1-58). Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

- Boulding, E. (1990). *Building a global civic culture: Education for an interdependent world*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Boulding, E. (2000). *Cultures of Peace: The hidden side of history*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Boy, A., & Kulczycki, A. (2008). What we know about intimate partner violence in the Middle East and North Africa. *Violence Against Women*, 14 (1): 53-70.
- Breunling, R., & Himelsten, A. & Nelson, A. (2008). "Our stories, told by us: The neighbourhood story project in New Orleans. In R. Solinger; M. Fox & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims*. (pp. 75-89). New York: Routledge.
- British Broadcasting Corporation. (2010, February 8). *Ukraine election results: voters react*. Retrieved February 8, 2010, from BBC News : [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/talking\\_point/8503983.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/talking_point/8503983.stm)
- Brittain, V. (2005). *One voice: Pacifist writings from the Second World War*. London: Continuum.
- Brock-Utne, B. (1985). *Educating for Peace: A feminist perspective*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Broome, B. J. (2009). Building relational empathy through an interactive design process. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 182-198). New York: Routledge.
- Bucur, M. (2006). Women's stories as sites of memory: Gender and remembering Romania's world wars. In M. Wingfield, & N. Bucur (Eds.), *Gender and war in twentieth-century Eastern Europe* (pp. 171-192). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Buffalo, Y. (1990). Seeds of thought, arrows of change: Native storytelling as metaphor. In T. Laidlaw, & C. Malmo (Eds.), *Feminist approaches to therapy with women* (pp. 118-142). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Bukkvol, T. (2009, winter/spring). *East or West? Ukraine's quandry*. Retrieved 10 2010, 17, from Center for World Dialogue: <http://www.worlddialogue.org/content.php?id=446>

- Bureychak, T. (in press). Masculinity in Soviet and Post-Soviet Ukraine: Models and their implications. In O. Hankivsky, & A. Salnykova (Eds.), *Gender, Politics, and Society*. Toronto University Press.
- Burrows, R. (1996). *The strategy of non-violent defense: A Gandhian approach*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Burton, J. (1990). *Conflict: Human needs theory*. London: Macmillan.
- Buvinic, M. (1997). Women in poverty: A new global underclass. *Foreign Policy*, *Autumn*, 38-53.
- Byrne, S., & Carter, N. (1996). *Social cubism: Six social forces of ethnoterritorial politics in Northern Ireland and Quebec*. Retrieved November 10, 2007, from Byrne & Carter: Social Cubism: <http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/bryce.htm>
- Byrne, S., Thiessen, C., & Fissuh, E. (2007). Economic Assistance and Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. *The Canadian Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 39: 7-22.
- Calvin, M. (2002). Abraham's "Dysfunctional family" in the Middle East: Sis Levin's peace rhetoric. In C. & Kelley (Ed.), *Women who speak for peace* (pp. 143-162). Lanham, MA: Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Campbell, M. (1973). *Half-Breed*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited.
- Canadian Human Rights Commission. (2009). *Human Rights in Canada: A Historical Perspective*. Retrieved June 22, 2009, from Canadian Human Rights in Canada: <http://www.chre-ccdp.ca/en/browseSubjects/index.asp>
- Carey, H. (2001). 'Women and Peace and security': The politics of implementing gender sensitivity norms in peacekeeping. In L. Olsson, & T. Tryggstad (Eds.), *Women and International Peacekeeping* (pp. 49-68). London: Frank Cass Publications.
- Carli, L. (1999). Gender, interpersonal power and social influence. *Journal of social issues*, 55 (3), 81-100.
- Center for Digital Storytelling. (2009). *Center for Digital Storytelling*. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from Center for Digital Storytelling: <http://www.storycentre.org/index.html>
- Chamberlain, D. (1990). *Narrative Perspective in Fiction : A phenomenological mediation of reader, text, and world*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

- Chamberlin, J. (2003). *If this is your land, where are your stories? Finding common ground*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Champigny, R. (1972). *Ontology of the Narrative*. The Hague: Moulin & Co. N.V. Publishers.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Chase, S. (1995). *Ambiguous empowerment: The work narratives of women school superintendents*. University of Massachusetts Press.
- Chase, S. (2005). Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research, 3rd edition* (pp. 651-679). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Chayes, A., & Minow, M. (2003). Introduction. In *Imagine Coexistence* (pp. xvii-xxiii). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Chekan, O. (2010). Advocating for the Ukrainian Orthodoxy *Tyzhden*, July 16-22, 2010 p. 17. (in Ukrainian).
- Cheldelin, S., Druckman, D., & Fast, L. (Eds.). (2003). *Conflict: From analysis to intervention*. New York: Continuum.
- Chesler, P. (2009). Are honor killings simply domestic? *Middle East Quarterly* (Spring), 61-69.
- Child abuse and neglect in Eastern Europe. (2010, 02 03). *Inauguration of the second stage of the Childhood without Abuse Project*. Retrieved 03 22, 2010, from Child Abuse and Neglect in Eastern Europe:  
[http://www.canee.net/bulgaria/inauguration\\_of\\_the\\_second\\_stage\\_of\\_the\\_childhood\\_without\\_abuse\\_project](http://www.canee.net/bulgaria/inauguration_of_the_second_stage_of_the_childhood_without_abuse_project)
- Chinn, P. (2004). *Peace and Power: Creative leadership for building community 6th ed.* Mississauga, ON: Jones and Bartlett Publishers Canada.
- Chodron, A. (2006). *Practicing peace in times of war*. Boston: Shambhala.
- Chopp, R. (2005). An agenda for higher education. In A. Brown, & K. Poremski (Eds.), *Roads to reconciliation: Conflict and dialogue in the twenty-first century* (pp. 255-261). New York: M.E. Sharpe.

- Christian Science Monitor Editorial Board. (2010, 2. 8). *Ukraine election result: A balancing act*. Retrieved 11. 4, 2010, from Christian Science Monitor: <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/the-monitors-view/2010/0208/Ukraine-election-result-a-balancing-act>
- Cobb, S. (2003). Fostering coexistence in identity-based conflicts: Toward a narrative approach. In A. Chayes, & M. Minow (Eds.), *Imagining Coexistence: Restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict* (pp. 294-310). San Francisco, CA: Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School: Jossey Bass.
- Cohen, C. (2003). Engaging with the arts to promote coexistence. *Imagine coexistence: Restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict* , 267-293. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cole, P. (2006). *Coyote and raven go canoeing: Coming home to the village*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Collins Essential English Dictionary 2nd ed.* (2006). Harper Collins Publishers.
- Colvin, C. J. (2008). Trafficking trauma: Intellectual property rights and the political economy of traumatic storytelling in South Africa. In R. Solinger, & M. & Fox (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 227-238). New York: Routledge.
- Condren, M. (1995). Work -in-progress: Sacrifice and political legitimation: the production of a gendered social order. *Journal of Women's History*, 6:4/7:1 , 160-189.
- Confortini, C. (2006). Galtung, violence and gender: The case for a peace studies/feminist alliance. *Peace and Change*, Vol 31, No. 3 , 333-367.
- Covey, S. (1990). *The seven habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. Simon and Schuster.
- Cruikshank, J. (2000). "My Roots Grow in Jackpine Roots": Culture, History, and Narrative Practice in the Yukon. In J. Cruikshank, *The social life of stories: Narrative knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (pp. 2-24). University of Nebraska Press.
- Cupples, J. (2005). Counter-revolutionary women: gender and reconciliation in post-war Nicaragua. In C. Sweetman (Ed.), *Bender, Peacebuilding & Reconstruction* (pp. 8-18). Oxfam, GB.

