Article

Infrapolitics of Defiance: Forms of Agency Exhibited by Homeless Survivors of Gender-Based Violence

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Abstract: This article offers a provocative look at practices of false compliance that homeless gender-based violence survivors employ to withstand the personal and structural violence they experience. The article explores how the three instrumentations of disorder, evasion, and subterfuge are used by survivors as forms of veiled resistance, as well as locations that exhibit their agency. Featuring stories from a series of in-depth interviews, the article uses critical theory to examine the specific mechanisms survivors' use to defy violent power relations. The research employs a grounded theory methodology, using narrative analysis grids to code for dialogic and performative themes that consistently emerge in survivor narratives. Research findings suggest that survivors' needs may be best met through innovative community-based programming that deinstitutionalizes entry and exit points into support systems. This decenters the role and function of the external professional helper by utilizing trained local community members as key partners in the disruption of violence cycles. This less traditional approach should be accompanied by housing reform policies that effect longer-term structural change by embedding shelter and safety needs in community networks. In the absence of such durable supports, survivors will continue to enact strategies of sabotage and logics of subversion until helping systems are transformed.

Keywords: homeless survivors; gender-based violence; agency; disorder narratives

1. Introduction: Leveraging Disorder

Complex, disrupted, and markedly chaotic environments are the norm for survivors of intimate partner violence who are homeless (Meyer 2016; Tutty et al. 2014; Schutt 2011; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000). This reality primes these survivors to develop unique coping mechanisms that help them navigate the hazards of violent relationships and transient living conditions (Murray 2009; Courtois 2008; Jones 2006; Sokolov 2005). The narratives highlighted in this research examine how survivors strategically deploy disorder, evasion, and subterfuge as platforms for resistance to conditions of protracted personal and structural insecurity.

In his text *Weapons of the Weak*, James C. Scott develops the concept of 'everyday forms of resistance' (1985). He introduces readers to the notion of non-cooperation as an instrumentation of self-assertion against oppression. Scott explores the way powerless people frequently use subterfuge, instead of overt confrontation, as a means to counter domination. He describes this strategy as the 'infrapolitics' of opposition to abuses of power (Scott 1990, p. 183). Nuancing and expanding on Scott's findings, this article elaborates on how homeless survivors wield similar responses, more specifically using instrumentations of evasive disorder, as strategies for daily survival.

2. Methodology: Revisionist Blueprint

This research is one of several products emerging out of a multi-year grant called the Silent Violence Project. The project's participants came from three demographically diverse survivor

communities: homeless women, undocumented Latinas, and women from a conservative religious enclave. The project's participant group consisted of 24 respondents, with each of its three demographics comprising a third (*n* = 8) of these respondents. The research's overarching goal was to conduct a qualitative analysis of how the marginalized identities of these three survivor groups impacted on the resistance and resilience strategies that each group adopted. This article specifically focuses on findings related to the project's homeless survivors, and the mechanisms of covert resistance they employed.

Using a grounded theory methodology, the research applied a constructivist approach to the compilation and interpretation of its data. This assumed an inductive design that was tasked with generating theory from specific observations. The project's blueprint consisted of: (1) conducting qualitative narrative analysis on 500 pages of transcription from 24 life story interviews; (2) gathering quantitative data on participant demographic characteristics; and (3) facilitating a series of follow-up training and support interventions with participant groups. These interventions included running survivor Circle processes, utilizing Playback Theater events, and facilitating Arts-based trauma debriefing activities.

The project's participants were selected through a chain referral process within the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. The specific benefits of this type of referral process were that it was respondent-driven and explicitly made visible the social capital networks that connected otherwise invisible communities of survivors. In-depth interviews (usually lasting between two and three hours) were conducted with each participant, accompanied by audio recordings that were later transcribed. The interview protocol involved a uniform series of semi-structured question prompts used to elicit each participant's life story. All of the project's homeless participants were over the age of eighteen and were interviewed during their stay at one of several local shelters.

A strengths-based approach was employed throughout the research to identify the instrumentations that homeless survivors utilized to counter their abuse. More specifically, narrative analysis grids were used to identify acts of: (a) physical and psychological evasion; (b) the strategic use of locational and cognitive disorder; and (c) displays of feigned ignorance or false compliance as mechanisms of sabotage. By means of framing these behaviors as forms of covert resistance as opposed to 'pathologies', survivor narratives challenge dominant discourses regarding homeless victims' 'complicity' with the personal and structural violence they experience; instead, these women's life stories showcase compelling renditions of survivor agency.

