1-1-2017

En Boca Cerrada No Entran Moscas. Flies Don't Enter Closed Mouths: A Grounded Theory Study of Latinas' Testimonios of Child Sexual Abuse Disclosure

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EN BOCA CERRADA NO ENTRAN MOSCAS. FLIES DON'T ENTER CLOSED MOUTHS: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF LATINAS' *TESTIMONIOS* OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE DISCLOSURE

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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June 2017

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Title: *EN BOCA CERRADA NO ENTRAN MOSCAS. FLIES DON'T ENTER CLOSED MOUTHS:* A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF LATINAS' *TESTIMONIOS* OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE DISCLOSURE
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Degree Date: June 2017

Abstract

Despite countless studies demonstrating a high prevalence of child sexual abuse (CSA) and low rates of disclosure in the Latinx community, research exploring Latinx CSA disclosure is scant in family communication studies. This study explores how Latinas choose to disclose and/or conceal their experience(s) of CSA as well as explores the Latinx cultural constructs that impact disclosure. Using the Indigenous methodology of *testimonio*, grounded theory, and communication privacy management theory as a sensitizing theory, the study examined six Latinas' *testimonios* collected in one-on-one interviews. In an effort to stay true to *testimonio*, the overarching themes are presented through individual narrative portraits that provide a space to introduce each participant and their narratives. Within the narrative portraits, analysis of each Latina's *testimonio* occurs by operating on Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology. These women of color theories provide an intricate context that grant insight into the matrix of domination and underlying power structures within Latinx culture that impact Latina CSA disclosure. Latinas' *testimonios* demonstrate the centering of the family when choosing to reveal and/or conceal their instances of CSA. Specifically, the study's results indicate that certain patriarchal principles encourage Latinas to uphold docility and purity. Further, they encourage Latinas to perform within a very strict gender role, where the protection

of the family is important. This study also demonstrates that CSA is normalized and an experience that is inherited from grandmothers to mothers to daughters.

Acknowledgements

At its absolute core, this project is for the powerful and brave participants in this dissertation. Gracias for your vulnerability, for helping me heal, and for changing my life. Mom and dad, this project is for you as well. I hope it celebrates your sacrifices and unconditional love. I am indebted to you for risking your lives when coming to this country to provide better opportunities for Tony and me. Gracias for crossing the border so that I could one day cross a Ph.D. graduation stage. Si se puede! Si se pudo! Tony, thank you for always motivating me to stay true to my dreams, for always making me laugh, and for making me a better person by just being you. I love you, brother.

To my advisor, friend, and mother of the heart, Erin: thank you for teaching me how to be a better scholar, for teaching me about compassion, for providing a perfect example of how to be a professor mommy, and most importantly, for teaching me how to transform pain into power and possibility. Gracias for being part of mi familia.

To my other mentors: Deb, gracias for your tough love and for your consejo: "What does my work do for my people?" Beth, thank you for fighting the fight. Mary Claire, thank you for proving a space for me to explore sexual abuse both academically and personally. To Shads and Vern, thank you for making me better, for being brave with your own research, for celebrating me and each other rather than competing. #WEDIDIT

Lastly, I want to thank my Heavenly Father for instilling in me the courage, resiliency, and faith to produce this project. In Jeremiah 29:11 You told me You had great plans for me, plans to prosper me, to give me hope, purpose, and a future. Thank You for fulfilling your promise.

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Chapter One: Introduction and Literature Review

…The next day I had to explain to my mother exactly what happened.

Step by step. Each touch. Each word. Everything.

I was assuming that the reason why she wanted very specific details was to have the story ready for the police. After I told her, she screamed and treated him like a criminal, which made me assume that the police would be involved. So I asked if that was going to happen next. Her response meant nothing to me then, but breaks my heart now.

"No mija, porque si lo echamos al bote lo deportan bien y bonito. Y luego van a saber que también yo soy ilegal [no honey, because if we throw him in jail, he will get deported and then they will find out that I too am illegal]. "Pero no tengas miedo, te vamos a cuidar y el nunca te va tocar, y ya nunca va a volver a la casa [but don't be scared, he will never touch you and hurt you again. And I promise he will never step foot in our home]."

That particular conversation with my mother stemmed from a tradition of silence (Anzaldúa, 2006). So, I bit my tongue. Stayed quiet while being reminded that it was my job…our job, as a familia, to protect him. And then, to protect her. My family's fear of

deportation was more palpable than the pain on my eight year-old body. I knew then, that my tongue, my voice, was as dangerous a weapon as his body had been to me.

Twenty years later, and my teeth loosen their grip. Anzaldúa (2007) echoes in my head: wild tongues can't be tamed…Now, I tell my story while hoping that other Latinas who have also known nothing other than the tradition of biting down—of silence—might finally have an opportunity to open their mouths,

And speak.

Introduction

The number of children like me who have experienced child sexual abuse (hereafter, CSA) has sharply increased in recent years (Dube, Anda, Charles, Whitfield, David, & Brown, 2005; Tyler, 2002) and although exact rates are extremely difficult to predict, it is estimated that one in three girls and one in 10 boys have been victims of sexual abuse (Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Fortunately, over the last two decades issues related to CSA have received much empirical attention (Dube et al., 2005; Ligiéro, Fassinger, McCauley, Moore, & Lyytinen, 2009). Despite the emerging presence of CSA in academic literature, however, the Latinx voice has remained silent.

Focusing on Latinx's experiences with CSA is important for several reasons. First, this community has been largely underrepresented in academic literature despite the number of Latinx that live in the United States today. Second, studying with and for the Latinx community provides first-hand fundamental CSA knowledge that could in turn be used to produce practical resources for a community that needs and deserves support.

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Third, neglecting this community in academic literature is dangerous since there are numerous psychological and social consequences associated with CSA. As such, this study serves to center Latina women in research as well as to strengthen understanding of Latinx CSA in academic literature.

As of 2013 Latinxs constituted the largest and most rapidly growing racial/ethnic group in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2014). A Latinx is a person who was born or lives in South America, Central America, or Mexico or a person who lives in the U.S. whose family is originally from South America, Central America, or Mexico (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). The U.S. Census Bureau (2013) predicts that by 2060, the U.S. Latinx community is estimated to reach 128.8 million, representing approximately 31% of the U.S. populace. Despite the current weight that this racial group has in the U.S. population, Latinxs are very often left at the margins or footnotes of research studies. Put simply, they are underrepresented in academic research studies across disciplines (Flores et al., 2002), especially in the areas of sexual violence and CSA (Banyard, Williams, & Siegal, 2001; Crosstown-Tower, 2015; Ligiéro et al., 2009). In the area of communication, only one known study has focused on CSA disclosure (Petronio et al., 1996). A plethora of existing studies explain sexual violence phenomena, specifically those surrounding the psychosocial impact, public health, and medical consequences (Banyard, Williams, & Siegal, 2001; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). However, this research has largely ignored the Latinx voice, particularly Latinas, and has left a void in scholarly knowledge regarding how sexual violence impacts Latina women and children as well as how Latinas manage CSA disclosure.

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In addition to this lack of research, another important reason to focus and investigate Latinx CSA is because of the menacing potential for social and psychological effects following CSA (Banyard, Williams, & Siegal, 2001). Revictimization is a dangerous CSA consequence and its constant attention in CSA research confirms the need to give it urgent consideration. Though studying revictimization prevalence is imperative, researchers should focus on sexual violence topics that would reduce revictimizaton and that need immediate attention, yet remain invisible and ignored. The literature surrounding revictimization consistently emphasizes that children who have been sexually abused once, are twice as likely to report sexual revictimization (Arrata, 2000; Desai, Arias, Thompson, & Basile, 2002; Filipas & Ullman, 2006). According to Kilpatrick et al. (1997) the biggest risk factors for sexual revictimization are minority status, former victimization, and the individuals' silence. As such, Latinxs are at risk for revictimization given their minority status and their conservative CSA disclosure rates.

Delaying disclosure or avoiding it entirely is a risk factor for revictimization. Research consistently indicates that Latinas experience high rates of CSA, but do not disclose as frequently as their white counterparts (Romero et al., 1999; Urquiza & Goodlin-Jones, 1994; Newcomb, Munoz, & Carmona, 2009). The discrepancy between high Latinx CSA prevalence rates and extremely conservative disclosure trends calls for urgent attention. Moreover, the disclosure differences between White and Latina women suggest the possibility of cultural nuances serving as disclosure determining factors. As such, the purpose of this dissertation is to bring the Latina voice from the margins to the

center of academic research to investigate and explore the ways Latinas manage and process CSA disclosure.

In order to address this goal in a way that acknowledges and represents authentic Latinx culture and voice, I explored CSA disclosure processes by interviewing Latina participants and being a witness to their *testimonios* (Holling, 2014; Pérez-Huber, 2008). I chose to utilize the storytelling Indigenous methodology of *testimonio* as this approach provides unique insight for uncovering culturally specific CSA disclosure processes. Indigenous methodology is based in critical epistemology that denotes a critical politics of representation that is entrenched in the rituals of Indigenous communities (Sandoval, 2000). Further, critical epistemology fundamentally aims to recognize hegemonic structures that generate and maintain inequity, and to promote more egalitarian possibilities for marginalized individuals (Castillo, 1996; Conquergood, 2013). Additionally, using Indigenous methodology allowed me to explore and analyze the way power, privilege, gender, sexuality, class, and race dynamics impact Latinas' decision to reveal or conceal their experiences of CSA. This study also implements Indigenous methodology in an effort to answer the call to use a critical scholarly lens to study and further interpersonal and family communication scholarship (Suter, 2016).

In conjunction with Indigenous methodology I used grounded theory methodology to investigate how Latinas choose to disclose and/or conceal their CSA experience(s). Grounded theory and Indigenous methodologies are compatible with one another in that they are rooted in the notion that lush data and stories should not be forced to fit into hegemonic existing theories; we should grant data enough respect and freedom

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to create new spaces. In short, in the present study, grounded theory allowed participants' *testimonios* to lead the trajectory of the research process, and most importantly, it allowed researched knowledge to be kept within Latinx cultural context. Though grounded theory methodology calls for the creation of new knowledge, it allows the researcher to use existing theory, concepts, and ideas as points of reference or points of departure.

Petronio's (2002) *communication privacy management theory* (CPM) explains the ways individuals manage privacy matters. CPM has been beneficial in investigating privacy processes and dilemmas and provides a starting point for the proposed study. Grounded theory invites researchers to use these starting points, deemed as sensitizing concepts, to assist in the creation of new theory, and in the present study, one that best explains the way Latinx communities understand the world. As such, CPM is considered the leading sensitizing concept for the present study, as it provides points of reference and places for jumping off to explore heavily nuanced processes of Latina CSA disclosure not currently accounted for by the theory. In addition to using some of CPM's tenets as sensitizing devices, however, I acknowledge that CPM is potentially limited in its ability to account for the marginalized voices of Latinxs. In so doing, I open spaces to both build on CPM and diverge from it.

In order to fully grasp the complex nature and severity of CSA as well as the urgent immediacy this area of study deserves, I continue with a detailed review of literature that will begin by defining CSA. Thereafter, a review of existing literature will showcase CSA prevalence rates and further give special attention to Latina CSA incidence rates and disclosure trends. After having a solid comprehension of the

fundamentals of CSA, I will then explore westernized conceptualizations of privacy, and as well as CPM (Petronio, 2002), as it has been the only framework to study CSA privacy phenomena. Further, I will explain the tenets of CPM in order to establish them as sensitizing concepts. Thereafter I will review Latinx family values as well as the ways in which Latinx families communicate about sex, as these communication patterns can impact the decision for a child to reveal sexual abuse. Lastly, I conclude chapter one by proposing the use of Indigenous methodology and grounded theory as the most appropriate and altruistic methods for the present study.

In chapter two I provide a detailed historical portrayal of the Indigenous method of testimonio, as well as a rationale for the appropriateness of *testimonio* and grounded theory for this dissertation. Further, in chapter two, I will introduce the study participants and will explain how the data and stories were coded and analyzed. In chapter three I will deliver findings and analysis alongside illustrative portions of *testimonios* though narrative portraits of each participant. Lastly, in the final chapter I will briefly revisit CPM and explore and discuss the ways in which it does and does not apply to explain Latina CSA disclosure. Further, I will explore the study's strengths, practical applications and implications, as well as the potential future direction of this work.

Review of Literature

Critical and methodological approach. The present study takes a critical approach in investigating how Latinas choose to reveal and/or conceal their experiences of CSA and will do so in a variety of ways. As such, this section will illustrate how I, as the researcher, as well as the study's methodological design align with a critical

approach. I touch on the importance of studying a marginalized community regarding a silenced topic and then connect to Suter's (2016) call for more critical approaches to interpersonal and family communication, specifically in regard to issues of power and reflexivity. I next justify my choice to use 'Latinx' in the proposed study as a means of highlighting my commitment to the critical study of CSA. Finally, I end the section by illustrating how grounded theory and Indigenous methods tightly fits with a critical lens. In so doing, I provide a starting place for the additional research that guides the study.

A focus on a marginalized community and topic. Critical research seeks to study with and for marginalized communities that are in dire need to be heard. As such, this study will prioritize the voices of Latina women since their voices are fundamentally silenced due to underlying structures of power that dominate their culture. Second, as highlighted in subsequent sections of this literature review, high CSA prevalence rates and low disclosure trends implicitly call for an urgent need to study Latina women.

A focus on power and reflexivity. In her call to further the critical family communication voice, Suter (2016) conceptualizes key considerations in order to better align with this perspective. First, Suter (2016) argues that an important point of concern is for research to address issues of power. Thus, in the present study, aside from capturing underlying structures of power that dictate how Latinx women should act and feel and perform, I will also draw on Suter's (2016) notion that power is not always inherent. Rather issues of power are external to the individual, as is the case for Latinxs who perform according to patriarchal principles. Second, the proposed study aligns with another important consideration within critical family communication as Suter (2016)

claims that author reflexivity and the presence and relocation of the researcher in relation to the research is a crucial critical component. The methodological approaches of Indigenous methodology as well as grounded theory also call for researcher reflexivity. Thus, in chapter two I will detail how I intend to remain reflexive throughout the study by sharing my own story of CSA and being mindful of how my own story impacts research findings through journaling, for example.

A focus on inclusive language. The vernacular that I use throughout this study is also grounded in my commitment to taking a critical approach to studying this marginalized community. In Latin America even language is a male discourse (Anzaldúa, 2007). Feminine pronouns and adjectives always end in *a* (singular) or *as* (plural) (i.e., one Latina, three Latinas). This is the linguistic rule unless there is masculine presence. In the case that a man is nearby we strip the feminine adjective indicators and take the masculine pronoun markers, *o*, *os*. For example, if there is a room full of 10 Latinas and one Latino male enters the room, there are now 11 *Latinos* in the room according Spanish linguistics. In an effort to move beyond the masculine-centric rules, I will use the identifiers *Latinx* or *Latinxs* throughout this study when referring to Latinas and Latinos collectively and in a plural sense (see, Monzó, 2016; Perez-Arronson, 2015). Though I have chosen *Latinx* for this study, when I review literature that focuses on Latinxs, I will use the demographic terms *Hispanic, Latina*, *Latino*, or *Latinos* as the authors used them in their research studies in order to maintain originality and represent the findings as they were presented.

A focus on empowering methods. Grounded theory is a methodological approach I have chosen for the proposed study as it is extremely attuned with Indigenous methodology principles. Both methodological approaches seek to create new, authentic spaces for Indigenous peoples' experiences and knowledge. The critical approach calls for the privileging of Indigenous voices and thus prioritizing the knowledge and needs of the participants serves in creating new, authentic spaces.

Grounded theory invites researchers to incorporate and build on current research after data collection and data analysis instead of using it as a framework that guides one's investigation from the beginning of a study (Charmaz, 2014). In other words, grounded theory scholars suggest that researchers should seek to see what the data shows rather than shoehorn it into what present literature already demonstrates (Charmaz, 2014; Urquhart, 2014). Similarly, Glaser and Strauss (1967) ask researchers to put aside any existing knowledge so that it does not influence the interpretation of the data. However, Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that one can provide a review of literature in a traditional way as long as the intention of the review is to provide context and to argue for the need of new emerging theory. As such, in what follows I present the review of literature traditionally by summarizing current research in order to offer essential context for this study. First, I will define child sexual abuse. I will then explore multiple research studies about general CSA prevalence rates, as well as Latinx CSA prevalence and disclosure trends. I will then discuss the theory of communication privacy management (Petronio, 2002) to provide context for what this theory has afforded, to specify a starting point, as well as an argument as to why this theory may not be entirely conducive for studying

Latina CSA disclosures. Lastly, in order to understand Latinx family values and dynamics and the ways these factors could potentially influence CSA disclosure, the present review will inquire into literature that explains Latinx cultural nuance.

Child sexual abuse (CSA). Many terms are interchangeably used with *sexual abuse,* some of which include *sexual victimization, sexual assault,* and *sexual molestation* (Finkelhor, 1994; Whetsell-Mitchel, 1995). For the purposes of this study, I will use *sexual abuse* as this term fully encompasses the nature of child sexual abuse. I will begin by establishing a clear definition of what constitutes child sexual abuse before I further explain my rationale for focusing on sexual *abuse* in the present study.

Defining child sexual abuse. Cultural diversity in the United States may impact what *child sexual abuse* is and what *sexual abuse* encompasses. Thus, it is important to provide a concrete definition of CSA to establish a common definition. Despite the common belief that sexual abuse of children denotes the presence of hurtful force and penetration (Dube et al., 2005), CSA actually entails a wide array of behaviors that may have various degrees of impact on children (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor, 1994; Tyler, 2002).

The definition of sexual abuse can be found within the criminal and child protection legal statues (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). This study operates on the latter. The child protection statute views sexual abuse as a form of maltreatment and as a condition from which children need to be protected. Moreover, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act bestows sexual abuse as a subcategory of child abuse and neglect and is further defined as:

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the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children. (Health and Human Services, 2014)

Child sexual abuse includes several additional elements. First, the targeted individual is under the age of 18 years of age and second, the act delivers sexual gratification for an adult. Furthermore, due to the child's developmental status he or she has "neither the knowledge nor the authority to consent, therefore the act(s) involve(s) some sort of enticement, entrapment, coercion, or force to gain access to the child and some degree of secrecy that allows the abuse to happen and possibly continue" (Crosson-Tower, 2014, p. 22).

Consent. The aforementioned CSA elements serve as the basis for using *sexual abuse* in lieu of *sexual assault,* which is the current recommended term to encompass sexual violence phenomena. *Sexual assault* conveys the presence of sexual contact and/or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the individual. According to Finkelhor (1979) in order for one to be able to grant consent, an individual requires the knowledge and the agency to do so. Children do not have the knowledge or awareness of the repercussions of sexual interaction or the authority by virtue of age to exercise the right to consent (Croson-Tower, 2014). In turn, s*exual abuse* echoes the notion that a child cannot consent to any form of sexual activity and thus, will be used in the present study.

A few studies (see, Jensen et al., 2005; Williams, 1994) speak to the notion that individuals are reluctant to speak up about their former or current sexual abuse experiences because they did not recognize the abusive activity as sexual abuse and/or

they were made to believe they gave consent (even though they never had consent to give). In fact, part of the perpetrator's grooming process may include manipulating the child to believe that he or she was an accomplice because he or she allowed it to happen (Kurchner, 2001). Due to the patriarchal nature and particular family values that saturate Latinx homes, it is likely that Latinas are manipulated to think that they did give consent. In turn, they feel guilt and shame, fear the consequences of their abuse, and remain silent. Child sexual abuse prevalence rates as well as disclosure trends serve to capture the severity of this phenomenon.

CSA prevalence rates. Due to the number of ways researchers and public agencies collect statistical data (surveys, interviews, self-reported measures), and because CSA is such a challenging and profoundly nuanced phenomenon to measure, the following review focuses on the prevalence of CSA includes incongruities. The literature review of the present study focuses solely on CSA statistics and excludes sexual assault research, as they are two different phenomena.

Important to keep in mind is that reported data do not reflect the number of individuals that choose to conceal their abuse. Thus, CSA prevalence statistics might be higher than research conveys (Russell & Bolen, 2000). Based on retrospective studies of adults, studies project that only one in 20 cases of CSA is identified by or reported to the authorities (Kellogg, 2005). Nevertheless, we can see the tip of the iceberg by looking at reports of CSA.

General CSA prevalence rates. The onset of sexual abuse varies; however, most clinical studies report children experiencing the first incidence of abuse between the ages

of seven and 12 (Ferrara, 2002; Finkelhor, 1984). Younger children tend to be more at risk due to their inability to report the abuse or their failure to distinguish a malignant touch (Crosson-Tower, 2014). The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2010) estimates that one in three girls and one in 10 boys are survivors of sexual abuse while Russell and Bolen (2010) postulate that one in three women and one in five men reported child sexual abuse before the age of 18. A national study reported that 61,472 children experienced some form of sexual abuse in 2011 (Children's Bureau, 2012; Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Further, Finkelholr, Hamby, Ormrod, and Turner's (2005) national meta-analysis of CSA rates reports the general incidence rates to be between 1.2 to 96 per 1,000 children, with abuse against girls being up to three times higher than for boys. In a sample of 4,339 high school seniors (2,324 girls, 2,015 boys) results indicated that 1,505 girls (65%) and 457 boys (23%) reported having experienced CSA (Priebe & Svedi, 2008). Most of the aforementioned research is general as numbers reflect multiple ethnicities as well as multiple age groups. In sum, these numbers suggest the severity of CSA and the dire need to further investigate CSA dynamics especially among people of color.

Ethnic CSA prevalence rates. Many researchers have called for the examination of CSA rates among ethnically diverse samples of children (Kenny & Wuertele, 2013) given the low frequency of people of color in multiple CSA studies. This work has given attention to marginalized groups and a few have performed meta analyses and comparative studies across cultures. For example, a national research study using a sample of high school students reported 12.5% of American Indian and Alaska Natives,

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10.5% of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students, 8.6% of Black students, and

8.2% of Latino students, 7.4% of White students, and 13.5% of multiple race students as

having formerly experienced forced sexual intercourse at one point in their lives (Center

for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). Important to note is that the aforementioned

study's intent was to investigate forced sexual intercourse, which is only one type of

CSA. As such, these numbers may have been larger had the study accounted for all types

of sexual abuse.

As the literature portrays, children of color are more likely to experience CSA

than their White counterparts. Though numeric data does not fully capture the hegemonic

discourses and cultural nuances that likely play a role in these high figures, they serve as

a starting point for future research. Latina CSA numbers are particularly important as

they serve as momentum for the proposed investigation. Thus, the next sections will

portray Latina sexual abuse rates as well as disclosure trends to argue for the research

attention this marginalized community deserves.

   Child sexual abuse among latinas. Particular studies report lower rates of sexual

abuse for Latinas compared to other ethnicities (Romero, Wyatt, Loeb, Carmona, &

Solis, 1999; Urquiza & Goodlin-Jones, 1994), whereas others report no significant

differences (Katerndahl, Burge, Kellogg, & Parra, 2005). In comparison, Newcomb,

Munoz, and Carmona (2009) found that Latinos/as (44%) were significantly more likely

to experience CSA compared to European Americans (27%), with Latina women (54%)

showing the highest prevalence rates overall. Romero et al.'s (1999) study portrayed that

one in three Latinas reported incidents of CSA, notwithstanding of citizenship status or

acculturation. The mean number of abuse incidents per woman was 1.46 (Romero et al., 1999) and of the respondents, "16% alleged sexual abuse at younger than age 7; 38% reported abuse between the ages of 7 and 11; and 46% reported that they were between 12 and 17 years of age or older at the time of the abuse incident(s)" (Romero et al., 1999, p. 357). The mean age of the child at the time of abuse was 11 years (Romero et al., 1999).

Again, it is debatable whether these aforementioned reports reflect genuine rates as reporting bias, cultural nuances, methodological differences, or some pattern of all these dynamics are likely to impact study results. Nonetheless, the constant fluctuation in evidence highlights the importance of further studying sexual abuse among Latinas to gain a better understanding of the scope and impact of this problem. Feasibly the reason that certain studies report low sexual abuse rates among Latinxs is not because they are not experiencing it as frequently, but because disclosing their abuse has different cultural implications than for their White counterparts. Having an understanding of CSA rates is important as it serves to highlight the menacing numbers and the urgency this phenomenon deserves. Disclosure rates of CSA are equally as important as research consistently indicates the dangers of silence.

Disclosure of sexual abuse. I now turn to disclosure trends to show the vast differences between White individuals and Latinas. I argue that the following trends are culturally nuanced and thus need to be studied in such a way that acknowledges Latinx cultural dynamics and values. Thus, I will first elucidate the importance of disclosure by displaying the psychosocial and social dangers of the lack of or delayed disclosure. Then

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I will explore general disclosure numbers and will follow with specific Latina disclosure trends. My intention is for these numbers to show the dire need for CSA disclosure research as well as to show how these numbers may be influenced by Latinx cultural nuance.

   Consequences of lack of or delayed CSA disclosure. In most instances of CSA, cases are usually uncovered by an initial disclosure of the child and often, the only proof of sexual abuse is the child's statement (Kellogg & Huston, 1995). The reasons why children choose to withhold and/or disclose their sexual abuse experience are significant as this knowledge is monumental in developing interventions, spaces, and affinity that would encourage children to disclose in the future (Petronio, Reeder, Hecht, & Ros-Mendoza, 1996). Disclosing instances of CSA could potentially end current abuse and would allow children to receive interventions that would prevent and/or treat the possible psychological, emotional, and social consequences caused by CSA including depression (e.g., Badmaeva, 2009; Bayatpour, Wells, & Holford, 1992; Dube et al., 2005; Mullers & Downing, 2008), suicide (Hornor, 2010, Tyler, 2002), revictimization (Reese-Weber & Smith, 2011; Tyler, 2002), and substance abuse (e.g., Badmaeva, 2009; Harrison, Fulkerson, & Beebe, 1997; Kauknien & DeMaris, 2005). Disclosure is important since silence is an added risk for a child who has been sexually abused. The literature surrounding revictimization constantly emphasizes that children who have been sexually abused once, are twice as likely to report sexual revictimization (Arrata, 2000; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Desai, Arias, Thompson, & Basile, 2002; Filipas & Ullman, 2006). According to Kilpatrick et al. (1997) the biggest risk factors for sexual revictimization are

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minority status, drug use, former victimization, and the individuals' silence. Thus, the next rational step is to study the dynamics that contribute to the decision for Latinas to disclose and/or conceal a sexual abuse experience to avoid the potential of revictimization as well as other psychological and social consequences.

   Disclosure trends. Kellogg and Huston's (1995) study shows that 85% of the participants with an unwanted sexual experience disclosed their abuse. This is a high percentage compared to many other studies' results. Important to note in Kellogg and Huston's study is that even though disclosure occurred at a higher rate, disclosure was postponed an average of 2.3 years. Unfortunately, demographics were not provided to assess ethnic patterns.

   Paine and Hansen (2002) found the mean delay to be three years between the onset of sexual abuse and disclosure. Comparatively, Lamb and Edgar-Smith (1994) positioned the mean age of disclosure to be eighteen years old in their study. This is noteworthy given that the average age of abuse for participants in this sample was eight-years-old. Only a few studies have investigated to whom children disclose their CSA (Kellogg & Huston, 1995; Petronio et al., 1996; Petronio, Flores, & Hecht, 1997). Participants in Kellogg and Huston's (1995) study identified adult relatives, such as parents, as the individuals to whom they chose to reveal their abuse to first. Research shows that the more severe the sexual abuse was, the more seldom both girls and boys had talked to parents (Priebe & Svedin, 2007). Furthermore, research findings consistently reveal that children abused by a close family member are less likely to report their abuse than those abused by a stranger (Paine & Hansen, 2002).

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Disclosure rate differences exist depending on ethnicity and gender. Newcomb et al. (2009) noted that females (45%) were two times more likely to report child sexual abuse than males (24%). Similarly, Priebe and Svedin (2007) and Paine and Hansen (2002) showed that girls exposed their abuse significantly more often than boys.

Latina disclosure trends. Kellogg and Huston (1995) found that Latina females (52%) were less likely to report unwanted sexual abuse than their White female (80%) counterparts. With respect to lifetime rape prevalence rates the National Violence Against Women study found that Latinas reported their abuse significantly less (14.6%) than non-Latino women (18.4%) (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Compared to European American women, women of color are less likely to tell a family member or report it to authorities and are more likely to fear the negative repercussions of disclosing (Ligiéro, Fassinger, McCauley, Moore, & Lyytinen, 2009; Sciolla, Glover, Loeb, Zhang, Myers, & Wyatt, 2011). In population-represented samples, approximately one-third of women never disclosed their CSA experiences. The two thirds that did reveal their abuse did so many years later (Sciolla et al., 2011).

Latina and other ethnic disclosure differences. Less attention has been paid to the CSA disclosure patterns among Latinas compared to African American and European American women (Ulibarri, Ulloa, & Camacho, 2009). The scant existing research suggests that Latinas less acculturated to U.S. culture are more likely to report family members as perpetrators and wait comparatively longer to disclose than women from other ethnic groups (Katerndahl, Burge, Kellogg, Parra, 2005; Sciolla et al., 2011). Less acculturated Latinas tend to come from families that have more undocumented

immigrants than Latinas who identify as more acculturated (Abraído-Lanza, Echeverría, & Flórez, 2016). As such, a potential reason as to why less acculturated Latinas wait longer to disclose may have to do with their decision to protect their undocumented family members. Bringing attention to their sexual abuse would simultaneously bring attention to the family's undocumented status.

   Disclosure fears. Low disclosure rates are no surprise as CSA triggers shame and humiliation, and sexually abused children often feel they are to blame for the abuse (Dube et al., 2005; Feiring, Taska, & Lewis, 2002; Fontes, 2007; Negrao et al., 2005). Age has been found to influence self-blame among children who have experienced sexual abuse (Sciolla et al., 2011). Young females are more likely to blame themselves for CSA incidents than older females and children who blame themselves may take longer to disclose (Sciolla et al., 2011). Further, children's appraisal of how other people may react to the disclosure along with the perceptions of responsibility for the abuse have been associated with the likelihood of disclosure (Goodman-Brown et al., 2003; Sciolla et al., 2011). Though this aforementioned finding encompasses participants from an array of cultures, this is often the case for Latinas. In Josie Mendez-Negrete's powerful book, *Las Hijas de Juan: Daughters Betrayed* (2006), many participants felt that they should have been able to avoid or prevent the abuse, even as children. Julia, a study participant, was abused by her uncle and later by a friend of the family. She began cutting as an adolescent and struggled with eating disorders. When she first went to college she experienced date rape. While she obtained counseling after her experience with date rape, she did not disclose her experience with CSA because she did not want to disclose

information that could potentially be held against her. When asked why she never reported her CSA occurrences to her counselor, Julia stated she feared that her sexual abuse history would lead her counselor to think that she had asked for it (Mendez-Negrete, 2006).

What would make young people like Julia think that they are to blame for their CSA? Perhaps specific Latinx values played a role in conditioning her to think she had agreed to the abuse. Julia's story is one of many that deserve to be unpacked, which is precisely on of the present study's objectives. Failure to study how Latinas choose to reveal and/or conceal their experiences of CSA contributes to the CSA consequences that Latina children experience.

Petronio et al.'s (1996) is the only study within communication studies that has focused on children CSA disclosure. Petronio et al. (1996) studied the ways children navigated their CSA disclosures by using communication privacy management theory (2002) as their guiding framework. However, communication scholars have yet to study how Latinas choose to reveal and/or conceal their CSA experience(s). Thus, the goal of the present study is to fully capture what influences CSA disclosures among Latinas by taking an inductive approach that accommodates Latinx culture. As such, what follows is an overview of what the communication discipline has contributed to CSA literature to understand the future direction this study will take.

Child sexual abuse within communication studies. Although the prevalence of sexual abuse is high among Latinx children many are choosing to abstain from self-disclosure. Given the differences of self-disclosure between Latinx and White children

and adolescents, perhaps these patterns of self-disclosure are culturally nuanced. To date, only one study within communication studies has investigated CSA phenomena. Using communication privacy management theory (CPM), Petronio et al. (1996) studied the ways sexually abused children granted access to their private abuse information. Petronio et al. (1996) found that children used particular rules such as tacit permission, selecting the circumstances, and incremental disclosure before disclosing their abuse. Researchers discovered that children searched for clues that a targeted person would want to hear about their abuse and they were very strategic about when to tell. Additionally, they found that children sought individuals that showed supportiveness and ones they felt could serve as advocates (Petronio et al., 1996). This study is groundbreaking as it addressed a topic that never before had been investigated in the discipline. However, it did not provide cultural demographics and thus, does not account for the ways race and ethnicity impact privacy boundary management. With that said, communication scholarship has remained silent in exploring CSA phenomena in Latinx culture in particular.

The study's main objective therefore is to investigate Latina CSA disclosure processes. Specifically, I will use grounded theory in conjunction with Indigenous methodology to explore the dynamics that impact Latinas' decision to reveal and/or conceal their experiences of CSA. Moving forward, within the context of grounded theory, CPM will be viewed as a sensitizing concept throughout this study. According to Blumer (1954) a sensitizing concept gives the researcher a general sense of reference and guidance for impending inductive research. Blumer (1954) argues that sensitizing

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concepts suggest "directions along which to look" (p. 7). Social researchers tend to view

sensitizing concepts as informational devices and as a starting point for an inductive

qualitative study (Bowen, 2006; Glaser, 1978). Further, Charmaz (2003) refers to

sensitizing concepts as background ideas that inform the overall research problem. She

states:

> Sensitizing concepts offer ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience; they are embedded in our disciplinary emphases and perspectival proclivities. Although sensitizing concepts may deepen perception, they provide starting points for building analysis, not ending points for evading it. We may use sensitizing concepts *only* as points of departure from which to study the data. (p. 259)

Sensitizing concepts can be tested, improved, and refined (Blumer, 1954). However,

researchers taking the grounded theory path do not seek to test, improve, or refine

existing concepts or theories (Charmaz, 2014; Urquhart, 2014). Communication privacy

management theory (Petronio, 2002) provides a foundation for the study of privacy

management and provides a point of reference for the present study. Before I explain the

tenets of CPM as well as the reasons CPM will be viewed as a sensitizing concept, I will

first explore western conceptualizations of privacy as CPM is situated within these views.

Privacy. I begin this section by providing an argument that the notion of privacy

is not universal. As such, I will explore literature that conceptualizes privacy as being

intrinsic and individualistic. Then I will explain how CPM is situated within these

conceptualizations of privacy to then argue that the theory's individualist focus may not

be sufficient on its own to study Latina CSA disclosure.

Western view of privacy. Privacy in and of itself is profoundly nuanced and thus,

conceptualized differently based on the society and culture in which one lives. Therefore,

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it is important to keep in mind that privacy may be understood differently depending on cultural dynamics. A potential (re)conceptualization of *privacy* serves as another reason for taking a new approach in studying Latina CSA matters in the present study. Many theorists, philosophers, and scholars have attempted to unravel the various nuanced definitions of privacy. Margulis (2003) asserts privacy is an elastic psychological construct that incorporates a wide variety of definitions. Studies of everyday meanings of privacy emphasize privacy as "control over or regulation of or, more narrowly, limitations on or exemption from scrutiny, surveillance, or unwanted access" (Margulis, 2003, p. 244). Margulis' (1977) inductively derived a formal definition for privacy and provided what he referred to as an abstract skeleton that facilitated a means and ends of privacy. Moreover, he argued that privacy "represents control over transactions between person(s) and other(s), the ultimate aim of which is to enhance autonomy and/or to minimize vulnerability" (Margulis, 1977, p. 10). Margulis' element of minimizing vulnerability could be viewed as a method of protecting oneself. This protection component of privacy is similar to Westin's (1967) theory of privacy such that his theory addresses how individuals protect themselves by limiting access to themselves by others. Protecting oneself again, assumes the presence of the autonomous self, which echoes my previous argument that privacy is so individualistically rooted.

Westin (1967) believes that privacy is an individual's entitlement to determine when, how, and to what extent information about them is communicated to others. Furthermore, privacy is the "voluntary and temporary withdrawal of a person from general society through physical or psychological means" (Westin, 1967, p. 7). Like

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Westin's view of privacy, Altman (1975) takes a limited access approach to privacy. Altman (1975) offers a conceptualization of privacy as the selective control of access to the self, involving dialectic, optimization, and multimodal processes. As such, he views privacy as a process of regulating levels of social interaction.

In *Philosophical Dimensions of Privacy* Schoeman (1992) created three identifications of privacy. First, privacy can be identified as the degree of control an individual has over information about oneself, intimacies of personal identity, and/or who has sensory access to him or her. Secondly, privacy can be understood as a condition of limited access to a person. Lastly, privacy can be thought as a privilege to decide about distributing information that concerns oneself (Schoman, 1992).