- Current Politics in Ukraine: Opinion and analysis on current events in Ukraine.* (2007-2010). Retrieved 10 21, 2010, from Blog at WordPress.com:  
<http://ukraineanalysis.wordpress.com/category/politics-and-history/>
- DeFehr, J. (2009). *Transforming encounters and interactions: A dialogical inquiry into the influence of collaborative therapy in the lives of its practitioners.* Winnipeg, MB: Tilburg University-doctoral dissertation.
- DeLaet, D. (2006). Gender justice: A gendered assessment of truth-telling mechanisms. In T. A. Borer (Ed.), *Telling truths: Truth telling and peace building in post-conflict societies.* (pp. 151-180). Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Delgado Bernal, D. (2002). Grass-roots leadership reconceptualized: Chicana oral histories and the 1968 Los Angeles school blowouts. In S. Armitage, P. Hart, & K. Weatherman (Eds.), *Women's oral histories: The Frontiers reader* (pp. 227-257). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Diamond, L., & McDonald, J. (1996). *Multi-track Diplomacy: A systems approach to peace.* 3rd ed. West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press.
- Do Valle, A. (2008). The we that sets us free. In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 161-171). New York: Routledge.
- Dobash, R., & Dobash, R. (1979). *Violence against wives.* New York: Free Press.
- Dobrova-Krol, N. (2009). *Vulnerable children in Ukraine: Impact of institutional care and HIV on the development of pre-schoolers.* Leiden University.
- Dolan, Y. (1991). *Resolving sexual abuse: Solution-focused therapy and Ericksonian hypnosis for adult survivors.* New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Dominelli, L. (2001). *Feminist social work theory and practice.* London: Palgrave.
- Dominelli, L. (2004). *Social Work: Theory and practice for a changing profession.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Draitser, E. (1999). *Making war, not love: Gender and sexuality in Russian humor.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Draitser, E. (2008). *Shush!: Growing up Jewish under Stalin: A memoir*. Berkely, CA: University of California Press.
- Druckman, D. (2003). Toward Integrated Knowledge. In S. Cheldelin, D. Druckman, & L. Fast (Eds.), *Conflict* (pp. 307-314). New York: Continuum.
- Dugan, K. (2006). Voice and agency in social movement outcomes. *Qualitative Sociology*, 29 (4) , 467-484.
- Duncan, L., & Miller, S. (2000). *The Heroic Client: Doing client-directed outcome-informed therapy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Dunn, D. (2005). *The first fifty years of peace research: A survey and interpretation*. Burlington, VA: Ashgate Publishing Co.
- Dutt, M. (1998). Reclaiming a human rights culture: Feminism of difference and alliance. In E. Shohat (Ed.), *Talking Visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age* (pp. 225-246). Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Eagan, G. (2002). *The skilled helper: A problem-management and opportunity-development approach to helping*. Pacific Grove CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Eisenstein, Z. (1993). Eastern European Male Democracies: A problem of unequal equality. In N. Funk & M. Mueller (Eds.), *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union* (pp. 303 - 317). New York: Routledge.
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. New York: Altamira Press.
- Elstain, J. (1987). *Women and War*. New York: Basic Books.
- Englander, E. K. (2007). *Understanding Violence, 3rd ed*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.
- Enloe, C. (2000/1989). *Bananas, beaches and bases: Making feminist sense of international politics*. Berkely: University of California Press.
- Enloe, C. (2010). *Nimo's war, Emma's war: Making feminist sense of the Iraq war*. Berkely: University of California Press.

- Epston, D. (1997). "I am a bear": Discovering discoveries. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adolescents* (pp. 53-70). New York: Guilford Press.
- Ette, M. (2007). Empowerment. In G. Blakely, & V. Bryson (Eds.), *The impact of feminism on political concepts and debates*. (pp. 146-160). Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Euronews. (2010, 02 2010). *Euronews*. Retrieved 04 27, 10, from Elections: Yanukovich declared winner of Ukraine elections:  
<http://www.euronews.net/2010/02/14/yanukovich-declared-winner-of-ukraine-election/>
- Evans, A., Evans, R., & Kraybill, R. (2001). *Peace Skills Leaders' Guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Evans, S. (2007). Youth sense of community: Voice and power in community contexts. *Journal of community psychology*, 35(6) , 693-709.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth* (2004 ed.). (R. Philcox, Trans.) Paris: Presence Africaine.
- Feagin, J., & Vera, H. (2008). *Liberation Sociology 2nd ed*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Figes, O. (2007). *The Whisperers: Private life in Stalin's Russia*. New York: Picador: Henry Holt and Co.
- Fisher, R., Kopelman, W., & Schneider, A. (1994). *Beyone Machiavelli: Tools for coping with conflict*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Fisk, L. (2000). Shaping visionaries: Nurturing peace through education. In L. Fisk, & J. Schellenberg (Eds.), *Paterns of Conflict: Paths to peace* (pp. 159-193). Broadview Press.
- Flaherty, K. (2009, June 14). Director, Workers Health Centre, Edmonton, AB. (M. Flaherty, Interviewer)
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. (S. Sampson, Trans.) Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Fosha, D. (2000). *The transforming power of affect: A model for accelerated change*. New York: Basic Books.
- Fosi, C. (2008). Annie Braden, Fannie Lou Hamer & Rigoberta Menchu: Using personal narrative to build activist movements. In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 217-226). New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. (C. Gordon, Ed., & L. M. Colin Gordon, Trans.) New York: The Harvester Press.
- Francis, D. (2002). *People, Peace and power: Conflict transformation in action*. London: Pluto Press.
- Freidus, N. (2008). Our stories, their dreams: Voter Education Project. In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims*. (pp. 119-126). New York: Routledge.
- French, M. (1985). *Beyond Power: On women, men and morals*. New York: Balantine Books.
- Friere, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Fusco, C. (1998). We wear the mask. In E. Shohat (Ed.), *Talking visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age* (pp. 113-118). New York: MIT Press.
- Gabriel, J. (2007). *Karama: women activists across the Middle East*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from Open Democracy: Free thinking for the world: <http://www.opendemocracy.net>
- Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. London: Sage .
- Galtung, J. (2004). *Transcend and Transform: An introduction to conflict work*. Boulder: Paradigm Press.
- Garbarino, J., & Kostelny, K. (1996). What do we need to understand children in war and community violence? In R. Apfel, & B. Simon (Eds.), *Minefields in their hearts: The*

*mental health of children in war and communal violence* (pp. 33-51). Chelsea, CT: Yale University Press.

- Geertz, C. (1973). Thick Description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (pp. 3-30).
- Geertz, C. (1988). *Works and lives: the anthropologist as author*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Geffner, R., & Mantooh, C. (2000). *Ending spouse/partner abuse: A psychoeducational approach for individuals and couples*. Fort Worth, Tx: Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute.
- Gergen, M. (2003). Life stories: Pieces of a dream. In M. Gergen, & K. Gergen (Eds.), *Social construction: A reader* (pp. 65-77). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Glisson, S. (2008). Telling the truth in Mississippi: How breaking silence brought redemption to one Mississippi town. In R. Solinger, & M. & Fox (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justic claims*. (pp. 31-38). New York: Routledge.
- Global Eye, UK. (2009). *Eye on Saudi Arabia: Women's rights*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from [globaleye.org](http://globaleye.org): [www.globaleye.org](http://www.globaleye.org).uk
- Gobodo-Madikizela, P. (2003). *A human being died that night: A South African woman confronts the legacy of apartied*. Boston: Mariner.
- Gobodo-Madikizela, P. (2010, September 29). Narratives of dialogue and healing: Stories of remorse and forgiveness in the aftermath of mass trauma and violence. Winnipeg, MB, Canada.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Toronto: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (2006). *Social Intelligence: The new science of human relationships*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Goodrich, T., Rampage, C., Ellman, B., & Halstead, K. (1988). *Feminist family therapy: A casebook*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