3. Definitions: Discursive Considerations

This article analyzes respondent narratives, keeping in mind a number of critical demarcations that exist at the intersection of intimate partner violence, homelessness, and discussions of female agency. These include discussions of each of these terms and their sometimes-contested meanings. Intimate partner violence (IPV, which is used interchangeably with gender-based violence in this article), is defined here as a 'syndrome' insofar as it includes coercive tactics that can entail a composite of physical, sexual, economic, and/or psychological abuse. This 'syndrome' framing is significant for the Silent Violence Project, as all respondents spoke of experiencing a cocktail of multiple forms of abuse that resulted in exponential impacts. Respondent narratives described not only current forms of violence, but also their latent consequences. While perhaps less immediately visible, latent manifestations of IPV such as sexual dysfunction, chronic health problems, and post-traumatic stress disorders add additional weight to the burdens already borne by IPV survivors (Widdows and Marway 2015, p. 35).

For the purposes of this research, the term 'homeless' should also be given some definitional consideration. The United Nations proffers two useful categories related to housing instability: absolute and relative homelessness. Novac (2006) suggests that absolute homelessness refers to persons "living on the streets" and/or those forced to inhabit temporary or emergency facilities. Relative homelessness, on the other hand is often "hidden and concealed" and can include "insecure living arrangements in which women are temporarily staying with friends or family" (Novac 2006).

In the context of this research, respondents were all interviewed during their stays at local shelters. However, domestic violence research suggests that it is usually only after survivors have exhausted family and friend networks that they then turn to shelters (Novac 2006). In this sense, survivors follow a pattern of experiencing "relative" homelessness, only to frequently have this followed by the reality of "absolute" homelessness.

A third concept that is particularly pertinent to this research relates to notions of female agency. This concept is embedded within a public discourse that often portrays women who have experienced IPV as either 'victims' or 'survivors' (Dunn 2005; Naples 2003; Samelius et al. 2014). This type of discourse essentializes women's experiences in ways that reinforce the dominant binary between an overemphasis on women's vulnerability on the one hand, or a dismissal of the very real hazards they face on the other. While the legal system primarily treats victims as passive and meek, being prematurely labeled a 'survivor' can be just as debilitating. According to Widdows and Marway (2015, p. 2), the victim/survivor binary creates "types and stereotypes, which too often alienate women from their own experience . . . They are caricatures, troupes and unreal, and importantly, in both frameworks women lose."

The chasm between victim and survivor language also implicates the structuring of policy interventions that put the onus on women to protect themselves as opposed to focusing on re-scripting norms of male behavior. Sorial and Poltera (2015, p. 16) describe this phenomena as an "asymmetry in how responsibility for avoiding and preventing sexual assault is understood and distributed within the existing philosophical literature and within our culture more generally." They assert that women's agency is frequently structurally sabotaged by binary dominant discourses that polarize and fragment support services in ways that subvert women's autonomy. As Alcoff and Gray (1993) rightly suggest, "The key point here is that there is a mutual reinforcement between disclosure and repression which constitutes a single economy of discourse." With this landscape in mind, the Silent Violence Project has intentionally targeted bridging the chasm between the discourses of vulnerability and agency by exploring how and why survivor resistance may manifest in subaltern formats.

4. Background: Recasting Decentered Subjects

In this research, sexual and domestic violence are not solely conceptualized as isolated events or individual perpetrator pathologies. Rather, they are envisaged as phenomena whose risk factors are often embedded in social and material conditions of structural violence (Villalon 2010; Collins and Andersen 2013; Crenshaw 1991). African American scholar Phillip Brian Harper calls this form of systemic analysis a process of 'framing the margins' (1994). He suggests that social research should put front and center the narratives of populations who have frequently been 'decentered' from the mainstream of public discourse (Harper 1994, p. 11). The homeless women's voices represented in this article give credence to forms of visible and invisible dissent that otherwise are often overlooked within the larger canons of orthodox history. Moreover, this project attempts to recast participants as protagonists who inhabit the center stage of a revisionist history.