Petronio and Bok both have simple definitions for privacy. Though communication privacy management theory, Petronio (2002) states that privacy is defined as the "feeling that one has the right to own private information, either personally or collectively" (Petronio, 2002, p. 6). She posits that while some information is public, the self also contains information that is intimate, private, and disclosed under special circumstances. Bok (1989) defines privacy as the condition of being protected from unwanted access by others, including physical access, personal information, or attention. Furthermore, claims to privacy are the rights to regulate access to what one believes to be "one's personal domain" (Bok, 1989, p. 11). In summary, at the root of the existing conceptualizations and definitions of privacy is the presence of an autonomous individual or base. Further, fundamentally all conceptualizations refer to different types of control (whether it is for ownership, protection, etc.) for the individual self.

Moving away from a westernized view of privacy. *Privacy*, as conceptualized by the aforementioned scholars, reiterates the universal existence of the sovereign self, or the self that has enough agency and self-governance to manage different elements relating to the self. Communication privacy management theory, the sensitizing theoretical framework of the present study, also has fundamental elements that point to the existence of a sovereign self. Based on literature that points to the collective nature of the self in Latinx culture (Anzaldúa, 2007), I argue that perhaps *privacy* is viewed and defined differently by Latinas and that using an existing theory that is rooted with such a westernized understanding of privacy may be limiting. Since the main objective of this study is to investigate the dynamics that play into Latinas choosing to reveal or conceal their experiences of CSA, we must be open to the idea that *privacy* may be conceptualized differently. Their potential understanding of privacy may impact their decision to disclose or conceal their abuse.

Like the existing theories of privacy, communication privacy management theory's conceptualization of privacy points to the idea of a self-governing individual self. The theory contends that individuals rightfully own their information and they have enough agency to choose and decide how it will be managed. Of course this is true for individuals who have enough privilege to exercise that right; however, in a culture with a number of patriarchal subtleties, not all women, and especially little girls, have this license. As such, this study will take an approach that accounts for this realistic experience. Communication privacy management theory according to Petronio (2002):

> represents a map that presumes private disclosures are dialectical, that people make choices about revealing and concealing based on criteria and conditions

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they perceive as salient, and that individuals fundamentally believe they have a right to own and regulate access to their private information. (p. 2)

Petronio (2002) developed such an intricate map to explain the ways individuals negotiate and navigate privacy management. Petronio (2002) even accounts for the ways culture and gender impact privacy rule creation and usage. This is a key tenet of CPM as it is uncommon for interpersonal and family communication theories to account for culture dynamics. This portion of CPM will be treated as a sensitizing concept as it provides some framework for the current study, which looks to study Latina disclosure processes.

As further described in the following section, CPM is well ordered and accounts for almost every possibility in relation to privacy management and disclosure dilemmas. Albeit its thorough preparedness for many privacy possibilities, I argue that CPM's system may be too formulaic for studying Latina CSA privacy matters. The underlying structures of power that exist in Latinx culture will likely impact Latina disclosure processes. I presume the processes will be very complicated and too heavily nuanced to be forced into such a neat system. As such, rather than trying to fit complex Latinx dynamics into an existing scheme that has yet to study Latinx communities, I argue that Latina CSA privacy matters need to be studied within their own right. Nonetheless, given CPM's heurism with other populations, it may provide key insights that may assist me in understanding Latinx's CSA disclosures. Thus, in the following section I will explain the tenets of CPM while also pointing to potential limitations of them for the present study.

Communication privacy management theory. Communication privacy management theory (CPM) (Petronio, 2002) was developed in an effort to understand the

ways in which people regulate the act of disclosing and concealing information. CPM views disclosure as the process of revealing private information, "yet always in relation to concealing private information" (Braithwaite & Schrodt, 2015, p. 336). The constant dialectical flux between the desire to conceal and reveal, demands a precise rule management system that individuals use to make disclosure decisions (Petronio, 2002). As a way to comprehend CPM and properly engage with the reasons why CPM may be insufficient in studying Latina sexual abuse disclosures alone, I will explore the main tenets of the theory and point to potential strengths and limitations the tenets hold for understanding CSA disclosures among Latinxs.

Ownership. CPM holds two assumptions about privacy management. First, individuals believe they are rightful, primary *owners* of their information (Petronio, 2002). Second, individuals believe they have the right to control and regulate the flow of their private information to others (Petronio, 2002).

CPM uses a boundary metaphor to designate borders of ownership that encircle and protect private information (Petronio, 2002; 2010; 2013). Using a boundary metaphor also allows the illustration of the transactional nature of how information is managed and shared with others, something that many other disclosure or privacy theories have previously failed to acknowledge (Petronio, 2010; 2013). Boundaries can be thick and impermeable, making it more likely for individuals to conceal private information. In contrast, when boundaries are thin and permeable, individuals are more likely to disclose (Petronio, 2002). Boundaries are not rigid; in fact, part of CPM's notion of ownership allows individuals to manage boundaries as they please. As such, individuals can decide,

as they wish, when and how to control the flow of their private information. According to CPM, based on a risk/benefit evaluation of privacy information and its management of it, individuals can determine who to disclose to. This system may not accurately capture the dynamics of Latinx's management of their CSA experiences because Latinas may not exist as the sovereign self and may not have enough agency to choose how and when to manage boundaries.

Levels of control. Aside from conceptualizing boundaries as permeable or impermeable, Petronio (2007) also illustrates the ways individuals navigate boundary management by establishing three levels of control. The level of control varies depending on the circumstances and dynamics of individuals' privacy. In particular cases, there is a high need for control over the privacy boundaries where the boundary walls are thick and the flow of information outward is very limited (Petronio, 2010; 2013). Consequently, high control results in establishing impermeable, dense boundaries that serve to protect the information (Petronio, 2002). Moderate control over privacy boundaries is used where information is available to some individuals but not to others. Low control boundaries also exist, where access is permitted, producing a highly permeable privacy boundary (Petronio, 2002). CPM's levels of control provide a basis for understanding the potential layers of privacy that may occur within Latinx culture. Being that Latinx culture is rooted in collectivist structures, it would make sense for private information to be deemed as private even when it was shared to particular members of the family. However, we must be mindful that the mere name of this tenet, *levels of **control**,* once

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again reiterates the notion that individuals have enough power to regulate and control private information.

   Privacy rules. Petronio (2002; 2007; 2010) argues that individuals depend on a rule-based system to control the flow of private information. CPM uses the concept of privacy rules to represent how people make decisions about retaining control or permitting access to others (Petronio, 2002). Petronio (2007) postulates that privacy rules are rooted in several criterion: culture, gender, motivation, risk/benefit ratio, and situational/contextual. A new scheme recently developed argues that these criteria can be classified into two types: *core* and *catalyst* criteria, which drive decision making in regard to privacy rule choices (Petronio, 2013). This tenet of CPM that considers culture and gender as disclosure impacting factors resonates most with the proposed study's argument.

   Cultural values are found to influence decisions about privacy issues and create expectations of how people think privacy should be managed (Petronio, 2002). Through cultural expectations for privacy "people open or protect their boundaries to varying degrees. Culture represents one resource people use to develop rules for regulating their privacy boundaries" (Petronio, 2002, p. 39). Multiple studies looking at the ways Latinx families communicate expectations and views relating to sex (e.g., Raffaelli & Green, 2003; Fontes, 2007) contend that Latinxs are extremely conservative when speaking about sexually nuanced issues and thus endorse high boundary control. Innocence is a facet of virginity, and silence about sexual matters indicates innocence and purity more so than speaking about sexual private information (Raffaelli & Green, 2003). Further, due

to its deep Catholicism and patriarchal roots (Organista, 2007), Latinx culture often uses shame to socialize children and women. In an effort to reduce or avoid shame-inducing circumstances, Latinas may choose to conceal their abuse. The rule that determines silence in these previous two examples stemmed from Latinx cultural standards.

Gender criteria are also used as a basis for developing privacy rules. Research shows that men and women regulate privacy boundaries differently based on gender role expectations (Petronio, 2002). The proposed study will likely see gender themes emerge while investigating the CSA experiences of Latina women. Idealized Latina gender roles, expectations, and agency (or lack thereof) will likely impact the decision to disclose or conceal former CSA experience(s). The Latinx cultural discourse that men (especially older men) are superior to women (Organista, 2007) potentially promotes extremely tight, impermeable boundaries, especially since men are often the perpetrators (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986).

Motivations also influence the enactment and formation of privacy rules (Petronio, 2002). Goal seeking, topic avoidance, and limiting access are predicated on objectives people wish to fulfill when deciding to share or protect private information (Petronio, 2010). Lastly, risk-benefit calculations form another criterion for rule establishment and application. When individuals determine that sharing private information seems more demanding than promising, they recalibrate privacy rules or establish new ones "to meet their risk-benefit threshold in a given situation or in terms of meeting an overall need" (Petronio, 2010, p. 180). For example, Carmen, a sexual abuse survivor, explained that disclosing her abuse would be harder than to keep it a secret

because she did not want to deal with all the negative stereotypes associated with survivors of abuse, like *being the provoker of the abuse*: "they see it like maybe it was my fault, that I provoked him with what I was wearing you know?" (Ligiéro et al., 2009). She chose silence.

Finally, *situational* and *contextual* criteria intervene at times to serve as a catalyst for changing established privacy rules (Petronio, 2002). When individuals face traumatic experiences, they feel the need to create new rules and depend on the expectations of the particular experience to direct them to the most appropriate rules to use (Petronio, 2002).

Boundary co-ownership and boundary insiders. Petronio et al. (1996) discovered that sexually abused children often felt afraid to disclose their abuse. As such, particular private information is believed to produce anxiety, fear, risks and vulnerability, which authenticates the reason why individuals demonstrate the need and desire to be owners (and be in control) of their information (Petronio, 2002). If individuals choose to share their private information with others, they become *co-owners* or *boundary insiders* (Petronio, 2002). Although others now hold a share to the private matter, and together they create one mutual boundary that protects the information, the original owner remains as the primary owner and continues to be in charge of the ways information is managed (Petronio, 2002). This tenet of CPM presumes the existence of the sovereign self, which may not accurately account for marginalized cultures where the self is embedded with and within others and as such, may interrupt CPM's entire notion of ownership and co-ownership.

Petronio (2002) posits that certain rules are at play within the principle of co-ownership. When individuals become co-owners there are three types of privacy rule conditions that are negotiated: coordinating linkage rules, coordinating permeability rules, and coordinating ownership rules (Petronio, 2002). Linkage rules encompass who else is allowed to own the information. Permeability rules are parameters for how much others should know about the private information within the co-owned boundary (Petronio, 2010). Lastly, ownership rules are synchronized with co-owners; there is an agreement about the degree of control the co-owner has to independently manage the private information (Petronio, 2002). The co-ownership tenet is both a strength and limitation for the present study. It is important to decipher who owns and co-owns the private information surrounding a Latina child's CSA experience. In my experience of CSA my mother was in charge of my information. It would be interesting to discover if this was due to my age at the time of abuse or because as Anzaldúa (2007) states, protecting the men in our families is a woman's prerogative. In other words, she owned my information, but did she take over my private information to protect me or to protect him? With that said, information ownership may be more culturally nuanced than CPM implies.

Boundary linkages. There are many reasons as to why individuals choose to share their information with others as well as grant them the right to control privacy matters. Some give up their privacy rights to gain safety. In a study of nursing homes, patients and older adults discussed their willingness to relinquish privacy in order to receive financial and health security (Petronio & Kovach, 1997). The older adults in this

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study claimed to willingly give up privacy and thus left their doors open so they could receive safe and accessible care during the night. Further, participants would allow others to bathe them and would grant particular people access to their financial information (Petronio & Kovach, 1997).

Giving up privacy control does not lead to such positive outcomes in every situation. If one person has more power over another person's information than that individual can take over boundary management. Given that this pattern is based on a power differential, this particular boundary linkage is classified as a *coercive linkage* (Petronio, 2002). These linkages are formed when person B is forced to give up private information to person A. "Issues of disclosure compliance, through either humiliation or manipulation, force the linkage leading to inclusive boundary coordination" (Petronio, 2002 p. 128). This can be common in sexual abuse experiences when the perpetrator conquers victim's privacy and then the perpetrator dictates the ways the boundaries encompassing the abuse are managed (Petronio, 2002).

In a collectivist family, the idea that a perpetrator took over a victim's privacy indicates that the victim had privacy privileges from the start. The possibility exists that perhaps Latinas do not start out with this privilege to begin with, given their low hierarchal standing in their family. As such, it is imperative to acknowledge the dire need for Latina sexual abuse disclosure to be studied in an inductive manner rather than trying to use an existing western privacy management theory explain this heavily nuanced phenomena.

Boundary turbulence. The last principle of CPM postulates that while owners and co-owners of private information should negotiate privacy rules to have smooth interactions and a "greater probability of regulating private information in a way that alleviates unwanted intrusion or exposure, individuals do not live in a perfect world" (Petronio, 2010, p. 182). This causes boundary turbulence. Boundary turbulence occurs when expectations for privacy management are unfulfilled. Petronio (2002) states that there are instances of fuzzy boundaries that occur when boundary ownership expectations are compromised while deciphering whether privacy is upheld or "deception is lurking" (Petronio, 2010, p. 182). For example, if an individual refuses to tell his partner the number of sexual partners he's had, and his partner feels like he should co-own this information, the seeking partner may think that his partner's intention is to deceive him. The privacy boundaries become blurry and ambiguous and thus has potential to cause conflict.

Privacy violations, dilemmas, and/or misconceptions of ownership contribute to boundary turbulence. Each case brings potential relational consequences when boundaries become turbulent. Toller and McBride (2013) illustrate how turbulence emerges when parents try to determine the most appropriate way to tell their children about the death of a family member. Perfect privacy regulation is unrealistic, and thus, boundary turbulence can bring disruptions and full breakdowns (Petronio, 2013). Overall, turbulence is the marker for needed change in privacy management and impacts expectations for future and current appropriate privacy regulation (Petronio, 2002; 2013).

The intricate tenets and elements of CPM have served to explain a myriad of different privacy management phenomena. What follows is a brief overview of the work that CPM has produced as the leading theoretical framework in the studies. Further, I explore studies that have used CPM to investigate privacy matters within marginalized and nontraditional families and communities.

Communication privacy management theory in action. Communication privacy management theory has been useful in understanding different kinds of privacy and disclosure phenomena. For example, Serewicz and Canary (2008) used CPM as the underlying framework to investigate newlywed's perceptions of private disclosures received from their in-laws. Durham and Braithwaite (2009) utilized CPM to describe the intradyadic communication processes that encompassed the family planning and decision making of couples choosing to voluntarily remain child-free. Additionally, Hammonds (2015) investigated the dynamics that play into emerging adults' likelihood to reveal private information to their parents.

As the present study seeks to investigate the way a marginalized community decides to disclose or conceal their experiences of CSA, I now turn to studies that have used CPM as their leading theoretical framework to study privacy management of certain marginalized communities.

CPM research with nontraditional families and marginalized communities. With the goal of stressing the notion that privacy management can change and shift due to societal circumstances, Lannutti (2013) identified how a modification in the conceptualization of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts affected privacy matters in

families. The same-sex couples in her study that were presently in or planning to enter a legally recognized marriage stated that their privacy management within their families transformed. Specifically, the ways couples established and managed privacy rules changed in accordance to the new marital context as couples felt they could talk about the status of their relationship more directly with their families. In another study, Breshears and DiVerniero (2015) used CPM to investigate how adult children of LGBT parents conceptualize and recognize the lesbian/gay identity within their family and how they created rules for concealing or revealing this private knowledge. The study revealed that adult children's perception of information ownership was conceptualized as identity ownership, "that is, who the participants perceived as owning the lesbian/gay identity" (p. 579). Some participants viewed the parent's sexual identity as belonging solely to the parent and not the entire family. As such, the adult children that claimed that their parents were the owners of their sexual identity believed they did not own their parents' information (Breshears & DiVerniero, 2015).

Communication privacy management theory has also been used to explore disclosure and privacy processes within communities of color. Greene and Faulkner (2002) used CPM to investigate disclosure patterns of African American adolescents with an HIV diagnosis. Specifically, researchers wanted to examine the role of a disclosure target and the ways they influenced adolescents' disclosure. Additionally, the study sought to find how expected reactions impacted the decision to disclose. The study's results revealed that eight out of 10 participants told their mothers on the same day they

found out about their HIV diagnosis and that women delineated clear disclosure rules based on their expectations of others' reactions (Greene & Faulkner, 2012).

Brummett and Steuber (2015) also implemented CPM to examine interracial romantic partners' privacy rule development. Researchers discovered that although participants expected societal push back, most chose to disclose relational information to family and individuals within their social network. Findings also showed that interracial couples identified with interracial and intercultural identities, which provided "additional opportunities for disclosure negotiations" (p. 22). Further, researchers argued that even though CPM claims that primary control of information belongs to the original owner, information regarding the relationship is actually owned by both romantic partners. Lastly, authors claimed that the conceptualization of ownership "also contrast when partners experience different degrees of relational marginalization, which are associated with varying perceptions of disclosure risks" (p. 40).

Though Latinxs have not been a popular sample in current CPM literature, the aforementioned studies give us insight into the ways different facets of culture impacts privacy as well as how CPM has been utilized when investigating privacy management within the family. However, since CPM Latinx research is scant, the privacy rule systems may be significantly different for Latinx families. As we move forward in investigating Latinx privacy management, we must consider that disclosure processes are likely impacted by cultural factors beyond race, such as socioeconomic and nationality status.

Potential limitations of the application of communication privacy management theory to Latina's CSA experiences. Communication privacy

management theory offers a logical, precise process for privacy management matters. The theory's tenets of ownership, co-ownership, privacy rules, and boundary turbulence are very coherent and rational and can be used to explain privacy phenomena for individuals who have enough agency to partake in these privacy management processes. This scheme, however, may not be the proper framework to capture Latina disclosure processes pertaining to CSA because I argue that privacy and disclosure processes are more culturally nuanced than what CPM posits. Thus, in what follows, I further explore CPM's limitations for the present study.

Communication privacy management theory enables researchers to design studies that will produce translational research as well as discover findings that can help "determine how to address a need for change, solve a problem, or create a new system when people are faced with issues such as privacy dilemmas, violations, and trust mistakes" (Petronio, 2007, p. 218). Although CPM has been and will continue to be advantageous and impactful in exploring a number of privacy phenomena, its precise framework and individualistic rooted tenets may be limited in accurately exploring the heavily nuanced experiences of Latina CSA disclosure. As such, the following sections will portray some of the individualistic tenets inherent in CPM as well as the possible reasons as to why these tenets cannot fully account for a collectivist culture.

Sovereign self. Though CPM acknowledges that self-disclosure is not simply restricted to the *self* but it is a communicative process that involves others (Petronio, 2002), at the center of CPM lies the presumptive idea of the *sovereign self.* Baxter and Sahlstein (2000) state that the "contained, or sovereign, self is a unitary, intact, rational

agent who acts autonomously on the world based on the internal workings of the individual mind" (p. 292). CPM, as well as other privacy and self-disclosure models and theories, have approached the act of disclosing as an individual process that is driven by choice and rationality (Baxter & Sahlstein, 2000; Sampson, 1993). Disclosure is often conceptualized as the process of revealing thoughts, feelings, and/or experiences to others about the self (Derlega et al., 1993). As such, according to Baxter and Sahlstein (2000), the mainstream disclosure conceptualization gives focus to the sender and his or her decision processes to share with a receiver. This reiterates that disclosure starts with the self (sender), which implies that the autonomous self exists.

Another common supposition of disclosure and privacy theories such as CPM is that individuals willfully decide to reveal their private information for personal reasons. In a capitalistic way, individuals first weigh the pros and cons of disclosing and if the risks and costs are higher than the rewards, they will resort to keeping their information private. Baxter and Sahlstein (2000) argue that existing disclosure and privacy theories assume "the content of the self-disclosure is treated as if it were representative of a preformed, intact, individual" (p. 292). Scholars further contend that the individual's life experiences, feelings, and ideas are assumed to exist inside the individual who decides (or not) to give others access to private information (2000).

I argue that the sovereign self should be decentered when investigating issues of Latinx privacy phenomena, as the *self* may be conceptualized differently in this collectivist culture. Collectivism is explained as the notion of prioritizing harmonious relationships with noteworthy members of one's social world, where actions or decisions

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are constrained or determined by a sense of duty and reverence to others, and where one's view of self is embedded within social relationships (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Sauceda, Paul, Gregorich, & Choi, 2016). For example and in relation to CSA in Latinx families, where familismo (which is rooted in collectivism) is a core value, a child may choose to remain silent for the better good of the entire family. If the child does choose to disclose, perhaps the family keeps the abuse a secret amongst themselves in order to protect the family collectively. These examples suggest a collectivist view of the self as opposed to a sovereign view.

A collective self. An alternative conception of the *self,* one that Baxter and Montgomery (1996) and Sampson (1993) describe as the social and dialogic self, is not constructed separately from others, instead it is created with and through others. In Latinx cultures the *self* cannot and should not be separated from others (Organista, 2009) because this would betray the notion of familismo. Further, in contrast to the perspective of the sovereign self, which directs our focus to an individual, the standpoint of a social and dialogic self "directs our gaze *between* individuals" (Baxter & Sahlstein, 2000, p. 293). The social or dialogic self would make more sense for a collectivist culture where group activities and processes are dominant, responsibility is shared, and accountability is collective (Gudykunst, 1998). I argue that in Latinx culture, issues of disclosure and privacy extend beyond autonomous individuals to a collective self as well as larger social units. In families, for example, the individual is implicated in negotiating issues of disclosure and privacy for himself or herself as well as for the family. For example, when

weighing the benefits and risks of disclosure, a Latinx child may analyze the risks or benefits to impact the family collectively, which is where his or her self is situated.

In sum, privacy, as well as the *self,* need to be looked at using a collectivist lens given Latinx family values wherein collectivism dictates the ways families perform and survive. To provide a fundamental connection to this notion, in what follows I will review literature that captures a variety of Latinx cultural values that may impact the Latinas' decision to reveal or conceal their sexual abuse experience(s). I will also explore the ways these cultural values impact the ways Latinx families communicate about sex as patterns of communication may contribute to CSA concealment.

Latinx family values and communication surrounding sex. This section of the literature review will thoroughly visit different Latinx structures of power as well as values and characteristics of Latinx culture as a way to later situate how these features potentially impact Latina CSA disclosure. As such, I will begin by exploring patriarchy and its multiple dimensions, as well as Latinx sex communication patterns to further comprehend how these entities close and restrict lines of communication for Latinas.

Research suggests that certain characteristics of Latinx culture may influence how a child with a history of CSA copes with, communicates about, and makes sense of her sexual abuse experience. The fundamental characteristics include familismo, machismo, marianismo, Catholicism, and the clear demarcation of gender roles (Fontes, 2007; Ligiéro et al., 2009; Organista, 2007). Sanchez et al. (2015) argue that cultural values and messages around gender role expectations that are associated with early adolescents' ethnic identity development may also guide their attitudes and behavioral decisions about

sex and sexual related events. In the following, I highlight machismo, marianismo, and patriarchy in order to display the deep rooted Latinx nuance that likely impacts CSA disclosure.

Machismo. In Latinx culture machismo, a male gender role construct, refers to male characteristics that are valued within the cultural context: physical strength, sexual desire, power over women, and emotional toughness. Machismo is not only valued in Latinx culture, it is a way of life. As such, machismo principles somewhat excuse men's abuse of power over women whether it is in sexual, physical, or emotional manner. When men abuse women, they are acting within what the machismo domain deemed as normal and so their behavior is not chastised.

Marianismo. On the other side of the gender role spectrum is marianismo. Marianismo stems from the idealization of the Virgin Mary and includes the expectation that the ideal woman to be docile, compliant, vulnerable, passive, and filled with sexual purity. Any woman that deviates from these advised behaviors is believed to be tainted, polluted, and at fault and guilty in relation to any type of sexual occurrence, including sexual abuse. As such, in cases of sexual abuse, this may translate to blaming the sexually abused child and delivering the perpetrator from all culpability since the abuse occurred within the appropriate nature of machismo (Ligiéro et al., 2009).

The expectations and norms that marianismo sets for Latinas are based on the collectivistic worldview in which interdependence and familial hierarchy are the cultural norm. Castillo et al. (2010) operationalized marianismo along five dimensions or what scholars titled *pillars*. First, the family pillar is based on the cultural tenet of familismo

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and emphasizes a woman's role in upholding dedication to family and family cohesion. Further, familismo refers to the extremely high levels of emotional and instrumental interdependence of the family, as well as the interpersonal bonding within the family (Organista, 2007).

The second dimension or the virtuous and chaste pillar, as explained by Castillo et al., (2010), is grounded on the tenet of respeto and describes how a Latina is expected to respect her body and maintain her virginity until marriage. Third, the subordinate to others pillar is also based on the tenet of respeto and reflects the belief that Latinas should show obedience and respect for the Latina/o hierarchical family structure. It is an obligation to pay reverence to those of higher status in the traditional sense, by virtue of age, gender, and social position. As such, children are expected to obey and respect parents as well as any older family member. Being right is secondary to respeto, so under no circumstances does one disagree or argue with an elder (González-Lopez, 2004; Ligiéro et al., 2009). If a child was asked by an elder, especially a male (family or not), to engage in sexual activity with or against the child's will, and then the elder enforced silence, the child *must* comply.

Anzaldúa (2007) states that Chicanas are conditioned to remain silent as demonstrated by the commonly Latinx family shared statement, "En boca cerrada no entran moscas. *Flies don't enter a closed mouth*" (p. 76). Well-educated girls do not answer or retaliate back when spoken to… because es una falta de respeto [it is a lack of respect] (Anzaldúa, 2007). If she does open her mouth, she is deemed hocicona, repelona, chismosa—having a big mouth (Anzaldúa, 2007). As Anzaldúa (2007) notes,

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"Questioning, or carrying tales are all signs of being mal criada [poorly raised]. In my culture, they are all words that are derogatory if applied to women- I've never heard them applied to men" (p. 76).

Castillo et al.'s fourth dimension is the self-silencing pillar, which is particularly important for the present study as it potentially explains the aforementioned conservative disclosure trends. If a child is consistently conditioned that silence is best, it is to no surprise that this would motivate Latinas to remain quiet in regard to her experience of CSA. The fifth dimension of marianismo is what Castillo et al. (2010) call the spiritual pillar. This construct describes the belief that Latinas should be the spiritual leader of the family and be responsible for the religious education of their family. In order to do so appropriately and effectively they must be meet qualifications, some of which can include purity standing, or an ability to be sacrificial; both of which can be obtained by silencing one's voice.

Patriarchy. The patriarchal basis of traditional Latinx families can be hard to understand in mainstream America, which in contrast, stresses egalitarian views and friendly relations between men and women (site). Patriarchy puts men as the priority of a family, women as second, children as last. Further, because at the end of the day the ideal woman in Latinx culture is pure, clean, and a virgin for her future husband, communication surrounding sex is extremely limited and constricted, and saturated with shame and infamy. Though this is absent in existing sex communication literature, sex communication has the potential to impact sexual abuse disclosures, as the knowledge that children build through these conversations can allow them to understand

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inappropriate touches, and can permit children to feel safe to disclose due to safe and open lines of communication. The present study may potentially serve to unveil these notions.

Latinx families and sex communication. Latinx sex communication practices can impact CSA disclosure as it potentially serves in setting appropriate expectations for communication surrounding sex and sex related phenomena. Latinxs have been severely understudied in the areas of sexual communication (Raffaelli & Green, 2003) and as such, limited information is available for scholars and practitioners working to address public health concerns surrounding sexual issues, such as STIs and teen pregnancy). Family communication may be an important factor to consider in risk reduction efforts with Latinx populations (Raffaelli & Green, 2003) especially since Latinx parents are less likely to communicate with their children about sexual issues than parents from other ethnic groups (O'Sullivan, Meyer-Bahlburg, & Watkins, 2001; Raffaelli & Green, 2003). Among a representative sample of Latina girls ages 12 to 19, more frequent communication with mothers about sex and sex related topics correlated with lower sexual activity and pregnancy rates (Pick & Palos, 1995). Though this does not directly pertain to sexual abuse, this parent protective influence of parent-child communication has foreshadowing effects in preventing and more effectively dealing with CSA phenomena, including abuse disclosures. For example, Fasula and Miller (2006) posited that mother's receptiveness and awareness to sexual and general communication with their adolescents had a buffering effect on negative sex outcomes. The adolescent participants who categorized their mothers as ones with above-average responsiveness

were 1.6 times more likely to plan to delay intercourse and communicate about sex related topics than were adolescents with mothers with average responsiveness (Fasula & Miller, 2006). Although Fasula and Miller (2006) solely focus on the impact of open family communication on sexually active Latina adolescents, this research supports the notion that open family communication can potentially induce sexual abuse disclosures.

Due to specific religious and cultural reasons, Latinx parents are less likely to communicate with their adolescents about sexual issues than parents from other ethnic groups, and they speak to their young daughters about sex in different ways than they do their sons (Rafafaelli & Green, 2003). The rules surrounding what boys and girls are allowed to hear in relation to sex is prominent in Latinx culture due to the differential treatment of male and female children (Rafaelli & Green, 2003). Marin, Tschann, Gómez, and Gregorich (1998) reported that Latinx parents prefer indirect communication strategies, such as making comments about sexual health to other friends and/or family members while the child is present. This research indicates that lines of communication may not be clear or inviting, and as such, children who have been sexually abused may not feel welcomed to disclose.

Families function as principal agents of socialization and knowledge and are crucial in shaping developmental experiences during childhood and adolescence. Parents often try to mold their children's behavior and expose them to (or protect them from) a collection of experiences (Aspy et al., 2007; Raffaelli, 2001). In many ways, families and parents impact their children's sexual attitudes (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Raffaelli, 2001; Udry and Campbell, 1994) and it is through family socialization that the creation of

sexual scripts occur (Simon & Gagnon, 1986). Sexual scripts can be powerful in determining whether to disclose or conceal a sexual abuse experience. A child who often hears the common Latinx family script that "men will go as far as women let them" (González-López, 2004) is likely to conceal her sexual abuse as the sexual script indicates that she allowed the abuse, making her an accomplice. Further, this sexual script along with a multitude of others may prompt Latina children to conceal their abuse experiences in an effort to avoid particular repercussions. The young girl knows she loses her virginity privileges if she were to disclose, will be stigmatized (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986) and seen as a hypersexualized, dirty, sinful girl (González-López, 2004).

Virginity. González- López (2004) studied the ways Mexican fathers conceptualized virginity as well as the manner in which they advocated premarital virginity within their families. According to González-López (2004) multiple Mexican fathers believed that virginity was extremely essential in upholding family honor. Many agreed on the notion that *being a virgin* increased the value of their daughters for future husbands (González-López, 2004). This gender ideology shapes the way Mexican families communicate their values and beliefs with regard to sex, sexuality, and sexual morality (González-López, 2004). These discourses can consequently emphasize the importance of virginity and purity. Thus, these messages may prompt Latinas to conceal their experiences of CSA since *being used goods* can bring dishonor to the family and disclosing may strip them from their virginity privileges.

"Virginity is a concept that has been, and in some cultures still is, applied only to women because the condition of a woman's hymen is used to determine her virginity

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status" (Medley-Rath, 2007, p. 26). To date, empirical research that demonstrates the ways Latinxs conceptualize *virginity* to support and accentuate Medley-Rath's (2007) ideas is scant. However, the virginity master narrative saturates Latinx homes. Similar to Medley-Rath's (2007) notion, whereas many *less traditional* Latinxs and westerners have the agency to self-conceptualize virginity, in traditional Latinx families virginity is conceptualized as a physical construct, synonymous with the hymen. Mothers go to full extremes to protect the state of their daughters' hymens by prohibiting activities that could potentially impair their daughters' virginity (Fontes, 2007). For example, very often Latina mothers prohibit the use of tampons to encourage the preservation of the hymen. As such, if one is sexually abused and the perpetrator crossed the boundary that marks virginity, the young girl is no longer considered a virgin, feels extreme shame (Fontes, 2007), and chooses to hide the experience.

Shame. In Ligiéro and scholars' study (2009), several participants mentioned the prominence of the virginity sexual script and the ways these scripts kept most of them silent. One participant shared that she would rather live with the repercussions of silence than to be seen as tainted or used goods (Ligiéro et al., 2009). Seen as anything other than pure and untainted can trigger feelings of shame (Fontes, 2007). Brown's (2006) shame resiliency theory proposes that shame is not elicited in women by universal shame triggers and the experiences and expectations that lead to shame appear to be unique to different women, their relationships, and most importantly, their culture. Latinx culture uses shame as a socializing agent, especially when educating young girls (Fontes, 2007). It is difficult to adequately measure whether shame impacts Latinas' decision to disclose

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or conceal sexual abuse experience(s). Thus, the grounded theory approach this study will employ will allow for nuanced constructs such as shame to naturally emerge if in fact it is a factor that impacts disclosure.

Though scholars have yet to investigate how shame influences the decision to disclose abuse, research on multicultural groups has found the presence and degree of shame to be a key predictor of children's recovery from sexual abuse (Feiring et al., 2002; Fontes, 2007). Feiring et al. (2002) found that compared to European American and African American children, Latinos showed the highest general shame levels. In her piece, Fontes (2007) conceptualizes shame as a powerful concept in Latinx cultures. Parents often may try to control their children's behavior using shame-inducing practices such as humiliating, mocking, and teasing. In Latin America, one of the worst names to be called is a *Sin Vergüenza*, which literally translates to someone "without shame". According to Fontes (2007) this colloquial term is used to describe people who have a faulty moral compass that does not allow them to experience the appropriate amount of self-critique when their behavior seems to fall short of ideal community standards. Since shame is so central in Latinx cultures, it is not at all surprising that it emerges strongly in situations related to CSA and could potentially impact the ways in which Latina women manage their privacy surrounding their abuse.

Due to a Catholic origin, traditional Latinx cultures are highly organized around honor and shame especially surrounding sex, sexuality, virginity, and purity. Talking about anything in relation to the *sexual parts* is a disgrace (Alcarón, Castillo, Moraga, 1993; Fontes, 2007). Speaking of a sexual abuse experience may generate feelings of

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shame for a Latina since having to admit that she has fallen short from upholding honor to her body is equivalent to losing purity standing in the eyes of her family.

In summary, a plethora of research shows particular Latinx family and culture values playing an important role in socializing Latinas. Cultural constructs such as familismo, marianismo, machismo, communication about sex, and shame impact the ways Latinx families function. Certain Latinx family values encourage limited sex communication with children, especially young girls. Thus, these restricted lines of communication may prohibit, inhibit, and/or delay CSA disclosures.

Toward a critical methodological approach. Communication privacy management theory is a framework designed to explain the way individuals manage private information. The theory postulates that individuals own their private information and through a risk/benefit ratio evaluation, they decide to share the information with other individuals (or not, if the risks outweigh the benefits). If they choose to share information with others, they form a collective boundary that houses the now co-owned private information. The original owner and co-owner of the information decide how the information should be managed. For example, the original owner can mandate if the co-owner is allowed to share the private information with others. If information gets mishandled, CPM posits that boundary turbulence occurs.

The precise system that CPM offers has been advantageous in investigating many privacy management phenomena. Though researchers have used CPM to discover privacy and disclosure matters that occur with marginalized communities and nontraditional families, CPM research that explains Latinx disclosure is scant. The

previous section showcased many elements of Latinx culture that can potentially be too nuanced and too entrenched with power structures to fit neatly within the CPM theoretical framework. As such, I argue for the use of an inductive and critical methodological approach for the present study.

The study will prioritize the data and stories shared by Latinas who have experienced child sexual abuse in order to allow for the production of new knowledge that CPM may have overlooked. Rather than using a CPM perspective while analyzing the stories, I will use an inductive approach to analyze participants' *testimonios.* Latinx culture nuances will emerge more freely with an inductive rather than deductive approach that would likely look to assimilate participants experiences into existing hegemonic theoretical frameworks. The decision to take an inductive approach for the study adheres to Indigenous methodology and grounded theory standards. Both perspectives encourage researchers to study Indigenous peoples in such a way that does not force them to assimilate into existing theories, in fact, these methods urge the participants' voices to take precedence in the research process. As such, this study will employ *testimonio* and grounded theory methodologies to investigate the present study's overarching research question: *How do Latinas decide to disclose or conceal their child sexual abuse experience(s)?*

For the purposes of the study, the research question is sufficiently open ended to facilitate thick description, open narrative, and storytelling (Meyette, 2009). The open-ended nature of the study's research question allows for the potential emergence of a more culturally nuanced conceptualization of privacy. Moreover, the study's research

question looks to investigate *how* Latinas navigate privacy matters surrounding their CSA experiences and CPM may be too well established to partake in the investigation. As such, Indigenous methodology and grounded theory are the most appropriate and ethical approaches for studying Latina CSA disclosure processes.

Chapter Two: Methodology

"Nuestro research should be subversive acts. Nuestras metodologias and inquiries are not just to advance the literature and to be self-indulgent but to change and transform our local and global communities" (Saavedra & Nymark, 2008, p. 271).