- Gopin, M. (2003). Religion as an aid and a hindrance to post-conflict coexistence work. *Imagine coexistence: Restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict*, 251-266. A. Chayes & M. Minow (Eds.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gordon, M. (2005). *The roots of empathy: Changing the world child by child*. Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers.
- Government of Canada. (2009, June 2 - last updated). *Indian residential schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. Retrieved June 10, 2009, from (TRC) website: <http://www.trc.cvr.ca/>
- Graham, B. (2003). Tap your innate creativity. In M. Shewchuk, J. Crump, & P. Cormack (Eds.), *The Canadian writer's guide: 13th edition* (pp. 21-23). Markham, ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
- Grewal, I. (1998). On the new global feminism and the family of nations: Dilemmas of transnational feminist practice. In E. Shohat (Ed.), *Talking visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age* (pp. 501-531). New York: MIT Press.
- Grima, B. (2005). *The performance of emotion among Paxtun women: "The misfortunes which have befallen me."* Oxford University Press.
- Groza, V., Komarovna, N., Galchinskaya, L., Gerasimova, A., & Volynets, L. (2010). Ukrainian adoptive families. *International Social Work*, 53 (1), 19-31.
- Guilfoyle, M. (2003). Dialogue and power: A critical analysis of power in dialogical therapy. *Family Process*, 42(3), 331-344.
- Hammack, P. (2009). Exploring the reproduction of conflict through narrative: Israeli youth motivated to participate in a coexistence program. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 15(1), 49-74.
- Harasym, H. (2009, 10.04). personal communication. (M. Flaherty, Interviewer)
- Harding, L. (2010, 03. 05). *Viktor Yanukovich promises Ukraine will embrace Russia*. Retrieved 09 13, 2010, from [guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/mar/05/ukraine-russia-relations-viktor-yanukovich): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/mar/05/ukraine-russia-relations-viktor-yanukovich>
- Hare-Mustin, R., & Maracek, J. (1988). The meaning of difference: Gender theory, postmodernism, and psychology. *American Psychologist*, 43(6), 455-464.

- Harway, M., & Hansen, M. (2004). *Spouse abuse: Assessing and treating battered women, batterers, & their children 2nd ed.* Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Press.
- Hayduk, N. (2001). *Conflict resolution and family mediation in Ukraine: The development of a training program for [the] social services.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba - practicum report.
- Hayduk, N. (2002, December). Director, Department of Social Work, Lviv Polytechnica, Lviv, Ukraine. (M. Flaherty, Interviewer)
- Headlines Theatre. (2009). *Theatre for Living.* Retrieved June 9, 2009, from Headlines Theatre: [http://www.headlinestheatre.com/theatre\\_for\\_living.htm](http://www.headlinestheatre.com/theatre_for_living.htm)
- Helsing, J., Kirlic, N., McMaster, N., & Sonnenschin, N. (2006). Young people's activism and the transition to peace: Bosnia, Northern Ireland, and Israel. In S. McEvoy-Levy (Ed.), *Troublemakers or peacemakers? Youth and post-accord peace-building* (pp. 195-216). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Herman, J. (1992/1997). *Trauma and Recovery.* New York: Basic Books.
- Hertz, R. (Ed.). (1997). *Reflexivity and voice.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Hewett, H. (2004). In search of an "I": Embodied voice and the personal essay. *Women's studies, 33(6)* , 219-741.
- Hicks, T. (1997). Sex, drugs and post-modern therapy: A teen finds her voice. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adults* (pp. 382-399). New York: Guilford Press.
- Himka, J. (2009). Victim cinema. Between Hitler and Stalin: Ukraine in WWII - the untold story. In G. Kasianov, & P. Ther (Eds.), *A laboratory of transnational history: Ukraine and recent Ukrainian historiography* (pp. 211-224). Budapest: CEU Press.
- Hochschild, A. (2005). Afterword: The colonized colonizer. In L. Gulati, & J. Bagchi (Eds.), *A space of her own: Personal narratives of twelve women* (pp. 257-264). London: Sage Publications.
- Hocker, J., & Wilmot, W. (1991). *Interpersonal Conflict.* Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.

- Homan, M. S. (2004). *Promoting Community Change: Making it happen in the real world*. Belmont, CA: Thompson: Brooks/Cole.
- hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*. Boston: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1998). Naked without shame: A counter-hegemonic body politic. In E. Shohat (Ed.), *Talking Visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age* (pp. 65-74). Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- hooks, b. (2000). *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching Community: A pedagogy of hope*. New York: Routledge.
- Horkheimer, M. (1937). Traditional and Critical Theory. In *Critical Theory: Selected Essays* (pp. 188-252). New York: The Seabury Press.
- Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. (1979/1947). *Dialectic of enlightenment*. London: Verso.
- Houghton Mifflin Co. (2003). *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th ed.* Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Houle, I. (2009, May 7). Conversation with Ivy. (M. Flaherty, Interviewer) Onion Lake, Alberta.
- Hrytsak, Y. (2009). On the relevance and irrelevance of nationalism in contemporary Ukraine. In G. Kasianov, & P. Ther (Eds.), *A laboratory of transnational history: Ukraine and recent Ukrainian historiography* (pp. 225-248). Budapest: CEU Press.
- Hughes, D., & Denisova, T. (2003). *Trafficking in Women from Ukraine*. US Department of Justice. <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/203275.pdf>.
- International Centre for Healthy Society. (2003). *Social determinants of health: the solid facts 2nd ed.* R. Wilkinson, & M. Marmot (Eds.) Geneva: World Health Organization.
- International Institute for Democracy. (2009, May 19). *Ukraine Electoral System: List PR*. Retrieved September 18, 2009, from International Institute for Democracy Voter Turnout: [http://www.idea.int/vt/country\\_view.cfm?CountryCode=UA](http://www.idea.int/vt/country_view.cfm?CountryCode=UA)
- International Storytelling Center. (2005). Retrieved June 22, 2009, from International Storytelling Center: <http://www.storytellingcenter.net>

- Iran Chamber Society. (2009). *Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi: Arya Mehr and Shahanshah (King of Kings)*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from Iran Chamber Society: Historic Personalities: [www.iranchaber.com](http://www.iranchaber.com)
- Jacobs, B. (2009, July 23). CBC Radio News on the hour.
- Jansen, G. G. (2006). Gender and War: The effects of armed conflict on women's health and mental health. *Affilia*, 21: 134-145.
- Jeong, H. W. (2000). *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Jeong, H. (2005). *Peacebuilding in postconflict societies: Strategy and process*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Joe, R. (2005). I lost my talk. In D. Moses, & T. Goldie (Eds.), *An anthology of Canadian Native literature in English, 3rd ed.* (pp. 105-109). Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, B. (2005). One generation from extinction. In D. Moses, & T. Goldie (Eds.), *An anthology of Native Canadian literature in English, 3rd ed.* (pp. 92-97). Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Jolluck, K. (2006). The Nation's Pain and Women's Shame: Polish Women and Wartime Violence. In N. Wingfield, & M. Bucur, *Gender War in Twentieth Century Eastern Europe* (pp. 193-219). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Kahn, S. (1991/1998). *Organizing: A guide for grass-roots leaders. Rev. ed.* United States: National Association of Social Workers.
- Kalunga-Banda, A. (2005). Post-conflict programmes for women: Lessons from the Kosovo Women's Initiative. In C. Sweetman (Ed.), *Gender, Peacebuilding and Reconstruction* (pp. 31-40). Oxfam, GB.
- Kaplan, L. (1996). Women as caretakers: An archetype that supports patriarchal militarism. In K. Warren, & D. Cady (Eds.), *Bringing peace home: Feminism, violence, and nature* (pp. 165-173). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Kappeler, A. (2009). From an ethno-national to a multiethnic to a transnational Ukrainian history. In G. Kasianov, & P. Ther (Eds.), *A laboratory of transnational*

*history: Ukraine and recent Ukrainian historiography* (pp. 51-80). Budapest: CEU Press.