In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, James C. Scott addresses himself to surfacing the 'hidden transcripts' of disenfranchised groups (1990). Scott's work pays close attention to how acts of protest, often very purposefully, remain muted and veiled for safety's sake (Scott 1990, p. 17). Accordingly, resistance activities can include a broad range of covert insubordinations including foot-dragging, evasion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, the use of rumor, gossip, disguises, linguistic tricks, metaphors, euphemisms, ritual gestures, folktales, and clandestine anonymity (Scott 1985, p. 137). Not unlike the musical 'spirituals' sung by many enslaved African Americans of the early 19th century, underground resistance is frequently encoded simultaneously with scripts of dissent and emancipation. This was certainly the case for the homeless survivors whose stories we gathered for the Silent Violence Project.

5. Theme #1: Acts of Strategic Evasion

Two forms of tactical evasion surfaced in homeless survivors' narratives. One pertained to perpetual hyper surveillance regarding external physical safety, while the other referred to the internal drive for psychological camouflage. The following respondent narrative illustrates the interplay between these two highly intertwined forms of strategic evasion.

"I was so afraid that he would come after me. That is the reason why I never showed him where my mom and dad lived, or my sister. He does know where my ex lives ... But every day until I came down here, I really thought, like I was really threatened. Even when I got down here. I walked, and I looked behind my back, thinkin' that he's gonna come down here. He knew where I was, and it's just like I kept lookin' over my back, and wonderin' if he's gonna be there. If he's gonna know, you know?" (Interview 20 November 2012).

"And on top of that, I—the last time I was with him—I was ready to jump off of the bridge up there at Speedway. That's how bad it got to be ... knowing that it's ok for him to have communication with his family, but when it come to my family, I was to break all ties from my mom, dad, two boys, my ex-husband, my sister. Yeah. He didn't want me talkin' to them or anything. So that's when I started sticking my phone down my bra ... " (Interview 20 November 2012).

Other survivors used the motifs of 'eggshells' or warning 'triggers' to describe how they maintained physical and psychological safety whilst simultaneously brokering exit strategies.

"Always walking around on eggshells because I know something's going to trigger ... It's sort of like a trickle-down effect ... [So, I] look for signs in people that might be triggers ... If you see how they might react to small things when you're with them, even though they might not be directed at you, yet. That's how I've seen it. I've seen it in eyes; I've seen transformations of faces. At first when you see this happening, even if it's not you ... if you see a transformation ... eventually it's going to trigger down to you if the violent reaction is there." (Interview 20 November 2012).

"And always have not an escape route, but routes no matter where you're at. I found—I noticed in myself—when I started goin' to the club. I started noticing whenever I would go into any particular place, the restaurant, club or any place, I'm lookin' for exits to get my ass out of there in case shit goes down. You know, [it's] usually those instincts ... I tell my friends, something don't feel right, I'm getting it ready to get together and get on up outta here and go home and stuff like that. And I roll out, and the next day I find out the party got raided ... And it's like ohhhhhh. But I listened to that voice, and I didn't get caught up in it. And every time that voice said, you know, just stop hustling for a while, I stopped hustling for a while. That's why the bastards could never get me ... Wherever I go, hotel room, whatever it is—it's gotta have some sort of security or I will add it in ... Because I can't deal with that too good. And even once I get comfortable—if I don't really have anything to worry about—I gotta kinda have a watchful sleeping ear ... Never get comfortable in there." (Interview 10 December 2012).

Themes of accentuated vigilance, prolonged state anxiety, and chronic somatization sequelae are common clinical manifestations documented in homeless women who experience intimate partner violence (Ellsberg et al. 2008; Pico-Alfonso et al. 2006; Ford et al. 2005). What has been given less attention in the literature, however, are the ways that these survivor responses can be interpreted as concomitant adaptations that signal the strategic deployment of autonomous regulation (Warshaw et al. 2013). Campbell and Jenevieve (2016, p. 1) highlight the pathologizing bias of

the medical model as a frame that "obscure[s] multi-faceted and hidden forms of agency, and the complexity of agency-violence intersections."

Indeed, framing makes all the difference; instead of pathologizing homeless survivors' behaviors, a more agency-centered lens picks up on the strategic nature of the choices IPV survivors make. In her seminal text *Battered Women's Protective Strategies: Stronger than You Know*, Sherry Hamby (2014) applies the Multiple Criteria Decision Making (MCDM) tool to instances of domestic violence. Originating in the environmental sciences, this tool provides a framework for the evaluation of multiple, and often competing, criteria in decision-making. Hamby's work, along with her generation of the Victim Inventory of Goals, Options, and Risks (VIGOR) index, provide important milestones in the documentation of victim's material and emotional protective strategies.