Indigenous people hold much valuable knowledge and it is in their best interest for researchers to find the most appropriate ways to study them. As researchers we can validate their voice, value systems and their understanding of the world by using proper methodology when studying with and for them. The present study implements Indigenous methodology as well as grounded theory, as they are the most ethically appropriate methods for studying Latinas who have experienced CSA. I will begin the following by giving a general background of what constitutes Indigenous methodology and will then provide an argument as to why this critical approach is best for studying a marginalized community. Next, I will introduce and thoroughly explain *testimonio*, the specific Indigenous method this study employs. Subsequently, I will highlight my recruitment procedures, as well as my participant sample. Finally, I will explain grounded theory and will provide an argument as to why it is the best methodological analysis approach for this study.

Indigenous Methodology

Indigenous methodology has incredible potential in studying marginalized communities. Indigenous methodologies are grounded in critical epistemology and pedagogy (Sandoval, 2000), representing a critical politics of representation that is entrenched in the rituals of Indigenous communities. Critical epistemology essentially aims to identify dominant structures and practices that create or uphold disadvantage, inequity, or oppression and points the way toward alternatives that promote more egalitarian possibilities for marginalized individuals (Castillo, 1996; Conquergood, 2013; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Critical epistemology's primary objective is to understand how oppressed groups become empowered, "and, in some cases, change dominant patterns and perhaps the ideologies that underlie them" (Wood, 1994, p. 199). Huber (2009) states that when People of Color are invited to reveal their oppressions, it motivates them to dismantle and transform oppressive conditions to end injustice. Offering participants in the present study the opportunity to share their stories or *testimonios* of oppression serves as a starting point for researchers to investigate and discover ways to begin to demolish injustice within a CSA context. *Testimonio*, a form of storytelling that is detailed thoroughly below, uncovers the way that systems of oppression conspire in the lives of Latinxs. Telling one's story of oppression in and of itself is an act of resistance against the silencing and subordination that Latinxs experience (Acevedo, 2001). Thus, it is my hope that by employing Indigenous methods, the academy and communication studies specifically, will become powerful platforms

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where social justice conversation can begin to influence structural changes. To begin this process, we must first prioritize and privilege Indigenous voices.

Privileging participants' voices. Indigenous researchers explore methodologies that ascend from their local knowledges and histories and seek to respect and empower the *first voice* (Caracciolo & Staikidis, 2009). Dunbar (2001) states that the "Indigenous world-view places Indigenous peoples at the center of the research environment and is cognizant of Indigenous values, beliefs, paradigms, social practices, ethical protocols, and pedagogies" (p. 92). In adherence with this notion, this study's design accommodates Latinxs' social practices, values, and pedagogies by selecting a method that is the most natural and authentic way to discover and create embodied knowledge. Indigenous methodologies promote investigative research endeavors to be reciprocal relationships between the research topic, the researcher, and the participants (Wilson, 2001). The main objectives of these methodologies are to aid in preserving the voices of Indigenous people, build resistance to dominant discourses, and most importantly strengthen the community (González-López, 2004; Wilson, 2001). In order to preserve the voices of Indigenous people, as researchers, we must keep ourselves accountable throughout the research process. I do so in the present study by being critically reflexive.

Critical reflexivity. Relational accountability is at the forefront of Indigenous methodology. As a researcher, one is called to answer his/her associations and intentions when conducting research. Thus, Indigenous methodology mandates critical reflexivity throughout the research relationship. The following self-reflexive questions guide Indigenous methodology (Wilson, 2001):

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What is my role as a researcher?
What are my obligations in this research relationship?
Does this method help to build a relationship between myself as a researcher and my research topic?
Does it build respectful relationships with the other participants in this research?
Am I gaining knowledge for personal pursuit? If so, how can I change this to gain knowledge to fulfill my end of the research relationship?

Throughout the research process, I kept a journal that allowed me to remain aware and reflexive regarding the aforementioned questions. I will explain my journal process in the analysis section of the present chapter.

According to Wilson (2001) and Conquergood (2013) there is an expectation from Indigenous communities that researched knowledge and findings will be kept in context with cultural protocols, and be meaningful and useful to the studied communities. Further, it must be a priority to protect Indigenous knowledge from misinterpretation and misuse (Smith, 1999).

With this understanding, for Latina women, traditional methodology is not sufficient on its own. Indigenous methodology is lush with techniques that can potentially aid in deciphering and understanding the heavily cultured nuanced processes that Latinas employ in deciding to reveal or conceal their experience(s) of CSA. As such, this study proposes using *testimonios* as the most appropriate Indigenous method.

Testimonio. Indigenous methodology privileges the body as the site of knowing (Conquergood, 2013) and is considered to be an embodied practice:

> It's one of getting data, it seems to me, by subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals… so that you are close to them while they are responding to what life does to them. (Goffman, 1989, p. 125)

The researcher becomes an embodied testigo (witness) to participants' *testimonios* and in so doing becomes part of the methodology. For example, while serving as a witness to her participants' stories of incest, González-López (2015) realized that all facets of her person (cognitive, spiritual, emotional) were correspondingly vital in the production and sharing of her participants' knowledge. In the interview setting, she performed well above a well-poised, removed, professional researcher; instead, she became a holistic human who witnessed her participants' stories.

Testimonio emerged from Latin America during the 1960's and has generally been used to document the experiences of oppressed groups and as a way for them to resist colonialism and injustices (Booker, 2002). Further, testimonio was used as a way to document "social-political-cultural histories that are often inflected with human rights violations" (Holling, 2014, p. 316). Even though a universal definition of *testimonio* does not exist, scholars have identified key elements of *testimonio* to consider. For example, Yúdice (1991) describes *testimonio* as an authentic narrative, voiced by an individual who is moved to narrate by the urgency of an experience. According to Reyes and Rodriguez (2012) a *testimonio* is told in the first person by a narrator who is a real protagonist or witness of events to uncover violations or transgressions (p. 527). Fontes (2007) contends that *testimonio* is a dear story that occurred to the self, and a narrative an individual is decisively prepared to share. Further, Brabeck (2001) describes *testimonio* as a verbal journey "of one's life experiences with attention to injustices one has suffered and the effect these injustices have had on one's life" (p. 3).

The Latina Feminist Group (2001) portrays the method of *testimonio* as a mode to craft knowledge and theory through personal experiences, highlighting the impact of the "process of *testimonio* in theorizing our own realities as Women of Color" (Huber, 2009 p. 643). Lastly, Huber (2009) defines *testimonio* as "a verbal journey of a witness who speaks to reveal the racial, classed, gendered, and nativist injustices they have suffered as a means of healing, empowerment, and advocacy for a more humane present and future" (p. 644). Though in English *testimonio* translates to testimony, interpreting and referencing testimonio as testimony is discouraged. According to Holling (2014) and Scholz (2007) using testimony interchangeably inauthentisizes the richness and complexity inherent in *testimonio*. Additionally, testimony does not capture the theoretical and foundational bedrock of testimonio.

Testimonio studies outside and within the communication field tell about *testimonio*'s cultural and theoretical fertility (Holling, 2014). For example, *testimonio* has been used as cinematic form, pedagogy, and as a research method (Holling, 2014; Latina Feminist Group, 2001). Another function of *testimonio* is that of bearing truthful witness and encouraging understanding and solidarity (Holling, 2014). Communication scholars offer alternative perspectives that derive from the analyses of one of the most widely recognized published *testimonios, I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman in Guatemala* (2000). In her *testimonio*, Rigoberta Menchú recounts her experiences of countless injustices and hardships in her early life that reflect the experiences common to many indigenous communities in Latin America. Initial communication testimonio scholarship reveals that "'testimonial' illustrates a theoretical and political form of discourse that

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operates from a collectivist voice through which cultural dimensions modify the presentation of political content" (Holling, 2014, p. 316). As such, using *testimonio* in the present study will give the participant space to speak in such a way that invites the collective way of being and the collective way of knowing.

Testimonio allows the participant to retell the personal story in as much depth as she finds fitting and permits the story to be told as many times as necessary. *Testimonios* are usually guided by the will of the narrator to tell events as she sees significant, and is often an expression of a collective experience, rather than the individual. Traditional research method designs often discount collectivist points of view as the designs are typically rooted with an individualistic approach. The present study utilizes *testimonio* as a method to accommodate for the collectivist perspective and nature of Latinas who have experienced child sexual abuse. Since Latinas often perform collectively per Latinx cultural standards, *testimonio* essentially invites Latinas to include their family and family cultural dynamics into the research process.

Power of testimonio. *Testimonio* arose in the wake of social movements during the 1960's and 1970's "when people who were once the objects of anthropological and psychological study began to write and speak for themselves" (Brabeck, 2003, p. 253). *Testimonio* gives the speakers an opportunity to trust themselves and to have faith in the ways they know, appreciate, and interpret the world and recognize this knowledge is valid and valuable to the research relationship process (Pérez-Huber, 1999). *Testimonio* moves beyond narrative, biography, and oral history because it is born out of the speaker's, not the researcher's, political agenda aimed at resisting oppression (Pérez-

Huber, 1999; 2008). This Indigenous methodology offers potential for the marginalized voice to speak on its own behalf and for those in the dominant group to validate that voice. This is an important point to make, as it is not my intention to speak for the participants in this study, but to speak with and to co-construct knowledge about their experiences. I believe that participants' *testimonios* will not only serve as a means for participants to speak for their collective selves, but they will also encourage the academy, and those who have failed to listen, to hear their voices. Cruz (2006) explains: "What *testimonio* does best is to connect a reader or an audience, positioning a reader or an audience for self- reflection ... the listener/reader/audience becomes witness" (p. 31). This is the incredible power of *testimonio* – to connect human beings in ways that enable the reader or audience to bear witness to experiences and struggles of those who are marginalized.

   Strengths of interviewing. Qualitative interviews deliver opportunities for shared discovery, reflection, and understanding through a path that is natural and organic (Tracy, 2013). Further, interviews enable the researcher to come to and explore "complex phenomena that may otherwise be hidden or unseen" (Tracy, 2013, p. 132). The interviews in which *testimonios* were elicited, were open-ended, semi-structured, and were designed to encourage participants to tell stories rather than to answer questions from a prescribed schedule of interview questions (Tracy, 2013). In this way, I conducted interviews where Latinas were able to share their *testimonios* freely, comfortably, and organically.

In a study utilizing *testimonio*, González-López's (2015) groundbreaking work on family incest in Mexican families offers a critical ethnographic examination of the social and cultural mechanisms that create the causes and conditions of incest and sexual violence in 60 different Mexican families. Through her ethnographic interviews, she emphasized the importance of engaging in face-to-face interviews with her participants. Throughout her self-reflection, she talked about her appreciation for having picked interviews as her primary method, as it allowed her informants to share their stories in a very authentic manner (González-López, 2015).

Too many times the research I reviewed revolving sexual violence was too far removed "emotionally. I questioned the emotional accuracy of academic research on rape. It now strikes me as too clean. Too sanitized. And too distant from the emotional lived experiences of rape survivors" (González-Lopez, 2015, p. 12). According to González-López (2015) fulfilling the role of *testigo* within the interviews diminished the opportunity to receive desensitized data. Similarly, the *testimonios* participants shared for the present study provided holistic, rich, authentic stories. The lush nuance that the *testimonios* brought allowed for a robust view of the ways Latinas decide to disclose or conceal their instances of child sexual abuse.

In summary, Indigenous methodology is predicated on empowering the voices and knowledge of marginalized communities. In particular, *testimonio* serves as a profound method in studying Latina CSA disclosure in that it maintains participants' stories in full cultural context and it privileges participants' voices. In contrast with traditional research methods, the open-ended and story-telling nature of *testimonio* allows the participant to

situate her child sexual abuse experiences around and against larger cultural and familial contexts. This in turn allows the researcher to understand Latina child sexual abuse disclosure more holistically.

Next, I will explain the steps I took to obtain Institutional Review Board approval for a study seeking to investigate a sensitive topic. I will then overview the manner in which the study was funded. Thereafter, I will discuss the study's recruitment methods and processes and introduce the participant sample.

Study's Logistical Steps

What follows is a detailed discussion of the logistical steps I took to receive approval to conduct and fund the present study. I will begin by giving a description of the guidelines I had to adhere to in order to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Then, I will explain how I navigated an agreement with IRB to create a research plan for such a sensitive research topic, that would protect participants and their confidentiality in the best manner. Since the only purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the steps I took to receive IRB approval and funding, I will reintroduce the study's specific recruitment procedures chronologically in the procedures section.

Institutional Review Board provisions. The present study was considered to be sensitive and risky as its goal was to explore the disclosure processes of sexually abused Latinas. I submitted an initial research protocol in July of 2016 for a full board review. Due to the delicate nature of the study, an IRB representative contacted me to invite me to attend the full board committee meeting as the board had a few concerns and questions about the proposed study. As such, my dissertation advisor and I attended the meeting

and answered several questions and talked through some concerns. A few weeks after the meeting, I received a stipulations letter indicating that my study had been deferred. The letter also provided a list of 18 required revisions I needed to make before conducting the study. The revisions required an additional full board review. Several weeks later, I received IRB's decision that specified three more changes they wanted to see before I could receive approval. At this point, my proposed dissertation was assigned a specific IRB board member to serve as an advocate for me and to serve as a point of contact for questions and concerns. I met with her to create a plan that would get approved. In November of 2016, I finally received IRB approval to conduct the study (see Appendix A for IRB approval letter).

IRB provided specific requirements in order for me to conduct the study in such a way that protected the participants and their confidentiality as best as possible. One way to protect participants was to avoid any type of social media recruitment as I had limited control regarding the ways study flyers would be shared and posted. For example, IRB wanted to avoid any situation where an individual publically outed a potential participant by placing the research flyer on a personal public forum such as a Facebook wall. Additionally, IRB requested that I refrain from snowball sampling recruitment methods as they preferred methods that allowed the potential participants to make the sovereign decision to seek me if they were interested in participating in the study. Flyers seemed to be the most effective for recruitment for the study as they are non-coercive, allowing participants to freely opt in and to avoid unsolicited conversations with others about the

CSA. IRB suggested that the research flyer be posted in public places or controlled public forums, including listservs (see Appendix B for research flyer).

In order to receive IRB approval, I had to provide specific instructions on the flyer regarding initial contact. The flyer indicated that if potential participants wanted to email me rather than call me about participating in the study they could use the following email prompt that would not indicate they had experience with CSA: *"I am interested in participating in the study. Can we set up a time to talk on the phone?"*

To ensure safety for the participant and myself, IRB asked me not to interview the women in their homes. Instead, the study had to take place in a private office at the University of Nevada, Reno or the University of Denver. The use of a public library was allowed as long as I reserved a private room.

As a way to protect participants' identities further, I decided to opt for verbal consent rather than written consent. Additionally, the protection of the recordings of the testimonios was important as they included the voice of the participants as well as an extensive story with child sexual abuse details. As such, with the help of IRB, we created an extremely specific data protection protocol to safeguard the participants, their stories, and confidentiality as best as possible. I was allowed to record the *testimonios* but immediately following the interview, I had to erase the *testimonio* from the audio recorder and download the file to a HIPPA and FERPA compliant private cloud storage provided by the University of Denver's sensitive research technology services. I could not save the data in a password-protected computer in case the computer was stolen.

In summary, as the present study sought to explore and investigate the particularly sensitive topic that is child sexual abuse, it was important to do so in such a way that protected the study's participants. As such, IRB and I created a specific and detailed research protocol that prioritized the safety of the participants, their stories, and their confidentiality. Due to the sensitive and unique nature of the study, I had to account for expenses to facilitate the study's recruitment, analysis, and participants' compensation. Thus, in the following section, I briefly summarize the manner in which the present study was funded.

Research grant. In order to provide participants with transportation resources to attend the interview and to compensate them for participating in the study, I applied for and received a research grant from the Latino Center for Community Engagement and Scholarship (DULCCES) at the University of Denver. The grant allowed me to pay for participants' transportation costs that included parking expenses or payment for ground transportation such as the bus, Uber, and/or taxi. The grant also funded two trips to Reno, Nevada, one for recruitment and another for an interview. Further, I used the grant to purchase an audio recorder and ATLAS.ti software to analyze the *testimonios*. Lastly, and most importantly, the grant allowed me to compensate the participants with a $50 gift card.

I now turn to the study's participant recruitment processes. What follows is a detailed outline of the steps I took to recruit participants. I will then introduce the participants and describe the study's procedures. Thereafter, I explain the way I analyzed participants' *testimonios*.

Participant Recruitment

After having received approval from the Institutional Review Board, I recruited study participants through research flyers, recruitment presentations on university campuses, as well as through local sexual assault and abuse organizations. Predominantly, I used the research flyer to invite adult women (ages 18 and older) who self-identified as Latina to participate in a study that sought to examine the ways Latinas choose to disclose or conceal their experience(s) of child sexual abuse. Since the study sought to explore a sensitive topic that is also unlawful, I was extremely careful not to use intimidating language to make potential participants (especially potential undocumented participants) feel safer. For example, in lieu of saying "the study will investigate" I decided to say "the study will examine." In Spanish, *investigates* often implies the presence of an investigator which often refers to someone with authority (i.e., police officer, judge).

Since I was seeking women that self-identified as Latinas, I did not specify who legally constitutes as a Latina on the flyer. For reference, however, a Latina is a woman who was born or lives in South America, Central America, or Mexico or a woman in the U.S. whose family is originally from South America, Central America, or Mexico (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Though it could be deemed as problematic to conflate Latin America, I decided to recruit Latinas generally (rather than from a specific Latinx country) to allow for a robust portrait of the systems of power that influence their decision to reveal or conceal their experience(s) of CSA. While each Latin American country offers different cultural nuance, the fundamental systems of power (e.g.,

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Catholicism, patriarchy) are similar. This is likely due to their common fundamental historical connection to Spain. Though many Latinx countries share similar cultural elements, throughout the *testimonios* I observed for nuances based on participants' specific nationality or ethnicity (e.g., Mexican, American).

Other than specifying that the sexual abuse had to have occurred as a child (ages 18 and younger), the research flyer also did not include the legal definition of child sexual abuse. I was extremely purposeful in not including the *legal* definition of child sexual abuse in an effort to allow participants to claim their experiences as such without any sort of influence. Once they reached out to me, I would listen to their brief explanation and then would determine whether their experience qualified for the study. For example, two women reached out to me to ask if they could participate if they had been sexually assaulted as an adult but not abused as a child. With both women, I explained that the present study was designed to explore child sexual abuse specifically.

I sought Latinas who resided in Reno, Nevada and Denver, Colorado and surrounding cities. My former residency and higher education in Northern Nevada allowed me to create connections with the University of Nevada as well as surrounding colleges and organizations. As such, I posted Spanish and English research flyers at a few college and university campuses such as the University of Nevada, Reno, Truckee Meadows Community College, University of Denver, Metro State University, and University of Colorado, Denver. Further, I sent the research flyer and study information to a variety of sexual assault and sexual violence agencies in the Reno, NV and Denver, CO. In order to reach Latinas specifically, I also presented at the University of Colorado

Center for Latinx Services and the University of Nevada's Latinx Research Center. Lastly, I located three Latina sororities and three undergraduate and graduate Latinx student associations at both Universities and asked them to share the study via their list serv. One of the three shared the flyer.

Aside from my former and current affiliation with the college campuses and organizations, I chose to recruit through sexual violence advocate agencies and organizations, as their objective is to target and provide services for women who are victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and sexual assault. Further, one of the many objectives of these agencies is to implement therapeutic approaches that empower women to heal and speak about their abuse in and outside of the organizations. Since the organizations and I share the same goal of empowering women by producing and implementing knowledge that serves to heal them, my study was in line with their goals.

Participants

Six participants offered their *testimonios* for the present study. These stories offered a tremendous deal of richness given that coding starts at the word and sentence level when utilizing a grounded theory approach (Urquhart, 2014). Small sample sizes often are typical in grounded theory research. For example, in his dissertation that studied the importance of collaborative relationships in ESL programs using grounded theory, Orloff (2011) acquired an immense amount of robust data from nine participants' interviews. Similarly, in Wadsworth's dissertation study on the well-being of women who are victims/survivors of sexual assault (2015), she reached theoretical saturation after 17 interviews (22 women participated in her grounded theory study).

I acquired participant demographic information through a form that participants completed before the sharing of their *testimonio* (see Appendix C for form). Of the six women, two self-identified as Chicanas[1], three as Mexican, and one as Cuban-Colombian-American. Three women were born in Mexico and the two Chicanas and Cuban and Colombian women were born in the United States. Three of the women identified as heterosexual, two as Lesbian, and one as Queer. Four participants reported being raised in lower class homes, while two reported their socioeconomic status as working class or middle class during their childhood. All women were between the ages of 30-60 years old (30, 31, 35, 42, 45, 60) at the time of the *testimonio* interview. In terms of highest level of education, two participants completed elementary education, two completed a Bachelor's degree and are finishing their Master's degree, one is finishing up her doctoral program, and one completed a Ph.D. Lastly, all women claimed Catholicism as their dominant religion during their childhood (see Appendix D for more specific individual demographic information).

Procedures

Once the participant reached out to me via email or through a phone call, we set a date, time, and place for the interview. During the initial point of contact the participants asked me several questions. The dominant question that I received from all but one

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[1] The word Chicana is an ethnic identity term for American women of Mexican ancestry, and is used instead of Mexican-American or Latina/o. Chicana incorporates a politicized ethnic identity and the acknowledgment of the experiences of native-born Americans of Mexican descent. Anzaldúa (2007) claims that identifying as a Chicana is a refusal to deny both American and Mexican identity. Thus, it acknowledges the mixture of two cultures and denies the separation of the two identities.

participant was surrounding the definition of child sexual abuse. Before committing to the study, participants wanted to verify that their abuse counted as sexual abuse. Once I confirmed that their abuse was considered child sexual abuse, we chose a place, date, and time for the *testimono* interview.

On the day of the interview, I would meet them at the parking lot and pay for their mode of transportation. I took advantage of the walk from the parking lot to the private office to build rapport through what González-López's (2015) calls a simpatia chat. A simpatia chat is a simple conversation geared to build rapport with a research participant. Our conversation ranged from topics surrounding their day at work to topics surrounding recent deaths in their family. Many of them took that opportunity to ask me about my career as well as my own family. Recounting sensitive stories of CSA certainly bring feelings of discomfort for participants. As such, I made it a priority to establish rapport with participants from the moment they reached out to me about participating in the study. To establish solidarity and rapport with participants, I implemented certain Latina cultural norms as part of the methodology. As mentioned in the procedures section, for a few minutes of the interview, I attempted to build trust and *simpatia* through small talk. González-López (2015) found that the majority of her participants were eager to engage in a reverse interview at the beginning of the interview. Her informants asked questions about the project, her intentions, her profession, her personal life, cultural competency, and about her level of comfort in listening to their stories (González-López, 2010; 2015).

Upon our arrival to the private office, I gave participants a brief explanation of the interview timetable. Thereafter, I read the consent form to them and asked if they had any

questions. After answering any questions they had, I gave them the demographic form for them to fill out (see Appendix E for consent form). As they filled out the form, we continued to chat about personal and professional topics. After they finished filling out the form, I turned on the audio recorder to receive and record their verbal consent. Further, I shared with them that I too had a story of child sexual abuse and I could share it with them in order to build solidarity. Per IRB, I had to receive participants' permission to tell my story. Every woman gave me permission to share my story of child sexual abuse and as I shared my story, they cried, laughed at my side commentary, and asked me questions about my family, my career, and as well as my healing process (see Appendix F for full interview protocol).

When I finished telling my story, I told participants they could tell their *testimonio* any way they wanted. Given the background of my participants and the context and purpose of the study, I did not need to explicitly define *testimonio*. I also gave participants the option of sharing their *testimonio* in English or Spanish. Two of the six women shared in Spanish, one shared in English, and the additional three testimonios were shared using a combination of English, Spanish, and Spanglish.

Testimonio interview questions. There are not specific requirements for how *testimonio* should be elicited in the research process (Pérez-Huber, 1999; 2008). Typically, however, the researcher poses questions to the narrator to prompt for the description of specific experiences (Pérez-Huber, 2008). Nevertheless, it is the narrator's choice to dictate what information in relation to their stories of CSA will be shared during the *testimonio* and to present that information within the context she feels

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appropriate (Brabeck, 2003). As such, I did not create a fully structured, rigid schedule of interview questions to meet *testimonio* criteria. The main question I used to provide a springboard for their story is: *will you share with me your story or testimonio of your experience (s) of CSA*? I also prepared open-ended questions, as suggested by grounded theory, with the intention of prompting participants to share the ways they chose to disclose or conceal their experiences of CSA (see Appendix F for full interview protocol). Additionally, the open-ended questions served to guide participants in case that they provided too few details about their story (e.g., Can you recall what happened next? As you look back, are there any events that stand out?). Though at times I did use prompt questions, I was extremely careful in probing for more detail to adhere to the empowering Indigenous method approach of allowing the participant to be in control of her storytelling.

Following the sharing of these *testimonios*, I asked participants if they had any questions or concerns and thanked them. Before they left the interview setting, study participants received a detailed therapy and counseling resource list as well as a $50 gift card for their participation (see Appendix G for resource list).

What follows is a procedural summary of the coding and analysis processes I implemented in the present study. I will first begin by explaining the importance of interviews, particularly for acquiring *testimonios*, followed by a brief review of how interviews have been useful in former similar research. Lastly, I will describe the ways in which I witnessed, transcribed, translated, and analyzed *testimonios*.

In an effort to further validate and prioritize participants' *testimonios*, I used

grounded theory to analyze the *testimonios*. Grounded theory's main tenets call for the

researcher to develop rapport with the data throughout the research process. This

particular standard, as well as the many grounded theory principles are extremely

compatible with the principles of Indigenous methodology. To further elucidate the

reasoning behind my decision in choosing grounded theory methodology, I will begin the

next section by briefly exploring the methodological approach's origin.

Methods of Analysis and Interpretation

The following section will begin by providing a thorough review of grounded

theory and its origin, as well as explain how its principles are compatible with those of

Indigenous methodology. I will then introduce constructivist grounded theory, as this

extension of the original version of grounded theory led the analysis of the present study.

Grounded theory method. Glaser and Strauss (1967) define grounded theory

method as the discovery of theory from data that is systematically obtained and analyzed

in social research. In their 1967 publication of *The Discovery of Grounded Theory:*

Strategies for Qualitative Research, sociologists Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss

"refocused qualitative inquiry on methods of analysis" (Charmaz, 2014). Grounded

Theory arose from their collaboration while studying death and dying in hospitals.

According to Charmaz (2014), during the early 1960's hospital staff rarely spoke or even

acknowledged death and dying with seriously ill patients. Glaser and Strauss observed

how death occurred in a variety of hospital settings including the ways that professionals

and their patients discerned they were dying as well as how both of them handled the

news (1967). As researchers constructed their analyses of dying, they created systematic methodological techniques that future researchers could use for studying and analyzing other topics. Glasser and Strauss (1967) articulated these strategies and advocated for scholars to cultivate theories from research grounded in qualitative data instead of deducing testable hypotheses from already existing theories.

Scholars adamantly remind readers that the key point in grounded theory is that any existing theory that was created was first grounded in data. Glaser and Strauss claim that the aim of grounded theory is to generate or discover a new theory and to do so, the researcher has to set aside any theoretical ideas in order to let the substantive theory emerge (Urquhart, 2013; Charmaz, 2014). Theory focuses on how individuals interact with the phenomena under study and it asserts a plausible relationship between concepts and a set of concepts (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2013). Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that the aim of grounded theory is to generate theory based on data, rather than verify grand theory. Glaser and Strauss continuously express their concern with researchers often forcefully fitting data into existing theories to prove the validity and legitimacy of that particular grand theory (1967). The authors argue that the classic theories (of sociology in particular) do not cover all the new capacities of social life that required further exploration (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This aforementioned notion is likeminded with the Indigenous methodology principle of empowering and prioritizing participants' stories (data). Thus, in the present study…

Constructivist grounded theory. Since Glaser and Strauss' (1967) book *Discovery*, both scholars have taken divergent views and directions to grounded theory.

As such, multiple scholars have joined this movement and have attempted to further

develop grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000). Due to the tight compatibility with

Indigenous methodology, this study used Charmaz's (2014) constructivist grounded

theory approach. This approach follows the original principles of grounded theory in that

it adopts the inductive, comparative, emergent, and open-ended tactics of Glaser and

Strauss's (1967) original account, but further highlights the flexibility of grounded theory

and resists mechanical applications of it (Charmaz, 2014). Constructivist grounded theory

further acknowledges that social reality is multiple, processual, and constructed and thus,

it must take the researcher's position, privileges, perspective, and interactions into

account as an inherent part of the research reality. Viewing the research as constructed

rather than discovered raises researchers' flexibility about their actions and judgments

(Charmaz, 2014). As stated in Suter, Bergen, Daas, and Durham (2006), constructive

grounded theory argues that an objective reality does not exist, "but rather that research

provides an interpretive portrayal of the studied world, not an exact picture of it"

(Charmaz, 2002, p. 678). Further, the constructivist approach eliminates the notions of a

neutral observer; instead, it recognizes and accepts that the researcher "must examine

rather than erase how their privileges and preconceptions may shape the analysis, but it

also means that their values shape the very facts that they can identify" (Charmaz, 2014

p. 13). According to Charmaz (2006) the ideal constructivist theorist embraces the

messiness inherent in the research process. Constructivist researchers claim that it is

impossible to create knowledge from a neutral stance. In addition, they take it a step

further by encouraging an explicit discussion about the researcher's position. In addition,

they encourage an open and continuous effort to maintain reflexivity during the entire research process (Charmaz, 2006).

Having had experienced instances of child sexual abuse myself, I acknowledged at the beginning of the research process that my biases may impact my analysis. This is one of the main reasons I chose Indigenous methodology as being reflexive corresponds with Indigenous methodology's demand for ongoing critical researcher reflexivity throughout the research process. Additionally, analogous with Indigenous methodology, the constructivist grounded theory approach treats research as a co-construction between participants and the witness, in this case, the researcher. For example, in the sharing of their testimonios, participants essentially produced knowledge surrounding disclosure and concealment surrounding child sexual abuse.

What follows is a brief preview on the manner in which Indigenous methodology and grounded theory work together to fulfill the goals of this study. I then explain how grounded theory principles were used for the present study as well as my rationale for doing so. Additionally, I will describe the step-by-step process I took in analyzing participants' *testimonios*.

Indigenous methodology and grounded theory similarities. Proponents of Indigenous methodologies and ground theory agree that instead of assimilating and forcefully thrusting lush data and stories to fit into hegemonic existing theories, as researchers, we must grant data enough power and freedom to create new spaces. As such, I allowed participants' *testimonios* to lead the trajectory of the research process which not only allowed for research knowledge to be kept within cultural contexts, but as

I will describe in chapter four, it also allowed for findings to be meaningful and potentially useful to the studied community. Additionally, grounded theory coincides with Indigenous methodology as they are both more than typical strict, rigid outlines used for the extraction of knowledge. Both of these methods and researchers who practice this methodology respect the traditions and customs of the people they study by allowing their culturally nuanced stories to lead the research process. As such, in lieu of establishing a strict interview schedule of questions and having a predetermined theory to analyze and validate the testimonios, I decided to select methodology that allowed the participant to determine the flow of the interview and an inductive mode of analysis.

Testimonio analysis. This section delineates the steps I took in analyzing *testimonios*. I followed the model for analyzing qualitative data recommended by Charmaz (2014). After first bearing witness and collecting *testimonios*, I personally transcribed the testimonios. Though originally I planned to have the testimonios transcribed by a professional transcriptionist, IRB recommended that I transcribe them so that the sensitive data was not exposed to an additional person. Six testimonios produced a total of 77 pages of transcription.

After transcribing, I translated the Spanish interviews into English to make analysis coding consistent (see Appendix H for translation certificate). Though it was a tedious and long process to transcribe them and then translate the testimonios that participants delivered in Spanish, it allowed me to thoroughly get acquainted with my data. Further, as I transcribed, I began open coding, line-by-line coding, and writing

memos using the track changes in Microsoft Word. I will explain that process in more detail next.

   Line-by-line coding. Line-by-line coding is the first step of analysis. Line-by-line coding means naming each line of written data with codes (words or groups of words). Grounded theory calls for line-by-line coding to build rapport with one's data as well as a way to make sure researchers account for every single emerging category (Charmaz, 2014). Further, line-by-line coding prompts researchers to remain open to the data and to see small details and nuances (Charmaz, 2006). As such, I coded line by line by writing single or multiple words that were salient in each line of the *testimonios.* As mentioned in the previous section, I began this process as I was transcribing. I would transcribe five to seven minutes of the data and would attach words and small sentences to the lines I had just finished transcribing. After I finished transcribing and coding line-by-line, I printed the finished document and added additional words that I had missed the first time I coded. At this point, I had a general idea of the most prominent words and ideas that kept emerging in all of the *testimonios*. Thereafter, I downloaded the *testimonio* transcriptions onto ATLAS.ti software. Though I already had a pretty solid idea of the main words and ideas, I wanted to attach the initial line-by-line codes and focused codes (described in the next section) to the data by using ATLAS.ti as this would later allow me to more easily generate a report of specific codes. Further, ATLAS.ti helped me assign specific quotes and segments of the *testimonios* to certain codes so that when it came to using quotes to explain themes, the process of searching for verbatim quotes that supported a theme would be easier to access.

After line-by-line coding, I began to identify categories of analysis (Charmaz, 2014). A category, as defined by grounded theory, "is generally a low-level concept attached to a particular piece of data" (Urquhart, 2014). As I coded line-by-line, I made sure to constantly connect and compare emerging categories to one another since grounded theory calls for the building of relationships between constructs. As such, I employed constant comparison, or the process of continuously comparing labeled data with other instances of data in the same category (Charmaz, 2014; Suter, Bergen, Daas, & Durham, 2006; Gonzalez-López, 2008). For example, as further explained in chapter three, the themes *Silence for Protection of the Self* and *Silence for Protection From Feeling Shame* initially began as categorical codes such as "safety" "protection" "self-defense." Through the constant comparison I began to identify that certain codes captured the protection of the physical body, while other codes encompassed the protection from feeling cultural emotional constructs such as shame. Once these initial codes of "safety", "protection", and "self-defense" were identified, they were grouped into larger categories in the second stage of coding deemed as focused coding.

   Focused coding. During initial line-by-line coding, the goal is to remain as open as possible to all potential theoretical directions indicated by data (Charmaz, 2006). After initial line-by-line coding, researchers use focused coding to pinpoint and develop the most salient and prominent categories (Charmaz, 2006). Focused codes are more selective and conceptual than line-by-line coding. Further, focused coding requires deciding which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize (Charmaz, 2006). In other words, focused coding means using the most significant and frequent open codes

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to examine through large amounts of data (Charmaz, 2006). Thus, after I established strong analytic directions through line-by-line coding, I began focused coding to combine and explain larger segments of *testimonios*. Great amounts of data were screaming "silence for protection of something". Thus, focused coding allowed me to identify and group larger ideas that spoke about protection into more specific groups (e.g., *Silence for Protection of the Self, Silence for Protection from Feeling Shame, Silence for Protection of Father's Masculinity*). According to Charmaz (2006) focused coding is imperative as theoretical integration and theoretical coding begins with focused coding.

  Theoretical coding. Charmaz (2014) claims theoretical coding to be a sophisticated level of coding that follows focused coding. Glaser (1978) first introduced theoretical codes as conceptualizing how focused codes may relate to each other "as hypotheses to be integrated into a theory" (p. 72). Theoretical codes portray possible relationships between categories that were specified by focused coding (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2014) states that theoretical codes are integrative and they lend shape to collected focused codes. Further, she claims that these codes may help researchers tell an analytic story that has coherence. Hence, these codes not only conceptualize how your substantive codes are related, but also move the research analytic story in a theoretical direction (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63). An example of theoretical coding occurred when the larger focus codes of *Silence for Protection of Purity and Virginity* began to coincide with the *Conservative/Sheltered Upbringing* focus code to tell a larger story of the impact that Catholicism plays in child sexual abuse disclosure. Memo-writing was also crucial in furthering focus codes and categories into a theoretical direction.

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Memo writing. Charmaz (2006; 2014) posits that the research process journey takes an analytic break when one is ready to write informal analytic notes, commonly known as memos in the grounded theory world. Memo writing occurs throughout the coding process. Charmaz (2014) states that researchers should stop and write ideas about the codes in any and every way that it occurs to the researcher at the specific moment. As an example, when I began to notice that the data was communicating the protection of different entities, I started writing memos to compare the types of protection the participants were seeking. I kept writing memos such as "Elena felt this way too." "Garabato and Rosa's mothers acted the same way with child sexual abuse disclosure…". I used the memos to remind me that something was re-occurring, or to remind myself to revisit certain part of data. For example, one memo I wrote stated, "Elena is afraid that her father finds out. Compare with Magnolia since she also has same fear… Find common denominator between the fear of father finding out…".