Karatnycky, A. (2005, April). *Ukraine's Orange Revolution*. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Foreign Affairs: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/60620/adrian-karatnycky/ukraines-orange-revolution>

Kazlev, M. A. (1998, October 21). *The parable of the blind men and the elephant- The Buddhist parable*. Retrieved May 17, 2009, from Kheper: transformation - evolution - metamorphosis: [http://www.kheper.net/topics/blind\\_men\\_and\\_elephant/Buddhist.html](http://www.kheper.net/topics/blind_men_and_elephant/Buddhist.html)

Keashly, L. (1994). Gender and conflict: What does psychological research tell us? In A. Taylor, & J. Beinstein Miller (Eds.), *Conflict and Gender* (pp. 167-190). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press Inc.

Kelley, C., & Eblen, A. (2002). *Women who speak for peace*. Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Kelman, H. (1996). The interactive problem-solving approach. In C. Crocker, F.O. Hampson & P. Aal (Eds.), *Managing Global Chaos*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Kelman, H. (1999). The interdependence of Israeli and Palestinian national identities: The role of the other in existential conflicts. *Journal of Social Issues*, 55 (3), 503-518.

Kimpson, S. (2005). Stepping off the road: A narrative (of) inquiry. In L. Brown, & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Critical, Indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches* (pp. 73-96). Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press/Women's Press.

King, E. (1999, March). *Systematic factors maintaining family violence*. Toronto, ON, Canada: Unpublished paper.

King, T. (1993). *One good story, that one*. Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers.

King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories: A Native narrative*. Toronto: Anansi Inc.

King, T. (2005). *A short history of Indians in Canada: Stories*. Toronto, ON: Harper Collins Publishers Ltd.

Kirschenbaum, L. A. (2006). "The alienated body": Gender identity and the memory of the siege of Leningrad. In N. Wingfield, & M. Bucur (Eds.), *Gender War in the*

*Twentieth Century in Eastern Europe* (pp. 220-234). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Kis, O. (2005). Choosing without choice: Dominant models of femininity in contemporary Ukraine. In M. Hurd, H. Carlbach, & S. Rastback (Eds.), *Gender transitions in Russia and Eastern Europe* (pp. 105-136). Stockholm: Gondolin Publishers.
- Kis, O. (2007). "Beauty will save the world!": Feminine strategies in Ukrainian politics and the case of Yulia Tymoshenko. Retrieved 10 18, 2010, from [http://www.youku.ca/soi/\\_Vol\\_7\\_2/\\_HLML/kis.html](http://www.youku.ca/soi/_Vol_7_2/_HLML/kis.html)
- Klinic, Inc. (2000). *Domestic abuse: Group work with abused women*. Winnipeg, MB: unpublished manual.
- Kolb, D., & Williams, J. (2000). *The Shadow negotiation: How women can master the hidden agendas that determine bargaining success*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Korac, M. (2006). Gender, conflict and peace-building: Lessons from the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. *Women's Studies International Forum* , 510-520.
- Korostelina, K. V. (2009). Identity conflicts: Models of dynamics and early warning. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 98-113). New York: Routledge.
- Kovach, M. (2005). Emerging from the Margins: Indigenous Methodologies. In L. Brown & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous and Anti-Oppressive Approaches* (pp. 19-36). Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Kreisburg, L. (1982). *Social conflicts, 2nd ed.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kriesberg, L. (2007). Contemporary conflict resolution applications. In C. Crocker, F. Hampson, & P. Aal (Eds.), *Leashing the dogs of war: Conflict management in a divided world* (pp. 455-476). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Kriesberg, L. (2009). Waging conflicts constructively. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Starost (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 155-167). New York: Routledge.
- Krushelnycky, A. (2006). *An orange revolution: A personal journey through Ukrainian history*. Harvill Secker.

- Kuwert, P. (2009, July 16). The Rape of Berlin. *The Current*. (S. Coles, Interviewer) CBC Radio One.
- Kuzio, T. (2010, Summer). *Viktor Yanukovych's first 100 days: Back to the past, but what's the rush?* Retrieved 11 4, 2010, from Demokratizatsiya: The journal of Post-Soviet democratization:  
<http://www.demokratizatsiya.org/issues/summer%202010/kuzio.html>
- Kyiv Post. (2010, February 10). *Yanukovych appeals to the nation, asks Tymoshenko to step down*. Retrieved February 11, 2010, from Kyiv Post:  
<http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/59193>
- Langellier, K., & Peterson, E. (1992). Spinstorying: An analysis of women storytelling. In E. Fine & J. Staskee Speer(Eds.), *Performance, Culture and Identity* (pp. 157-179). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Lankton, C., & Lankton, S. (1989). *Tales of enchantment: Goal-oriented metaphors for adults and children in therapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel Inc.
- Laskey, H. (2003). *Night voices: Heard in the shadow of Hitler and Stalin*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Lawless, E. (1993). *Holy Women, Wholly Women: Sharing ministries of wholeness through life stories and reciprocal ethnography*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Layoun, M.D. (2001). *Wedded to the Land? Gender, boundaries and nationalism*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- Lederach, J.P. (1995). *Preparing for Peace: Conflict transformation across cultures*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Lederach, J.P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Lederach, J.P. (2001). Civil Society and Reconciliation. In C. Crocker, F. Hampson, & P. Aal (Eds.), *Trubulent Peace: the challenges of managing intenational conflict* (pp. 841-854). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

- Lederach, J.P. (2003). The "Wow factor" and the non-theory of change. In C. Sampson, M. Abu-Nimer, & C. & Liebler (Eds.), *Positive approaches to peacebuilding: A resource for innovators*. (pp. 119-133). Washington, DC: Pact Publications.
- Lederach, J.P. (2005). *The moral imagination: The art and soul of building peace*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lederach, J. P., & Moomaw Jenner, J. (Eds.). (2002). *A handbook of international peacebuilding: Into the eye of the storm*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Library of Parliament. (2007, December 12). *Women's Right to Vote*. Retrieved May 16, 2009, from Parliament of Canada:  
<http://2.parl.gc.ca/parlinfo/compilations/ProvinceTerritory/ProvincialWomenRighttoVote.aspx>
- Lincoln, M. (2002). *Conflict resolution communication: Patterns promoting peaceful schools*. Lanhan, MA.: Scarecrow Press.
- Lissyutkina, L. (1993). Soviet women at the crossroads of Perestroika. In N. Funk, & M. Mueller, *Gender Politics and Post-communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union* (pp. 274-286). New York: Routledge.
- London School of Economics and Political Science. (2010, August 27). *What is civil society?* Retrieved August 30, 2010, from London School of Economics and Political Science: [http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what\\_is\\_civil\\_society.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm)
- Madigan, S. (1997). Re-considering memory: Re-remembering lost identities back toward re-remembered selves. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adolescents* (pp. 338-355). New York: Guilford Press.
- Mahalingam, R., & Reid, P. (2007). Dialogue at the margins: Women's self-stories and the intersection of identities. *Women Studies International Forum* , 254-263.
- Maksymovych, L. (2007, October 24). Trafficking in Ukrainians Abroad. Winnipeg, MB.
- Malarek, V. (2004). *The Natashas: The new global sex trade*. Toronto: Viking Canada.
- Malhotra, A., & Schulen, S. (2005). Women's empowerment as a variable in international development. In D. Narayan (Ed.), *Measuring empowerment: Cross-disciplinary perspectives* (pp. 71-88). The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