In addition to hyper surveillance around physical safety, other subtexts emerged in participant narratives that related to various forms of internal psychological protection. These narratives evidenced the frequent practice of dissociation. Our homeless survivors (as distinct from the project's other participants) consistently avoided speaking directly about the violence they had experienced. Instead, they used dissociative metaphors to describe instances of violence. These strategies hark back to Scott's (1985) references to the use of allusions and verbal euphemisms as covert forms of self-protective resistance.

In the following scripts, there is a notable silence around the specific events of violence that survivors experienced. Instead we hear them refer to their trauma through the metaphors of 'the trench', the 'big huge green bottle', the 'song', and the 'butterfly'.

> "You're gone. And people kind of flip because it's like [you're] a child standing in front of a trench. [One] that you doesn't know. You're in that trench. Expecting something . . . [something] to stop and go away." (Interview 10 December 2012).

> "With my real [biological] father, I thought it was normal, I didn't realize it wasn't . . . I could just be sitting on my bed doing my homework and [he'd come in and] do it. Um, my real father, I, (sigh) with him I always remember seeing, I don't know what brand it is, but I always remember seeing this big huge green bottle, and it had grapes, uh, like carved into it or something but I always saw that bottle, like around the house and stuff . . . Like I said, it had grapes like carved into it, blown into the glass . . . " (Interview 10 July 2012).

> "'A Little Too Late' [that was the name of the song]. She singin' while she's movin' on and she's, you know, no longer wants to be with him. And he's got problems, so she says she can't help him no more. That song there is what I play all the time . . . " (Interview 13 November 2012).

> "It's just there was always one insect that would pop into my head. That was a butterfly, 'cause they've always had a really hard life. And they go through all those stages and you get something beautiful at the end. And that's what, what always hit me. And that's why I had them, had it tattooed on my legs, so I would always have [that butterfly with me]. It's, it's different, your life is. You get through it and you can get past it. I mean you never forget, but you can get past it." (Interview 10 July 2012).

Metaphors of resistance and euphemisms for resilience; both capture an ethos of very active subaltern agency. Evidencing the repeated use of dissociation, our research found that homeless respondents were the only participant group whose narratives consistently described the instrumentation of evasion. Our other two respondent groups would directly describe instances of IPV without the pervasive use of allusion or dissociative metaphors. Moreover, the significance of this difference pivots on the symbiosis that exists between IPV and housing instability. Having few structural and social capital supports to lean on (due to the contingent circumstances of ongoing displacement), homeless survivors defaulted to physical and psychological behaviors of evasion as

their primary safety measures. This has significant policy implications which will be discussed later in this article.

6. Theme #2: Tactical Disorder

The second instrumentation of resistance that surfaced in homeless survivors' narratives was the stratagem of 'disorder'. Ironically, we found that many women communicated that they felt safer staying physically 'present' (and 'concealed') in abusive relationships, then exiting abusive relationships and becoming the prey and open target of violence. Because of this, homeless women's lives became increasingly disordered as they strove to stay simultaneously present yet invisible. These contradictions serve to heighten homeless survivors' fragility writ large as they navigate conditions of duress, volatility, and protracted trauma (Pimlott-Kubiak and Cortina 2003; Cascardi et al. 1999).

The 'disorder' present in participants' lives resulted in two outcomes: (1) disordered trauma processing (psychogenic amnesia and chaotic and contradictory narrations) and (2) serial social dislocations (disordered residential and relational predilections). In the following narrative, a respondent shares with us two very contradictory and disordered scripts regarding her father's role in her life. After a tirade that lambasts his abuse and neglect, within twenty minutes she extols his protections and provisioning role in her life. These exhibitions of 'disordered' thinking on her part are not contradictory in her mind but are rather two sides of the same coin; both are true. By deconstructing the frame of chronological and contiguous thinking, we begin to understand the 'rationality' of this respondent's narration. Using disorder as her mechanism of choice, she carefully articulates the connection she sees between two disjoined realities. In so doing, her disordered medium becomes her message.