According to Charmaz (2006) memo-writing is crucial as it encourages you to analyze data and codes early on in the research process and it keeps researchers connected and involved throughout the analysis. Certain codes stand out and take form as theoretical categories as one writes memos (Charmaz, 2006; 2014). Memos catch researcher's thoughts, captures precise comparisons, and it allows researchers to create connections and to write about future directions to pursue in the study (Charmaz, 2006). Once a memo is written, Charmaz (2006) invites researchers to use it or store it for later retrieval. At the end of each testimonio, I would revisit the memos I had written to see if any of my questions had been answered by that specific *testimonio.* Eventually, as I

analyzed the other testimonios I would remember that I had written a memo about something that was beginning to emerge in the other participants' stories.

I also used memo-writing as I initially transcribed and coded to document the ways my story was similar and different to that of the participant's. Memo-writing allowed to me to remain critically reflexive and adhere to Indigenous methodology throughout analysis. At one point, I found that I kept writing memos that compared my mom's reaction to my abuse with the participants' mothers. One memo I wrote said, "My mom reacted the same way. Why? Why is our own version of the story not enough sometimes? If my mom did this and Garabato and Rosa's mom did too, maybe this means that there is something else they have in common. Find out what it is." Another said, "I am trying not to think about my mom as I read this *testimonio* because I do not want to conflate their reactions. But I can't help it. I really hope that this [constantly asking questions about my mom] doesn't make me a little biased." I found that some memos made me upset, especially those that related to my own experiences. The general rule that I gave myself was to make the memo into a journal entry to adhere to Indigenous methodology of remaining critically reflexive. I will explain this process in more depth in a following section.

In summary, memos allowed me to ask (and later answer) questions regarding particular codes and to give myself notes on when to revisit certain parts of the *testimonios.* Most importantly, memos motivated me to remain connected with participant *testimonios and* they helped me fine-tune later data-gathering.

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Theoretical sampling. Throughout the research process memos can serve in deciphering future directions for the research study at hand. Theoretical sampling encourages researchers to retrace steps or take a new path when tentative categories are identified (Charmaz, 2014). Theoretical sampling allows researchers to recruit more participants at any point of the study in order to capture the missing pieces certain categories call for. Charmaz (2006) states that researchers should go back into the empirical world to look for data that will saturate a category, theme, or an emerging idea. The six testimonios provided incredible amounts of data, which assisted in the saturation of major themes pretty quickly. In fact, there were times that I felt I had too many examples for one theme and I felt that I needed to break them apart further. In the moments that felt like I should break up themes to become more than one theme, I would break it apart and quickly realize that I did not have enough to saturate a new theme. As such, I would put the original theme back together. Throughout theoretical sampling, I continued to use constant comparing with other themes to make sure that all themes were saturated.

Constant comparison. Constant comparison comes together with theoretical sampling (Boeije, 2002; Charmaz, 2014). Although theoretical sampling of the data is not a clearly described process (Amsteus, 2014) it suggests that the researcher decides what data will be collected and where to find it based on tentative theoretical ideas (Boeije, 2002). When the research is underway, theoretical sampling implies that sampling is decided by the analysis of previous data "making it possible to answer questions that have arisen from the analysis of and reflection on previous data" (Amsteus, 2014 p. 13).

After analyzing each *testimonio*, I used the next *testimonio* to saturate the codes from the previous by using constant comparison between similar codes and stories. If new codes emerged in testimonio, I would keep the code, write a memo on it to identify it as brand new, and then I would continue analysis of the current or new testimonio. Eventually I would find that particular code in future testimonios and would look for similarities and differences before making it a larger, focused code. This process and theoretical sampling in essence also enables validity.

Validity. The researcher's responsibility is to take preventive measures to confirm areas of validity within one's research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As such, measures that can be taken to encourage validity in a grounded theory study are reflexivity, documentation (or memos), and theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In terms of reflexivity, I kept a research/personal journal throughout the entire study process to continuously critically self-reflect on my research positionality, my relationship with my participants, as well as the relationship with my research topic. In doing so, I was aware of my biases and the ways they can impact the direction of the research process or the way that I interpreted particular moments during *testimonios*. The example about my own experience with my mother kept emerging through the testimonios where participants spoke about their mothers' reactions to their abuse. I believe that my personal experience with my mother allowed me to be hyperaware of the similar moments that participants shared. In turn, part of critical reflexivity is that as researchers we are aware of the ways our own experiences can impact the way data is analyzed.

The memos that I initially wrote regarding my mother and family dynamics turned into journal entries. Typically, the journals started with a summary of my own experience and how it was similar or different than the participants. This writing process allowed me to focus and reflect on my experience and also to remain self-reflexive and answer questions suggested by Indigenous methods (e.g., *What is my role as a researcher? What are my obligations in this research relationship? Does this method help to build a relationship between myself as a researcher and my research topic?*).

In summary, specific grounded theory coding and analytic procedures serve in enhancing possibilities for future theories that fully account for the ways certain people, in this case, sexually abused Latinas, understand their reality. This can occur by inviting all possibilities through opening and focused coding, forming saturated categories, and later comparing and connecting to decipher the relationships among them.

Special steps taken for study. Grounded theory does not follow a traditional linear fashion as data collection and data analysis can occur interchangeably and/or simultaneously and as often as the researcher requires. As such, I did not wait for all *testimonios* to be collected before I began analysis. Instead, I began coding throughout the transcription process and after each interview. Charmaz (2014) states that once a researcher reaches theoretical saturation (when no new concepts emerge from data), researchers can stop colleting additional data.

Being that the current study's research question was purposefully broad in accordance with a grounded theory approach and to accommodate for lush stories, an immense amount of themes emerged (13 themes). As such, I met with my dissertation

committee to discuss the direction of the study as well as to decide on which themes to focus on for the present study. My dissertation committee agreed to focus on the themes that related to disclosure and concealment of child sexual abuse as the study sought to investigate those processes. Further, in agreement with Indigenous method's notion of prioritizing the first voice, we collectively decided I would deliver all of the themes in such a way that captured the verdant cultural nuance and authenticity of the original *testimonios*. As such, in chapter three, I will introduce each participant through narrative portraits, and narratively convey the study's themes through the telling of participants' testimonios.

Chapter Three: Findings, Analysis, and Narrative Portraits

"By writing I put order in the world, give it a handle so I can grasp it. I write because life

does not appease my appetites and hunger. I write to record what others erase when I

speak, to rewrite the stories others have miswritten about me, about you" (Anzaldúa,

2009, p. 30).

The literature surrounding the prevalence of Latinx child sexual abuse indicate a

dire need to study child sexual abuse phenomena. Despite the high frequency of Latinx

child sexual abuse, disclosure rates are low. Due to the number of child sexual abuse

psychological and social consequences, it is important to expand this child sexual abuse

research. As such, the overarching research question of the present study focused on how

Latinas decide to reveal and/or conceal their experience(s) of child sexual abuse. In doing

so, six adult Latina women shared their *testimonios* of their former child sexual abuse

experiences. As explained in chapter two, once the *testimonios* were transcribed, I

performed a grounded theory analysis that generated 13 overarching themes. For the

purposes of the present study, I focused on nine of the themes since they related

specifically to disclosure, which was focus of the study's research question. In the present

chapter, I will begin by making an argument for the presentation of the study's themes

and findings through narrative portraits. Thereafter, I will preview and briefly explain the

nine themes that emerged in the *testimonios* before fully showcasing them within the

narrative portraits. The portraits will provide segments of each woman's *testimonio* of

child sexual abuse through the use of her own voice. Moreover, the narrative portraits

will reintroduce and further contextualize the study's themes.

In what follows, I provide a rationale for the use of narrative portraits and the

reasons to further unpack the study's themes through the telling of participants'

testimonios. Further, I will discuss the importance of presenting an overview of

participants' *testimonios* and the reasons why exhibiting detailed pieces of each

participant's story fulfills a critical research approach.

Rationale for Narrative Portraits

Testimonio is a narrative device used to dismantle the oppressions and power

structures that marginalize a person by the very act of speaking (Holling, 2014). For the

purposes of investigating the way Latinas managed and negotiated disclosure, the

Indigenous method of *testimonio* was implemented in the study to allow the participants

to speak to the disclosure processes but also to speak about their oppression in a

nonrestrictive manner. Simultaneously, as they told their stories of child sexual abuse

they challenged the cultural narratives that exist that keep them quiet. Further, the

narrative approach allowed the participants to make sense of their stories and their

families as they told their stories. According to Harter, Japp, and Beck (2008) "narrative

is a fundamental human way of giving meaning to experience" and that we rely on

narratives to engage in sense making. As I sat across from the six Latinas who bravely

shared their *testimonios* of child sexual abuse, I noticed them attempting to make sense of their stories by interweaving other mini stories as well as through their weeping and laughter. In line with an Indigenous approach I also found myself making sense of own experience of sexual abuse as they spoke.

Given the narrative format of testimonios themselves and as a research method, I found myself struggling to adhere to traditional linear means of not only analyzing data but also presenting themes in the manner prescribed by most academic research articles. Regarding the former, throughout the analysis of *testimonios,* I recognized that I consistently needed to refer to participants' full *testimonios* to also make sense of emerging themes. Without the entire story, the themes felt empty and sanitized. Nevertheless, according to grounded theory methodology I created organized themes to make sense of the data. The process of creating neat and structured themes did make it clear that almost all themes co-existed and danced with another. In recognizing the ways the themes dance together rather than separately, I also began to wonder if, through the process of categorization, separation, and analysis, I was truly capturing the song and essence of each of the participant's stories. In other words, was dismembering the themes from the others and from the entire testimonio itself doing an injustice to the participant's *full* story of child sexual abuse? Given these questions and feelings of uneasiness, I realized that the traditional format of a *results section* that researchers typically use to present themes linearly was insufficient for this study. Thus, in the present section I convey themes in such a way that do justice to the participants, the stories, and Indigenous methodology. Therefore, the presentation of the themes below allows the

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participants and the stories speak for themselves, while also carefully detailing the themes stemming from my analysis. In so doing, rather than symbolically dismembering a woman and her story, I allow her whole truth to be heard. Thus, the format of the presentation of the themes takes the form of *narrative portraits* of each participant and her *testimonio* in an effort to do the women's narratives justice. Broadly speaking, a narrative portrait is a detailed description of each participant in the study that renders an overview of each participant's *testimonio*. I use participants' own words along with my own in order to give voice to their stories as well as speak to how the *testimonios* embody the study themes.

I argue that the narrative portraits are the best avenue for presenting the findings of the present study for four reasons. First, in adherence with Indigenous methodology sharing the participants' stories through narrative portraits will provide a space that tells the stories in an authentic manner and thus prioritizes the first voice. Not only will this serve to prioritize the participant's voice and body, but to also push for a broader audience to listen to her moments of oppression (Pérez-Huber, 2008). Giving each *testimonio* a designated space grants the respect that each woman and story deserves to roam loud, proud, and free. Similarly, this approach observes grounded theory principles of assuring that the data (stories) take precedence in the research process (Charmaz, 2006). The stories call for them to be heard and understood and thus, sharing them by way of narrative portraits prioritizes the stories.

Second, sharing the narrative portraits will highlight the broader cultural master narratives and will serve to provide a rich backdrop to fully make sense of and appreciate

each theme. A master narrative is generally described as an ultimate story and truth that sets the standard for how people should perform in a particular society (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Some of the master narratives to expect speak to the idea about the ideal Latina, daughter, and the admiration of particular sexuality and purity performances of sexuality to name a few. Sharing themes through the telling of *testimonios* will also grant participants' experiences more nuanced meaning "by temporarily organizing events [and by] distinguishing characters and their relations with one another" (Harter, 2009, p. 141). For example, rather than getting a desensitized theme, the narrative portraits allow the themes to come to life through the setting and characters that the participants provide through their story telling.

Third, sharing each individual *testimonio's* themes will serve to capture the absence of an objective, universal reality, but also serve to demonstrate how Latinx structures of power are all present in all of them. Grounded theory argues that an objective reality does not exist but instead postulates that research offers an interpretive representation of the studied world, not an identical illustration of it (Charmaz, 2002; Suter et al., 2006). Further, Isasi-Díaz (1996) argues that objectivity is "merely the subjectivity of those who have the power to impose it on others" (p. 3). As such, sharing narrative portraits will push the reader to see each woman as an individual, one that shares an experience with another, yet her story is unique.

Lastly, since all narratives have a political function and have the power to educate, empower, and emancipate (Langellier, 2010) and speaking about oppressive moments is a form of resistance (Anzaldúa, 2007), sharing Latinas' themes and narratives

through narrative portraits will disrupt the master narratives that have kept these women quiet and afraid (Corey, 2010).

Before I present the narrative portraits, I will provide a preview of the themes that will be unpacked and analyzed within the narrative portraits. Providing this general background before the narrative portraits will allow me to tell the participants' full stories as they apply to the themes with less interruption.

Brief Review of the Study's Overarching Themes

Of the 13 main themes that emerged during analysis, nine served to capture disclosure processes relating to both concealing and revealing. They include: *self-invalidation/minimization of abuse*, *expiration of abuse story*, *generational abuse*, *normalization of abuse*, *protection and/or restoration of father's masculinity*, *silence for protection of the family and/or perpetrator*, *silence for protection from a larger political system*, *silence for protection of purity and virginity*, *silence for protection of the self and shame*[2].

I will focus on the aforementioned themes, as the purpose of the study is to investigate how Latinas decide to disclose or conceal their child sexual abuse experiences. What follows is a brief summary of each theme. I will then reintroduce each theme through the participants' narrative portraits and explain the themes in more depth. Aside from introducing the participants and casting more light on parts of the *testimonios,* the narrative portraits will also serve to demonstrate the way themes function and exist with one another.

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[2] Themes are not listed in a particular order.

Self-invalidation/minimization of abuse. Instances surrounding the minimization of abuse occurred many times throughout the *testimonios*. This theme encompassed participants' lack of awareness of the technical definition of child sexual abuse and/or her family members. Throughout the participants' *testimonios*, some of the women admitted not knowing that their experiences constituted sexual abuse until later on in their lives. According to some women, the familia and cultural narratives had taught them that sexual abuse only counted as such if the abuse included penetration with a penis, resistance from the victim, and if an adult man perpetrated it. Further, this theme included the comparing of sexual abuse with others' in the family. For example, if a participant had been abused without penetration with a penis and she knew of someone in the family who had been abused as such and for longer and more painfully, then she would invalidate her own sexual abuse. In summary, this theme captured the instances when the participants did not know how to identify sexual abuse and when they chose to prioritize others' harsher forms of sexual abuse over their own.

Expiration of abuse story. Another theme that emerged in the study was abuse story expiration. Some of the women in the study decided not to tell about their sexual abuse stories because too much time had gone by since the abuse, and thus the abuse story had essentially expired. Further, the theme of expiration of the abuse story occurred often after the women initially disclosed to their mothers about the abuse. In other words, the participant would disclose to her mother. If the participant tried to talk about the abuse again, the mother would reject the information through messages that indicated that the story was expired and no longer existed. Thus this theme captures the dismissal and

disappearing of the abuse story once participants told it. Moreover, once the Latinas

disclosed about their abuse for the first time and made an attempt to talk about it again

later on, some of the family members would remind them that the abuse was gone and no

longer existed. As such, participants would conceal their abuse and never speak about it

again. The *testimonios* highlighted a member of the family, typically the mother,

attempting to dismiss the participant's story. The *testimonios* indicate this phenomenon

likely being influenced by generational abuse.

    Generational abuse. The theme of generational abuse highlights the girls and

women are oppressed in Latinx families generation after generation. In a sense, abuse

occurs so frequently that it is almost seen as daughters and granddaughters' inheritance

from their mothers and grandmothers respectively. Several Latinas in the study chose to

maintain silence about their sexual abuse because their mothers indirectly and directly

motivated them to do so. This theme includes the moments in the testimonios where

Latinas share about their mothers', grandmothers', and sisters' abuse in such a way that

indicate that they kept silent because abuse is a common thing according to the ancestral

tree. Thus, if one's grandmother and mother were abused and they were able to survive it

without speaking about it, then participants were expected to do the same. This theme

captures the moments in *testimonios* where Latinas negotiate whether to conceal or

disclose since abuse was not abnormal to a Latina woman and often times just a way of

life.

    Normalization of abuse. The normalization of abuse often co-existed with

generational abuse. Because abuse was handed down generation after generation, it

became a normal struggle for Latina women. The common place that abuse has in Latinas' lives made it seem as if it was too normal to speak about. Further, as the participants' mothers and grandmothers had also likely been abused, participants did not know how to speak about it because their mothers never did either. Thus, this theme also highlights the times when women normalized silence since the abuse was too typical. Additionally, this theme captures the parts of the testimonios where Latinas do not disclose about their abuse because they were too little to understand that it was abnormal to be touched in certain places and they were unaware of the malicious nature of the touches since they were coming from a trusted family member.

Silence for protection of father's masculinity. Protecting and/or restoring father's masculinity was another theme that emerged in many of the *testimonios*. This theme covered the times the women would not disclose about their abuse because they felt that it would hurt their fathers' masculinity. As a "true" Latino man, the onus is on him to protect his family, especially his daughters. In an effort to avoid their father getting upset for not having been the ideal protector, the women would remain silent about the abuse, or would perform actions to restore their fathers' masculinity once he found out about the abuse. Further, this theme also includes the times when Latinas in the study wanted to protect their father from experiencing shame.

Silence for protection from feeling shame. Unlike the previous theme that captures Latinas keeping their abuse a secret to prevent their father from feeling shame, the theme protecting the self from feeling shame describes the feelings of inadequacy, dishonor, and stigma that Latinas feel about their own selves and their bodies. According

to Fontes (2007) shame is described as the feeling of no claim to worth, "exacerbated by the lack of social acknowledgement of worth" (Fontes, 2007, p. 63). In other words, the person who feels shame feels internal unworthiness and also feels that he or she is unworthy in the eyes of other people. Further, Brown (2006) proposes that shame is a psycho-social-cultural construct as individuals internally feel the emotional aspects of shame and the thoughts and feelings are tied with external interpersonal relationships. The cultural component of shame points to the "very prevalent role of cultural expectations and the relationships between shame and the real or perceived failure of meeting cultural expectations" (Brown, 2006, p. 45). As such, this theme includes the times that Latinas chose to stay quiet regarding their abuse because they felt that they did not adhere to Latinx cultural standards and thus felt extreme shame. This theme also captures the decision to stay quiet to avoid being further shamed by others.

Even more specifically, two women in the study speak about the notion of collective and intersectional shame. Collective shame captures the shame that is experienced by the entire family and intersectional shame occurs when multiple intersections of Latinas' identities (such as sexuality, aesthetic, gender role, etc.) produce a great amount of shame since they do not align with the archetype of the ideal Latina woman who is heterosexual, pure, a wife, and a mother. Lastly and importantly, the shame theme was present in every *testimonio* and often co-existed with the protection of purity and virginity.

Silence for protection of purity and virginity. The theme, silence for protection of purity and virginity, described the moments where the participants in the study chose

to remain quiet in an effort to protect their purity status. Due to its underlying Catholic foundation, the Latinx culture puts extreme value on a woman who makes it to the altar as a virgin woman. A couple of the women in the study decided to withhold their sexual abuse experiences so that their purity grade would not lessen in the eyes of the family and future suitors. Moreover, as virginity and purity relate to the physical conservation of the hymen, women felt they were no longer virgins even if their hymens were damaged against their will. In Latinx culture, upholding one's virginity assures the continuation of an idyllic form of family tradition and social representation. As such, being silent about the abuse provided less risk to some of the women in the study as the stigma of being abused and impure could potentially lead to a life of being unwanted and underappreciated by men.

Silence for protection of the family and/or perpetrator. An additional theme that emerged was silence for protection of the family and or/perpetrator. Many times the perpetrator was a member of the family and thus, Latinas kept quiet to protect him or her. This theme also encompassed the times that Latinas chose to conceal their abuse to protect other family members such as a younger sibling who the perpetrator had threatened to hurt if the participant disclosed. Further, Latinas kept quiet about their abuse to avoid hurting or burdening their grandmothers or mothers.

Silence for protection of the self. The final theme that emerged in the study was silence for protection of the self. This theme described the experiences of the women who kept silent about their sexual abuse experiences in order to protect their body from physical harm. This theme captures women staying silent to avoid a beating from the

perpetrator for telling or to avoid getting physically disciplined by their mothers for having been in a situation that got them violated. Within this theme, the subtheme silence for protection from political authorities emerged.

Silence for protection from political authorities. Quite often, if the participant was undocumented, she claimed that her life in the United States was isolating and lonely since her family was back home. Due to the isolation and the lack of awareness of the U.S. American political system and authorities, they feared calling the police for help and so they kept quiet. The participants stated throughout their testimonios that they were unsure of how the police worked in the United States. Due to narratives that family members had shared with them, the police were never to be trusted. Calling the police meant a potential referral to the immigration police and that would potentially mean deportation. Aside from the fear of being caught, thrown in jail, and sent back to Mexico, deportation would also bring the inability for the undocumented women in the study to provide for their family in Mexico.

In summary, the themes that surfaced in the study capture the negotiation that women took to protect either the self or the family from experiencing physical and/or emotional harm. Further, the themes demonstrate the concealment of child sexual abuse to avoid family and individual shame and stigma. Lastly, some of the themes describe initial disclosure of abuse, but subsequent silence once their abuse was dismissed or invalidated.

Madison (2010) suggests the employment of theory to defend the complexity and dignity of the multiple truths and paradoxes below the surface of the stories. As such,

within the narrative portraits I unpack the study themes and explain larger Latinx master narratives of how Latinx families should perform by operating on Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology. Given the focus on the present study, I also briefly apply privacy management within the portraits but will do so more in depth in chapter four.

Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology

The study's participants often spoke about being multidimensional and intersectional beings. According to Crenshaw (1991) intersectionality describes the notion of the overlying or *intersecting* of social identities and associated systems of discrimination. In other words, intersectionality is the idea that multiple identities intersect to create a full identity. The identities that can intersect include gender, race, religion, socioeconomic class, sexuality, age, and ability. With a that said, some of the participants did not identify simply as a woman. Rather, for example, they would talk about being a Catholic Latina woman who had been raised in a lower class home who was also queer. Every single intersection of their identity impacted the way they understood and spoke about their experiences of child sexual abuse. I realized that I needed to contextualize their experiences with theory that was created by women with similar experiences who also spoke about the struggle of being more than just a gender. As such, I used Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology to assist in the analysis and discussion of the study's themes.

Mujerista Theology. Multiple women in the study did not speak about shame without first speaking about their identity as a Catholic woman. Most of their shame and protection of purity and virginity stemmed from teachings that had Catholic undertones.

With that said, Mujerista Theology seemed appropriate in unpacking certain themes, particularly those surrounding shame and the normalization of abuse.

Mother of Mujerista Theology, Isasi-Díaz (1996) describes Mujerista Theology as a liberative praxis that aims to liberate Latinas, Latinx families, and Latinx communities. Mujerista Theology does so by challenging religious understandings as well as church teachings and practices that were created to marginalize Latinxs, particularly, the Latina woman. Isasi-Diaz (1996) states that any measure and/or rule given by the church that oppresses Latinas cannot be theologically correct. Mujerista Theology "is not a theology exclusive for Latinas but a theology from the perspective of Latinas that is an intrinsic element of Hispanic/Latino theology in the USA" (p. 2). Since this theology was created with a Latina lens, it serves to capture the ways in which the church oppresses Latinas and the historical roots at play. As such, I use Mujerista Theology to contextualize the master narratives that perpetuate constructs such as shame and the strong women of color trope that are fervent in participants' *testimonios*. Moreover, as a way to contextualize about the different familial elements, rules, and hierarchies in Latinx culture, I also refer to Chicana Feminism.

Chicana Feminism. I also employ Chicana Feminism to analyze and discuss participants' stories and the themes that surfaced from them. Chicana Feminism emerged during the 1960's and the 1970's (García, 1997). A generation of Chicana women and theorists began to advocate against gender tensions that often marginalized Chicana women during the Chicano sociopolitical protest movement. Though the Chicano movement challenged patterns of inequality for Mexican American people, it ignited a

political debate between the Chicanas and Chicanos. Chicanas felt internal gender inequality within the movement and thus, Chicanas "produced an ideological critique of the Chicano cultural nationalist movement that struggled against social injustice yet maintained patriarchal structures of domination" (García, 1997, p. 1). As such, Chicana Feminism sought to reflect Chicana women's historical struggles and worked to dismantle sexist and homophobic marginalization by the men within the culture as well as men in general. Chicana Feminists knew that their struggles were not simply created by racism, but sexism as well.

The narrative portraits will showcase participants reflecting on the multiple intersections of their identity as they tell their stories of child sexual abuse. As such, I draw on Chicana Feminism to address the participants' intersectional cultural, spiritual, economic, and sexuality identities as well as how they work together to impact child sexual abuse disclosure.

I will present the narrative portraits next. Again, my hope in sharing portions of their *testimonios'* and themes through a narrative portrait is to use the first voice and the participants' embodied knowledge to contribute to conversations about critical issues involving Latina children, Latina women, and Latinx families. The *testimonios* in this study offer a culturally informed perspective that can help us understand the interplay among family, communication, culture, as well as the power structures that foster silence, inaction, or both.

Narrative Portraits

The present chapter will present six narrative portraits. Each portrait will begin with an excerpt that briefly overviews the main themes inherent in that particular participants' *testimonio.* Though I showcase the larger *testimonio* throughout the entire portrait, next each portrait will provide a summary of the participant's *testimonio*. Once I share an overview of the larger *testimonio*, I then begin to convey critical moments and sub-stories that the participant shared through her *testimonio* and use them as examples that display how Latinas concealed and/or revealed their child sexual abuse experiences. I also provide significant contexts surrounding the manner in which they spoke about concealment and disclosure in relation to family rules and dynamics. Additionally, as a way to adhere to Indigenous methodology's notion of critical reflexivity, throughout the portraits I locate parts of the participants' stories that echo my own experiences of child sexual abuse and reflect on those moments. Furthermore, I refer Mujerista Theology as well as Chicana Feminism to illuminate the manner in which Latinx cultural history impacts family and gender performances and thus, child sexual abuse disclosure

Every portrait will provide enough background for the reader to get acquainted with the participant and their story, and at times, with the participant's family. Once I provide enough context, the narrative portrait reintroduces the themes that I presented at the beginning of the chapter.

Narrative portrait: Rosa.

...and I was able to leave the room and I was crying, crying, crying. My mom was taking a shower because we had all just come back from the beach and I wrote my mom a letter.

Saying, "mom, [my step-grandfather] touched me in like my pee-pee and my butt and it

really hurt and I don't know what to do."

I remember writing it in red crayon or something and I left it on her bed and when she

got out of the shower she found it and she called me to her room.

And I was like "yes, this just happened, I was downstairs."

So she said, "Okay stay in your room…"

And I don't remember what else happened after that point. I remember that it was kinda

like "stay away" but I do not remember any immediate discussion of it. That turned into

a " [My mom and I] need to talk to him about this, we need to confront the situation." He

was a local truck driver so he would stop every day on his route and come [to my home]

and have lunch and coffee and leave again. And it was summer and I would always be

watching out the window and I was petrified that I was going to get called downstairs

and this was going to happen.

And so finally, the day happened where I couldn't escape it anymore and he came for

lunch and I remember we were in the kitchen and my mom asked me in front of him, "Did

he do this to you?"

"Yeah," [I said].

And he said, "No I didn't! You are lying."

I just lost it and ran upstairs crying and that was the end of it.

And so it was never brought up again.[3]

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[3] Participants' voice and direct quotes are italicized.

In the above portion of her testimonio, Rosa, a 35-year-old Cuban-Colombian-American woman shared a memory of the time when she was sexually abused by her step-grandfather as well as her mother's reaction to the abuse. Rosa was 10 years old when she was sexually abused by her step-grandfather, 14 when she was psychologically sexually abused[4] by her mother's boyfriend, and 16 when she was raped by a family friend. In Miami, Florida, Rosa and her little sister lived with her mother, grandmother, and stepfather during her father's time in prison. Rosa was one of the only participants in the study who disclosed to her mother immediately after her first instance of abuse by her step-grandfather. The excerpt of her testimonio above suggests that as a child, she did not know how to talk about sexual abuse, and therefore she disclosed through a pad of paper and a red crayon. Rosa shared that even after disclosing to her mother about being abused by her step-grandfather, there was no immediate response. In fact, her mother and grandmother collectively confronted the perpetrator weeks later, only to believe him, and not her. After that, her abuse was not to be brought up again because it had been "handled."

> *"And so that was it,"* Rosa explained:
>
> *It was as if nothing ever happened. I came to find out years later that the reason*
>
> *why my mom didn't take any further action was because at that time she was with*

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[4] A term Rosa used to describe moments when her mother's boyfriend sexually abused Rosa and Rosa's little sister by exposing them to his masturbation and pornography. She called this psychological sexual abuse as there was never physical contact.

my stepfather who was a practicing Santero[5] and my grandmother says that my

mom asked the Santos[6] if what I said was true and that the Santos said I was

lying. And that they kind of rationalized the whole thing by saying that I was

devastated because my dad was in jail recently and I had been close and

protective of my grandmother and this is why the fabrication happened.

Rosa, who now studies Santeria (Way of the Saints), explained that Santeria grew out of the Slave trade in Cuba and thus, is an Afro-Caribbean religion based on Yoruba beliefs and traditions, with some added Roman Catholic features. Rosa stated that her stepfather had asked the Santos (Saints) if Rosa was telling the truth regarding the alleged sexual abuse:

The way you communicate to the Santos is through oracle so there are different

oracles. There are coconut oracles. There are shells that get thrown and

depending on the combination of pieces and if they are facing up or down, you get

an answer. It is super complicated. So if you throw the coconut and four pieces

are facing up then the answer to your question is yes, four facing down is

resoundingly no, if it's two and two that means maybe.

According to Rosa, when the shells were thrown to decipher whether she was telling the truth, the four shells faced up, delivering a loud *no*.

And that was that; Rosa normalized her abuse and stated that this experience as well as

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[5] A priest in the Santeria religion.

[6] Saints

her other two instances of abuse were compartmentalized and *"in storage for so long, neatly put in a bag with a nice coat of dust over it."*

Rosa recalled that years later, Rosa's mother and Rosa's step-grandfather went to get Chinese food. On their way there, Rosa's step-grandfather asked Rosa's mother to show him *"her brand new boob job."* Super upset and angry, Rosa's mother vented about the situation to Rosa's father, who had recently gotten out of prison. As Rosa's mother was telling him about her experience she said, *"Parece que es verdad lo que dijo la niña [so it appears the little girl was telling the truth...]."* Rosa's father had never been told about Rosa's alleged sexual abuse and was extremely upset:

> *And so my dad called me and he was really upset and asked me if this was true.*
> *'Tell me everything!' So 13 years later I had to relive this story for the first time*
> *because up to this point I had neatly compartmentalized it. It was boxed away*
> *until my dad came back and I had to tell him the whole story.*

As Rosa recalled and recounted her father's reaction, she remembered that her dad had felt *"so like, castrated. Like no power as a man to do anything. He failed his daughters."* At that point he asked her to file a police report and though she knew it was 13 years after the incident, she did so to *"do anything that would give my father any sort of consolation. I wanted to make him feel better and help him restore some of his masculinity that was lost."*

Up to this point, Rosa's story fully captures three main themes inherent in a few *testimonios:* **expiration of abuse story, silence for protection father's masculinity, and normalization of abuse.** Throughout Rosa's testimonio, she frequently spoke about

her mother's reactions after the first incidence of abuse and her mother's comments later on in life that minimized or erased the abuse story entirely. This indicated the potential idea that her story was not to be talked about anymore because her abuse story had essentially expired thus, conveying the theme of **expiration of abuse story**.

Rosa recalled a vivid memory of wanting to go into a music shop years after her abuse and how she asked her mother to go inside the store with her because there were too many men in there. Rosa's mom responded with: *"What has a man ever done to you?"* Rosa told me that over her lifetime her mother would say things to her that indicated that Rosa had never been hurt by a man. Countless times, her mother delivered messages that made Rosa realize that her mother had either forgotten about her abuse or her mother wanted Rosa to forget the abuse. Rosa also mentioned that perhaps this was her mother's way of dismissing the abuse so that she would never have to hear Rosa speak about the abuse again. As such, she felt that her story of sexual abuse had expired and she was not allowed to talk about it again.

While listening to Rosa and several of the other women speak about their mothers' reactions and dismissive attitudes towards to their abuse, I began to think about the ways my mother reacted after disclosing about my own sexual abuse. When I was first abused as an eight-year old, my mother reacted in such a way that made me feel protected and prioritized. Though my mother did not feel like she was able to call the police due to our family's undocumented status, she made my uncle leave and made sure he never was a part of our family ever again. The second time I was abused, my mother did not react similarly. In fact, she questioned my honesty and in many ways did not react

when I disclosed about her brother sexually abusing me. I remember feeling so angry at

her for asking the most cynical questions and for making sure my grandmother never

found out about it.

As I heard the women in this study speak about similar moments with their

mothers and the protection of the grandmother in one way or another, I realized that there

were larger cultural and familial constituents at play. If multiple participants' mothers

reacted similarly to Rosa's mother and my own, this indicated potential cultural elements

rooted in the mothers' actions.

Chicana Feminist Gloria Anzladúa describes women's selfishness as condemned

and humility and selflessness as extremely high virtues (2007). For women, being humble

is considered a mandatory way of living to adhere to the familismo concept of respeto.

Anzaldúa (2007) states:

> Respeto carries a set of rules so that social categories and hierarchies will be kept
> in order: respect is observed for the abuela [grandmother], papá [father], patron
> [boss], those with power in the community. Women are at the bottom of the
> ladder one rung above the deviants. (p. 40)

It dawned on me that though it seems as if our mothers are simply dismissing and abating

our sexual abuse for no valid reason, our mothers might reject our abuse so we learn to do

so as well. Learning to dismiss sexual abuse would allow our mothers to act within the

standard familial and cultural rubric. Rosa's mother was fulfilling her role as a woman

and mother by adhering to Anzlauda's (2007) notion of familial hierarchal respect.

Rosa's mother followed the social rules that mandate the upmost reverence for the person

at the top of the hierarchy- the grandmother. According to Rosa, she thinks that had her

mother accepted and validated her abuse, Rosa's grandmother would have been impacted the most:

> *And to this day my mom still talks to this man because obviously my grandmother is aging and he is the communication to my grandmother. Especially when my grandmother gets sick and goes to the hospital. My mom continues to speak with him and buys him Christmas gifts. Continues to treat him with a respect that you should treat a parent. And expects for me to continue to treat her and my grandmother with that same reverence, like the holy mother.*

As seen in Rosa's narrative portrait so far, her mother reacted to Rosa's initial disclosure of abuse and once time had gone by, Rosa's mother's reactions and messages to Rosa indicated the notion of **expiration of the abuse story**. Rosa was no longer allowed to talk about it and when she did, the story would get rejected as Rosa's mother would remind Rosa that nothing had ever happened to her. According to Rosa, to this day, her mother will still say things that dismiss Rosa's sexual abuse. Further, the dismissal of her abuse and the constant reminder that her abuse no longer existed conditioned Rosa to normalize her abuse and the ones that occurred later in her life.

The second theme inherent in Rosa's story is **normalization of abuse** and it captures the reason Rosa decided to conceal two other experiences of sexual abuse. The current literature surrounding child sexual abuse states that revictimization is a dangerous consequence of sexual abuse. According to multiple studies children who experience sexual abuse once are twice as likely to report future instances of abuse (Arrata, 2000; Desai, Arias, Thompson, & Basile, 2002; Filipas & Ullman, 2006). Rosa and multiple

other participants in the study were sexually abused more than once during their childhood and much like Rosa, other participants learned to normalize abuse as well. For Rosa, her mother's rejection of her story influenced her to keep quiet about her other sexual abuse experiences as she began to conceptualize sexual abuse as normal: *And I would put them away and would normalize the abuse and the compartmentalizing. I think, well I think that when you see something as normal, you do not feel like you have to talk about it, you know?*

The third theme that emerged from Rosa's testimonio was **silence for protection of father's masculinity.** Rosa claimed that once her father found out about her abuse, he pleaded for some type of mercy. Thus, he asked her to essentially restore his masculinity by filing a police report 13 years after her abuse. As she told her story, Rosa and I were both fascinated that it took a man to validate and revive her abuse story, and that though it was never taken to the police to protect her body, it was taken to the police to reinstate his masculinity.

Patriarchal training starts at a very young age in Latinx cultures, especially for the young girls in the family. Through the modeling of the mother, girls quickly learn that it is a priority to impeccably respect and prioritize the head of the household (González-López, 2015). Traditionally, the father is the breadwinner and the main provider in the family so women and children in the family must do whatever it takes to keep him happy and satisfied. As Rosa's story demonstrates, she was willing to do anything to help him heal his identity as a man and a father.

