

Our Voice

Numbed by the avalanche of images and words we're engulfed in, we don't stop to ask ourselves if violence inhabits our territory or if we involuntarily inhabit the territories of violence. Bombarded —permit me the use of the metaphor— by statistics about attacks, disappearances, deaths, feminicides, do we lose track of the fact that behind each figure, there's a name, a history, a human being lost, attacked, murdered? Our country's daily newscasts come closer and closer to a police report; digital media also disseminates these situations as they happen. How, then, can we have a proper perspective?

Etymologically, the word “violence” relates to excessive force. Exercised how, against whom, why, for what? Are all the actions we perceive as aggressions violence? Would that be subjective? What is more, is objectivity at all possible in this realm?

This issue of *Voices of Mexico* deals with the events and how they are represented; with the situations and the discourse that talks about them; with the stories of lives damaged and the narratives that make them visible. This issue's articles reflect on impunity, the search for justice, anecdotes, testimony, the discursive constructions that produce the guilty parties or stigmatize, the cultural production that attempts to explain this context that seems so unreal because of how real, how brutal, how ignominious it is.

The idea is to give voice, but also to raise our voices. Both academic reflections and cultural and artistic production that populate this territory of ideas invite us to stop and not let the bombardment anesthetize us with its intensity, and to understand how we can decodify the images without letting them take us by storm and exist inside us without leaving us the space we need to think.

Organized crime, sexism, feminicide, serial murder, drug addiction, and drug trafficking, white-collar crime: this issue looks at everything that makes up our context from different perspectives. But, at the same time, we also see artistic creation, film, police reports, and audiovisual production, post-truth and graphic interpretation,

visual and performing arts that interpret that context, and call on us to make sense of it all. All of this contributes to the cartography of the territories of violence that, without wanting to, we move through every day.

All the voices of different generations, all serious and authoritative, those who have created the texts and images we present here, seek to make us reflect so that we don't normalize violence, that complex phenomenon that surrounds us in a territory that we would probably prefer to emigrate from.

I close this reflection with a forceful quote from Margaret Atwood's essay "Writing the Male Character," which I translated almost thirty years ago for the journal *Debate feminista* (Feminist Debate)

"Why do men feel threatened by women?" I asked a male friend of mine. (I love that wonderful rhetorical device, "a male friend of mine." It's often used by female journalists when they want to say something particularly bitchy, but don't want to be held responsible for it themselves. It also lets people know that you do have male friends, that you aren't one of those fire-breathing mythical monsters, The Radical Feminists, who walk around with little pairs of scissors and kick men in the shins if they open doors for you. "A male friend of mine" also gives — let us admit it — a certain weight to the opinions expressed.) So, this male friend of mine, who does by the way exist, conveniently entered into the following dialogue. "I mean," I said, "men are bigger, most of the time, they can run faster, strangle better, and they have on the average a lot more money and power." "They're afraid women will laugh at them," he said. "Undercut their world view." Then I asked some women students in a quickie poetry seminar I was giving, "Why do women feel threatened by men?" "They're afraid of being killed," they said.

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