> [Referring to talking to her dad] "No, I'm talking about when I was a child, you know. You [dad] knew and you did nothing . . . You know what's happening to me, and you're not doing anything. [It was with] friends of the—so called 'friends of the family'. And then you got me turning around, tellin' me a lie and sayin' the only reason you didn't do anything was 'cause you were afraid mama would pack up, and you'd never see me again. You're full of shit, old man. I remember how you used to talk to mama. Mama wasn't goin' no fuckin [no] where, and you know it. So now you're gonna sit here and not only shit in my face, now you're going to spit on top of it? . . . "

> "[Mama] took me to the gynecologist. I was maybe, I don't know, fifth grade or somethin' I think. And apparently she didn't know my reading level had long surpassed probably college. And so she told the doc, (we're sitting there and he's at his desk), "Well I'd like to put her on birth control because I believe she's promiscuous." Hmm, I said to myself, "Bitch, no you didn't!" I stood up, I looked at her, and I said, "You know exactly what's goin' on with me and what people are doing." So I said, "It's ok if they do it 'as long as they don't get me knocked up', huh?" I said, "Let me tell you something old lady." I said "You do this, and I will leave home, and you will never know what happened to me again a day in your life." And I walked out . . . " (Interview 10 December 2012).

Within a brief span, this same narrator returns to the subject of her father's complicity with her sexual abuse and states loudly and unequivocally:

> "Yep. I know one thing. My father won't see me hurt. Or on the street or hungry. That I know!" (Interview 10 December 2012).

Without fail, participants regularly provided us with disordered accounts of the events of their lives. This included chronological and sequencing contradictions, tense and object confusion, as well as blatant factual inconsistencies. Homeless survivors also generated narratives that externalized this disorder, projecting it onto their relations with service providers. In the script below, a respondent

recounts how she is on excellent terms with her local Social Service office. Seconds later, she denounces them as extractive 'dragons'.

> "Social services and all that; that wasn't a complicated thing or the social security office. I reached out and, um, the services have been extremely helpful. Because it was like kind of having a pow-wow the other week when I had folks over and stuff. And they're like, well we can do better, and I'm like, well I'll check it out."

> "And everybody—the dragons are circling around me, you know what I mean?"

> "Plus they got the new thing goin' on where you get like 90 days of services and then they cut you loose. How does that work? How do you not do 'continued care', and wha—what?? Did I got lost somewhere? But all ya'll gettin' full paychecks every week."
>
> (Interview 12 December 2012)

In the narrative above, we sense this survivor's ambivalence regarding her 'providers'. Not only does she know how to 'perform' within the system, but she also renders a sharply underhanded critique of the system. This repertoire resonates with the resistance formats that Scott references in regard to subaltern nonconformity. Scott suggests that "[m]ost of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in the overt collective defiance of powerholders nor in complete hegemonic compliance, but in the vast territory between these two polar opposites" (Scott 1985, p. 136). Insofar as transient populations frequently do not have access to standard collective mobilization platforms, a default towards individual covert resistance makes perfect sense.

7. Theme #3: Reveling in Subterfuge

Probably the most interesting exhibitions of survivor agency surface in narratives that describe how respondents not only question authority figures but also actively sabotage them. As a survivor with two felony charges already against her, the respondent below recounts how she proudly uses the intrigue of various 'disguises' in order to divert police identification.

> "I even made a TV show: Wayne County's Most Wanted! It was comical. I got all of these emergency phone calls. Momma's callin'—call Betty! Ah ah, I'm like . . . what is goin' on? And it [TV show] started to show before I left, I thought it was so stupid. They actually had a show called Wayne County's Most Wanted. It was right about the time John was doin' the—what was that show—America's Most Wanted? I finally call Betty. I'm like, "What the hell is goin' on?" She said, "They had you on Wayne County's Most Wanted!" I said, "You bullshit." I said, "For one point, [for] one fourth of a gram of fuckin' coke?" I said, "Are you serious?" She's like, "Yep, but guess what?" I'm like, "No what's the surprise?" "They do not have a picture of you. They had a statement saying you change your style and appearance so much they could never get an accurate picture." Which I do! Yes. And I—I just found a hairstylist, my daughter, and she didn't even know she did all that. I get bored with a look, and I change it up. And since I got draw-string ponytails, and [a] weave in this . . . I can be dead-on near bald, and change up every day to [be] whatever I want it to be."
> (Interview 10 December 2012).