Albeit her father's support of Rosa and his validation of her abuse story, Rosa mentioned that her father was not as supportive of her being a lesbian:

So my dad now, he in some weird sick way thinks I am gay because I was abused when I was a young child. So it goes back to the whole 'what has a man ever done to you.' This all happened because a guy did something to you… And I told him no, dad. I remember before this happened to me, being attracted to like the older sisters of the little boys I was friends with. Again, this is not why I am gay. I am gay because I like women, not because… I don't like women because I was abused by a man. But he holds tight to that especially now after the whole gay is like a sickness thing…

Anzaldúa (2007) states that for lesbians of color the ultimate rebellion she can perform against her culture and family is through two forms of prohibited sexual behavior: sexuality and homosexuality [sic]. Sexuality is to be hidden at all costs within the consecrated walls of the familia and in the even more "privatized walls of our bedrooms" (Alarcón, Castillo, & Moraga, 1993, p. 10). Rosa's father blamed her sexuality on child sexual abuse to deliver her from *intentional* sinning. In a similar manner, by rejecting or accepting the abuse story, Rosa's mother allowed her young daughter to remain nonsexual to adhere to the master narrative of the ideal pure woman.

Rosa's sexuality did not impact her decision to disclose or conceal her instances of sexual abuse, but this part of Rosa's *testimonio* demonstrates how Rosa spoke about her abuse in relation to her sexuality. Her identity as a Lesbian woman was constantly questioned by her family as they thought she was a Lesbian because she had been

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damaged through her sexual abuse. The notion of being a lesbian as a consequence of child sexual abuse will appear in future portraits. Through those future portraits, I will demonstrate in more depth the way participants protected their sexuality through the concealing of their child sexual abuse experiences.

I conclude Rosa's narrative with her thoughts on what she would tell a little girl who had gone through a similar experience. Rosa said that she would make her feel protected and that she would believe her. *"And I think I would try to be a voice for her. Someone that protects her. Let her know that it is okay and there is a life after this and then just try to be that protector, especially if her God given protectors are failing her."*

Narrative portrait: Garabato.

The second person who abused me was my brother. He was older than I was. I was like 6 years old. He started masturbating in front of me and I didn't know how to react so I would avoid it and not say anything. And I didn't say anything because we were really poor and logically we all slept in the same bed. So at night time he would always approach me and abuse me.

He would start by touching me and all of that. He abused me from the time I was 6 until I turned 18, right when I escaped to the United States. He was like 6 years older than me give or take.

And that is how it started and since he was older than me, he would…how do I say this… like he would threaten to hit me. Like he would say, "If you don't do this, I will hit you." So that is also when the psychological abuse began I guess. So I couldn't and wouldn't say a thing.

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When I was 12 my other brother, Rafa, I think he found out, but I do not know how he

found out. I was 12 and Rafa yelled because I was telling my mom to please kick

[perpetrator brother] out of the house. And I would always run away from home. Or stay

away from home. I was always in the street trying to be as far away as possible.

And my mom would find me and would return me home and I would tell her that I didn't

want to be there. So that time we were fighting really loud and my brother Rafa told my

mom.

And my mom didn't do anything.

So I told her, "Please call the police."

She didn't want to call them.

So I was so hurt (crying) that she did that. That she now knew and she didn't do a thing.

She had her son [who was abusing me] right there. I always protested to her.

And she would say:

"But, he is my son."

Garabato vividly described the moment her younger brother, Rafa, told their

mother that their older brother had been raping her. Though she never intended to tell her

mother, she mentioned that she always believed that if her mother ever found out that one

of her sons was raping her, that she would likely save Garabato. Garabato was wrong.

The third youngest child of 12, Garabato was six years old when she was sexually

abused by a 60-year old neighbor, six years old when her older brother began abusing

her, eight years old when she was molested by her father, a teenager when multiple other

men raped her, and a young adult when an American man broke into her home and forced

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her to give him oral sex with a knife to her throat. From a young age, Garabato thought sexual abuse was just a way of life for her sisters and women in general:

> *I learned from a very young age that this was… like normal. Whoever had the right to abuse me. So honestly (crying) I don't know how many men abused me but I do remember one being a mailman. I would go to the theater and it was as if I had a huge sign on my forehead that said ABUSE ME and they did and I couldn't do a thing. I was like frozen.*

Like Rosa, Garabato learned from a very young age to normalize her abuse. Both women told their mothers about the first instances of sexual abuse, but due to their mothers' rejection of the story, they never spoke about their abuse with their mothers or anyone else again and kept subsequent instances of abuse quiet.

Throughout her two-hour *testimonio*, Garabato shared stories that somehow circled back to how much resentment she had towards her mother and certain siblings for their inaction and refusal to accept or validate the abuse story. Garabato mentioned that she told her mother once and never again brought up her abuse again:

> *So the only time that I talked to my mom was that time… and it was the only time that we talked about it and we never talked about it again. My brother, the oldest one tells me 'it was so long ago, haven't you gone to therapy, didn't they help you get rid of it [the sexual abuse memory] already? It is gone.' And those are the scars that sexual abuse leaves you. I always say, where were the peopele that were supposed to protect me? My mother, my older siblings? No one was there. And that right there… that is the abuse.*

Garabato also spoke about the conflicting emotions she felt for her 10-year-old sister who would take Garabato to the neighbor's house *"to make money." "So did she know she was prostituting me? Why would she do that to me? But then again, we were poor, and like, who had taught her to do that? She had been through her own share of abuse."* Garabato's family's impoverished living conditions were brought up many times as she spoke about her abuse. Her family struggled with poverty especially during the seasons when her dad would leave them for months at a time. To her, there was no surprise that three or four children had to share a bed, and that her older siblings had to make money *somehow*.

Garabato mentioned that the only way out of the abuse was to migrate to the United States, even if it meant leaving her mother behind. The night before she was supposed to leave she almost changed her mind and stayed in Mexico. At that very moment, however, her older brother walked in to abuse her again. *"So that's when I told myself that I could not stay any longer. Let's go to the United States of America. And I escaped."*

Many themes emerged from Garabato's *testimonio* that explain her decision to reveal and conceal her experiences of child sexual abuse. They include: **expiration of abuse story, silence for protection of the family and/or perpetrator, normalization of abuse**, and **generational abuse**.

Similar to Rosa's testimonio, the first theme that emerged in Garabato's narrative was **expiration of abuse story**. Throughout Garabato's testimonio, she would speak to the countless times she would try to talk about her abuse with her mother or other family

members only to get rejected. Garabato shared that multiple members of her family minimized her abuse and several blatantly motivated her to forget the abuse as too much time had gone by and the abuse story had basically perished. Like Rosa, Garabato's story exposed the same scene of the mother rejecting the story after initial disclosure. Both mothers invalidated the abuse and responded in such a way that protected other members of the family over their daughters. Rosa's mother sought to protect Rosa's grandmother and Garabato's mother sought to protect her son. Perhaps Garabato's mother sought to push Garabato's story to an expired point so that in turn that would motivate Garabato to keep quiet. Garabato's silence served as a way for Garabato's mother to protect her son.

Garabato's mother's guard for her son is not exclusive to Garabato's family. Chicana Feminist Cherríe Moraga (2000) states that the Mexican wifely and motherly duty is to put the male first:

> There is nothing more beautiful as the Mexican male. I have never met any kind of mexicano who, although he may have claimed his family was very woman-dominated did not subscribe to the basic belief that men are better. It is so ordinary a statement as to sound simplistic and I am nearly embarrassed to write it, but that's the truth in its kernel. (p. 93)

Moraga goes further to say that though any Mexican mother will claim to love her children equally, she doesn't because boys are more special and while the daughter has to work hard to be loved, "the son—gets her love for free" (p. 94):

> Sometimes I sense that [mother] feels this way because she wants to believe that through her mothering she can develop the kind of man she would have liked to marry, or even have been. That through her son she can get a small taste of male privilege since without race or class privilege that's all there is to be had. (p. 94)

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According to Moraga, the daughter, in this case Garabato, could never offer the mother such a gift since the daughter is "straddled by the same forces that confine the mother" (p. 94). Had Garabato's mother defended her daughter over her abusive son, she would have fundamentally gone against Mexican tradition (Moraga, 2000). "You are a traitor to your race if you do not put the man first" (p. 95). Further, Anzaldúa (2007) postulates that much of what the Mexican culture embraces centers on the family relationship. "The welfare of the family, the community, the tribe is more important than the welfare of the individual. The individual exists first as kin-as sister, as father, as padrino, - and last, as the self" (p. 40). Any acknowledgement and punishment of abuse would cause the disruption of the family. Garabato felt that her mother did not want her to ever speak about her abuse again in an effort to forget the abuse. If the abuse story expired, then the welfare of the family (over the welfare of one individual) could be prioritized again.

Generational abuse was another theme in Garabato's *testimonio* that captured Garabato's decision to conceal her abuse. Garabato stated that she remembered one of her sisters being abused by the same brother and the sister that had prostituted Garabato was also simultaneously being abused by the neighbor. In addition, Garabato's mother also suffered her own instances of abuse: *"My mother was abused and she married at 12 years old. So what do you expect from a 12-year-old child. And so, the abuse came. And it still happens in Mexico."* Garabato expressed that abuse was so common and unavoidable in her family so it was almost so pointless to speak about. Like Rosa, Garabato learned to normalize her abuse, and thus keep quiet about it.

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Generational abuse and **normalization of abuse** often co-existed in all

testimonios. As with Garabato's mother's own story of abuse, in Rosa's testimonio, she

shared that her mother had also been abused. Perhaps little girls learn to normalize and

conceal abuse because abuse is just a Latina woman's inheritance. Mothers do not

respond to abuse because they too have experienced it and so it is simply a way of life.

And when abuse, the protection of sons and perpetrators, and the idolization of a gentle,

forgiving woman are the revered norms, it is best to just keep quiet. Calladita [stay quiet,

little girl], because en boca cerrada no entran moscas, flies don't enter closed mouths.

This is a saying used to socialize little girls to adhere to a tradition of silence. "Ser

habladora [to be outspoken] was to be a gossip and a liar, to talk too much. Well-bred

girls don't answer back" (Anzaldúa, 2007, p. 76). So, not only do Latinx families

indirectly socialize girls to normalize abuse, they also socialize them to be silent.

Though Garabato learned that abuse was normal and thus kept quiet about it,

when she moved to the United States, she experienced more atrocities that eventually

allowed her to speak about her abuse. During her time in the United States, Garabato

experienced a variety of different types of abuse, sexism, and racism. She realized that in

order to survive her depression and suicidal ideation she had to seek psychological help.

Though she did not tell her counselor about her history of child sexual abuse, her

counselor detected it immediately. Garabato said that her counselor was the first person

to hear about her child sexual abuse after many years and they decided on a plan that

would help her find the bright side of her experiences. This led Garabato to share her

story at violence shelters and different counseling groups:

I told my story to heal and also to let the Anglos know how one person can

survive so much without being able to speak English, without being educated. I

wanted to tell the Anglos my story so they knew that people come to this country

to survive sometimes. We all come here for different reasons. I wanted to let them

know that I survived as an immigrant, minority, woman, homosexual[7].

According to Moraga and Anzaldúa (2015), "in this country, lesbianism is a poverty-as is being brown, as is being a woman, as is being just plain poor" (p. 24). To echo this notion, Garabato spoke about the difficulty of being more than just a poor, undocumented woman in the in the United States when it came to healing and speaking about her child sexual abuse. Garabato talked about the different intersections of her identity and how they impacted her decision to disclose about her sexual abuse. Of course, as a little girl living in poverty, her voice did not have much power in and of itself. As an immigrant, she felt fear about seeking the resources that would assist her, and lastly, speaking about her sexual abuse would mean she would have to defend her sexuality a little extra:

So when I finally spoke about it people would say: 'so you are a lesbian because

you were abused.' And I would say NO! I am not a lesbian because I was abused.

I discovered my homosexuality when I was four years old. I always knew I was

different. I always knew. I was four years old when I fell in love with my

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[7] Though homosexual is not a preferred term to describe someone in the LGBTQ community, I chose to use the vernacular that the participant used throughout her *testimonio* to adhere with Indigenous methodology of prioritizing the first voice.

kindergarten teacher. I remember that moment. And then there was a little girl I

fell in love with in second grade. Claudia Villanueva. She was the love of my life.

And she tried to kiss me, and I chickened out! I was like, what is happening? We

were so Catholic and from a very small town so I didn't talk about my

homosexuality with anyone.

Anzaldúa (2007) calls this silence the fear of going home. She states that queer women of color fear being abandoned by the family and the culture for being tainted and damaged. "To avoid rejection, some of us conform to the values of the culture, push the unacceptable parts to the shadows" (p. 42). Garabato felt that if she disclosed about her abuse, she would have to defend her identity as a Lesbian woman. So even when she was presented with opportunities to talk about her abuse outside of therapy, she would choose silence. For Garabato, having to explain that her sexual abuse had not caused her homosexuality was too taxing. "*Pues entonces prefiero no hablar de mi abuso. Y prefiero callar. [So then I just prefer not to talk about my abuse. I prefer to be quiet]*."

Narrative portrait: Elena.

I was a virgin and to me it was the biggest thing that I thought I had.

My parents made me believe that if you are not a virgin that you are not good anymore

and not worth a penny. So of course, my heart was coming out of my chest and I was

begging to please take me back to the house. Take me back. PLEASE take me back!! I do

not know how long we had been driving in the freeway. But he told me, 'So you can see,

Elena, that I really love you and really care for you, we are going to go back. But first,

we have to check.'

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He told me we had passed an immigration checkpoint and he was going to go back and

check to see if it was open for us to come back. If not we would have to spend the night

somewhere.

Of course I have no clue where I was. No clue. So then he goes, 'I am going to stop, we

are going to stop right here, we are going to stop at a motel. And you stay here and then I

am going to go check to see if La Migra (Immigration Police) is there [at the

checkpoint]. Then I will come and pick you up and then we are going to go back.'

So of course, I am believing that he is telling me the truth so I didn't see anything wrong

for me to stay at the motel because it was already getting late and everything.

In my head, you know when your intuition is telling you something? Well my intuition

was telling me that this doesn't look good. It doesn't look good. I don't know what his

plans are, but this is not good. He told me, 'Okay just wait here, because I am going to

go and check, I will be back. Are you hungry?' and I said, 'no I am not hungry.' And then

he took off and then he comes back with food, offers me food that I didn't want to eat and

he started eating like it was a vacation.

Of course I was crying. I have been crying the whole time that I knew that he was taking

me away, I was crying. So he told me, 'I am sorry, but we are going to have to spend the

night [at the motel] because La Migra is there and they are not going to leave.

So we are gonna have to wait until tomorrow.'

Elena's portion of her testimonio illustrated the moment her father's friend's son

essentially kidnapped her and drove for hours to a location far away from her temporary

home in Los Angeles. When she thought she finally had convinced the perpetrator to take

her back, he took advantage of her naivety and pretended to be unable to drive back since the immigration police were waiting for them at a checkpoint to deport her. As seen in the excerpt, he convinced her to stay in a motel room while he went to go check if it was safe to drive her home. That night, Elena was raped by the man.

Elena was 16 years old when she came to the United States as an undocumented immigrant to be able to send money to her family that stayed in Mexico:

> *Being so poor, my whole family, we had hopes that by me coming to the United States I was going to be able to help my parents. I had big dreams. I was always just hoping to get a job and help my parents which was the number one reason why I came over here. I wanted to come, I wanted to do so much for them and the rest of my family and my parents because they always worked so hard and everything.*

Elena stated that she came to the United States with her parents' permission with the condition that she had to stay with her father's best friend's family in Los Angeles, California until she got on her feet. In fact, the family, her father's best friend in particular, was so eager to host her that he paid for Elena's coyote[8]. Elena found a job right away working at a party decoration warehouse. She mentioned that as soon as she got the job, one of the sons of the family was assigned to take her to and from work every single day since their jobs were in the same area:

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[8] A coyote is a person who smuggles Latin Americans across the US border, typically for a high fee.

Within a month of being here, the father [her father's friend]*, he started touching me. When I was asleep. And of course I threatened him to tell his wife if he continued. Well he continued, but not as much and I didn't know what to do. I didn't know anybody, no friends, no family, nobody. Pretty much, I felt like I was forced to stay there until I could make more money and be able to rent an apartment in the future and everything. So things continued like a routine.*

Despite this extremely uncomfortable and terrible nightly routine, Elena kept quiet about those instances of abuse. Elena did not want to say anything as she was afraid that her parents would make her go back to Mexico and all she wanted to do was go to work every day to make sure that her parents and family received financial help.

Elena continued to work to raise money to help her family and also to be able to afford her own place to live. Since she was sending most of her money to her family, it was hard for her to save money to get out of her dad's friend's home. Meanwhile, the son that had been assigned to take her to and from work did so on a daily basis. One day, three months after her arrival to the United States, on their way back to the house, Elena sensed that something was wrong based on the difference in route that the guy took that day:

So I asked him where we were going? And he told me that he had problems with the car that he was going to check the car that he was going to a body shop. He continued driving, but at that point I already had a bad feeling. Because before that this guy was looking at me in a way that was, that I didn't feel good about it. So I was actually feeling like a piece of meat because his father had been

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touching me and then this other stupid guy [the son] *started looking at me in a different way. I can guarantee you that his plan was to do this. I am almost positive that is why he helped to bring me over here without me paying them anything because he paid for the coyote.*

And so they continued to drive and drive when finally Elena's gut feeling took over and she started crying:

So I ask again where are you taking me. He goes, 'Don't worry, we are going to get the car fixed.' But at that point, he was on the freeway already so I didn't know where I was, at that point I didn't know where I was I just knew that he had been driving for a long time, I started to panic and I asked again. Please tell me where are you taking me. And then he told me, he confessed to me that he was going to take me either to Washington or somewhere.

The man, who was 47 years old, continued to drive and Elena continued to weep and beg. Finally, he used her fear of La Migra as a way to manipulate her. He told her that he would go back and check to see that La Migra was not at the checkpoint, otherwise La Migra would take her back to Mexico and she would no longer be able to provide for her family. Elena did not know English or her way around the system that she relied on this man to protect her from what she feared the most- getting deported. Elena was told to wait at a hotel room that he had rented for her to wait while he went to check for any danger. Elena said she had no idea that the motel tactic was part of his plan the entire time. Otherwise, she would have never left the car and made sure she was always in an open public setting. The man returned to the hotel with food and told her that La Migra

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was in fact waiting and there was no way they could return home that evening. As Elena cried and cried she said that the man asked her to come to bed. She told him that she would sleep on the chair that she was sitting in in a *fetal position*:

> *So then he grabbed me de la mano [from the hand] and then he threw me to the bed. So then I just turned to the side and I was wearing jeans. I didn't want to take off my clothes, because he said, 'Take off your clothes.' I told him I wasn't going to take my clothes off. Then little by little he started getting impatient and then he wasn't nice anymore. And he told me again, 'Take off your clothes.' By now el estaba enojado [he was mad]. 'Take off your clothes!' And of course I am mad too, so I told him, I am not going to take off my clothes. He turned, I did not know what he was going to do, but I noticed that he turned to the nightstand, I don't know if it was to grab something. So I got out of bed and I started running towards the door. And I wanted to open the door. And then he grabbed me. I kept screaming. I am screaming at the motel, I am asking for help, but nobody comes. And he proceeds to rape me. I couldn't go anywhere. I didn't know any English, nothing, zero, nothing. The next day he told me, 'Okay let's go.' Without going to check for La Migra. So of course, I was crying more at the moment because I realized he tricked me. There was never no Migra. And I had to be quiet, mija. I did not know how to call the police, I did not know about no 9-1-1. And I knew if I spoke to them about my abuse, well they would hand me over to La Migra bien rapidito [really quickly].*

Elena also stated that she did not want to tell anybody about her abuse to protect her

virginity and because she felt shame because she was *so dirty*. Further, she concealed her

abuse from her family because she did not want to see her father upset. *"My father*

thought that his friend in L.A. would help me get on my feet. But instead, he abused me.

And his son [abused me] también [too]."

The prominent themes that emerged in Elena's story were **silence for protection**

from political authorities, silence for protection of purity and virginity, silence for

protection of father's masculinity, and silence for protection from feeling shame.

As viewed in portions of Elena's testimonio, Elena chose to be silent about her

abuse as a way to protect herself from the police and La Migra. As such, the first theme

that emerged was **silence for protection from political authorities.** Elena's story echoes

Anzaldúa's (2007) notion that as an undocumented person, the Mexican woman is

especially at risk in the United States, "La mojada, la mujer indocumentada, is doubly

threated in this country. Not only does she have to contend with sexual violence, but like

all women, she is prey to a sense of physical helplessness" (p. 34). Elena told me that she

had no idea how the police and legal authorities functioned in the United States. All she

knew was to stay away from the police as they could hurt her by turning her in to the

immigration police. Through family narratives, Elena was always told not to trust the

police in the U.S. She said that people had told her that it was hard to decipher the good

police from the bad police and so it was best to stay away from them entirely. Anzaldúa

(2007) also states that an undocumented woman in the United States cannot seek health,

economic, or safety resources because she does not know English and she fears being

deported. An undocumented woman is often isolated and worried about supporting her family back home. Listening to Elena made me think of the way my family responded to my first experience of child sexual abuse. For my mom to be able to press 9-1-1 was a privilege, one that we, or Elena, did not believe we had.

Though not mentioned in Garabato's narrative portrait in an effort to focus on different themes for her story, she also explained that she was afraid of the judicial system in the United States because she too was undocumented and feared deportation. She also claimed to not know the way the police operated. Fontes, Cruz, and Tabachnick (2001) state that less acculturated (to the U.S.) immigrant women from different Latino countries spoke about their sexual abuse less often than more acculturated women. Scholars contend that this may be the case because less acculturated women do not know how to speak about child sexual abuse as their Latinx country of origin does not engage in those types of conversations. Though that may be the case for Garabato and Elena, their stories portray silence to protect themselves from a justice system that they are unfamiliar with. Additionally, the way the women, particularly Elena, spoke about their fears of the police indicated that they only feared the police because they thought they would turn them in to the immigration police.

Elena was extremely afraid of the immigration police. Through the telling of her *testimonio* Elena realized that she had been more afraid of La Migra than the most immediate dangerous man that was less than two feet away who had essentially kidnapped her and robbed her of the most precious thing she possessed, her purity and virginity.

The second theme that surfaced in Elena's testimonio that showcased the reason she concealed her sexual abuse was **silence for protection of purity and virginity**. If I could paint a picture of the vivid way Elena spoke of her sacred virginity, my drawing would portray a pot of the most rare, expensive, precious gold locked in the most beautiful golden cage. It was her precious treasure that she so dearly protected and wanted to share with a husband and the love her life:

The virginity to me was like something so great. You cannot imagine how important it was for me, how important. To some people being a virgin could not be nothing, but to me it was like a gold. He robbed me of something that I was saving. I only wanted to be touched by the person that I marry. That was my mentality. I dreamt about the white dress, being pure and everything. He destroyed my virginity, he destroyed my life, I felt like I couldn't go back to Mexico because I felt like everybody was going to find out that I was not a virgin and now I am no good anymore.

The ideal wife is a woman who is docile, kind, compliant, pure, and a virgin (Ligiéro et al., 2009). There are really only two types of women in Mexican culture, the virgin and the whore. The latter is to be avoided at all costs and women must do everything in their power to emulate the Virgin Mary. Elena's parents made sure to hardwire that important message in her brain, and needless to say, it stayed there permanently. When Elena finally decided to date men after her abuse, she said she kept silent about her abuse because she wanted to be taken serious and she knew that since she was no longer a virgin, they would only want her for a temporary good time. She did not tell her husband-

to-be because she wanted to get married first so that he would not leave. She was damaged goods, and *"no Latino wants damaged goods."* According to Chicana Feminism, an ideal woman should be submissive and passive and under the authority and instruction of the man. Through the notion of marianismo, the woman should be seen as the Virgin Mary since she is saintly, motherly, a wife, and a sex object. Since Elena no longer fulfilled the archetype of the Virgin Mary, she decided to conceal her sexual abuse. In so doing, she did not have to tell anyone that she no longer was a virgin. As such, she kept quiet to protect her virginity and purity standing and also, to protect herself from shame.

The third theme that appeared in Elena's story was **silence for protection from feeling shame**. Shame was a major reason Elena kept quiet about her abuse:

> *I think that is why a lot of people do not say anything. Shame. Even though it is not our fault, we feel ashamed. And hopefully, in the future, people will learn not to be ashamed, because that is the last thing que deveriamos de tener [that we should have]. Verguenza porque [Why shame]? We didn't do anything. We didn't provoke it. Why do we have to feel like that? I think that society is los que nos hace sentir asi [who makes us feel this way].*

Elena claimed that she did cried every day for so many months because of the shame she felt. She said it felt was too hard to feel for herself and she did not want others to make her feel more of it. As such, in order to protect herself from what Fontes (2007) deems as external shame, she decided to encircle her abuse with silence.

Elena's experience with shame is so common in Latinx cultures (Fontes, 2007). Shame is all too familiar for Latina women. Shame is just something that we inherent as a socializing tool for our daughters and their daughters. "Shame was something I internalized from my culture, from my mother and grandmothers" (Anzaldúa, 2007, p. 93). On top of avoiding shame for herself, Elena was also avoiding hurting her father with the news. As such, for a very long time Elena did not return to Mexico because she did not want to confront her parents, especially her father.

The final theme surrounding sexual abuse concealment in Elena's story was **silence for protection of father's masculinity.** Elena's pride and joy is her father. She loves her father and did not want to see him sad over what had happened to her and so she protected him with silence. As explained in Garabato's and Rosa's story, selflessness is preferred behavior in women so putting the male first, especially the head and most revered person in the family, is a daughter's main responsibility (Anzaldúa, 2007; Moraga, 2000). During her time in the United States, Elena hardly communicated with her family because phones were only an upper class luxury. According to Elena, mail would take so long so it was typical for several months to go by without communicating with her family. When she returned to Mexico, she told her parents about what had happened and her biggest fear came true:

> *In that moment, mija, seeing my father cry, it was so sad. It was so difficult. I think at that point in my life it was more difficult… If I thought about the rape and seeing my father like he couldn't do nothing and crying for what had happened to me…. That hurt so much more than my rape, mija. So much more.*

One of the positive connotations of machismo is that of the man and father being the ultimate protector, savior, and provider. As seen in Elena's story, speaking about her abuse would break her father's heart and in a sense emasculate him for his failed performance of protector that his culture expects him to achieve. As Elena told the story of her saddened father, she realized the irony of her story. The masculinity and *"macho problem in my culture was the reason I got abused but I did not want my father to feel weak and sad."* While Elena's perpetrator's masculinity and machismo principally gave him permission to take Elena's body, Elena wanted to do whatever it took to protect her father's. And for so long she withheld her abuse from her father to guard him and his machismo. Her silence, a tradition passed down from our mothers (Anzaldúa, 2007) was intended to safeguard an entity that essentially raped her. Anzaludúa (2007) states, "I abhor some of my culture's ways, how it cripples its women, como burras, our strengths used against us, lowly burras bearing humility and dignity. The ability to serve, claim the males, is our highest virtue" (p. 44).

To conclude Elena's narrative portrait, I share a message that she wanted me give on her behalf to a broader audience, but especially little girls who have been or are currently being abused:

> *Talk. Talk. TALK! Don't listen to the guy, don't listen to what they say to you.*
> *Talk! Talk to your teacher, talk to your mom, talk to your sister, talk to your*
> *cousin. Talk! That is the only thing that I can say. We cannot change anything*
> *else, the only thing that we can do is talk. Because if we talk, then more people*
> *will get punished. And hopefully it will stop. If we do not talk, they will continue*

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to hurt little girls like you and me, they will have the power. Let's get the power,

let's talk.

Narrative portrait: Magnolia.

...Like that innocence is lost because you realize that there are parts of your body men

want, but you are too young to realize or understand why.

But like there was shame, I felt so much shame, I felt disgusted with my own body.

Like I didn't want to love my body because it was causing me harm. It was getting

attention I didn't want that I wasn't mentally or physically ready to receive. So going into

puberty was really hard, I remember wearing super baggy clothes, like I didn't want

anybody to see that I was developing breasts and I was developing a butt.

And, there was that shame that came with the abuse because I did something that would

disappoint my mom if she found out. You just know that you have messed up, or

something that has happened to me has caused something negative. Like something bad

that I knew as a child.

Like there is the thought that goes through your head that you did something. Even now I

think,

Is it something that I wore?

Was it something that I said?

Was it something that I acted?

But you didn't because you are children. Like I was a child, I was 5 and then 9. And both

times I thought I was around people I could be safe with. I should be safe around them.

This is family, family shouldn't do this to you.

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But like over the years you come to figure it out a little bit more. I also think there is the

Catholic guilt that plays into the shame. I grew up when the priests were being convicted

about sexual abuse so even then I didn't know how to talk about it because it was like, I

was supposed to trust these people leading the church. There are things that even adults

don't know how to talk to children about. Parents should help[children] understand a

little bit of what is going on [with shame]and why they can trust [the parent] and that

[children who have been abused] are allowed to tell [about sexual abuse]. I wish my

mom had talked about… I wish parents knew how to address the fact that

there will be shame.

And I think that it is the shame for me that keeps me from telling my parents.

Because it is like, then they are going to feel it. You know. Collective shame. I can't

explain how shame feels, it just does not feel good. It didn't feel good when I was little.

In her *testimonio* passage above, Magnolia speaks about the intense feelings of

shame she felt as a child and shame she still continues to feel to this day. Magnolia also

tells about the fear she has regarding her parents feeling shame because Magnolia was

sexually abused. In her *testimonio* excerpt, she shares about her constant thoughts of

whether she brought the abuse upon herself. She also speaks about her desire for parents

to teach children about shame so that children like her would have known how to handle

the uncomfortable feelings of shame.

Magnolia was five years old when she was sexually abused by her uncle and nine

years old when her older cousin abused her when they were playing hide and seek.

Though she claims her parents never described how to rid oneself of shame, her mother

had been very direct with her regarding what to do when someone malignantly touched her. Nonetheless, when she was sexually abused the first time, she found herself unable to articulate her abuse to her mother:

> *I remember feeling like something had happened to me, but I didn't have the words to explain it. That is the one thing I wish my mom had told me… I don't know if that would have made a difference. But like, naming how it [sexual abuse] can make you feel shameful could have maybe helped me tell her what had happened, not just the first time but the second time too. But I just remember after that, I was just sad all the time, like there was just a sadness. That I still have. And so I knew I wasn't little anymore but I knew I still was.*

Post abuse experience, she remembers being extremely sad as a child and recalls having to get counseling in elementary school because she was always so emotional:

> *I would cry about everything. And I think that is just a symptom of what had happened when I was five. But I didn't know how to tell people. I just knew I was feeling sad all the time. I had great days when I was not sad. It was just that the sadness was less. Which is what I feel now.*

Like many little girls who experience child sexual abuse, she compartmentalized her abuse for many years, to avoid feeling sadness and shame.

"*You need to tell me because we do not keep secrets in this family*". Magnolia vividly remembers her mother's message that taught her from a very young age that it was mandatory to share absolutely everything with her mother. She felt very guilty about not telling her mother about her first instance of abuse, as she did not want her mother to

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feel like Magnolia did not trust her. When she was sexually abused again by her cousin who had recently suffered a head injury at the time, she hesitated to tell her mother, as it would mean she would have to disclose about the first instance of abuse as well. Though she was presented with an immediate opportunity to disclose about her cousin touching her, she decided to protect him instead:

> *And I ran out. And then my mom was like, 'What is wrong?' And I was like my cousin just scared me… It was the first thing that came out of my mouth, not like, 'He just touched me.' And so like my aunt my uncle were just looking at each other and like looked at my mom and looked at my dad and I could feel the tension and I'm like, 'It is okay, it was just hide and seek… We were just really playing.' Because I just got really scared. Like, I didn't know what was going to happen and like my thing was, through counseling, I am not sure if I am compartmentalizing or making an excuse for what happened because for him, he now has a disability and hasn't been the same since and so my mom tried talking to me afterwards and I just got scared. And like, I never kept secrets from my mom until I remembered I had kept the one from when I was younger and now this one. I didn't feel like I could tell her anymore, 'cause I had done this, because I had hurt our relationship.*

Throughout her testimonio, Magnolia made it a point to remind me that she had never disclosed to her parents about her experiences of child sexual abuse and that it would remain this way for the rest of her life. She wanted to avoid hurting her family, particularly her father. As her father's only daughter, she wanted to have a great

relationship with him. Magnolia stated that she wanted her father to feel like the ultimate protector in her family. Disclosing about her abuse would likely hurt him since he did not fulfill his protector role. Additionally, another reason why she kept quiet about her abuse was to protect herself from feeling shame. She also mentioned several times that too much time had gone by since her abuse happened and thus, it was too late to disclose about her sexual abuse. In a sense, her story of child sexual abuse had expired according to her own rules of time and disclosure. Lastly, through family story telling she learned that multiple family members had been abused in harsher ways and thus, her abuse was not enough to talk about.

The themes inherent in Magnolia's *testimonio* include **self-invalidation/minimization of abuse, expiration of abuse story**, **silence for protection from feeling shame**, and **silence for protection father's masculinity.**

The theme that emerged in Magnolia's testimonio and throughout most of the testimonios was self-invalidation/minimization of abuse. Magnolia, as well as Monica and Luna (who I will introduce next), all reached out to me about wanting to participate in the study, but were not sure if their experiences counted as sexual abuse since penetration never occurred. This occurs often in Latinx families; sexual abuse is deemed as such if and only if penetration with a penis occurred; otherwise it falls short of abuse and girls learn to minimize and keep quiet (Gonzalez-Lopez, 2015). Magnolia found out that her cousin had sexually abused other family members in *"worse ways"* which also motivated her to invalidate and minimize her own abuse, put her family first, and keep quiet.

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And like five years ago it came out that my cousin had abused a lot of our cousins.

And so I was like, well mine is just small, it shouldn't matter, like they are having

like a big ole thing about how they were abused. So I felt like mine was minimal,

so I minimized what happened to me.

As seen in Rosa's and Garabato's story, the notion of generational abuse within the family likely caused Magnolia to compare and contrast hers as well.

Magnolia's invalidation and minimizing of her story co-existed with the other theme in her testimonio, **expiration of abuse story**. She calculated that her abuse was not as harsh as her other family members' experiences and that since so much time had gone by, her abuse disclosure opportunity had essentially expired because she had waited so long. *"It is like, how do you have that conversation after so many years?"* In contrast with Garabato and Rosa's stories that portrayed the mothers motivating their daughters to believe their stories had expired, Magnolia told herself that too much time had gone by for her to reveal. *"Like, for what, it is gone forever now."* Magnolia stated that instead, she decided to hide her abuse in the depths of her mind for a long time.

After about a decade of compartmentalizing her sexual abuse experiences, while in college, Magnolia's good friend was sexually assaulted. Magnolia said that when her friend told Magnolia about the assault that all of her memories and feelings came back. She said that her parents had called to check on Magnolia's friend upon receiving the news of the assault, and that her mother noticed Magnolia's negative affect. Magnolia felt that during that moment she could have taken the opportunity to tell her mother that the reason why she was so upset over her friend's assault was because it had triggered

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emotions about her own abuse. She did not take the opportunity because again, too much time had gone by and it was pointless to tell. In that moment she realized that she also wanted to protect herself from feeling so much shame.

Another theme that captured Magnolia's decision to hide her child sexual abuse was **silence for protection from feeling shame.** Magnolia refused to have a conversation with her parents about her abuse to avoid feeling the shame she felt during her elementary years. Like every participant in the study, Magnolia knew shame too well. According to Mujerista Theology, shame is often used in Latinx families to socialize children, particularly Latina children, to adhere to the purest standards. In most cases, the patriarchal nature of the Catholic church serves to provide a set of guidelines for women that often oppresses and marginalizes them but is quick to provide different guidelines that liberate men from any culpability (Isasi-Díaz, 1996). Magnolia recognized this notion as she was telling her testimonio,

> *That is when I do get angry about what happened to me. Because I should not be feeling these ways, YOU [the perpetrators] should be feeling these ways. Why am I the one feeling guilty, it should be the people that did this to me that should feel guilty. Like there is a part of me that wonders how come they don't feel guilt or shame if they keep doing it. Or do they?*

In addition to protecting herself from feeling shame, she also wanted to protect her family as much as possible, particularly from experiencing shame by withholding her sexual abuse from them. Magnolia like Elena, wanted to protect her father, which conveys the theme of **silence for protection father's masculinity:**

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I am also very protective of my dad and I recognize that because his family is just,

I know that all families are all types of screwed up but his is really screwed up.

'Cause I know he already feels a lot of shame about his family…. And, I know that

my dad already feels inadequate like we have had a couple conversations where

he has acknowledged that he knows that he is not available emotionally, he is not

available, and I just don't want it [the sexual abuse] to be something else that

reminds him that he is not a good dad because he has been. He has provided for

my family… So yeah I want to protect him in that way (crying). Like I just want to

be his daughter, I am his only daughter. And I know that it is not his fault and I

wouldn't want him thinking that way either.