- Malin, J. (2001). *The voice of the mother: Embedded maternal narratives in twentieth-century women's autobiographies*. Southern Illinois University.
- Marples, D. (2007). *Heroes and villains: Creating national history in contemporary Ukraine*. New York: CEU Press.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1897/1976). *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Introduced by Ernest Mandel, tras. Ben Fowkes. New York: Vintage.
- Maslow, A. (1954, 1970). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Mason, K.O. (2005). Measuring women's empowerment: Learning from cross-national research. In D. Narayan (Ed.), *Measuring empowerment: Cross-disciplinary perspectives* (pp. 82-102). The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development: The World Bank.
- Maxwell, V. (2009, June). *Victoria Maxwell: Crazy for Life*. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from Victoria Maxwell: [www.victoriamaxwell.com/shows\\_crazy\\_for\\_life.asp](http://www.victoriamaxwell.com/shows_crazy_for_life.asp)
- Mazurana, D.; Raven-Roberts, A. & Parport, J. (2005). Introduction. In *Gender, Conflict & Peacekeeping*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- McAdams, D. (1996). Personality, modernity, and the storied self: A contemporary framework for studying persons. *Psychological Inquiry* , 7 (4), 295-321.
- McBeath, J. (2006). Finding a voice, finding self. *Educational Review*, 58(2) , 195-207.
- McLeod, N. (2007). *Cree narrative memory: From treaties to contemporary times*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich Publishing Co.
- McNamee, S., & Gergen, K. (1999). *Relational responsibility: Resources for sustainable dialogue*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Memmi, A. (1965). *The colonizer and the colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Merry, S. E. (2006). *Human rights and gender violence: Translating international law into social justice*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Miall, H., Ramsbottom, O., & Woodhouse, T. (2002). Calling for a broad approach to conflict resolution. In P. Van Tongeren, H. Vanderveen & J. Verhoeven, (Eds.), *Searching for peace in Europe and Eurasia: An overview of conflict prevention and*

- peace-building activities*. (pp. 71-76). Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers, Inc.
- Minister, K. (1992). Rehearsing for the ultimate audience. In E. Fine, & J. Staskell Speer (Eds.), *Performance, culture and identity*. Westport, CT: Prager.
- Minow, M. (2003). Education for Coexistence. *Imagine coexistence: Restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict*, 213-234. (A. Chayes, & M. Minow, Eds.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mitchell, C. (1981). *The structure of international conflict*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Mladjenovic, L. (2001). Caring at the same time: On feminist politics during the NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the ethnic cleansing of Albanians in Kosovo, 1999. In S. Meintjes, A. Pilky, & M. Tursher (Eds.), *The aftermath: Women in post-conflict transformations*. London: Zed Books.
- Mohanty, C. (1998). Crafting feminist geneologies: On the geography and politics of home, nation and community. In E. Shohat (Ed.), *Talking visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age* (pp. 485-496). New York: MIT Press.
- Monaghan, L. (2007). Signing. In L. Monaghan, & J. Goodman (Eds.), *A cultural approach to interpersonal communication: Essential readings* (pp. 413-415). Victoria, Australia: Blackwell Publishing.
- Moosa-Mitha, M. (2005). Situating anti-oppressive theories within critical and difference-centred perspectives. In L. Brown & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Critical, indigenous & anti-oppressive approaches* (pp. 37-72). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Morris, M. (2009). *Women and Poverty*. Retrieved May 16, 2009, from Candian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women: <http://www.criaw-icref.ca>
- Moses, D., & Goldie, T. (Eds.). (2005). *An anthology of Canadian Native literature in English, 3rd ed.* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Mostov, J. (Oct. 1995). Our women/Their women. *Peace & Change*, Vol. 20: Issue 4 pp. 515-530.
- Nafisi, A. (2004). *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A memoir in books*. New York: Random House

- Narayan, D. (2005). Conceptual framework and methodological challenges. In D. Narayan (Ed.), *Measuring empowerment: Cross-disciplinary perspectives* (pp. 3-38). The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.
- Native Women's Association of Canada. (2007). *Aboriginal Women and Bill C-31: An issue paper*. Corner Brook, NL: National Aboriginal Women's Summit, June 20-22, 2007.
- Nelson, H. L. (2006). Damaged Identities: Narrative Repair. In N. N. Potter (Ed.), *Trauma, Truth and Reconciliation*. Oxford University Press.
- News, R. D. (2008, October 24). *Ukrainian style independence: What's up Yuschenko's sleeve?* Retrieved October 26, 2008, from <http://www.kp.ru/daily/24186/399007>
- Neysmith, S. (2000). Networking across difference: Connecting restructuring and caring labour. In S. Neysmith (Ed.), *Restructuring caring labour: Discourse, state practice, and everyday life* (pp. 1-28). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
- Nordstrom, C. (2006). The jagged edge of peace: The creation of culture and war orphans in Angola. In S. McEvoy-Levy (Ed.), *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and Post-accord peace-building* (pp. 99-116). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Nowrojee, B. (2008). "Your justice is too slow": Will the international criminal tribunal for Rwanda fail Rwanda's rape victims? In D. Pankhurst (Ed.), *Gendered peace: Women's struggles for post-war justice and reconciliation* (pp. 107-136). New York: Routledge.
- Nye, J. S. (2007). The place of soft power in state-based conflict management. In C. Crocker; F. Hampson & P. Aal (Eds.), *Leashing the dogs of war: Conflict management in a divided world* (pp. 389-400). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace.
- Ochs, E. (2007). Narrative lessons. In L. Monaghan, & J. Goodman (Eds.), *A cultural approach to interpersonal communication: Essential readings* (pp. 41-49). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd.
- O'Connell, D. (1983). Poverty: The feminine complaint. In J. Turner, & L. Emery (Eds.), *Perspectives on women in the 1980s* (pp. 41-65). Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.

- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2000). Women's rights are human rights: Special issue on women's rights. (Spring).
- O'Hanlon, B., & Weiner-Davis, M. (1989). *In search of solutions: A new direction in psycho-therapy*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.
- Olsen, T. (1965). *Silences*. New York: Delacorte/Seymour Lawrence.
- Olsson, L. (2001). Gender mainstreaming in practice: The United Nations Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia. In L. Olsson, & T. Tryggestad (Eds.), *Women in international peacekeeping* (pp. 97-110). London: Frank Cass Publishers.
- O'Neil, P. (2010, October 30). Harper draws flak on Ukraine famine: Deaths overstated, say some historians. *Winnipeg Free Press*, p. A13.
- OSCE. (Oct. 1, 2007). *International Election Observation Mission Ukraine - Pre-term Parliamentary Elections 30 September, 2007. Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions*. Office for Democratic Institution of Human Rights.
- Ottaway, M. (2007). Is democracy the answer? In C. H. Crocker (Ed.), *Leashing the dogs of war: Conflict management in a divided world*. (pp. 603-618). Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Paffenholz, T. (2003). *Community-based bottom-up peacebuilding: The development of the Life and Peace Institute's approach to peacebuilding and Lessons Learned from the Somalia experience (1990-2000)*. Uppsala, Sweden: Life and Peace Institute.
- Page, J. (2004, December 8). *Who Poisoned Yuschenko*. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from The Times:  
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article400357.ece>
- Panchemenko, N. (2006). Migration of highly qualified professionals from Ukraine: Current situation and future threats. *Warsaw Center for International Relations, Reports and Analyses N 18*.
- Pankhurst, D. (2008). Introduction: Gendered war and peace. In D. Pankhurst (Ed.), *Gendered Peace: Women's struggles for post-war justice and reconciliation* (pp. 1-30). New York: Routledge.
- Pare, D., Bondy, J., & Malhotra, C. (2006, March 19). *Performing respect: Using enactments in group work with men who have abused*. Retrieved June 10, 2009, from [www.glebeinstitute.com/writings/pareetalperformingMarch19,06.pdf](http://www.glebeinstitute.com/writings/pareetalperformingMarch19,06.pdf)