Survivors' renditions of their relationships with formal institutions wove in themes that displayed their own volition and tactical initiative. Instead of framing themselves solely as 'victims', these survivors resoundingly talked about leveraging intentional choices amidst the multiple forms of personal and systemic violence they faced. As we discovered, many of their responses to these violence schemas manifested as 'everyday forms of resistance'. This reframing of the loci of power is illustrated well in the following narrative in which a survivor speaks of 'fearing herself', more than she fears her abuser.

"I just felt if I stayed with him I was gonna do somethin' to him! [Be]cause enough was enough. It really brings you to that point that you really want to do somethin' to 'em if you stay with that. And I was just scared-a doin' that 'cause I don't ever wanna go to prison over him . . . cause I better leave first, cause he ain't worth it! . . . [So I left] . . . That's right. It could go either way. He's gonna try to kill you at the house, or he's gonna get you when you're not there or out on the street somewhere or wherever you're at. So it really wadn't, you know, him sayin': "Well I'm gonna try [to kill you]"—[It was] I'm gonna kill [him first]." (Interview 13 November 2012).

8. Internal Logics: Subversive Subtexts

The article *Survivor Discourse: Transgression or Recuperation?* (Alcoff and Gray 1993), suggests that 'speaking out' can be an emancipatory process that potentially repositions power relations and gives voice to otherwise subjugated discourses. The authors also, however, note possible hazards for these vocalizations. They remind readers of Foucault's admonition that resistance that takes the form of simple negation can become entrapped by the hegemony of the very system it seeks to critique. This resonates with the assertions of Spivak (1988) regarding whether the 'subaltern can speak', and be legitimately heard, outside of dominant forms of representation. Moreover, these scholars' deconstructionist perspectives lay critical groundwork for the Silent Violence Project's work in analyzing homeless survivors' rationalities in relation to the logics of their own voices.

Coming full circle in this article, we ask ourselves: what were the primary 'logics of defiance' that our respondents employed? Evasion, disorder, subterfuge; these were themes that surfaced in the narratives of the homeless survivors we interviewed. Using these constructs (respondent frames) as our plumbline, we address ourselves to the practice and policy implications of these findings. Here we extrapolate on possible practical outcomes that can inform policymakers and practitioners.

9. Conclusions: Disruptive Propositions

Moving sequentially through the various behavioral frames that we encountered, we begin with recommendations related to the narrative grid of 'evasion'. In our analysis, this theme manifests in terms of the need for both physical and psychological safety. It was accompanied by behaviors of hyper surveillance, dissociation, and somatic dysregulation. While these behaviors are not unusual for homeless populations writ large, our larger research frame allowed us to compare these responses with our other two survivor groups. Here we found a clear distinction: our homeless survivors used evasion not only as an individual protective strategy against abusers, but they also projected this evasion frame onto their structural relations with service providers.

This bias towards structural evasion carries a number of important implications for providers engaging with homeless survivors. First, the survivors we interviewed had low levels of trust in institutions; institutions were viewed with suspicion and marked amounts of skepticism. Traditional service provision interventions that focused solely on supplying formal housing or shelter for these survivors proved less than effective due to survivors' distrust and inconsistent engagement with housing assistance bodies. While important as longer-term structural solutions, housing policies that give little credence to how homeless users enter and exit support and safety systems overlook critically important access issues.

Insofar as the norm for homeless survivors is structural 'invisibility', providers need to target ways to locate survivors in preemptive ways that create platforms for interpersonal trust-building, before structural 'solutions' are deployed. The Cure Violence initiative, founded in 2000 by Dr. Gary Slutkin, provides a provocative model in this regard (Cure Violence 2011). Slutkin's approach has received endorsements from the U.S. Conference of Mayors and is rapidly gaining traction as it spreads to 25 national sites, with as many locations globally (Kristof and WuDunn 2015).

Based on a public health/epidemiology framework, Slutkin's work in Chicago's most crime-ridden neighborhoods provides evidence-based support for a 'violence disruption' model

that de-professionalizes and de-institutionalizes service intervention entry and exit points. Viewing violence as one of America's biggest public health issues, Cure Violence trains lay community members and dispatches them as local health liaisons and violence-mitigation advocates. In a similar manner, local outreach workers could be dispatched to build rapport with women who are experiencing housing instability and/or conditions associated with household violence. Taking support and prevention services to vulnerable women, instead of waiting for women to self-identify after violence has occurred, turns the current institutional model on its head. Slutkin's approach also provides the opportunity for more personal accountability and interpersonal trust-building and maximizes available local social capital resources.