Magnolia so badly wanted to be her father's daughter. She wanted an impeccable

relationship with him and ultimately she wanted to be the daughter that her father

provided for and protected. Yet the roles seemed to switch when her silence was intended

to protect him. One of the main reasons Magnolia still keeps quiet about her abuse is to

avoid making her father feel shame and inadequacy as a man for not adhering to the

protector role that his only daughter deserved. Magnolia made it a point several times in

her *testimonio* to make sure I knew he was a good protector and this was not his fault, or

hers. According to Isasi-Días (1996):

> Family for us is a vast network of relationships and resources in which Hispanic
> women play a key role. Latinas want to preserve our families while ridding
> ourselves of oppressive elements and understandings about the family and about
> our role in it. (p. 139)

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Magnolia's plan to keep quiet ultimately favors her family by delivering them from feeling shame. In so doing, Magnolia does not disrupt the Latinx family homeostasis. As such, Magnolia's concealment allows her to be the daughter, to put the male at the top of the hierarchy first. To this day, her silence about her sexual abuse allows her father to remain the impeccable provider and protector. "*I think that is a little bit in our nature [as daughters] to protect our family. It is all about making sure that they are safe. Emotionally. Physically. And that we can provide that [for them].*"

Narrative portrait: Monica.

I never told anybody about this [my child sexual abuse] and then one day,

probably about 20 years ago,

I was with my mom and we were talking, and my mother grew up in the same exact house

that I did and she said that her brother had molested her. Her older brother.

My mom was the youngest and obviously this [my mother's molestation] was way before

I was born. And my mom was 14 years old when she got pregnant [with me]. So you can

imagine.

So I think that we have the fear that if we tell, well,

if we tell we will feel like we did something wrong. You know?

[It's] the shame that we have to negotiate, especially as Mexican women.

And so, my mom tells me this and we just cried and cried and cried.

And from that day, we have never really talked about that ever again, except for once in

a while she will make a statement about her brother. Which they don't really talk.

So it has been this thing that is there, but it is not there. You know?

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And it is really hard, because for me, I think it has really affected me, and my own idea

about where I want to be,

about bisexuality.

In the aforementioned segment of her *testimonio*, Monica, shares the first time, after 20 years, that she told her mother about her experience of child sexual abuse. Monica's mom had just told her about her own experience of abuse by her brother and so Monica felt she could share her own experience with her mother. Though she disclosed to her mother about the abuse, she never talked about it again. Moreover, Monica also shared the manner in which her experience of child sexual abuse impacted her sexuality.

As the daughter of a young mother, Monica grew up living with her grandparents (nana and tata) the majority of her life. "*And my grandfather was in construction and he had only finished up to the fourth grade and my grandmother was a homemaker and she only had gone to the eighth grade so we were pretty solidly working class and you know, we are Mexican-American.*" During a brief time when she was ten years old, her teenage cousin lived with them and because it was a two-bedroom home, Monica and he had to share a room. Monica stated that for several nights in a row, as she was trying to sleep her cousin sexually abused her. Scared and confused with what was happening, Monica would pretend to be asleep and would turn toss and turn her body so it would be inaccessible to him:

> *And then it happened again, I remember again, pretending like I was asleep or*
>
> *laying on my stomach to keep my arms, or take the cover around me and pull it*
>
> *down so that this person couldn't do this to me and I never... I was still young, I*

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didn't know what was happening and I didn't even see what was happening, but

you could feel it and I never touched a penis and I had no desire to but it was just

like I knew something was wrong.

Monica approached me similarly to the way Magnolia did about the definition of CSA. *"I am wondering how you are conceptualizing child sexual abuse…"* Her question regarding the definition clearly exposed her inner negotiation of whether her abuse counted as such. *"I mean I guess I have been thinking about his for a long time, but it is something that I ever really named this way. I think that is why I asked you how you were defining it."* Her question, as well as many of the other participants' inquiry about sexual abuse provides insight to the lack of awareness in Latinx families of what constitutes child sexual abuse. According to Fontes, Cruz, and Tabachnick (2001) Latinos do not identify sexual abusive behavior because it is not something that is spoken or learned about in the family. This was the case for Magnolia who was being raised in a very conservative home.

Like Magnolia, and Luna, who I will introduce next, Monica knew that what her cousin was doing at nighttime to her was wrong because her felt so much shame because she knew that whatever was happening was definitely immoral. Her Catholic and conservative grandparents, her formal Catholic education, as well as the continual representation of religion throughout the house reminded her to feel shame:

And I went to Catholic school from kindergarten to twelfth grade and we had

religious iconography throughout the house, the Virgin of Guadalupe[9], guardian

angel, all this stuff. So there was all this continual like representation of religion

throughout the house as well as in my school and so I just remember like, I felt a

lot of shame.

And so, Monica kept quiet for many years. Twenty years later, as an adult, Monica

disclosed to her mother about her sexual abuse after her mother had confessed to her that

her brother had abused her when she was a teenager. The delay of disclosure for several

women in the study seems peculiar, but it is consistent with current Latinx child sexual

abuse disclosure literature. Studies show that majority of sexually abused children do not

reveal sexual abuse during childhood and wait until adulthood to do so (Fontes &

Plummer, 2010).

Though Monica's mother offered the opportunity that invited Monica to disclose,

Monica stated that particular time was the only time they ever talked about it. Further,

when asked why she kept her secret for so long and why she never told her nana, Monica

stated that she wanted to protect her cousin and herself from all the shame that comes

with immoral situations.

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[9] Roman Catholic title for the Virgin Mary. The Virgin of Guadalupe is considered the
Patron Saint of Mexico. She is often depicted with brown skin and is said to be of Aztec
and Spanish heritage. She is considered to be the one who helped convert the Indigenous
people of Mexico to Christianity at the time of the Spanish conquest.

Expiration of abuse story, silence for protection of the family and/or perpetrator, silence for protection from feeling shame, were the main themes that exhibited the reasons why Monica stayed silent about her sexual abuse.

Expiration of abuse story was one of the main themes in Monica's testimonio. Monica did disclose to her mother 20 years after the abuse and like Rosa, Elena, and Garabato, once Monica disclosed to her mother, it was never brought up again. As seen in the introduction of Monica's testimonio, she mentioned that her story of child sexual abuse was almost ghostlike, *"So it has been this thing that is there, but it is not there. You know?"* Again, it is as if the women's stories of child sexual abuse have an expiration period and there are silent rules about child sexual abuse disclosure. If you do not tell within a particular time period, you waited too long, do not tell. Once you tell once, do not tell it again. The story is gone forever, why tell it again? The undertone of this theme echoes the idea of the strong women of color trope. Good Latina mothers are supposed to raise ideal girls. Since being an ideal Latina likely means the need to survive oppression and marginalization, our mothers and grandmothers also train us to be strong. We are inheriting our mother's gardens and with them, tools to groom them. Silence is strength. Get over it. Ya (enough). Be happy. Isasi-Díaz (1996) acknowledged that the daily ordinary lucha (struggle) of Latinas to survive suffering and to live fully needed to be a central element of Mujerista Theology because that is the main experience of Latina women:

> La lucha and not suffering is central to Hispanic women's self-understanding. I have gotten the best clues for understanding how Latinas understand and deal with suffering by looking at Latinas' capacity to celebrate, at our ability to

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organize a fiesta in the midst of the most difficult circumstances and in spite of deep pain. The fiestas are of course, not celebrations of suffering but of the struggle against suffering. (p. 130)

Though not explicit, the metaphorical fiestas (often the silent fiestas) that Isasi-Díaz (1996) postulates about are often a way of encouraging the women in our families to be strong and to not let typical difficulties overcome Latinas' lives. Monica spoke to her mother about her abuse when she learned that her mother had also experienced sexual abuse. Thereafter, they never brought the experiences up again. Similarly, in my experience, my mom and I tend to walk on eggshells about my former experiences of abuse. I want to talk to her so she helps me save myself from the remnants of shame that I still feel once in a while. I am sure she wants to help me, but it is too difficult for her too. And though it may seem cruel that our mothers do not invite us to speak, cope, and manage our survival of shame, their silence about our stories could serve as opportunities for us to distance ourselves from the pain of having to relive our stories as we speak them.

Silence for protection of the family and/or perpetrator was one of the main reasons Monica kept quiet about her abuse for 20 years. Monica stated that she could not disclose to her grandmother because she had a close relationship with the cousin who had abused her. Monica mentioned that it was a very interesting negotiation because despite her cousin sexually abusing her, he was one of her favorite cousins and did not want to jeopardize their relationship or him. *"And I loved my cousin. And I still love him and he is my favorite cousin. But I do not know how to make sense of it. And I don't know if I want to, I don't know if I can."*

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Typically, the reason why children protect their perpetrator is because often, the perpetrator is someone who the child feels he or she should trust and so it gets complicated for the child (Fontes & Plummer, 2010). Other times, the child gets groomed and accustomed to a set of events that develop from innocent play to malignant touches that constitute sexual abuse. By the time the abuse comes, children are told not to tell or they feel guilty for not telling sooner (as seen in Magnolia's story) or they simply have become acclimated to the abuse as a normal event (as seen in Garabato and Rosa's story) (Fontes & Plummer, 2010). Further, Fontes and Plummer (2010) state that through the grooming process, children learn to enjoy certain aspects of the relationship with the offender and so they eventually protect the offender unknowingly. In Monica's case, her cousin did not intentionally groom her and he did not ask her to conceal her abuse. Monica simply acted as a typical Chicana woman that put herself second and prioritized the protection of her cousin and the protection of her grandparents from experiencing shame and inadequacy.

As captured in Garabato's *testimonio*, Anzaldúa (2007) states that Chicanas and Mexicanas exist collectively first and as the self last. That is, we are first a sister, daughter, cousin, goddaughter, before we are allowed to claim and be the autonomous self. As such, Monica acted within the cultural rulebook of performing and protecting the self last, because her first responsibility was to exist as granddaughter and cousin. Additionally, as Mexican women, it is our job to essentially impress the males in the family due to the patriarchal rubric that we must abide by. Monica stated, *"I loved my cousin very much. I looked up to him and you know when you are young, and you are*

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young girl you are trying to get huge approval, so when you get something like that

happening, you just don't know if it is right or wrong." Since it was hard for Monica to

decipher the wrongness of what was happening, she decided to conceal her abuse to

protect her cousin.

Additionally, in a sense, by protecting the perpetrator, Monica was also protecting

her nana and tata from experiencing that collective shame that Magnolia introduced us to.

Disclosing about her abuse would implicate the entire family in that it would question

their ability to nurture and protect. According to Fontes (2005), being part of the child

sexual abuse system is in itself a shaming experience for Latinx families. A visit by a

police officer or a member of a child protection agency can produce a deep sense of

shame since authorities would examine only "bad" caretakers. Even if Monica had

disclosed to her grandparents and it would have been handled within the family, the

disclosure itself would be a prominent indicator of parental inadequacy.

Another reason why Monica did not disclose had to do with the avoidance of

different types of shame. This is captured by the second theme in her story, **silence for**

protection from feeling shame. Monica stated that she did not disclose to her grandma

because of anticipated disapproval and potential blaming:

> *You know my nana was very much about modesty. So I am sure there would have*
>
> *been something about my modesty. She probably would have told my tata or*
>
> *maybe not because she tried to protect him. I don't think she would have said*
>
> *anything. Except something to me. She would not have said anything to my*
>
> *cousin. She might have believed me, but I don't think she would have said*

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anything. And not because she is a bad person but because, I don't think she knew

how to deal with that. Maybe she would ask me questions like, what [clothes] was

I sleeping in? Was I not covered correctly? What did I do wrong?

Fontes (2005) claims that shame and honor are perceived as extreme opposites. Honor is

the ultimate aim that consists of a claim to worth and the social acknowledgement of

worth. On the other end, shame is the feeling "of no claim to worth, exacerbated by the

lack of social acknowledgement of worth. That is, not only do shamed people feel

unworthy inside, but they also feel they lack worth in the eyes of others" (Fontes, 2005,

p. 63). Though Monica realizes that she did not do anything wrong, she conditioned to

feel shame for being in a sexual situation, even if it was against her will. Unfortunately,

shame did not exist solely in the frame of her sexual abuse experience; rather, it existed

among and between every single one of her intersecting identities.

Monica and Garabato's *testimonios* beautifully showcased the ways Latinas

negotiate, speak, and survive their sexual abuse experiences as multidimensional and

intersectional beings. Both stories displayed the ways class plays a role in child sexual

abuse as well as how religion impacts the way Latina women react and survive sexual

abuse. Additionally, the protagonists of both *testimonios* centered their sexuality and

spoke about the ways it was impacted (or not) by the abuse. Monica stated, *"And so,*

everything about my sexuality was always in crisis I felt because of what had happened to

me." She was hyper aware of her body from a very young age, likely because of the

abuse. Monica also stated she always knew she was different:

I know as well that I am not straight. I know I am not straight. But I know that I

am not a lesbian either, but there is something going on here. And maybe I am

queer because yeah I don't just want to be with a man, and I don't want to just be

with a woman but, I am queer because I have been fucked over by the patriarchy,

you know what I mean? So the queerness for me isn't necessarily about my

sexuality as much as being a sense of that abject. Or being treated or

experiencing abjection. Which I think a lot of it goes back to this incident [of child

sexual abuse].

Monica's words echo those of Anzaldúa (2007) when she speaks about her own

queerness: "Being a lesbian and raised Catholic, indoctrinated as straight, I made the

choice to be queer (for some it is genetically inherent)" (p. 41).

As Magnolia introduced us to collective shame, Monica presented what I came to

call intersectional shame, or shame that lives in between her intersecting identities.

As women, like Garabato, Monica experienced shame surrounding her abuse in that she

felt she had done something wrong as a woman. Further, every other intersection of

Monica's identity was broken because she did not adhere to each intersection's standards.

For example, as someone who was raised in a Catholic home receiving a Catholic

education, she disrupted the holy, heteronormative way of being by choosing to be queer.

Monica's skin color was also a counter narrative to the master narrative of what a Latina

should look like, and what Latinas are allowed to talk about. Specifically, she mentioned

that her grandmother would call her "Guerra," a nickname often given to the lightest

skinned children in the family. Though her grandmother found it a privilege to have

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someone this fair skinned living in her home, Monica did not appreciate having a

moniker based on skin color:

> *I remember one time I told my grandmother, I don't want you to call me Guerra*
>
> *anymore, how would you like it if I called you by your skin color? And she was*
>
> *really offended by it. And I think they see me as really radical. Even the critiques*
>
> *about whiteness, are met with 'you have to be careful; don't say that..*

Moraga and Anzaldúa (2015) speak about the *color problem* and state that if you are not

dark enough or white enough, you are flawed. Chicanas are "always up against a color

chart that first got erected far outside our families and our neighborhoods, but which

invaded them both with systemic determination" (p. 3). Monica knew shame in and

outside of her body, to speak about her abuse would have been too much for her, and her

grandmother. Come back around to connection to collective shame if that is your point.

According to Monica, the intersection of her identity that was influenced by her

abuse that produced much more shame than being queer was her woman mothering

identity, or lack thereof. *"Because when you say you are a woman that doesn't want to*

have children, that gets the most negative reaction than any other identity I have." As

Chicana women, there are only two culturally acceptable vocational paths. You may be a

mother and wife or the only other acceptable vocation is to be a nun (Anzaldúa, 2007).

"Women are made to be total failures if they don't marry and have children" (p. 39).

Monica chose another choice, to enter the vocational world by way of education and

becoming an autonomous person. *"So I think for me, well maybe this[the abuse] is*

probably one of the reasons why I don't want to have kids, I don't know but. I don't have

children. I am never going to have children, the closest thing I ever have are my

students."

As we wrapped up Monica's *testimonio* we discussed changes we could make as we move forward so that little girls are empowered to speak. She stated that in order to change any type of shame or silence narrative, we need to educate the entire family, and we need to involve the Catholic church:

> *I think our families need to be educated about naming these things, I think it also has to be connected to the church because we learn shame in many cases from the church. So I think if we get women and men who are educating both the parents, as well as other family members about these issues that is where we have to start. The church has done so much of this to us that we have to involve the church in the change. There were men in the Bible that did bad things to their daughters, can we use that as an example? The old testament is full of it! I think that the Bible provides us with moments to learn and talk about these things.*

Narrative portrait: Luna.

I think letting myself, well letting her [the perpetrator] do those things to me. Like that didn't seem socially acceptable and engaging in those activities [being abused] at that age.

When I grew older and started developing an understanding of what that [the abuse] meant, I realized that it would have been… well I was tainted. I was no longer… pure. It just that, that's the way that I was raised. My mom is very conservative towards everything and we were raised Catholic and it was very strict, the religion and the

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practices. So I never, consciously made an effort to say or to think that I was protecting

myself by not saying anything, but that could have been because I did feel shame if I had

said something.

Also, I think it is a very common thing, of blaming.

Especially with my family. Like, 'Oh that happened to you? What did you do to make that

happen?' And I don't know where it comes from, I think it is just an occurring thing, you

know? From generation to generation and when they [the women in my family] were

growing up that is how they were treated. And that is how things were justified.

What did you do to make it happen?

What were you wearing that brought that upon you?

It is a cultural blaming. Blaming the victim.

Luna, a 31-year-old Mexican woman, recalls the negotiation within herself of

whether she should disclose about her sexual abuse or keep it quiet to avoid several

things. She knew that if she kept her abuse a secret, she could avoid being blamed for the

abuse and could avoid feelings of shame. In her testimonio excerpt, Luna knew that

sexual abuse was too common for the women in her culture and family which is what

made her think she would be blamed for being in situations that got her abused, so she

kept quiet.

Luna was eight years old when an older girl sexually abused her in a rural town in

Mexico. Luna started her testimonio by describing her town and the extremely tight

community she was a part of. Since her father spent most of the year in the United States

so he could send money to Luna and her family, her mother predominantly raised Luna

and her siblings. To live a more comfortable life, her mother would pick up shifts at Luna's aunt's tortilla business. Luna remembers being unsupervised often and would spend a lot of time with her cousins on her dad's side of the family in their neighborhood.

There was this girl she would hang out with, however, that was not her cousin, but the girl's family was close with Luna's dad. Luna remembers this girl being more open about sex and since Luna was raised extremely conservative and sheltered this was a bit unusual:

> *So I would hang out with one of the daughters a lot and other friends that I had, but it seems as if she had been exposed to sex very early, I don't know if it was just that she had been watching other people, because there was a lot of teenagers in the neighborhood. And there was a couple that everybody knew that was known to do [sexual] things like that. But the girl who I would hang out with she had clearly seen a lot of things.*

One day, the girl asked Luna to go to this house with her that was not part of their neighborhood. Of course, because they were friends, Luna did not think anything of it:

> *I don't remember how we got there or why we were there but she took me behind a green door, it was wood, and she took me behind the door and she said 'oh I want to show you something.' And I went, you know, I didn't know. And then she, uh, I was standing behind the door and she was in front of me facing me and then she started to take my clothes off and I was like what does she want to show me? Like I really had no idea. At that age I didn't know. We were very sheltered from those things and not even thinking about… I was just hanging out with friends. So*

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she started taking off my clothes and I didn't think about it. I couldn't make

anything out of it and then started licking me. Like licking my body, like my

breasts and …. Yeah… And kissing me and then she was telling me, 'You know,

this is how they do it…' Like the guy and the girl that I had mentioned earlier.

And then I only remember [her] licking me and kissing me and touching me and

after that, I have no idea what happened. I probably went back home. I don't

know what followed, or what I felt. I just know that I didn't think anything out of it

until I was old enough to think.

Luna does not remember what happened after, but she does remember not wanting to tell

her mother because she felt her mother would reprimand her and she also felt shame:

Shame. I felt it. I think letting myself, well letting her do those things to me. Like

that didn't seem socially acceptable and engaging in those activities at that age.

When I grew older and started developing an understanding of what that meant, I

realized that it would have been… well I was tainted. I was no longer… pure.

Luna's *testimonio* presented the following themes: **self-invalidation/minimizing of**

abuse, silence for protection of the self, and **silence for protection of feeling shame**.

Similar to some of the women in the study, Luna was curious how I was defining

child sexual abuse and wondered if her story could be considered. *"I have a question*

about how you're defining child sexual abuse. Are you looking for participants abused by

adults only?" Quite frankly, as I mentioned in chapter two, after reading so much about

sexual abuse and what constituted as such, I decided not to include the definition on

flyers so that women would not qualify their abuse. I also wanted them to reach out to me

and I could answer any questions verbally instead of them looking at a flyer and allowing

it to determine whether their abuse counted or not. Like with Monica and Magnolia, I

described child sexual abuse and I found myself going back to the legal definition of it

provided by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act:

> the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any
> child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit
> conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual
> depiction of such conduct; or the rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of
> sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children. (Health and Human
> Services, 2014)

It dawned on me in that moment that the legal definition of CSA did not explain more

thoroughly that the important marker of CSA was not *who did it* (and how old they were)

rather *who they did it to*. A *child*. What was special about Luna's story was that her

perpetrator was not only a 12-year-old child, but also her perpetrator was a female. It is

important to keep this in mind because as Luna told her story, she mentioned that she did

not disclose for many years and when she did, most people would minimize her abuse

and deemed it as child's play, so she began to invalidate her abuse as well:

> *Some were dismissive like you know, that we were just kids playing, others were*
>
> *like, oh that is horrible. But I got mostly, 'Oh that was nothing.' Like she didn't,*
>
> *rape you.' I don't remember, maybe she did. Yeah, I haven't told someone*
>
> *[when?] I told the story and felt like they understood the gravity or the impact*
>
> *that it had on me.*

Also, because Luna was so young when it happened, and her mother never had any sort

of conversation relating to situations like those, she did not know how to decipher abuse,

specifically because it did not come from an adult. In turn, she minimized her abuse and decided to keep her child sexual abuse a secret.

Silence for protection of the self was another theme that captured Luna's decision to conceal her sexual abuse. To this day, Luna has not told her mother because Luna wanted to protect herself and her honor:

She probably would have been angry. For being there with her. I don't think that she would have gone after the girl or the mom. But honestly, I think she would have given me a beating because I allowed myself to be with this girl, I let her do things to me. Yeah. Knowing my mom, that is what would have happened. So maybe in a way, not saying anything was also, that was my way to stay safe.

As seen in her introduction, Luna was protecting herself from cultural blame. She had broken the cultural rule of being in a situation that got her abused. Luna's mother followed the Mexican mother rulebook—Maintain a peaceful, conservative home, while the father is away in the U.S. making money for his family. Creating a conservative space means using shame to socialize little girls and avoiding any communication surrounding sex that will taint little girls' ears. Additionally, part of upholding a conservative household is to reprimand children, particularly girls, when they put themselves in dangerous or shameful situations. *"Yeah, like it is our job not to put ourselves in that situation. Like don't go out there and get violated. It happened to you because you were probably not careful. What did you do to avoid it?"* I believe that the onus often put on the woman to not put herself in situation that is going to get her sexually marked is part of the conservative upbringing and it has its roots in Mexican folklore. Anzaldúa

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remembers her mother and grandmother socializing her with the story about the serpent in the water:

> 'Don't go in the water', my mother would say, 'a snake will crawl into your vagina and make you pregnant.' Hers was a cautionary tale so that I wouldn't bare my body like the gringa girls. 'Don't go out late at night, a snake will enter your vagina.' But my mother was really saying, 'Don't go out late at night; a man will rape you.' (Keating, 2015, p. 26)

Luna kept quiet about her abuse to protect herself from receiving a beating for not being more careful and for being in a dangerous situation. Further, Luna decided to stay quiet to avoid feelings of shame from others.

The final theme in Luna's testimonio was **silence for protection from feeling shame**. Brown's (2006) research on shame offers a different view on shame in that it incorporates three different components in the definition. Aside from the uncomfortable thoughts and feelings of shame, Brown (2006) states that shame exists within social situations and that shame survives because certain social relationships confirm the internal feelings of shame. Lastly, Brown (2006) posits that the cultural component of shame indicates the breaking of moral rules set by cultural expectations. In speaking about the moral rules in our culture Luna offered an explanation of the entities and/or people that make and perpetuate the "*shame rules*." She stated:

> *Well I think the church. I know the church has a lot to do with it. If you come from a family or community with religion it [shame] is one of the main things, main values, and anything that deviates from that [purity], is wrong. It is frowned upon. It makes you less of a Catholic. Like that makes you dirty. And I know that where I came from that is how people are, they are very hush, hush about*

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anything that is not according to what Jesus says or what the church is saying you

have to do.

Since Luna had been in a situation that essentially robbed her from her purity, she knew

she had to feel shame and if she spoke about her abuse, she would feel even more of it.

As such, she decided to conceal her sexual abuse and will likely never tell her family.

Luna concluded her *testimonio* by sharing that she was changing the narrative for

her little niece. Not only is she having conversations about malignant touches, Luna also

mentioned that she is teaching her that is it okay to talk about it even if it feels shameful.

Luna will keep quiet about her instance of sexual abuse, but she will make sure she and

other little girls know to use their voice. *"Now I tell my niece, who is 6 years old. I tell*

her those things. I tell her not to let people touch her. If somebody ever does something to

you, I want her to tell me if something happens. Just say it."

Summary

By being witnesses to participants' *testimonios* and the themes within them, we

are learning about the complicated nature of child sexual abuse and also allowing them to

share about their past to co-create knowledge for the present and future. Isasi-Díaz (1996)

states that letting Latinas speak freely about oppressions permits them to be protagonists

and agents of their histories and futures:

> If when we speak, we are not listened to, if Latinas continue to be spoken to,
> spoken about, or simply- supposedly- included in what is said about Hispanics in
> general, our humanity will continue to be diminished in the eyes of the dominant
> group, but also, unfortunately, in our own eyes as we internalize such
> objectification of ourselves. (133)

The findings in this chapter ardently display an extremely nuanced, complicated, and nonlinear nature of child sexual abuse disclosure for Latina women. Considering the value this dissertation places on prioritizing and hearing participants' voices, it is critical to recognize the way participants speak about family and larger Latinx cultural constructs, and the manner in which they impact sexual abuse disclosure.

As seen in the majority of participants' testimonios, **silence for protection of the family/perpetrator, silence for protection of the father's masculinity,** and **silence for protection of feeling shame** are inundated themes that speak to the protection of the familia. Magnolia, Elena, and Rosa feverishly protected their father's reputation as a man and their father's dignity from experiencing any sort of shame by keeping quiet. We even saw Rosa digging up her sexual abuse vault and going to the police 13 years after her abuse because she wanted to heal her father's masculinity. Monica never told her grandmother about her abuse, but had she told her grandmother, she is sure that her grandmother would have reprimanded Monica and made sure to never let the grandfather know to protect him. Monica stayed quiet to protect her cousin that she dearly cares for and Magnolia stayed quiet because she rationalized her abuse as nonmalignant since her cousin had just suffered a head injury. For these women, family came first, and family will always come first.

Expiration of abuse story, normalization of abuse, self-invalidation/minimization of abuse, generational abuse, silence for protection from political authorities, silence for protection of purity and virginity, and **silence for protection of feeling shame** were the other themes that explain why Latinas choose to

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remain silent about their abuse. I argue that these themes emerge due to a faulty cultural system that continues to exist through the teachings of the family and the Catholic Church. Further, the cultural system that is designed to marginalize women is safeguarded and perpetuated by the silence of the very same women (whether it be the woman who experience abuse, the mothers, or grandmothers, etc.). Rosa, Garabato, and Monica told their mothers about their abuse and all of their mothers heard them once, but never again. Rosa and Garabato's narrative portraits showed their mothers protecting the male perpetrator and both women got reprimanded for bringing up their abuse years later because the abuse was nonexistent, expired, moot. As these women told their stories we learned that most of the mothers and/or sisters had been abused as well and therefore the women in the study learned to normalize and minimize their instances of abuse. While hearing participants' stories and themes within the narratives I learned the Latinx rules of silence deep-rooted in my own upbringing and family:

1. You already spoke about it. Ya. No more.

2. Your mother was abused too? Normalize it.

3. You were not penetrated with a penis? Minimize it.

4. Abused by an older child? A woman? It doesn't count.

5. He penetrated you? He touched you? What did you do to be in that situation?

6. Protect your virginity and purity as if your life depends on it. How? Bite your tongue firmly.

7. Pick the most dangerous individual in your presence and go from there… La Migra or a rapist?

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La Migra.

Shhh.

The present chapter showcased through narrative portraits of the retelling of

pieces of the *testimonios* the ways women decide to conceal and/or reveal their

experiences of child sexual abuse without using an existing theory to describe and

validate Latina child sexual abuse disclosure processes. Grounded theory calls for the

emptying of the theoretical mind during data collection and analysis to allow the data and

stories to create a brand new authentic space for original knowledge. Now that the stories

organically sanctioned the emergence of themes, I will briefly revisit communication

privacy management theory, the study's sensitizing concept and theory, in chapter four.

As described by grounded theory principles in chapter one and two, CPM provided a

point of reference for the ways individuals choose to disclose and/or conceal sexual abuse

experiences. In former chapters I acknowledged that CPM could be potentially limited on

its own to account for the marginalized voices of sexually abuse Latinas. What follows is

an analysis of how CPM could function to explain Latina child sexual abuse disclosure,

and concepts and situations that CPM should consider moving forward.

Chapter Four: Discussion

"Do work that matters. Vale la pena, it's worth the pain" (Anazaldúa, p. 22, 2015).

Multiple empirical studies and reports indicate that one in three Latina girls experiences child sexual abuse before the age of 18 (Newcomb, Munoz, & Carmona, 2009; Russell & Bolen, 2010). Though prevalence rates are significantly high among this community, studies that investigate disclosure trends convey that Latinas' disclosure rates are low and often delayed (Ligiéro et al., 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Silence and delayed disclosure are risk factors for many social and psychological consequences that follow child sexual abuse, such as depression, revictimization, and substance abuse. Given the psychological repercussions that follow child sexual abuse, it is imperative to center Latina women in sexual violence and communication studies research.

As a historically marginalized community and one that is often absent in research studies, Latinas should be studied through critical methodology that prioritizes their voice. This is especially important when studying a community of individuals that have been violated and silenced. Further, Latina child sexual abuse disclosure should be studied with a critical methodology that invites the collective and nuanced nature of the Latinx culture. This would serve to uncover the fundamental structures of power that

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likely impact child sexual abuse disclosure. As such, the present study sought to explore the manner in which Latinas choose to disclose or conceal their instances of child sexual abuse by employing the Indigenous methodology of *testimonio. Testimonio* is a story-telling research method that is often used to document the experiences of individuals who have been oppressed and it has been utilized to denounce injustices experienced by marginalized societies. Further, in order to prioritize the stories of Latinas in the study and to allow their *testimonios* to create new authentic spaces for novel knowledge, I used grounded theory to analyze the *testimonios* inductively. Grounded theory calls for the emptying of existing theoretical knowledge to allow the data (in this case participants' *testimonios*) to lead the trajectory of the research process. Further, grounded theory allows for the use of a sensitizing concept, or ideas or existing theories that can provide a point of reference. As such, communication privacy management theory served as the sensitizing theory for the present study as its framework is designed to explore the ways individuals manage private information. Given the strengths of Indigenous methodology and grounded theory, I implemented them to work together to investigate the present study's overarching question: *How do Latinas decide to disclose or conceal their child sexual abuse experience(s)?*

Choosing to explore the ways Latinas disclose or conceal their experiences of child sexual abuse through an Indigenous method and grounded theory approach provided insight for the present study and future scholarly and community endeavors. Six Latina women shared their *testimonios* of child sexual abuse in the present study. Participants' *testimonios* garnered narratives that explored and examined the manner in

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which they experienced child sexual abuse as well as the processes they took in deciding to disclose or conceal their child sexual abuse experiences. Further, through participant narrative portraits, chapter three displayed the pervasive and continual negotiation of centering the family when deciding to disclose about CSA instances. Specifically, the narrative portraits showcased nine themes that captured Latinas' decisions to conceal or reveal their abuse experiences. The themes included: self-invalidation/minimization of abuse, normalization of abuse, generational abuse, expiration of abuse story, silence for protection from feeling shame, silence for protection of father's masculinity, silence for protection of purity and virginity, silence for protection of the family and/or perpetrator, and silence for protection of the self. I presented the themes through the telling of portions of the participants' *testimonios* and analyzed and contextualized them through application of Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology.

Now that the *testimonios* organically sanctioned the emergence of themes, in this final chapter, I revisit communication privacy management theory as it served as the sensitizing theory for this study. First, I will provide a brief exploration of the principles within the theory that apply to Latina child sexual abuse disclosure. The *testimonios* in this study provided robust data that can serve as a starting point to further CPM. As such, I will then explore the new ideas this study provides related to CPM and will conclude with a discussion of the practical applications, the strengths and limitations of this study, and future direction of this work.

Revisiting Communication Privacy Management Theory (CPM)

Before I examine CPM's theoretical principles that account for Latina child sexual abuse disclosure and possible extensions of the theory, I briefly summarize the theory, which I explained in greater depth in chapter one. Overall, CPM was created to address the way individuals manage private information through communicative interactions (Petronio, 2002; 2007). CPM uses a boundary metaphor to demonstrate the manner in which management principles work and to show how people regulate private information with others. According to Petronio (2002) individuals believe that they are the primary shareholder of their private information and they have the right to manage and control the flow of the information. Through the use of a variety of privacy rules, individuals decide to open a privacy boundary and disclose their private information or conceal their private information and keep the individual boundary closed (Petronio, 2002). If the individual chooses to disclose the private information, the original information shareholder and recipient of the information form a collective boundary. In so doing, the recipient now becomes a shareholder and co-owner of the private information. "Consequently, if mutually agreed upon privacy rules are developed and adopted, the co-owners of the information are able to coordinate successfully the regulation of the collectively held private information" (Petronio, 2007, p. 219). Further, Petronio (2002) accounts for co-management issues of private information through the idea of boundary turbulence. Boundary turbulence occurs when a member disrupts the coordination of privacy rules or when an individual's privacy boundary is infringed upon.

According to Petronio (2002; 2007) boundary turbulence usually results in anger, uncertainty, and/or mistrust.

What follows is an exploration of the manner in which Latinas managed their privacy surrounding their child sexual abuse experiences. First, I will demonstrate how two Latinas' *testimonios* and their privacy management truly correspond with CPM's principles and then I will explore the ways in which CPM can develop to explain Latina child sexual abuse disclosure.

Testimonios' Congruity with CPM Principles

Two Latinas in the study, Magnolia and Luna, mentioned that they never told anyone about their abuse and that they likely never will. According to CPM, these two women have impermeable or resistant boundaries surrounding their abuse. Thus, the information is self-owned as it lives within the safe walls of the individual boundary (Petronio, 2002). Though not explicit stated, it seems that the two women decided that the risks of disclosure outweighed the benefits of disclosure. When individuals determine that opening access to private information to others will be more punishing than rewarding, they will keep the information in the individual boundary (Petronio, 2010). One woman, Luna, said she did not want to get beat by her mother. She knew her mother would reprimand her for putting herself in the situation to get abused. She also calculated that her mother would not confront the perpetrator, would simply shame Luna, and nothing more. She did not think that by telling her mother she would feel protected, so she kept quiet. Magnolia, the other woman who did not disclose, decided to stay silent so that her parents never felt the shame that she felt. She also did not want to tell her mom

about the abuse, as it would hurt her mother by making her think that Magnolia never trusted her with this information when the abuse initially occurred. Accordingly, Petronio (2007) states that individuals want to dictate the flow of information because there may be risks if others get access to the private information. As such, these women individually managed their information and made sure to remain as primary and individual owners of their child sexual abuse, which is congruent with Petronio's (2002) idea of primary ownership.

Another way that Latinas' management of private sexual abuse information corresponded with CPM principles was through the negotiation and implementation of privacy rules. Petronio (2002; 2007; 2010) contends that individuals use a rule-based system to control the flow of private material. As such, privacy rules are created to determine how, when, and to whom individuals will share private information. According to Petronio (2007), privacy rules stem from criteria that individuals use to make and change the rules according to the situation. "Cultural values are found to influence judgments about privacy issues and create expectations of how people think privacy should be managed" (Petronio, 2010, p. 179). In both their stories, Luna and Magnolia were influenced by shame and thus decided to remain primary owners of their sexual abuse private information. In their cases, since Magnolia and Luna had been abused, they no longer held a purity status, and thus shame emerged. As such, as Petronio (2010) contends, their cultural values dictated their decision to conceal their experiences of child sexual abuse. Since both women decided to conceal their experiences of child sexual abuse, their abuse stayed within the dimension of the individual boundary. As such, since

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Magnolia and Luna kept their information to themselves, they never formed a collective

boundary with anyone else.

CPM: Personal and Collective Boundaries

In what follows, I will further explain Petronio's (2002) concepts of personal and

collective boundaries. Moreover, in order to account for the collective nature of Latinx

culture, I will propose for CPM to add a collective family backdrop element that will

supplement the existing individual and collective boundaries already inherent in CPM's

system. Thereafter, I will explain the manner in which some Latinas' attempted to form

collective boundaries with members of their family and the ways family members

rejected Latinas' child sexual abuse stories. Since current CPM research does not account

for the collective nature of certain cultures or situations for when information gets

rejected by target recipients, I will then make an argument for how these ideas can serve

to extend CPM.