- Parliamentary Information and Research Service. (2000). *Bill C-31: an act to amend the Canadian Elections Act and the Public Service Employment Act*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from Legislative Summaries: Library of Parliament: <http://www2.parl.gc.ca>
- Paterson, D. (2002, September). *We are all theatre: An interview with Augusta Boal*. Retrieved June 2009, 10, from Community arts network reading room: [http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivesfiles/2002/09/we\\_all\\_are\\_theatre.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivesfiles/2002/09/we_all_are_theatre.php)
- Pavlychko, S. (1997). Progress on hold: The conservative faces of women in Ukraine. In M. Buckley (Ed.), *Post-Soviet women: From the Baltic to Central Asia* (pp. 219-234). Cambridge University Press.
- Pedwell, C. (2008). Weaving relational webs: Theorizing cultural difference and embodied practice. *Feminist Theory*, 9: 87-107.
- People's Movement for Human Rights Education. (2009). *Women and Land*. Retrieved May 16, 2009, from People's Movement for Human Rights Education: [http://www.pdhre.org/rights/women\\_and\\_poverty.html](http://www.pdhre.org/rights/women_and_poverty.html)
- Perring, C. (2006). Telling the truth about mental illness: The role of narrative. In N. N. Potter (Ed.), *Trauma, truth and reconciliation* (pp. 257-276). Oxford University Press.
- Petipas-Taylor, G. (2009). *Closing the rights gap of Aboriginal women*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from [www.acswcccf.nb.ca](http://www.acswcccf.nb.ca)
- Petz, I. (2010, 08 30). *Ukraine's new regime: The first 200 days*. Retrieved 9 9, 2010, from Democracy Now: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/ukraines-new-regime-first-200-days/ingo-petz>
- Pipher, M. (2009). *Seeking peace: Chronicles from the worst Buddhist in the world*. New York: Riverhead Books.
- Piroshkov, S., & Safarova, G. (2006). Demographic development of Russia and Ukraine: Fifteen years of independence. *European Population Conference, June 21-24*. Liverpool, UK.
- Pittinsky, T., Shih, M., & Ambady, N. (1999). Identity adaptiveness: Affect across multiple identities. *Journal of social issues*, 55:3, 55 (3), 503-518.

- Politkovskaya, A. (2007). *A Russian Diary*. London: Vintage Books.
- Porter, E. (2007). *Peacebuilding: Women in international perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Posadskaya, A. (1995). Democracy without women is no democracy: Women's struggles in postcommunist Russia. In A. Basu (Ed.), *Women's Movements in Global Perspective* (pp. 351-373). Boulder: Westview Press.
- Potter, N. N. (2006). Introduction. In N. N. Potter (Ed.), *Trauma, truth and reconciliation: Healing damaged relationships* (pp. 1-14). Oxford University Press.
- Potts, K., & Brown, L. (2005). Becoming and anti-oppressive researcher. In L. Brown, & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous and Anti-oppressive Approaches* (pp. 255-286). Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Pranis, K., Stuart, B., & Wedge, M. (2003). *Peacemaking Circles: From crime to community*. St. Paul, MN: Living Justice Press.
- Press Service of the Accounting Chamber. (2007, 01 23). *Money passes by children due to administrative disability of officials*. Retrieved 03 17, 2010, from Accounting Chamber of Ukraine official website: <http://www.ac-rada.gov.ua/control/main/en/publish/article/895892;jsessionid=0C70A0B2D16977962C001D4CF148A288>
- Puddephat, A.J. (2006). An interview with Kathy Charmaz on constructing grounded theory. *Qualitative Sociology Review*. Vol 2: Issue 3. Also available on line at [http://www.qualitativesociologyreview.org/ENG/Volume5/QSR\\_2\\_3\\_Interview.pdf](http://www.qualitativesociologyreview.org/ENG/Volume5/QSR_2_3_Interview.pdf)
- Raging Grannies Without Borders of Detroit, MI and Windsor, ON. (2009). *History of the raging grannies*. Retrieved May 2009, from Raging Grannies Without Borders of Detroit Michigan and Windsor Ontario: <http://www.geocities.com/raginggranni/HistoryandArticles.html>
- Rambo, A., Heath, A., & Chenail, R. (Eds.). (1993). *Practicing therapy: Exercises for growing therapists*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Randall, M. (2003). *When I look into the mirror and see you: Women, terror, and resistance*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Rapoport, A. (1960). *Fights, games, and debates*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press.

- Rappaport, J. (1984). *Studies in empowerment: Steps toward understanding and action*. New York: Howard Press Inc.
- Raven-Roberts, A. (2005). Gender mainstreaming in the United Nations peacekeeping operations: Talking the talk, tripping over the walk. In D. Mazurana, A. Raven-Roberts & J. Paraport (Eds.), *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping* (pp. 43-63). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Reardon, B. A. (1996). *Sexism and the war system*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Reardon, B. (2001). *Education for a culture of peace in a gender perspective*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.
- Reid, A. (2003/1997/1985). *Borderland: A journey through the history of Ukraine*. London: Orion Books, Ltd.
- Reimann, C., & Ropers, N. (2005). Discourses on peace practices: Learning to change by learning from change. In P. Van Tongeren, M. Brenk, M. Helleman & J. Verhoeven (Eds.), *People building peace II: Successful stories of civil society* (pp. 29-44). Boulder: Lynne Reinner . Project of the European Centre for Conflict Prevention.
- Richardson, L. (1960). *Statistics of deadly quarrels*. Pttsburgh: Boxwood.
- Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Riikonen, E. (1999). Inspiring dialogues and relational responsibility. In S. McNamee, & K. Gergen (Eds.), *Relational responsibility: Resources for sustainable dialogue* (pp. 139-149). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ring, L. (2006). *Zenara: Everyday peace in a Karachi apartment building*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Ristock, J. (2003). Exploring dynamics of abusive lesbian relationships: Preliminary analysis of a multiple qualitative study. *American journal of community psychology* , 329-341.
- RISU. (2007). *Religious Organizations in Ukraine as of January 1, 2007*. Retrieved November 2007, from Religious Information Service of Ukraine: <http://www.risu.org.ua/eng/resources/statistics/ukr2007/>

- Roberts, A., & Roberts, B. (2005). *Ending intimate partner abuse: Practical guidance and survival strategies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robinson, E. (2000). *Monkey Beach*. Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada.
- Romans, S., Forte, T., Cohen, M., Du Mont, J., & Hyman, I. (2007). Who is most at risk for intimate partner violence?: A Canadian population-based study. *Journal of Interpersonal violence*, 22(12): 1495-1514.
- Rosenberg, S. (2010). An introduction to feminist poststructural theorizing. In N. Mandell (Ed.), *Feminist Issues: Race, class, and sexuality. Fifth ed.* (pp. 40-62). Toronto: Pearson Canada.
- Rothbart, D., & Cherubin, R. (2009). Causation as a core concept in conflict analysis. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 57-68). New York: Routledge.
- Rothbart, D., & Korostelina, K. (2009). The enemy and the innocent in violent conflicts. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution* (pp. 83-97). New York: Routledge.
- Roth-Howe, D., Roth, H. S., Wenz-Haubfleisch, & Sternberg, R. R. (2008). *An unlikely alliance: Germans and Jews collaborate to teach the lessons of the Holocaust*. (R. Solinger, & M. & Fox, Eds.) New York: Routledge.
- Rothman, J. (1997). *Resolving Identity-Based Conflicts*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Rubin, J., Pruitt, D., & Kim, S. (1994). *Social conflict: Escalation, stalemate, and settlement*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Rural Development Institute. (2002-2007). *Women and Land*. Retrieved May 16, 2009, from Rural Development Institute: [http://www.rdiland.org/OURWORK/OurWork\\_WomenLand.html](http://www.rdiland.org/OURWORK/OurWork_WomenLand.html)
- Russell, M. (1984). *Skills in counselling women: The feminist approach*. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher.
- Sanders, C. (1997). Re-authoring problem identities: Small victories with young persons captured by substance abuse. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adolescents* (pp. 400-422). New York: Guilford Press.