The second theme that we encountered in respondents' stories was 'disorder'. Homeless survivors' portrayed disorder as a stratagem they regularly used as a protective ruse. They also suggested that their disordered existence tended to isolate them socially. While their narratives tended to fluctuate between intrusive trauma processing and psychogenic amnesia, the social outcomes of this disorder dialectic were quite predictable—serial social dislocations. The very thing that these survivors needed most, safe community, became unavailable to them. This pattern became a mutually reinforcing cycle that was deployed both very intentionally for safety's sake, as well as seemingly (and perhaps at times pathologically) unintentionally.

A number of practice and policy recommendations emerge out of our findings regarding the disorder theme. These relate to service provision modalities that actively bridge the gap between the uneasy temporariness of emergency shelter life and the solitary sequestering of independent living. If homeless survivors regularly activate disorder as a protective mechanism, what living arrangements would ideally foster safety, whilst simultaneously providing accompaniment as survivors re-order their lives in meaningful and productive ways?

The Clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation was popularized in the mid-1970s in the wake of mental health deinstitutionalization (Fountain House Clubhouse 2017). It offered persons with persistent mental illnesses a community-based program that provided a comprehensive, safe, and restorative location that they could visit daily. This program created 'order' in Clubhouse member's lives while still honoring the voluntary nature of program participation. Clubhouses were not clinical sites insofar as no therapists or psychiatrists were on staff; trained community members were hired to accompany Clubhouse members using a collegial partnership model.

Service providers would do well to consider the benefits of approaches similar to the Clubhouse model. One such program is the New Community Project of Harrisonburg, Virginia (New Community Project 2003). Built on the principles of ecologically sustainable urban homesteading, this project provides on-site food gardening and micro-enterprise opportunities for residents. Residents live according to jointly agreed upon house rules and negotiate any infractions of these rules as a collective. To move emergency shelters in the direction of these types of programs would require a paradigm shift. From a 'holding location', shelters would need to become 'living locations' with the necessary social architecture to support these ends.

The third resistance mechanism that surfaced in respondents' stories related to enactments of 'subterfuge'. These took the form of non-compliance, feigned ignorance, the use of disguises, or at times the appropriation of clandestine anonymity. All of these instrumentations were rendered as performances of power. There were no apologies for these power plays; in fact, survivors tended to revel in these admissions of their own countervailed capacity. While these exhibitions revealed critically significant loci of survivor agency, a more nuanced reading would reveal that they also at times limited respondents' abilities to interface effectively with support providers.

Keeping in mind the possibility of being on the receiving end of these 'subterfuge' dynamics, the Silent Violence Project very intentionally structured its engagements with respondents in ways that bypassed traditional 'service provider' roles. In addition to the interviews we conducted, we also invited participants to Arts-based trauma-debriefing activities, Playback Theater events, and group Circle processes. While these were voluntary events, they offered a variety of non-traditional

and creative platforms to engage with participants in non-linear and binary ways. As forms of 'play therapy', these activities also disarmed participants so that the fight or flight responses characteristic of subterfuge were rarely activated. Perhaps more importantly, these alternative engagement platforms de-linked us from many of the traditional dualisms of research and opened up the reflexive space for each respondent to act as the theorist of her own experience.

10. Reaching Forward: I'm Gonna Preach

As a closing to our interview protocol, we asked each participant what she would like her contribution to this research to be. This is what one participant said:

> "[Providing] guidance. Guidance in knowing that life isn't easy for any of us. And by me talking about all of these vast different things in my life, I can affect anyone on pretty much any social, economic level, across races and genders and everything else. And I think that's more what Father in heaven intended when um, He went and told me that I was gonna preach. And I didn't realize that I'd been doing [that] for years." (Interview 10 December 2012).

By unveiling some of the 'hidden transcripts' behind these participants' narratives, we observe how their exigent circumstances become locations of survival and sabotage, resistance and resilience. Our hope is that through the 'infrapolitics' of their own struggle, the voices rendered in this research have been provided with yet another platform to 'preach'.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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