CPM's principle of boundary coordination and collective boundaries are

significant to this study as participants centered the collective family in their disclosure

processes, even when they do not tell. Petronio (2002) posits that individuals have

personal boundaries where they manage private information about the self, but they also

have collective boundary configurations where they are allowed to regulate information

with other people. In order for these collective boundaries to transpire, a coordination

process must take place. Petronio (2002) states that it is not enough to consider the self in

the revealing and concealing process as the larger disclosure picture includes other

characters. Thus, Petronio (2002) explicates the differences between personal and collective boundaries.

Petronio (2002) postulates that the individual boundary is the home to an individual's private information. CPM identifies information about the self as private and that individuals use a rule system to decide whether to disclose or conceal private information about the self. Similarly, individuals also manage collective boundaries with others. With self-disclosure (personal/individual boundary) "we personally determine who, what, when, and where private information is revealed because we own it" (p. 86). For example, when Rosa decided to tell her mom about her first instance of abuse, she essentially formed a collective boundary with her mother that now housed Rosa's abuse experience. Because collective boundary management does not solely encompass the self, a much more complicated system is at play due to the participation of multiple selves. Petronio (2002) postulates that there is information that belongs to the entire family so it is marked by a collective boundary and simultaneously, each family member has information that may be inaccessible to other members of the family. As such, the individual boundary marks private information about the self that has not been revealed; however, the moment another member becomes privy to the information, the personal boundary transforms into a collective boundary (2002). Petronio (2002) offers a visual representation of the collective boundary process in Figure 1.
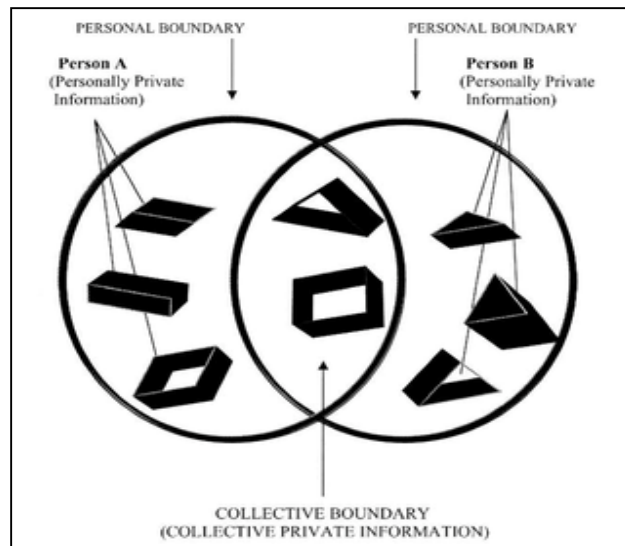
Figure 1. Boundary Types: Personal and Collective (Petronio, 2002, p. 7).
According to Petronio (2002) an individual has an individual boundary where he

or she holds private information. Figure 1 shows two individual boundaries belonging to

Person A and Person B existing in the middle of an unlabeled background. As the figure

depicts, the personal boundaries have private information exclusive to that particular

person's boundary (solid rectangles and solid triangles). However, if Person A decides to

share private information with Person B that originally was exclusive to Person A's

individual boundary, they form a collective boundary that now holds the collectively

owned private information. In figure 1, Person A shared private information (the hollow

rectangle) with Person B, and Person B shared private information with Person A (the

hollow triangle). According to Petronio (2002), "once the collective boundary is formed,

there is an expectation of co-responsibility for the shared information" (p. 87). Rosa and

Garabato's narrative portraits demonstrated examples of the idea that individuals expect

their information to be co-owned and co-managed. For example, Garabato disclosed to

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her mother about her abuse in hopes that her mother would accept the story as true and in the hopes of her mother calling the police to take Garabato's perpetrator brother to jail. Garabato expected her mother to not only receive and accept her private information but also she expected her mother to fulfill the responsibility of managing her abuse.

What follows is a discussion of the way individual and collective boundaries existed with the participants' *testimonios* as well as a proposal to add a collective family backdrop to CPM's system when used to describe Latinx disclosure processes. The collective family backdrop will allow for the collective and family cultural nuance to have a space in CPM's framework.

Collective Family Backdrop

As discussed in chapter one, central to CPM is the idea that an individual acts autonomously and has enough agency to claim private information as their possession. As the primary owner of their private information, he or she has full custody of the private knowledge and can choose to involucrate another, thus forming an alliance with a now co-owner and forming a collective boundary. The way participants in this study managed information does coincide with CPM's fundamental principles of boundaries and ownership for the most part in the sense that there is the idea that private information belongs to somebody and should be shared with someone if the benefits of disclosure outweigh the risks. Yet, I argue that the order in which ownership is shared may be more intricate when exploring Latinx child sexual abuse disclosure due to the emphasis of the family collective. As such, I recommend adding a dimension to CPM that encompasses

the idea that Latinas manage information individually or collectively at times, but always against a collective family backdrop.

As a witness to six *testimonios,* I learned that Latinas perform in such a way that implies Anzaldua's (2007) notion that a Latina woman first exists collectively, and then individually. I also learned that at times Latinas in the study did perform within Petronio's (2002) idea of an individual boundary. As such, I propose that CPM's boundary system would better explain the disclosure processes that occurred in this study if I encircle the individual and collective boundary processes with a superior collective family backdrop. This would allow both concepts to be together in one place: individual boundaries within a collective environment. With that in mind, I argue that as Latinas and as part of a collective unit, in CPM's framework, we innately exist and perform within the collective family backdrop. Put simply, Latinas act and manage private information in such a way that prioritizes the family first. Magnolia, the fourth participant introduced in chapter three, shared a memorable message delivered by her mother that indicates the responsibility of performing collectively when it came to managing private information, "In this family, we do not keep secrets." Though she was one of the participants that did not disclose about her sexual abuse, she mentioned she concealed her abuse because she did not know how to tell her mother immediately after the abuse had occurred. She knew that in her family, she was not allowed to keep anything to herself, yet because she was unaware of how to disclose, she kept silent. The guilt she felt for not initially disclosing is what kept her quiet because she had broken the family rule that states that she must share private information with her mother. As such, the message that follows her to this day

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potentially indicates Latinx families exist within a collective family backdrop. Within the collective family, Magnolia's mother expected her daughter to share everything with her, which initially denoted the potential absence of a personal boundary for Magnolia. As she kept her secret, however, we see that Magnolia did house her information within a personal boundary that existed in a collective family backdrop.

Petronio (2002) states that collectively held privacy boundaries are collective because the private information is not only regarding the self. Latinas in the study knew that their information implicated the entire familia because they exist in a collective family backdrop and therefore it was immediately supposed to be collectively owned. This is when they attempted to form the collective boundary with their mothers. Opposed to the current idea that Petronio (2002) offers regarding existing as the autonomous self first and then sharing and forming a collective boundary, there is no such thing as an autonomous self when you exist within the collective family backdrop. However, true to Petronio's (2002) idea of boundary coordination and linkages (2002), participants in the study did attempt to form a collective boundary within the collective family backdrop. For example, Rosa disclosed to her mother regarding her abuse, thus forming a collective boundary with her mother. Rosa's narrative portrait then shows the mother rejecting Rosa's story. This is when we learn that the idea of forming a collective boundary with the targeted recipient accepting co-ownership of the private information is not always the case. Rather, for several Latinas, once their information was rejected by targeted recipients (in most cases, the mothers), the targeted recipient unlatched themselves from the collective boundary. This resulted in the participants now being the only owner of the

sexual abuse, leaving the sexual abuse stored in the Latina's single personal boundary

that again, exists in a collective backdrop. I offer Figure 2 as a visual representation of

the idea of the rejection of information within a collective family backdrop. In the

following section, I will explore each tenet of Figure 2.
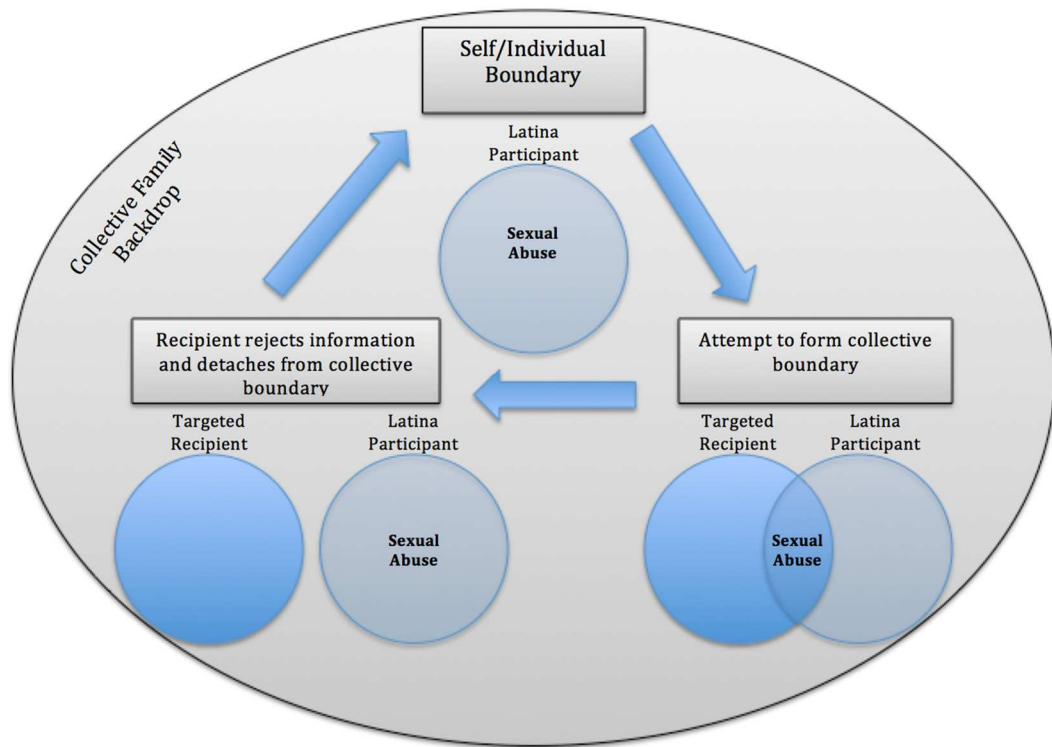
Figure 2. Recipient Rejection of Private Information Within a Collective Family
Backdrop

Recipient Rejection of Private Information and Private Information Expiration

CPM provides a theoretical network that assists in assessing how families manage

individual and collective family boundaries (Petronio, 2002; 2010). Existing research

shows the presence of family privacy boundaries and the ways families manage

information outside the collective boundary (Petronio, 2010; Serewicz & Canary, 2008).

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Further, CPM predicts that family members that serve as recipients are perceived as having to inherently accept private information and take responsibility for the private information. This principal allows CPM to be understood as a communicative disclosure theory where information management occurs on multiple levels across and among individuals and family units.

As depicted in Figure 1, Petronio (2002) posits that when given access to private information, the recipient will take onus and accept ownership of new information. What Figure 2 demonstrates, however, is a representation of the experience of those participants who attempted to create a collective boundary with a recipient and the recipient rejecting ownership of the information. I will explain the Figure 2's components individually and then illustrate the way they work together to describe private information rejection from targeted participants.

Figure 2: Recipient rejection of private information within a collective family backdrop. The first element of Figure 2 is the collective family backdrop and is represented by the large gray circle that encloses the other characters of the figure. The collective family backdrop accounts for the collectivist nuanced nature of the Latinx family. Within the collective family backdrop, at the top center position lays the individual boundary, which is represented by a solitary blue transparent circle that encloses child sexual abuse private information. Next, on the right side of the figure are two circles potentially coming together to form a collective boundary. The transparent blue circle represents the Latina participant in the study and the dark blue circle represents the targeted recipient. Like Petronio's (2002) Figure 1 of the forming of

collective boundaries, in Figure 2, some of the Latina participants shared the sexual abuse information. According to Petronio (2002) this now indicates that the information lives within a collective boundary and the recipient is now a co-owner of the information. As I continue to move through the figure and following the arrows in a clockwise manner, the next part of the figure shows the two individual boundaries coming apart. When the Latinas in the study shared their information with different family members, some of them rejected the ownership of the private information. As such, the figure demonstrates the targeted recipient detaching from the collective boundary that the Latina participant attempted to create. The next arrow takes us back to the top center of the figure, where the self boundary is and where we initially started. Since the targeted recipient rejected the child sexual abuse information, the information now lives in the individual boundary of the participant. The recipient's detachment from the private sexual abuse information essentially pushed Latinas in the study to primarily own their sexual abuse within their personal boundary.

Figure 2 principles exemplified in Latinas' testimonios. As witnessed in Rosa, Garabato, and Monica's *testimonios*, their mothers and other family members stated memorable messages and moments that indicated the rejection and expiration of abuse stories. Even though Rosa had told her mother that her step-grandfather had abused her, years later Rosa's mother blatantly asked Rosa why she was afraid of men. "What has a man ever done to you?" This memorable message indicated that Rosa's mother had either forgot about the fact that her daughter had been abused by a man, or that she simply did not accept ownership of the information. Several of the women in the study shared that

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their abuse was shared once with their mothers, and it was never brought up again. Monica mentioned that her abuse was ghostlike; it was there, but not there, denoting that it may have expired. Garabato attempted to bring her abuse up decades later and her family members reminded her that the abuse was no longer existent. As such, the present study raised an important question. What occurs when recipients reject ownership of private information and unlatch themselves from a collective boundary? As current CPM literature does not fully account for this phenomena, the present study's finding of recipient rejection of information and future research could serve to extend CPM.

Future Extensions of CPM

In this section I will begin by exploring CPM's idea of the reluctant confidant, as it is the concept within CPM's framework that somewhat resembles the present's study finding of the rejection of private information. After giving a brief overview of the reluctant confidant, I will explain the ways this concept falls short in fully explaining and accounting for the rejection of private information in the present study. Thereafter I will explain the manner in which this study establishes a foundation for which future research can expand to extend CPM.

Within CPM's theoretical framework lies the idea of the reluctant confidant. When disclosers select a targeted recipient to hear their private information, the targeted recipients do not necessarily select the role of serving as a confidant (Petronio, 2002). In these cases, as Petronio (2002) postulates, "reluctant confidants are expected to attend to the problems of people with whom they have no relationship" (p. 117). According to Petronio (2002) reluctant confidants find themselves in that role when crucial life events

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occur. For example, an obviously pregnant woman may receive unsolicited pregnancy and birthing stories from others; this makes the pregnant woman a reluctant confidant. In this case, the pregnant woman did not reject the information; she just did not want to hear the other person's disclosure and thus serve as a recipient of information. In the present study, we witnessed targeted recipients rejecting the information through actions that indicated that they never received the abuse story. In addition, some participants received reminders that the abuse story had expired, which could be a form of information rejection.

CPM's reluctant confidant concept often describes situations where the targeted person receives information from others with whom they do not have a relationship. This was not the case in the present study as the Latina participants sought to share information with their mothers. The presence of a familial relationship marks this as different than CPM's current reluctant confidant tenet. As such, currently, CPM does not account for situations where family members reject private information.

Though a plethora of research provides support for CPM's prediction of acceptance of ownership, Petronio (2010) states more work is needed to identify the dimensions of responsibility that occur in different types of family situations:

> A better understanding is needed to grasp how responsibility enacted across situations and whether the commitment to a sense of accountability on the part of the recipient fulfills the expectations of the person giving access to his or her private information. (p. 177)

Current CPM research shows recipients accepting and accounting for private information yet the current study demonstrates that this is not always the case. Accounting for

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recipients' performance is central to CPM as this is the part of the theory that focuses on management and regulation of private information. The present study answers Petronio's (2010) call to begin the investigation of recipient information acceptance, or lack thereof.

Using the Indigenous method of *testimonio* and utilizing grounded theory to code stories inductively allowed Latinas' stories to take precedence in the research process. Further, these methods also allowed for the opportunity to witness the ways in which CPM functions to explain information management within this marginalized community. The study also served to discover points of CPM that could potentially develop to account for the times when individuals' private information gets rejected. Understanding this unspoken for phenomena through future studies can provide new and important insights in and outside of family and culture communication studies.

In the next section I will describe the implications and practical applications that the present study offers. Thereafter, I will review the strengths and limitations of the study. Lastly, based on the study's findings, I will conclude with a discussion of the future theoretical and methodological direction of this work.

Implications and Practical Applications

When I was a little girl and my friends would invite me over to their house for dinner or a play date, my mom would say, "Si, pero que les llevas? (Yes, but what will you bring them)?" "I do not know, mother. A cool, respectful girl who is fun?" That was not enough. "Leave more than you take!" That was her saying. I was always so embarrassed to be the kid that would bring the whole host family a snack, a meal, a six pack of sodas, flowers for the mother of the house. "My mom said to bring this," I would

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say. Though I would get angry with my mom for making me do things that other kids never had to do, I am thankful to my mother for instilling in me something that now transcends into my research. I had two goals throughout this dissertation. The first was to center the women in this study as much as possible. The second was to do my best to give back to them (the community) more than they gave me.

The present study offers a variety of implications on its own, and also produced knowledge that can be transformed into practical interventions to take back to the community.

The present study was designed to encourage Latina women who have kept quiet to speak.

By simply participating in this study, Latinas were provided an opportunity to tell their stories of child sexual abuse in a safe space. Additionally, as the study sought to provide a framework that centered the participants in every way possible, Latina participants told their story in such a way that prioritized and empowered them. *Testimonio* research shows that providing a space for marginalized communities to speak about oppressive moments can be cathartic and can also serve to begin the dismantling of power structures that have marginalized them (Holling, 2014).

The results of this study emphasize the importance of considering contextual, cultural, familial, and individual variables when counseling Latinas who have experienced child sexual abuse. Findings can extend existing research and serve as a basis for creating counseling theories and techniques that will accommodate the heavily nuanced needs of Latina women. Specifically, the silence dominion that follows Latina

women calls for counseling options to take a narrative approach to therapy. Narrative therapy is a person (patient) centered approach that seeks to be an empowering non-blaming counseling method and one that centers individuals as the experts and main narrator in their own life (Morgan, 2000; Payne, 2006). Much like *testimonio* allowed the participants in this study to symbolically bring their family to the research interview, narrative therapy would also let Latinas bring the entire familia to counseling and would allow them to relive and analyze the entire story and characters more holistically. A narrative therapy approach would also work to identify and highlight the presence and influence power plays on Latinas and child sexual abuse situations, which could potentially aid in the forgiving the characters who simply performed within their character role.

Moreover, this study provides a basis for the need to create and implement culturally sensitive resources for Latinas who have experienced CSA. Based on the results of this study, current and future scholars, therapists, social workers, and advocates will know to utilize culturally sensitive interventions that take into account Latinx family values. On its own, this study can be a starting point for social science and communication scholarship to create and implement ways to empower marginalized communities so we can live at peace knowing that we took less than we left behind.

Strengths of the Study

In this section, I will explain the strengths of the present study as well as what the study provides to communication scholarship on a methodological and theoretical basis. Specifically, I focus on the benefits of having taken a critical lens in exploring Latina

child sexual abuse disclosure as well as describe the research calls that this study answers.

Methodologically, this dissertation showcases the benefits of using nontraditional methods that not only serve to center the voices of the Latinas in the study as well as their embodied knowledge, but also work to reveal rich, nuanced experiences that often times cannot emerge from a prescribed interview schedule or survey. The Indigenous method of *testimonio* proved to uncover the manner in which Latinas choose to reveal or conceal their experience(s) of child sexual abuse while simultaneously serving as a social justice tool to expose and disrupt brutality and silence so common to Latina women. Unlike the more common and traditional training of researchers to produce unbiased and generalizable knowledge, *testimonio* challenges objectivity by positioning the Latina participant in relationship to and with a collective experience marked by marginalization and struggle. In this study, *testimonio* demonstrated the understandings about how Latinas manage private information as well as how they respond to and attempt to resist the dominant cultural master narratives that exist to perpetuate inequity. Most importantly, choosing an Indigenous method to lead this study unveiled power structures that could have been dismissed had I used a more traditional method. *Testimonio* allowed for a rich telling of the participant's child sexual abuse experience because the participant was in control of the movement of the story. In other words, she was not restricted by an interview schedule of questions that would have not allowed for the emergence of side narratives that highlighted and uncovered Latinx cultural nuance. Additionally, as the

open-ended and free nature of *testimonio* allowed for cultural nuance, elements of a

larger Latinx matrix of domination (e.g., patriarchy, Catholicism) were quickly

uncovered through the telling of narratives within the Latina's *testimonio*.

This study borrowed from interpersonal, family, and cultural communication

theories to be able to investigate and explain Latina child sexual abuse disclosure. The

blending of the different paradigms and sub disciplines provides possibility to further

theories in each track but more so to produce work that takes a critical approach to family

communication.

The present study took a critical approach to studying Latina child sexual abuse

disclosure by dismantling power structures by using an Indigenous method and further,

by contextualizing the experiences of Latinas by echoing the fundamental principles of

Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology. As such, the study answered Suter's (2016)

call for researchers to take a more critical scholarly lens to studying the family. Suter

(2016) states that ideally, critical family communication research should focus on issues

of power as well as investigating the way culture seeps in and out family ideologies.

Further, Suter (2016) invites author reflexivity when studying the family. She

conceptualizes author reflexivity as "the inclusion of (re)positionings of the author's self

in relation to or as embodied in the project" (p. 3). In the present study, I position myself,

my own story of child sexual abuse, my vulnerabilities, and my own family in an effort to

demonstrate solidarity to the participants. In addition, positioning myself allowed for a

deeper identification of power structures that saturate my culture, gender, and family.

Moreover, this study also provides a critical understanding of the ways Latinas manage

child sexual abuse disclosure through a CPM perspective, which also answers Suter's (2016) call to produce more critical work in family communications studies.

Following a critical approach, another strength of the present study was the manner in which it unconventionally presented findings to prioritize Latinas' voices and their *testimonios* of child sexual abuse. Through the use of narrative portraits, I presented findings, which allowed me to keep participants central to the study and the study's purpose. In so doing, the study provides an innovative way of presenting future study's findings. Further, this approach is critical in that it takes away power from the individuals (who were predominantly White males) that dictate the manner and order in which research articles should be organized and presented, and thus gives the power to the study participants themselves.

Overall, results of the study demonstrate the rich potential of examining the intricate disclosure and concealment decisions made my Latina women and the ways these processes occur at the intersections of culture and family. Beyond providing an overview of the manner in which Latina women and their families negotiate and perform disclosure, this study stands to provide practical knowledge on a theoretical and methodological basis within and beyond communication studies.

Limitations of the Study

Though the stories that the women in this study shared are powerful and offered a lot of insight, having a larger sample size would have perhaps provided an even more detailed account of CSA disclosure. It was difficult to critique CPM using only six women's experiences. A future project with a larger sample size could serve to decipher

whether recipients outside of the current participant sample's families reject private information. A larger sample would also allow for creation of new theory that captures Latinx disclosure processes surrounding child sexual abuse.

Very importantly, three of the six Latinas in this study identified as being part of the LGBTQ community. Though I used Chicana Feminism to assist in contextualizing their experiences, I believe they deserve their own space with theories that more meaningfully account for their intersectional marginalized identities. Further, a larger sample of Latinas in the LGBTQ community could help decipher the ways sexuality impacts the decision to disclose or conceal child sexual abuse experiences.

Another limitation included the setting in which the *testimonios* took place. Latina participants delivered their *testimonios* in university private offices. Though the office provided enough privacy to tell their stories, perhaps participants would have been more comfortable sharing in the comfort of their own home. Sharing their *testimonios* on university campuses may have been intimidating to some and thus, could have impacted findings by restricting the way they told their *testimonios* of child sexual abuse. Further, the university setting automatically placed me in a power position as it immediately allocated me as a person with education privilege that had access to a higher education institution. Moreover, in terms of power, though I was critically reflexive throughout the research process, ultimately I had fundamental power to dictate which portions of the Latinas' *testimonios* to share through the narrative portraits. Perhaps future work can center participants more radically in research by asking them to choose the elements in their story that they want a larger audience to witness.

Lastly, this study unapologetically sought and recruited women only. Future studies should invite Latino men to participate in child sexual abuse research as this phenomenon is far too common and stigmatized for little boys in Latinx culture.

Future Directions

In what follows, I explore future theoretical and methodological future directions based on the findings of the present study. Specifically, I make suggestions for future research to continue to expand research on child sexual abuse disclosure. First, I will provide general future directions and will then give specific recommendations for future work on a theoretical basis. Lastly, I will explore the ways the direction of this work should advance methodologically.

General future directions. Fontes, Cruz, and Tabachnick (2001) posit that women of color, Latinas in particular, are less comfortable with the idea of research than other communities. This could be the reason why people of color are often found in limitations, footnotes, or future directions sections of interpersonal and family communication research studies. As I conducted this study I did come to find out that several of the women in the study were hesitant to participate in the present research study without first receiving detailed description of my motives as a researcher. For me, the most challenging part of this study was locating the women and then asking them to speak about their experiences of child sexual abuse. I found that women trusted me more after I took the time to explain the purpose of research in general, as well as the ways they would contribute to future generations of little girls by participating. Furthermore, I discovered that they trusted me more when I spoke in Spanish or about my family. When

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I did these things, they identified me as double insider; I was a Latina and a survivor of child sexual abuse. As I continued the research process, I realized that doing work regarding Latinx child sexual abuse would mean that I would have to invite the whole familia in, and often, the entire culture as well.

Due to the high prevalence of culture nuance in these types of studies, it is common for this type of communication research with communities of color to be conducted by cultural communication study scholars. This may be the case as cultural communication studies employs nontraditional methods of research inquiry that better accommodate sensitive topics and communities. With that said, future work should focus on recruitment efforts that invite scholars of color and other minorities into field of interpersonal and family communication as I believe it sets up for the recruitment of more participants that identify with minority identities.

Since the Latinas in this study were difficult to locate and then difficult to convince to participate in the study, future research should focus on finding ways that make recruitment of women of color easier. Further, as I believe that most of the women in the present study decided to participate due to my double insider identity, interpersonal and family communication studies should implement efforts that recruit scholars of color or of other marginalized identities that are interested in studying with and for particular communities within interpersonal and family communication studies. Due to the historically white, educated, heteronormative, and middle to upper class nature of family and interpersonal communication studies, perhaps minority scholars tend to wander into the cultural communication sub discipline. This may occur because they themselves feel

more represented in critical cultural communication studies research. Again, this may occur because cultural communication studies are more equipped to study scholars of different minority identities. As such, future work within interpersonal and family communication studies should focus more on implementing nontraditional theoretical and methodological research inquiries that target and accommodate the needs of marginalized communities. This can also potentially serve to attract more scholars of color to the fields of interpersonal and family communication.

Theoretical future directions. Theoretically, the study affords numerous possibilities for future research that could deepen current knowledge of family and cultural communication studies, thus bridging the gap between the two sub disciplines. As I heard the women in my study speak about their mothers and their fathers and the way they sought to protect them by being silent, I imagined a perfect research world where the entire family attended the interview and engaged in a family story-telling/*testimonio* to make sense of the family trauma collectively. That to me would be the epitome of critical family communication work. Koenig Kellas and Trees (2009) speak to the benefits of joint storytelling, or as they call it, collaborative narration. In their study, researchers witnessed families making sense of difficult family events and experiences. Joint story-telling, as a collective approach, would provide a more nuanced and rich view of child sexual abuse disclosure. It would present elements that live in a blind spot that an individual narration cannot expose.

This study makes a theoretical contribution to the communication privacy management theory, and through its findings it invites more research to continue the

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investigation of disclosure within collective families. This study identified the way CPM works to investigate Latina child sexual abuse disclosure and the ways it could grow due to the results of this study. Future work should focus on furthering CPM's principles of collective boundary management as well as potential actions to take when a targeted recipient rejects private information.

In addition to future work that could extend CPM to better describe the processes of families within collective societies, theoretically, future work should consider supplementing existing theories within interpersonal and family communication studies with theories that speak to the historical and present experience of people of color. The present study showed that it is possible to use theories that better account for the nuanced nature of Latinx culture with theories such as Chicana Feminism and Mujerista Theology.

Methodological future directions. Methodologically, future research should focus on using research methods to empower survivors and victims of child sexual abuse and should implement nontraditional methods to assist with the investigation of Latina child sexual abuse disclosure. Methods such as the Indigenous method of *testimonio* prioritize participants' local knowledges and histories and seek to produce practical knowledge to give back to the studied community (Caracciolo & Staikidis, 2009). Indigenous methodology already places Indigenous peoples at the center of the research process (Dunbar, 2001). To center them more radically, a future direction for studying Latinx child sexual abuse could include potential community participatory action research (CPAR) projects. Specifically, CPAR is an approach to research in and for communities that stresses participation, input, and action of a particular community

towards one specific topic or issue. The studied community becomes part of the research process by essentially serving as co-researchers. CPAR emphasizes collective inquiry and is grounded in experience and social history. As such, as a community of people that understands the complicated and sensitive nature of child sexual abuse based on their embodied experiences and oppressions, survivors can create robust tools to give back to a larger community. For example, a future CPAR project could include the collaboration of social workers, child violence abuse researchers, and survivors of child sexual abuse that come together to create a Latinx family sex education curricula.

The participants in this study spoke about the desire for their families to have communicated with them more directly about constructs such as shame and guilt and sexual abuse in general. Thus, creating curricula from survivors' perspective can focus on educating the entire family about child sexual abuse and sex in general. Using a familial approach to educate Latinx families can potentially diminish the stigma of speaking and learning about sex, sexual abuse, and sexual abuse social/psychological consequences. The curriculum could be geared to first educate Latinx families about what sexual abuse is. Some of the participants in the study did not know that they had been abused because their experiences did not match what their families conceptualized as abuse. As such, having a clear definition of what counts as sexual abuse can begin to assist with the definition problem. Further, the sex education curricula can include communication lessons geared for parents to communicate with their children that the lines of communication for sensitive topics such as child sexual abuse.

An example of a successful familial CPAR project includes Yull, Blitz, Thompson, and Murray's (2014) research on family and school partnerships with families of color. Researchers used community participatory action research methods to discover the needs of middle class parents of color for their children in their schools and their community in general. Researchers discovered lack of cultural enrichment for families of color in the area as well as racism and cultural ignorance. The children and school-focused findings included the lack of cultural competency in the schools and stereotyping. This study shows the incredible potential of going into the community and co-researching with and for a community and later transforming that knowledge into community resources that serve to better the community at hand.

The participants in this study talked about being unable to understand shame and the power it had over their lives. Even after years since their abuse, they still struggled with shame. In particular, they struggled with letting go of the emotion because they lacked a full understanding of the history of it. Though shame seems to be a simple emotional construct that is easily conceptualized on a logical basis, when one experiences shame, it is more difficult to deconstruct verbally. As such, future child sexual abuse research could implement visual research methods as tools of inquiry to assist in capturing research phenomena that is much easier to illustrate than talk about. Visual research methodology uses art and narrative methods to produce data and examples of visual research methods include using photography, body maps, painting, and drawing to extract participants' conceptualizations and of particular emotional constructs (e.g., shame, guilt). Visual-based methodology has served to be a useful research method for

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understanding a wide array of health experiences, including sexual abuse, and can be used in conjunction with traditional research methods (Hughes, 2009). This approach could be effective when working with vulnerable people such as sexually abused women whose experiences make it challenging for them to properly express meanings and emotions into words. Moreover, visual-based methodology may allow participants benefits such as stress reduction, self-esteem improvement, and validation of feelings (Hughes, 2009; Webb, 2011). For example, Willer and others (under review) conducted a study that analyzed children's memories of baby loss through visual narratives (drawings). Children's drawings helped create explanations of an unfathomable event, and also allowed the reflection of larger social and cultural narratives to emerge. Additionally, through the Scraps of the Heart Project, Willer and others ("Scraps of the Heart Project," 2015) conduct art and narrative community-based workshops that empower parents and family members through baby loss trauma. Creating and implementing research workshops could be a powerful research project that would empower survivors of child sexual abuse. Similar to The Scraps of the Heart Project (2015) workshops, participants could engage in art-based activities that are geared to help child sexual abuse survivors process their child sexual abuse experience(s).

The present study used narrative portraits to introduce the study participants and to convey the study's themes through the telling of pieces of participants' *testimonios*. Using narrative portraits served to prioritize the participant and her story of child sexual abuse. Moreover, as verbatim details of participants' *testimonios* were used to explain the study's themes, in a sense, the study prioritized her first voice.

In summary, the direction of this work is fruitful and this study demonstrated some of the fertile, potential avenues. This study married Indigenous methodologies, social science, and personal narrative in an effort to provide the most appropriate means to investigate Latina child sexual abuse communication. My hope is that this study serves as an example of the benefits that can emerge when we step outside our methodological and theoretical comfort zones.

Conclusion

Communication scholarship has historically made a difference at individual, relational, and collective heights (Frey, 2009). In this case, communication scholarship offered an opportunity in advancing Latina child sexual abuse research. The Latina voice is often absent in child sexual abuse literature (especially in communication scholarship) even though prevalence and disclosure rates indicate the dire need to study and understand their experiences.

Latinx culture is saturated with specific values and patriarchal principles that impact Latina child sexual abuse disclosure. Specifically, constructs that stem out of patriarchy such as machismo and marianismo encourage Latinas to uphold docility, submissiveness, and purity. Further, they encourage Latinas to perform within a very rigid gender role, where the protection of the family, the father, and purity is their number one priority and so they keep silent about their child sexual abuse experiences. This study uncovered the notion that child sexual abuse is normalized and is an inherent thread of the fabric that makes Latinas' lives. As child sexual abuse gets inherited from

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grandmothers, to mothers, to daughters, so does the silence that helps the familia and then

the self survive.

Concluding Personal Narrative

And in the final days of writing this dissertation my mind keeps
coming back to one of the most important conversations
I had just weeks ago.

"Es posible que se me haya olvidado algo que me paso cuando estaba chica y apenas me estoy acordando?"
[Is it possible and normal to forget something that happened when I was super little and I am just now starting to remember?]

Me: *"Si, depende. Pero si pasa a veces. Especialmente si estás bien chiquita."*
[Yeah, it happens sometimes. Especially if you were little, little.]

She meets my answer with silence.
And so I push a little.
Me: *"Por que?"* [Why?]

"Nomas…. Pues entonces te tengo que contar algo."
[Just because. Well, then I guess I should tell you something.]

Me: *"Dime."* [Tell me.]

"Se me hace que tenia como 5 o 6 años. Pero le había llevado leche fresca al vecino de la esquina. Y me fui corre y corre pa mi casa y estaba llore y llore. Y de ahí casi no me acuerdo mucho. Pero me acuerdo que me mama y mi nina me acostaron y me bajaron los calcones para revisarme allá abajo en mis partes privadas. Y me pusieron como algo para el dolor. Y ya, de ahí no me acuerdo nada. Entonces le llame a mi mama el otro día para preguntarle si alguien me había dañado, me entiendes? Y no me quería decir nada. Entonces que le pregunto otra ves y me dijo, 'no importa, ya paso.'"

[When I was like five I vaguely remember that I had gone to the neighbor's house on the corner of the block to deliver the fresh milk of the day. I was running really fast to my mom's house and I was crying and crying. And then I don't remember a lot, but I remember my mom and my grandma laying me on the bed and taking my underwear off and inspecting my privates and putting something on them to make the pain go away. That is it; I don't remember anything after that. So I called my mom a few days ago and I asked her if someone had hurt me, you know? And she did not want to talk about it. So I pushed and asked again and she said, 'It doesn't matter, it already happened.']

My heart is pounding and breaking
for what she just told me.
The shock and sadness start building up in my throat
But I try to be strong for her.
"Y te tengo que decir algo más."
[Oh, and I need to tell you something else.]

Can I take anything else at this point?
I am biting my tongue firmly.
Trying not to say anything.
Trying not to ask all of the questions getting in line in my head.
But she wants to keep going.
So I find my strength and clear my throat.
And let her speak.

Me: *"Tell me."*

"Yo también tuve un tío que me manoseo… No me violo, entonces no dije nada. Y lo para que las cosas no fueran raras. Me entiendes?"

[I had an uncle that molested me too when I was a teenager. He didn't rape me so I didn't have to tell. And I didn't want things to be awkward, you understand right?]

I am so sad. I suddenly understand so much.
Her reaction to my abuse.
Her inability to talk about it with me.
But I don't say much.
Because I can't.
I do not have words.
Other than:

"Te amo, mom."
[I love you, mom.]

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Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY of DENVER
RESEARCH & SPONSORED PROGRAMS

DATE:	December 1, 2016
TO:	Nivea Castaneda, MA, ABD
FROM:	University of Denver (DU) IRB
PROJECT TITLE:	[920819-4] A Grounded Theory Study on Latinas' Experiences of Childhood Disclosure Processes
SUBMISSION TYPE:	Response/Follow-Up to New Project
APPROVAL DATE:	December 1, 2016 Initial Approval with Modifications Required: 11/10/2016 Approval of Revisions: 12/01/2016
EXPIRATION DATE:	**October 15, 2017**
RISK LEVEL:	More than Minimal Risk
CONTINUING REVIEW:	Full Board
REVIEW PERIOD:	12 months
REVIEW TYPE:	Administrative Review
ACTION:	**APPROVED**

Thank you for your submission of the Response/Follow-Up materials for this project. The University of Denver (DU) IRB has granted **FULL APPROVAL** for your project. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission. The IRB determined that the criteria for IRB approval of research, per 45 CFR 46.111, has been met.