- Sandole-Staroste, I. (2009). Gender-mainstreaming: a valuable tool in building sustainable peace. In J. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and REsolution* (pp. 224-238). New York: Routledge.
- Sapon-Chevin, M. (1999). *Because we can change the world: A practical guide to building cooperative, inclusive classroom communities*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Sarcar, A. (2007, 11 19). *Young Tibetan theatre aspirants look towards Delhi stage*. Retrieved 06 10, 2009, from Friends of Tibet: Peoples movement for an independent Tibet:  
[http://www.friendsoftibet.org/sofar/himachal/theatre\\_nov\\_19\\_2007.html](http://www.friendsoftibet.org/sofar/himachal/theatre_nov_19_2007.html)
- Sasse, G. (2007). *The Crimea question: Identity, transition, and conflict*. Harvard University Press.
- Sax, P. (1997). Narrative therapy and family support: Strengthening the mother's voice in working with families with infants and toddlers. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adolescents* (pp. 111-146). New York: Guilford Press.
- Schaef, A. (1981). *Women's reality: An emerging female system in a white male society*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Schellenberg, J. (1996). *Conflict Resolution: Theory, research and practice*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Schlesinger, J. (2009, June 9). Interview with Joe Schlesinger on The Current, CBC. (A. M. Tremonte, Interviewer)
- Schuler, S., Bates, M., & Islam, F. (2008). Women's rights, domestic violence and recourse seeking in rural Bangladesh. *Violence against women*, 14(3): 326-345.
- Schwerin, E. (1985). *Mediation, citizen empowerment, and transformational politics*. Westport: Praeger.
- Seigel, R. (1999). Silencing the voices of older women. In *Identity, culture and older women* (pp. 315-330). Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

- Senehi, J. (2002). Constructive Storytelling: A peace process. *Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies* , 9(2): 41-63.
- Senehi, J. (2009). Building peace: Storytelling to transform conflicts constructively. In D. Sandole, S. Byrne, J. Senehi, & I. Sandole-Staroste (Eds.), *Handbook of conflict analysis and resolution* (pp. 198-212). New York: Routledge.
- Senehi, J., & Byrne, S. (2006). From violence towards peace: The role of storytelling for youth healing and political empowerment after social conflict. In S. McEvoy-Levy (Ed.), *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and post-accord peace-building* (pp. 235-258). Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Serwer, D., & Thompson, P. (2007). A framework for success: International intervention in societies emerging from conflict. In C. Crocker, O. Hampson, & P. Aal (Eds.), *Leashing the dogs of war: Conflict management in a divided world* (pp. 369-388). Washington, DC: United States Institution of Peace.
- Shahed, A. L. (2008). Hearing the great ancestors and "Women living under Muslim laws." In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 173-181). New York: Routledge.
- Shalev, A. (2006). Interventions for traumatic stress: Theoretical basis. In E. Ritchie, P. Watson, & M. Friedman (Eds.), *Interventions following mass violence and disasters: Strategies for mental health practice* (pp. 103-120). New York: Guilford Press.
- Shebib, B. (2007). *Choices: Interviewing and counselling skills for Canadians 3rd ed.* Toronto, ON: Peason Education Canada/Prentice Hall.
- Siegel, D. (2003). An interpersonal neurobiology of psychotherapy: The developing mind and the resolution of trauma. In M. Solomon, & D. Siegel (Eds.), *Healing trauma: Attachment, mind, body and brain*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Simms, L. (2003). *Becoming the World*. New York: Mercy Corps & Comfort for Kids.
- Simms, L. (2008, August 18-29). *Becoming the World: Storytelling for building tolerance in schools and communities*. Winnipeg, MB, Canada.
- Sinha, M. (2006). Gender and Nation. In S. e. Morgan, *The feminist history reader* (pp. 323-338). New York: Routledge.

- Sluzki, C. (2003). The process toward reconciliation. In A. Chayes & M. Minow (Eds.) *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity after Violent Ethnic Conflict* ( pp 21-32). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, C. (1997). Introduction: Comparing traditional therapies with narrative approaches. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adults* (pp. 1-52). New York: Guilford Press.
- Smith, L. T. (2006/1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Smitha, F. (2007). *The Iranian Revolution*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from Macrohistory and world report: <http://www.fsmitha.com/h2ch29ir.html>
- Snore, E. (Director). (2008). *The Soviet Story* [Motion Picture].
- Snyder, A. (2003). *Setting the agenda for global peace: Conflict and consensus building*. Aldershot Hampshire, England: Ashgate.
- Solinger, R., Fox, M., & Irani, K. (2008). Introduction. In *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 1-11). New York: Routledge.
- Spelman, E. (2003). Coexistence and Repair. *Imagine Coexistence: Restoring Humanity after violent ethnic conflict*. In A. Chayes & M. Minow (Eds.), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. pp 235-251.
- Sprague, J. (2005). *Feminist methodologies for the critical researcher: Bridging differences*. New York: Altamira Press.
- Spraker, B. (2009). *Women hold up half the sky*. Retrieved May 12, 2009, from [www.antiochsea.edu/academics/enviro/faculty/documents/WomenHoldupHalftheSky.pdf](http://www.antiochsea.edu/academics/enviro/faculty/documents/WomenHoldupHalftheSky.pdf)
- Stacey, K. (1997). From imposition to collaboration: Generating stories of competence. In C. Smith, & D. Nylund (Eds.), *Narrative therapies with children and adults* (pp. 221-254). New York: Guilford Press.
- Stanzel, F.K. (1990). *Narrative perspective in fiction: A phenomenological mediation of reader, text, and world*. (C. Goedsche, Trans.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- State Statistics Committee of Ukraine. (2004). *Main points in brief*. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Demographic news: <http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/>
- Statistics Canada. (2005, July 7). *General Social Survey*. Retrieved February 2008, from Statistics Canada: <http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/indb/p25V.pl>
- Staub, E. (1989). *The roots of evil: Theories of genocide and other group violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stavkova, S. (May, 2003/June, 2005). (M. Flaherty, Interviewer) Lviv, Ukraine.
- Stavkova, S. (2010, February 10). *Interview with a multi-ethnic Ukrainian*. (M. Flaherty, Interviewer). Lviv, Ukraine
- Steihm, J. (2001). Women, peacekeeping and peacemaking: Gender balance and mainstreaming. In L. Olsson, & T. Tryggestad (Eds.), *Women and International Peacemaking* (pp. 39-48). London: Frank Cass Publishers.
- Stephens, J. B. (1994). Gender Conflict: Connecting feminist theory and conflict resolution. In A. Chayes & J. Beinstein Miller (Ed.), *Conflict and Gender* (pp. 217-236). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc. (George Mason University).
- Straus, M., & Gilles, R. (1990). How violent are American families? Estimates from the National Family Violence Resurvey and other studies. In M. S. Gilles (Ed.), *Physical violence in American families* (pp. 95-132). New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers.
- Swadron, J. (2008). *The cast & crew of Madness, Masks & Miracles*. Retrieved June 12, 2009, from Madness, Masks & Miracles: [http://www.juneswadron.com/cast\\_and\\_crew.htm](http://www.juneswadron.com/cast_and_crew.htm)
- Swager, L. (2006). The drum keeps beating: Recovering a Mohawk identity. In K. Anderson, & B. Lawrence (Eds.), *Strong women stories: Native vision and community survival* (pp. 37-54). Toronto, ON: Sumach Press.
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. (2007, April 5). *Soderkopiing Process*. Retrieved October 17, 2010, from 4 - 7 million Ukrainian citizens working abroad: <http://soderkoping.org.ua/page13979.html>
- Sylvester, C. (1992). Patriarchy, peace and women warriors. In J. Fahey, & R. Armstrong (Eds.), *A peace reader: Essential readings on war, justice, non-violence and world order* (pp. 33-49). Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press.

- Sylvester, C. (2002). *Feminist international relations: An unfinished journey*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Taylor, A., & Beinstein Miller, J. (1994). Introduction: The necessity of seeing gender in conflict. In A. & Taylor, *Conflict and Gender* (pp. 1-17). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.
- The China Project: Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba. (2004). *Building Capacity: Social work with rural women in China; Narrative report Year 4*. Ottawa, Canada: Canadian International Development Agency.
- The women of York Correctional Institute. (2003). Lamb, W., (Ed). *Couldn't keep it to myself: Testimonies from our imprisoned sisters*. New York: Regan Books.
- Thornham, S. (2000). *Feminist theory and cultural studies*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tickner, J.A. (1992). *Gender in international relations: Feminist perspectives on achieving global security*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tickner, J. A. (2001). *Gendering world politics: Issues and approaches in the Cold War era*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tickner, J. A. (2006). On the frontlines or sidelines of knowledge and power? Feminist Practices of Responsible Scholarship. *International Relations Review* (2006) 8 , pp. 383-395.
- Tsukanova, A. (2010, April 27). *Chaos in Ukraine as Russia deal ratified*. Retrieved April 27, 2010, from Jakarta Globe: <http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/afp/chaos-in-ukraine-parliament-as-russia-deal-ratified/371849>
- Tuso, H. (2000). Indigenous processes of conflict resolution in Oromo Society. In W. Zartman (Ed.), *Traditional cures for modern conflicts: African conflict "medicine"* (pp. 79-94). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Ukrainetrek.com. (2010). *Ukrainetrek.com*. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from Simferopol, Ukraine: [http://ukrainetrek.com/Simferopol\\_city.shtml](http://ukrainetrek.com/Simferopol_city.shtml)

- UNIFEM. (2009). *The multimedia report: Progress of the world's women 2008/2009*. Retrieved July 21, 2009, from Politics: <http://www.unifem.org>
- United Nations. (1948). *UN: United Nations Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved May 2009, from <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>
- Ury, W. (1999). *Getting to Peace*. New York: Viking Penguin.
- Van Tongeren, P., Brenk, M., Hellema, M., & Verhoeven, J. (2005). *People Building Peace II: Successful stories of civil society (Project of the European Centre for Conflict Prevention)*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Vandenberg, M. (2005). Peacekeeping, alphabet soup and violence against women in the Balkans. In D. Mazurana, A. Raven-Roberts & J. Paraport (Eds.), *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping* (pp. 150-167). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Volkan, V. (2004). *Blind trust: Large groups and their leaders in times of crisis and terror*. Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone Publishing.
- Volpe, M., & Chandler, D. (2001). Resolving and managing conflicts in academic communities: The emerging role of the 'pracademic'. *Negotiation Journal*, 17 (3), 245-255.
- Wahid, O. (2008). From storytelling to community development: Jaghori, Afghanistan. In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 193-200). New York: Routledge.
- Wako, E., & Page, C. (2008). Depo Diaries and the power of stories. In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 101-107). New York: Routledge.
- Walker, L. (1979). *The battered woman*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Wallach, J. (2000). *The enemy has a face: The Seeds of Peace experience*. Washington, D.C.: The United States Institute of Peace.
- Ward, J. (2006). *Broken bodies, broken dreams*. United Nations Publications.

- Waters, E., & Posadskaya, A. (1995). Democracy without women is no democracy: Women's struggles in Postcommunist Russia. In A. Basu (Ed.), *The challenge of local Feminisms: Women's movements in global perspective* (pp. 351-373). Boulder: Westview Press Inc.
- Watson, C. (1994). Gender differences in negotiating behavior and outcomes: Fact or artifact? In A. Taylor, & J. Beinstein Miller (Eds.), *Conflict and Gender* (pp. 191-210). Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Weber, M. (1977). *Theory of social and economic organization*. Introduction by T. Parsons. New York: The Free Press.
- Weiser, J., & Nash, J. (1990). More than meets the eye: Using ordinary snapshots as tools for therapy. In T. Laidlaw, & C. Malmo (Eds.), *Feminist approaches to therapy with women* (pp. 83-117). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Wesoky, S. (2008). A story of suicide and social change in contemporary China. In R. Solinger, M. Fox, & I. Kayhan (Eds.), *Telling Stories to change the world: Global voices on the power of narrative to build community and make social justice claims* (pp. 91-100). New York: Routledge.
- Wessels, M., & Davidson, J. (2006). Recruitment and reintegration of former youth soldiers in Sierra Leone: Challenges of reconciliation and post-accord peace-building. In S. McEvoy-Levy (Ed.), *Troublemakers or Peacemakers? Youth and post-accord peace-building* (pp. 27-47). Notre Dame, IL: Notre Dame University Press.
- Westly, F., Zimmerman, B., & Patton, M. (2007). *Getting to maybe: How the world is changed*. Toronto: Vintage Canada: Random House.
- Whitbread, J. (2005). Mainstreaming gender in conflict reduction: From challenge to opportunity. In C. Sweetman (Ed.), *Gender, Peacebuilding & Reconstruction* (pp. 41-49). Oxfam, GB.
- White, M. (2003). Narrative therapy and externalizing the problem. In M. Gergen, & K. Gergen (Eds.), *Social construction: A reader* (pp. 163-168). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Whitney, D., Leibler, C., & Cooperider, D. (2003). Appreciative inquiry in organizations and international development: An invitation to share and learn across fields. In C. Sampson, M. Abu-Nimer, C. Liebler & M. Cooperider(Eds.), *Positive approaches to peacebuilding: A resource for innovators* (pp. 24-53). Washington, DC: Pact Publications.

- WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health. (2008). *Commission on Social Determinants of Health Final Report: Executive Summary*. World Health Organization.
- Whonnock, K. (2008, March). *Matrimonial real property on reserve in Canada*. Retrieved July 20, 2009, from The SCOW Institute: <http://www.scowinstitute.ca>
- Wiens, H., Janzen, H., Mott, A., & Claypool, T. (2003). Voice training as a healing power: A pilot study. *Guidance and counselling, 19(1)* , 10-17.
- Wingfield, N.; Bucur, M. (2006). Introduction: Gender and War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe. In N. Wingfield & M. Bucur (Eds.), *Gender and War in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (pp. 1-22). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Women in Politics: Beyond nations*. (2000). Retrieved July 21, 2009, from Women in Politics: Beyond nations.: <http://womenhistory.about.com>
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. (2003). *UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security: Implications of UNSC Res. 1325 3 years on*. New York: United Nations Office.
- Workers Health Centre. (2009). *The Workus*. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from Alberta Workers Health Centre: <http://www.workershealthcentre.ca>
- World Health Organization. (2005). *Summary Report: Multi-country study of women's health and domestic violence against women: Initial results on prevailing health outcomes and women's responses*. Switzerland: World Health Organization.
- Wright, Q. (1942). *The study of war*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Yanchuk, O. (Director). (2004). *Famine-33* [Motion Picture].
- Yelenski, V. (2001). *The processes of institutional religion in Ukraine*. Retrieved November 2007, from Religious Information Service: <http://www.risu.org.ua/eng/religion.and.society/processes.of.religion/>
- Young, B. (2006). The immediate response to disaster: Guidelines for adult psychological first aid. In E. Ritchie, P. Watson, & M. Friedman (Eds.), *Interventions following mass violence and disasters* (pp. 134-154). New York: Guilford Press.

Zemlynska, M. (2004, June). Tour of rehabilitative facility at Truskaveets, Ukraine. (M. Flaherty, Interviewer)

Zhengkun, G. t. (2006). *The book of Tao and The*. Peking: Peking University .

Zviglyanich, V. (1998 ). Ukraine: Demography and national security. *The Jamestown Foundation: Prism* , 4:25.