This submission has received a **Full Board Review** based on applicable federal regulations. Please note that the following documents were included in the final review and approval of this study:

- Advertisement - IRB Email to Agencies and List Serv Appendix C.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Advertisement - Research Flyer .docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Advertisement - Research Flyer Spanish.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Consent Form - Corrected IRB Conset Form Spanish Version.docx (UPDATED: 12/1/2016)
- Consent Form - IRB Conset Form Spanish Version.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Consent Waiver - Informed Consent Waiver Form.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Cover Sheet - IRB Cover letter November.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Other - IRB Populations with Additional Considerations copy.pdf (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Other - IRB-Translation form.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Other - Mental Health Resource Spanish Version.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Other - IRB Appendix F Mental Health Resources.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Protocol - IRB Protocol Narrative Nov.doc (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Protocol - IRB Interview Protocol Questions.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)

Generated on IRBNet

- Protocol - IRB Interview Protocol and Questions Spanish Version.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Questionnaire/Survey - IRB Demographic Form Spanish Version.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)
- Questionnaire/Survey - IRB Demographic form Appendix G.docx (UPDATED: 11/28/2016)

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document. Forms used beyond the expiration date stamped on the document are not valid.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by the DU IRB prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others (UPIRSOs) and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be a **More than Minimal Risk** project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by the convened DU IRB no less than annually. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of **October 15, 2017**.

Please note that all research records must be retained in a secure location for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact the DU Human Research Protection Program at (303) 871-2121 or at IRBAdmin@du.edu. Please include your project title and IRBNet number in all correspondence with the IRB/HRPP.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Denver (DU) IRB's records.

**University of Denver
Department of Communication Studies
Is Conducting a Study on**

Latina Child Sexual Abuse Disclosure

At the University of Denver/University of Nevada
Private office

If you are a Latina who is 18 years or older and have experienced sexual abuse
as a child (before you were 18 years old)

You may qualify for a research study that examines how Latinas choose to
disclose and/or conceal their experiences of child sexual abuse.
Eligible participants will participate in a testimonio face-to-face interview
that will last approximately 60-90 minutes.

Participants will be compensated with a $50 Target Gift Card

Principal Investigator: Nivea Castaneda, NCC, ABD
Study supervised by: Dr. Erin K. Willer

For more information call Nivea Castaneda
775.721.0466 or nivea.castaneda@du.edu

Note: If you are interested in participating and choose to use email to reach out to Nivea, you may
use the following email prompt to ensure we are protecting your privacy as much as possible:
"I am interested in participating in the study. Can we set up a time to talk on the phone?"

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Universidad De Denver
Departmento de Estudios de Comunicación
Está conduciendo un estudio sobre:

Revelaciones de Latinas sobre Abuso Sexual De Niñez

En La Universidad de Denver/Universidad De Nevada
En oficinia privada

Si eres una Latina que tiene 18 años o màs y pasaste abuso sexual cuando
eras niña (antes de los 18 años)

Calificas para un estudio que examina las maneras en las cuales Latinas
deciden como y cuando ocultar y/o revelar sus experiencias de abuso
sexual que occurio durante niñez.
Participantes elegibles darán su testimonio en una entrevista
Que durará aproximadamente 60-90 minutos

Recibirás una tarjeta de $50 de Target por tu participación.

Investigadora Principal: Nivea Castaneda, NCC, ABD
Estudio supervisado por: Dr. Erin K. Willer

Para màs información llame o escriba a Nivea Castaneda
775.721.0466 o nivea.castaneda@du.edu

Nota: Si está interesada en participar en este estudio y decide escribir un email puede escribir lo
siguiente para asegurar privacidad de la mejor manera posible: *"Estoy interesada en participar en el estudio.
Podemos hacer cita para hablar por telefono?"*

Appendix C: Demographic Forms

Preferred Pseudonym _____

Current age:_____   Age of child sexual abuse experience(s) _____

Gender of Perpetrator(s): Woman/Man
Your Relationship to Perpetrator(s):_____

What is your ethnicity? (Costa Rican, Puerto Rican, Mexican, etc.)_____

Religious and/or spiritual background   _____

Current education level:_____

Socioeconomic status at time of abuse: _____

Parent/Guardian education level:_____

Información Demográfica

Seudónimo Preferido _____

Edad:_____ Edad de experiencia(s) de abuso sexual durante niñez_____

Género de Perpetrador: Mujer/Hombre   Relación al Perpetrador:_____

Cuál es tu origen étnico? (Costa Riqueña, Puerto Riqueña, Mexicana, etc.)_____

Religión que practica_____

Nivel de educación:_____

Cuál era su situación socioeconómica durante tiempo de abuso: _____
_____

Nivel de educación de padre/madre/ guardián_____

Appendix D: Participant Demographics

Participant	Ethnicity	Sexuality	Age at time of Testimonio	Relationship to Perpetrator	Religious Affiliation	Class at time of Abuse	Education Attained
Garabato	Mexican	LGBTQ	45	Neighbor Brother Mail Man Father Home intruder	Catholicism	Lower Class/Poverty	Elementary some middle school
Magnolia	Chicana	Heterosexual	31	Cousin	Catholicism	Poverty/Working Class	Bachelor's Degree (finishing Masters)
Rosa	Colombian - Cuban-American	LGBTQ	35	Step grandfather Family friend	Catholicism/ Santeria	Middle class	Bachelor's Degree (Finishing Masters)
Elena	Mexican	Heterosexual	57	Family friend Father's best friend	Catholicism	Lower class/poverty	Elementary education
Luna	Mexican	Heterosexual	31	Family friend	Catholicism	Lower Class/Poverty	Masters
Monica	Chicana	LGBTQ	42	Cousin	Catholicism	Working Class	Ph.D.

University of Denver
Consent Form for Participation in Research

Title of Research Study: A Grounded Theory Study on Latinas' Experiences of
Childhood Disclosure Processes

Principal Researcher: Nivea Castaneda, MA, NCC
Study Site: University of Denver, University of Nevada, Denver Metro Area
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Erin K. Willer

<u>Purpose</u>
You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to
investigate how Latinas choose to reveal or conceal instance(s) of child sexual abuse.
Latina disclosure is likely to be complicated due to the underlying sources of power (such
as patriarchy, Catholicism) that exist in Latinx culture.

<u>Procedures</u>
If you participate in this research study, you will be asked to participate in a research
interview where you will share your testimonio of child sexual abuse. This will be
recorded. Interviews will typically take at least and hour and may take longer depending
on the participant. Once you finish interviewing with me, you don't have to participate
any further. If you have any questions or concerns after the interview you are welcome to
contact me.

<u>Voluntary Nature of the Study</u>
Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now,
you may change your mind and stop at any time. If you decide to withdraw early the
information or data you provided will be destroyed. If you withdraw early from the
interview we will ask if we may use any of your responses. If you choose for us to not

use the information, we will destroy it. If you withdraw early from the interview you will
still be compensated with the $50 Target gift card for your time.

<u>Risks or Discomforts</u>
Potential risks and/or discomforts of participation may include emotional distress,
feelings of shame, and/or embarrassment. You may feel negative emotions once you
relive your story of child sexual abuse. However, the researcher has taken steps to
minimize the risks of this study. Even so, you may still experience some risks related to
your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. Additionally, as
part of the interview, you will be asked to recall specific events, conversations, and

experiences relating to your experiences of child sexual abuse. You may experience psychological discomfort when recalling these details. You do not have to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. In addition, you can stop participating at any time or take a break from answering questions if needed. If you are in the Denver area and experience psychological discomfort and you wish to speak with a mental healthcare provider you may contact DU's Health and Counseling Center as they provide 24-hour support and can be contacted at 303-871-2205 or through their website at: http://www.du.edu/health-and-counseling-center/aboutus/hours-location- parking.html. You may also refer to the attached referral list that provides bilingual and off campus therapy options for surrounding Denver areas. If you are in the Reno area and experience psychological discomfort and you wish to speak with a mental healthcare provider you may contact the Crisis Line at 775-322-3466 and/or 24 Hour Hotline at 775-298-0010. Both agencies provide bilingual 24-hour support. You may also refer to the attached referral list that provides bilingual and off campus therapy options for surrounding Reno areas. The list includes places that offer low cost and sliding scale prices for counseling therapy.

What happens if I feel psychologically distressed during the study?
The University of Denver has no plan to pay for psychological harm. If you experience distress, you may choose to contact one of the mental healthcare providers listed on the resource sheet provided at the start of the interview and listed on this form.

Benefits
Study is designed for the researcher to learn more about how Latinas navigate privacy in relation to former child sexual abuse experience(s). Essentially, the study seeks to understand how Latinas choose to disclose or conceal their child sexual abuse experiences. You may benefit from being in this study in being allowed to share some of the stories of your experiences relating to child sexual abuse. In sharing your story and answering the questions posed by the researcher, the interview may also give you the opportunity to think about your experiences in new ways or bring additional insight. In addition, information gathered in this study will help us understand how we can create theories and techniques for counselors and social workers to work with Latinx families who have experienced child sexual abuse. Your interview will also be integral in developing beneficial, educational material for Latinx families in the future that are learning to navigate the experience child sexual abuse.

Incentives to participate
You will receive a $50 Target gift card for participating in this research project. If you begin the interview but are unable or would not like to finish the interview you will still be compensated the $50 gift card for your time. You will receive the gift card immediately after the interview.

Study Costs
As an interview participant, you will be expected to pay for your own transportation, parking, or childcare, if needed. The principal researcher will try to minimize these costs by setting up the interview at a convenient location and time.

Confidentiality

The principal researcher will be the only individual with access to the interview data. After interviews are complete, the principal researcher will immediately download the audio files onto a University of Denver private storage cloud space (OneDRIVE) that is designed to protect sensitive private information. In the case that the audio files cannot be immediately downloaded onto a password-protected computer or the private storage space, they will be kept in a locked office. After ensuring the audio files are downloaded and protected, they will be deleted permanently from the audio recorder used in the interview. The principal researcher will then transcribe the audio file. During transcription of the data, any personal identifier such as names, dates or places will be replaced. Once the data have been transcribed the audio files will be erased. Transcribed interviews will be saved using the University of Denver's private storage space. Demographic data will also be stored in the University of Denver's private storage space. Further, in the event that the researcher travels to administer an interview, she will immediately download the audio file onto the University of Denver's private storage space. In the event that the storage space is not accessible due to technical difficulties, the data will be stored in a password-protected computer under a password-protected folder. The researcher will carry password-protected computer on the plane as she travels.

The data will be saved until the principal researcher has completed the analyses and write ups of the study. The data will not be made available to other researchers for other studies following the completion of the current study. Results from this research may be shared at professional research conferences and/or published in journal articles. Any remaining information pertaining to participants' identities will be kept private when information is presented at conferences or published in academic journals. Further, full transcripts will never be shared via publications or presentations. Instead, excerpts and quotes of the testimonio will be used to further protect confidentiality and privacy.

Reporting Requirements

The principal researcher is a mandated reporter. As such, suspected or observed abuse or neglect of a current minor must be reported. Per *Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 19, Children's Code,* and Nevada Revised Statute 432B.220 it is by law that if an individual (mandatory reporter) has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, the mandatory reporter shall immediately upon receiving such information report or cause a report to be make of such fact to the county department, the local law enforcement agency, local police department, the child abuse reporting hotline system, and/or child protective services at 1-800-992-5757 (this would include students when working in the role of a researcher).

- "Abuse" includes physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; treatment without consent; confinement or restraint;
- "Neglect" means failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or medical care.

Additionally, if participants disclose any suicidal and/homicidal plans, those too will be reported.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact **Nivea Castaneda** at **775-721-0466** at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the DU Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling (303) 871-2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers.

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

Agreement to be in this study

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.
If you decide to participate, your completion of the research procedures indicates your consent. Please keep this form for your records.

</div>

Universidad de Denver
Forma de Permiso
Para Participación en Investigación

Titulo de investigación: Estudio Sobre Las Experiencias de Niñas Latinas sobre Procesos de Revelación

Investigadora Principal: Nivea Castaneda, MA, NCC
Sitio de estudio: Universidad de Denver, Universidad de Nevada, y áreas cerca de esas dos ciudades
Facultad supervisando el estudio: Dr. Erin K. Willer

Propósito de estudio:
Le invitamos a participar en este estudio. El propósito de este estudio es para investigar como Latinas deciden decir o revelar sus experiencias de abuso sexual de niñas. La investigadora principal le preguntara que comparta su historia en forma de testimonio.

Procedimiento
Si participa en este estudio tendrá que compartir su testimonio de abuso sexual que le ocurrió de niña. Su historia será grabada por la investigadora principal. Esto va a durar de una a tres horas dependiendo del participante. En cuanto terminemos la entrevista, no tendrá que participar más. Si tiene preguntas después de la entrevista puede contactarme cuando guste.

Derechos del Participante y Participación Voluntaria:
Si a leído este formulario y a decidido participar en este proyecto, por favor entienda que su participación es voluntaria y usted tiene el derecho de retirar su consentimiento o descontinuar su participación en cualquier momento sin castigo o pérdida de beneficios por los que de otra manera ella tiene derecho. Usted tiene el derecho a rechazar preguntas o involucrarse en alguna actividad si es que se siente incómoda con ese tipo de participación. La privacidad individual se mantendrá en todos los datos publicados y escritos resultando del estudio.

Tiempo de Participación
Si decide participar en este estudio, tendrá que participar en una entrevista donde dará su testimonio. Esto quizás dure de una a tres horas.

Pago:
Usted tiene la oportunidad de recibir $50.00 en forma de tarjeta de Target por ser parte de este estudio. Tendrá esta oportunidad a pesar del tiempo que este involucrada en el estudio. Si usted decide en terminar su participación antes de que la entrevista termine, de todas maneras tendrá la oportunidad de obtener una tarjeta de Target de $50.00.

Riesgos o Sentimientos Incomodos

Durante una y cada una de las fases de este estudio, Nivea Castaneda tomará las medidas necesarias para minimizar cualquier riesgo a las participantes. Aun así, usted podría atravesar algunos riesgos en relación con su participación. En este estudio, se le pedirá que hable sobre sus experiencias en relación a su abuso sexual que ocurrió cuando era niña. Puede que se sienta incómoda psicológicamente, o emocionalmente mientras estemos discutiendo experiencias como estas. Quizás sienta emociones como culpa, vergüenza, tristeza. Durante cualquier parte de este estudio, puede elegir no participar individualmente, si no se siente cómoda, después puede reunirse de nuevo cuando se sienta lista. Similarmente, puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento retirándose del estudio por completo, o temporalmente, ya sea que el tiempo fuera sea monetario o extendido. Usted también puede elegir revocar su consentimiento en cualquier momento por cualquier razón durante el involucramiento en el estudio. Además, si desea, puede hablar con un proveedor de salud mental. El Departamento de Colorado de Servicios Humanos proporciona una lista de Centros de Salud Mental Comunitarios en su sitio de internet: http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-BehavioralHealth/CBON/1251581449824. También puede contactar a DU's Health and Counseling Center. Ellos tienen apoyo durante 24 horas y pueden ser contactados al 303-871-2205 o por la red: http://www.du.edu/health-and-counseling-center/aboutus/hours-location- parking.html. También puede ver la lista para más opciones de proveedor de salud mental para áreas cerca de Denver. Si vive en la area de Reno y se siente sicológicamente incomoda y gusta hablar con un consejero puede llamar a Crisis Line (Linea de Crisis) a 775-322-3466 y/o 24 Hour Hotline (Linea de 24 Horas) a 775-298-0010. Las dos agencias ofrecen apoyo durante las 24 horas. Si gusta, también puede ver la lista que ofrece apoyo en las áreas de Reno. La lista incluye lugares que ofrecen opciones económicas o gratis para terapia sicológica.

Qué pasa si me siento incomoda sicológicamente?

Este estudio no presenta riesgos físicos inmediatos. Por si algún caso te dañas mientras trabajas con nosotras, la Universidad de Denver no tiene plan de pagar por daños físicos o psicológicos. Si sientes angustia o sentimientos negativos puedes contactar a un proveedor de atención medica creada por Nivea Castaneda.

Beneficios del Estudio

Este estudio está diseñado para aprender como Latinas navegan su privacidad en relación a sus experiencias de abuso sexual que ocurrieron cuando eran niñas. Básicamente el estudio quiere entender como Latinas escogen revelar o aguardar su experiencia de abuso sexual. Puede beneficiar en diferente maneras. Primero, usted beneficia en que puede compartir su historia. En compartir su historia y en responder las preguntas que Nivea le pregunte, esto quizás le pueda ayudar a ver a sus experiencias en diferente manera. También, la información que colectemos en este estudio nos ayudara a entender como podemos crear teorías y técnicas para consejeros y trabajadores sociales para que trabajen y apoyen a familias Latinas que han pasado por abuso sexual. Su entrevista será integral en crear material de educación para familias que pasaran por lo mismo en el futuro.

Costos del Estudio

Como participante, usted debe de pagarse su ida a la universidad donde quiera que sea la

entrevista. Usted esta a cargo de pagar por servicios de cuidado para sus hijos mientras que este en la entrevista.

Confidencialidad y Privacidad

Si participa en este estudio las conversaciones que ocurran serán grabadas por medio de una grabadora de audio. Las únicas personas que tendrán acceso a estas grabaciones son Nivea Castaneda. Es posible que usemos estas grabaciones y las versiones transcribidas de estas grabaciones para crear materiales publicables. Para asegurarnos de que todas las identidades y la información que compartan se quede privada, Nivea Castaneda descargara los archivos de audio a OneDRIVE que es un espacio de red diseñado para aguardar y proteger información privada y sensible. En dado caso que haya problemas con OneDrive, una computadora protegida por contraseña y almacenados en una carpeta también protegida por contraseña. Si por alguna razón Nivea no puede descargar los archivos de audio inmediatamente a una computadora protegida por contraseña, ella mantendrá la grabadora de voz guardada bajo llave en una oficina. Después de que los archivos de audio se hayan descargado y estén protegidos serán borrados permanentemente de la grabadora de voz. Durante la transcripción de nuestras conversaciones, cualquier información (como su nombre o las fechas y lugares de nuestras conversaciones) será reemplazada en maneras con las que usted esté de acuerdo. Una vez que nuestras conversaciones hayan sido transcribidas, los archivos de audio serán borrados de los archivos. Conversaciones transcribidas serán guardadas como archivos guardados con contraseña en una computadora protegida con contraseña. Información demográfica será almacenada como un archivo protegido con contraseña en una computadora protegida con contraseña. En caso que tenga que viajar, mi computadora estará conmigo en todos momentos. Al igual, su información será guardada en el archivo privado OneDRIVE.

Toda la información transcribida será guardada por Nivea Castaneda hasta que haya completado el estudio. Estos datos no se harán disponibles a otros investigadores para otros estudios. Los resultados de esta investigación podrían ser compartidos en conferencias de investigación profesional, publicados en artículos periodísticos, y/o presentados en foros públicos. La historia completa no será compartida, en cambio, será compartido en forma de partes cortas. Cualquier información que tenga que ver con su identidad se mantendrá privada cuando la información se presente en cualquier ambiente con cualquier público.

Requisitos de Reporte

La investigadora principal es reportera bajo mandato. Es decir que si la investigadora sospecha y sabe de abuso o negligencia presente sobre un menor debe de contactar a la agencia apropiada.
Según la ley de Colorado, Titulo 19, Código de Niño, y la Ley Revisada de Nevada 432B.220 por ley, la investigadora, si tiene sospecha suficiente sobre abuso de menor, la investigadora debe de reportar en cuanto se de cuenta sobre esta información. La investigadora mandará el reporte a el departamento o agencia indicada o a la policía, o a la agencia de protección para niños al 1-800-992-5757.

- "Abuso" indica físico, emocional, o sexual; tratamiento sin conocimiento;
- "Negligencia" significa la incapacidad de dar medios básicos como alimento, hogar, ropa, o atención medica.

Al igual, si participantes reportan planes de suicidio o homicidio, esos también serán reportados.

Información de Contacto:
Si en cualquier momento tiene preguntas sobre este trabajo, puede preguntarlas en este momento o puede contactar a Nivea Castaneda usando el numero de teléfono:775-721-0466.

Si tiene preguntas o problemas con su participación y derechos como participante puede contactar el Comité de Revisión Institucional para la Protección de los Sujetos Humanos al 303-871-2121 o usando el correo electrónico IRBadmin@du.edu para hablar con otra gente además de las investigadoras.

Acordamiento de estar en este Estudio

> **Por favor tome el tiempo necesario para leer este documento y decida si quiere participar en este estudio.**
>
> Si esta de acuerdo de participar en este estudio, la finalización de este estudio indica su conocimiento y acordamiento. Por favor aguarde esta forma.

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

Questions Created based on Grounded Theory Principles

Thank you so much for being willing to meet with me today. We are going to talk about a difficult experience in your life with the goal of helping other Latinas in the future.

Now, I would like for you to fill out a demographic form so I can get basic information from you. Your real name will NOT be included in this demographic form. In fact, at this point, I want you to choose a pseudonym (a fake name) for yourself so we can use that as we move forward so you we can protect your confidentiality as much as possible.

Before we begin, I would like to read with you the consent form to find out if you have any questions or concerns. I will give you a copy for your records.

Now that we have read the consent form, I will turn on audio recorder so I can obtain your verbal consent.

I have my own story of child sexual abuse and I can share that with you with the goal of demonstrating solidarity and to show you are not alone. However, I would like to give you the opportunity to choose whether you want to hear my story or not. It is entirely up to you and your decision will not affect your participation in the study. My story contains details such as: my age at the time of my experience of child sexual abuse, my relationship to the perpetrator, details regarding my reaction to the abuse incident, and his comments as he was abusing me. Lastly, my story contains my family's reaction to this incident.

If you do prefer to hear my story, I will do that first. If at any point you have any questions for me, please do not hesitate to ask. They can be about my story, my career, any questions you have about the research study process… anything that will make you more comfortable. (Simpatia chat). I will then ask you to share your very own story of sexual abuse. At any point of your story telling I may ask prompt questions, based on the flow of your story. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. We are going to talk about your feelings and opinions, and we will stop any time if you feel uncomfortable and do not wish to continue.

Would you like to hear my story or would you like to skip that and move on to telling your testimonio?

If participant says yes:

When I was a little girl, we were extremely poor. My dad worked during the day and my mom would work at nighttime at a nearby restaurant. Because my brother and I were the only members of our family that were born in the United States, my family always lived in fear that they (la migra) would come find us and deport us. At that time, my dad was getting his residency status and my mom had just submitted paperwork to meet with

Immigration Services in San Diego, CA. Since my parents had been in the U.S. for a few years, family members from Mexico often sought them for initial help. Meaning, that when a family member crossed the border to the United States, they would come live with us for a couple of weeks (or months) until they got on their feet to move out. When I was eight years old we had three uncles and three aunts living with my mom, dad, my brother, and me in a small three-bedroom trailer. My mom was always working to help my dad and the rest of my family stay afloat and so my aunts and uncles would be in charge of watching my brother and me.

One particular night I was playing Nintendo with my brother and one of my uncles decided to join us. I was eight, my brother was four years old. I remember being annoyed with him joining us because even though my instinct compass was only eight years old, I had a weird vibe when he was around. The vibe had been confirmed when a few weeks before this night he began to tickle the back of my legs when my mom was at work. Looking back now at the specific moment from my 27-year-old perspective, I realize that he was grooming me. Grooming is the process that sexual perpetrators take to prepare the child they are going to sexually abuse. Usually it entails building a relationship with the child and being extra kind to that child so that when the abuse happened, they could more easily manipulate the situation. One of the ways he groomed me (now that I have this knowledge and am able to look back) was by buying me candy and asking me not to tell anyone. Essentially, he taught me how to keep a secret. He would also tell me I was his favorite and that my brother was not as cute as I was. Being the big sister that I was, I loved my brother, but I would also love when I didn't have to share the secret candy with my him.

Anyway, throughout my childhood my mom was always very clear and direct with me about safe touches and would indicate inappropriate touches by telling me that if someone would ever touch me here (she would point to my breasts), here (she would point to my pelvic area), and/or here (she would point to my glutes) that I needed to run and tell her or someone in the family immediately. Up to that point, he had tickled the back of my legs, but never actually touched what I called my "heres." Until that night.

After playing Nintendo with my uncle and my brother, I remember falling asleep and next thing I knew the room was pitch dark. My brother, aunts, and myself all shared this room, but I remember waking up to an empty room. Of course there were times when I would fall asleep before anyone else and when I woke up in the middle of the night or in the morning, the full size bed was filled with two or three other people. It wasn't the case now.

As I closed my eyes to fall back to sleep, I realized that someone else was in the room because the bed moved. It was my uncle. He began to speak quietly and told me not to scream or cry. I remember being so scared and I also remember not being able to move, something that I still get angry with myself about. I wish I had screamed. I wish I could have run out of the room like my mom had advised me.

After what I remember as 10 minutes of aggressively using my hands to please his body and his hands roughly touching mine, I knew what was coming next based on the gestures he had done with his hands. I was terrified, but I couldn't move or scream. I was crying. I remember that. And throughout the entire time he kept asking me why I was crying. Kept telling me I was special. He began to unzip his pants when my brother burst into the room asking me to play Nintendo with him again. I put my shirt down, pulled my jammies up and ran out of the room as I told my brother to go wait in living room for me. On my way out he said "remember, it's a secret."

I was crying when my mom got home and if it wasn't for all the vomit and tears that leaked from my body, I don't think I would have told her because I was so scared. She kept asking me what was wrong and finally I came out and told her. I had never seen my mom so angry and violent towards someone. And to this day, I don't think I have ever seen her so hurt and heartbroken.

My mom kicked him out of the house that very night. I actually remember him leaving without shoes. And my mom kept holding me and saying sorry to me. My aunts and the rest of my uncles had been in the living room the entire time, my dad was sleeping. They all kept apologizing to my mom for not even thinking to check on me or Tony during those 10 minutes.

After a family consensus, we decided that no one was allowed to know about this. That way, no one would see me differently and that way I could forget. When I asked if he was going to jail my mom said no since he hadn't raped me and if we told the police it would mean we would have to dial three numbers that would probably lead us to get deported. The politics of immigration trumped the politics of my body. And so my family and I remained silent.

When another uncle sexually abused me four years later, I didn't tell my mom. Actually I didn't tell anyone. Mostly because I felt so much shame. And because he was also undocumented, and because he didn't "fully" rape me. Silence was best.

Thank you so much for listening to my story. I told you a very condensed version of my story because I am here to listen to yours. I want to make sure we have enough time to honor your story. Your story may be similar or completely different than mine and that is okay! I ask that you tell the story in any way you want to tell it. Meaning, you don't have to tell your story the way I told you mine. You may tell me in Spanish, English, or even Spanglish. Whatever makes you feel good.

If the participant prefers to NOT hear story:

As we went over in the consent form, moving forward we will use the pseudonym you chose on that demographic form. That name will be the one that appears in any publication, presentation, etc. With that said, as you tell your story try to mask other characters in your story by using fake names for them as well. If you mess up and

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accidently say your real name or any real names, please let me know and I will de identify them during transcribing process.

Are you feeling comfortable with our arrangements for privacy? Do you have any questions, about anything, before we begin? Is it OK to begin your testimonio?

Prompt Questions
(These may not be asked, but are there in case the participant needs prompting.)

Initial Open-Ended Questions (Charmaz, 2006)

1. Tell me about your experience of child sexual abuse. You can start at any point of your story. For example, if you choose to begin your story by telling me about your family first to provide context, that is okay. If you want to go right into that particular experience, that is okay too.
2. Could you describe the events that led up to your experiences of CSA?
3. How would you describe your feelings and emotions surrounding your abuse?
4. What else was going on in your life then?

Intermediate Questions (Charmaz, 2006; 2014)

1. What happened next?
2. Who was involved? When was that? How where they involved?
3. Tell me how you learned to handle talking about your abuse? To who?
4. Tell me how you learned to handle keeping your abuse private?
5. What do you think helped you decide to reveal or conceal your abuse experience?
6. As you look back and retell your story, are there any events that stand out in your mind?

Ending Questions (Charmaz, 2006; 2014)

1. Is there anything that you think I should know to understand your story better?
2. Is there anything you would like to ask me? It can be about my own story, about what happens after you leave here, and/or what happens with your story in this dissertation study.

Thank you so much for sharing your story with me. I know that retelling our stories may trigger negative emotions and feelings. As such, I have provided a referral list of counseling sites that will offer complementary and/or low cost therapy. If at any point you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Interview Protocol and Questions
Questions Created based on Grounded Theory Principles
Spanish Version

Muchísimas gracias por haber aceptado esta invitación de participar en este estudio. Vamos a platicar sobre experiencias dificultosas en tu vida con la meta de ayudar a Latinas en el futuro que han sufrido abuso sexual de niñas.

Quiero que llena esta forma demográfica para agarrar información básica. Su nombre verdadero no será incluido en esta forma. En este momento quiero que escoja un nombre falso para usarlo de aquí en adelante para proteger su identidad lo mejor posible.

En este momento leeremos la forma de conocimiento y si tiene preguntas se las puedo contestar.

En este momento voy a prender la grabadora para que me de su conocimiento y permiso verbal de participar en este estudio.

Le quiero dar la oportunidad de decidir si gusta escuchar mi propio testimonio de mi experiencia de abuso sexual. No es obligada a escucharla. Si decide escucharla quiero que sepa que mi testimonio incluye la persona que me abuso, la manera en la cual me abuso, y las personas involucradas, al igual que su reacción a mi abuso.

Quizás le preguntaré preguntas dependiendo de lo que me cuente, pero no esta obligada a responderlas si no gusta. No hay forma correcta o incorrecta de contestar las preguntas, entonces, no le de pena contestarlas como quiera. Vamos a hablar sobre su historia, su opiniones, y sus sentimientos. En cualquier momento si se siente incomoda, podemos parar.

Gusta oir mi testimonio primero o prefiere pasar ese paso y decirme la suya inmediatamente.

Usted es bienvenida en preguntarme preguntas. Pueden ser de mi historia, de mi Carrera, de lo que usted quiera. Lo que guste para que se sienta mas cómoda conmigo.

Mi historia…

Muchas gracias por escuchar mi historia. Le dije una versión muy pequeña para tener mas tiempo con la suya. Quiero asegurarme que tengamos suficientemente tiempo para su testimonio. Su historia quizás sea similar a la mía o completamente diferente. De cualquier manera, esta bien. Le pido que me diga mi historia en la manera que usted la quiera contar. Me la puede decir en español, en ingles, Spanglish. Lo que la haga sentir más cómoda.

Como le dije en la forma de consentimiento, de aquí para delante usaremos el nombre que usted ha elegido. Ese seudónimo lo usaremos para publicaciones y presentaciones para proteger su identidad. Los nombres que use mientras me diga su historia también los cambiaré en cuanto transcriba. Entonces no se preocupe de decir los nombres verdaderos mientras que cuenta su historia, ya que yo los voy a cambiar para también asegurar privacidad para ellos/as.

Se siente cómoda con nuestros arreglos de privacidad? Tiene preguntas antes de comenzar? Me puede contar su testimonio?

Prompt Questions
(These may not be asked, but are there in case the participant needs prompting.)

Initial Open-Ended Questions (Charmaz, 2006)

5. Dígame su historia de su experiencia de abuso sexual durante su niñez. Puede comenzar en cualquier punto de su historia. Por ejemplo, si gusta empezar por contarme de su familia primero, puede hacer eso. Si no, también puede contarme de su historia inmediatamente.
6. Puede describir los eventos que ocurrieron antes de su abuso sexual?
7. Cómo puede describir sus sentimientos y emociones sobre su abuso?
8. Qué mas estaba pasando en su vida en aquel momento?

Intermediate Questions (Charmaz, 2006; 2014)

7. Qué paso después?
8. Quien estaba involucrado y como? Cuando paso?
9. Dígame como aprendió a platicar sobre su experiencia? A quien?
10. Cuénteme como aprendió a mantener su abuso privado?
11. Que piensa que le ayudo a decidir si aguardar su abuso en secreto y/o sacarlo a luz?
12. Cuando mira hacia atrás y cuenta su historia, que eventos recuerda mucho?

Ending Questions (Charmaz, 2006; 2014)

3. Hay algo que me quiera contar para entender a su historia mejor?
4. Hay algo que me quiera preguntar? Puede ser sobre mi propia historia y de lo que ocurre después con su historia en esta disertación…

Le agradezco mucho que haya compartido su historia conmigo. Yo sé que recordar la historia nos hace sentir emociones negativas. Por eso mismo le quiero compartir una lista de consejeros y sicólogos que ofrecen consultas gratis o de costo bajo. En cualquier momento si tiene preguntas, por favor no dude en contactarme. Muchas gracias.

Appendix G: Resource List

<u>Mental Health Resources in Denver, Colorado</u>

On Campus:

<u>DU Health and Counseling Center</u>
2240 E Buchtel Blvd☐Denver,
CO 80208
☐Phone: 303-871-2205
After hours mental health problems: 303-871-3000☐
General email: <u>info@hcc.du.edu</u>
http://www.du.edu/health-and-counseling-center/aboutus/hours-location- parking.html☐
Available to DU's Students

<u>University of Denver Counseling Services Clinic Mental Health Clinic</u>
1999 E Evans Ave
Denver, CO 80208
(303) 871-2528

Bilingual Therapy:

<u>Spanish Clinic</u>
4200 Morrison Rd ☐
Unit 8☐Denver, CO 80219
Ph: 303-934-3040

<u>Juliana Vergaray</u>
Nourished Health Center
1740 Marion St
Denver, Colorado 80218
(720) 709-2305

<u>Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault Center</u>
1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 700
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303.839.9999

Other:

<u>Colorado Crisis Services</u>☐
24-hour support line: 1-844-493-8255☐
http://coloradocrisisservices.org☐
Walk-in Center Locations
2551 W 84th Avenue Westminster, CO 80031☐
12055 W. 2nd Place Lakewood, CO 80228☐6509
2206 Victor Street Aurora, CO 80045☐

791 Chambers Road Aurora, CO 80011
4353 E. Colfax Avenue Denver, CO 80220

<u>Mental Health Resources in Reno, Nevada</u>

On Campus:

<u>University of Nevada Counseling Center</u>
Counseling Services
1664 N. Virginia Street
Reno, NV 89557
Phone (775) 784-4648
Fax (775) 327-2293
Pennington Student Achievement Center, Suite 420
Available to students and non-students of Reno area

Bilingual Therapy:

<u>Quest Counseling</u>
3500 Lakeside Ct Ste 101
Reno, NV 89509
(775) 786-6880

<u>Bicultural Counseling</u>
1859 C St, Sparks, NV 89431
(775) 359-8136

<u>Local, State, and National Mental Health 24-Hour Hotlines</u>

Crisis Line
780 East Lincoln Way, Sparks, NV, 89434
775-322-3466

24-Hour Hotline
948 Incline Way, Incline Village, NV, 89451
775-298-0010
https://211nevada.communityos.org/zf/profile/service/id/1868584

Appendix H: Translation Certificate

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION FORM

For research conducted in languages other than English, the DU IRB/ Office of Research Compliance must have all versions of the research materials (e.g. recruitment, informed consent form(s), instruments) in both English and Non-English on file. This Certificate of Translation Form must be submitted to verify that a translation from English to Non-English is accurate. Those who translate the research materials need to provide a brief description of their qualifications, skills or experience for carrying out this role.

Important Considerations:

- **Translation:** It is acceptable for investigators listed as research personnel to "translate" the research materials (e.g., recruitment, consent, data collection instruments).
- **Timing of the Translation:** The research investigator(s) may wish to delay initial translation from English into the Non-English until after the IRB's initial review of the application. Awaiting the IRB initial review comments will ultimately help researchers avoid having to consult a translator more than once.
- **Modifications:** When a translation is carried out AFTER the research has been approved, a formal modification to the approved research must be submitted. The researcher must submit any modified materials along with the translated versions of these materials. The Certificate of Translation Form can be submitted as part of the formal modification process.

Choose One Option:
__x___ Initial Review
_____ Modification (to add new documents)

General Information:
Principal Investigator's Name: Nivea Castaneda
IRBNet #:

Translated language(s) necessary for the research to be conducted: English-> Spanish

Briefly describe the qualifications (either professional or through life experience) of translator(s):
Aside from my native Spanish speaking ability, I have a Baccalaureate degree in Spanish Linguistics and hold a certificate of translation: Spanish→English and English→Spanish from the University of Basque Country, San Sebastian, Spain and University of Nevada, Reno.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT: By signing your first and last name, and the date below, you certify that the content of the translated documents is accurate and correct.

Nivea Castaneda
Translator's First and Last Name: