

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography

<http://jce.sagepub.com/>

Ethnographic Lessons: Researching Incest in Mexican Families

Gloria González-López

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography 2010 39: 569

DOI: 10.1177/0891241610375279

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://jce.sagepub.com/content/39/5/569>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

Additional services and information for *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://jce.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

Citations: <http://jce.sagepub.com/content/39/5/569.refs.html>

Ethnographic Lessons: Researching Incest in Mexican Families

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography
39(5) 569–581
© The Author(s) 2010
Reprints and permission: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>
DOI: 10.1177/0891241610375279
<http://jce.sagepub.com>


Gloria González-López¹

Abstract

This article is a series of reflections on the methodological challenges and ethnographic complexities I have encountered while conducting research on the sexualized acts, interactions, and relationships (both voluntary and involuntary) within the family context in Mexican society. I examine how this journey has had a transformative effect on me as a researcher and a sociologist. In particular, I discuss the research surprises, methodological lessons, and epistemological insights that I experienced during this research process. I also comment on the paradigms and concepts that have helped me decipher and reconcile the tensions of occupying a position as both a researcher trying to maintain standards of conventional academic rigor and a witness to reports of sexualized pain.

Keywords

incest, community-based research, research ethics, Mexico

In the fall of 2005, I started work on a project in which I explore incest in Mexican society. My intent in this project has been to develop a critical sociological understanding of incestuous relationships in urbanized contexts in contemporary Mexico. My interest in exploring incestuous relationships emerged while I was conducting an earlier research project on Mexican immigrants and their sex lives. During my research for that study, I was deeply moved by informants' stories of sexual experiences with some of their

¹University of Texas at Austin, TX, USA

Corresponding Author:

Gloria González-López, 1 University Station A1700, Austin, TX 78712, USA
Email: gloria@austin.utexas.edu

relatives. These narratives exposing coercive experiences and sexual abuse early in childhood had aroused both my heart and my curiosity. I did some preliminary research on the topic and learned about the lack of sociological research in this area with populations of Mexican origin. Across disciplines, the studies that deal with these relationships are few, and most of them are historical analyses and descriptive statistical examinations, legal and judicial publications analyzing social and cultural forces but from a theoretical perspective, and artistic representations giving a voice to the victims in a symbolic way that has resulted in the production of novels and critical essays in the humanities. In short, I discovered that there are almost no ethnographic studies on incest in Mexico and none that give voice to the people.

In pursuing this study, I was also motivated by a strong desire to become more engaged in research that emerged directly from communities. In turn, I went back to Mexico to approach activists and mental health professionals to ask about what was “urgently” needed in the area of sexuality studies in Mexico. I spent time in Ciudad Juárez and engaged in conversations with professionals I had met five years earlier. During that time I had become a sort of long-distance volunteer who visited the city periodically to offer my sociological and clinical knowledge through workshops on gender and sexual violence at two local institutions. I was also exploring ways to create bridges between my professional career, my personal growth, and my spiritual life. I wanted to learn to do research for the benefit of others. I wanted to conduct a study that had the potential for “giving back” to the communities involved in the study. For example, giving workshops to discuss final results was at least one of the ideas I had as a way to reciprocate to these professional communities for their generous support. Most importantly, I wanted to avoid the “maquiladora syndrome”: going south as a researcher, gathering data, and then going back north to publish for my own professional benefit and a select group of privileged people (González-López 2007).

As I immersed myself in the field in the fall of 2005, I was driven by a particular interest and concern with regard to involuntary relationships that mainly affect the lives of children and women. This interest echoed many of the concerns expressed by professionals (i.e., activists, mental health professionals, and social workers, among others) who talked to me about their need to better understand the reasons why some adults (mainly men) may abuse the children and younger women in their families.

I began my fieldwork with two central objectives in mind. First, I wished to critically identify and examine the social, socioeconomic, and cultural forces responsible for these sexualized activities, paying special attention to involuntary, coercive sex between relatives but also to the nuances and

complexities involved in voluntary experiences. And second, I wished to examine how these sexualized acts and interactions shape the romantic, sexual, and relational lives of these women and men and how these sexual and emotional processes are shaped by Mexican culture and society.

I conducted a total of sixty individual interviews with adult women and men with histories of sexualized contact, interactions, and/or relationships within the context of family and who live in four large urban centers in Mexico. I also interviewed thirty-five professionals working on issues involving sexual violence against girls and boys, and women in general. I conducted my fieldwork in four major cities in Mexico (Ciudad Juárez, Guadalajara, Mexico City, and Monterrey) through the priceless help of professionals working at community-based agencies (i.e., NGOs) and countless activists and professionals I met at other nonprofit and academic institutions located in these four urban centers. My fieldwork took place in 2005 and 2006, and I have been working on transcribing, organizing, and analyzing the interviews since then. This process has been an emotionally and intellectually challenging journey, and it has taken considerably more time and work than I had originally expected.

In this article, I offer some reflections and insights on the complexities of doing research on sexual violence, but my central focus is on how this ethnographic journey has had a transformative effect on me, as a researcher and a sociologist. In the first part of the article, I discuss some of the research surprises and methodological lessons I learned as part of the process. In the second section, I discuss some of the ways I have navigated these ethnographic journeys as I attempt both to decipher the complexities of my own humanity and develop an academically rigorous study.

Research Surprises and Methodological Lessons

During the fieldwork for this project, I was often confronted by unexpected situations and experiences. These experiences prompted continual reflexivity, and my methods and orienting frameworks were consistently shaped and reshaped as a result. Below I discuss a few of these experiences.

Interviewing the Researcher

Ciudad Juárez was the first city in which I conducted my fieldwork. I was able to identify potential informants through the generous support of community-based agencies in the city. When I began contacting potential informants, I was surprised to find myself being interviewed by them. In

considering whether to participate, these women and men had endless questions for me about the project and about myself, professionally and personally. I was asked about my age, my professional training, my credentials, and my cultural competency, among other personal questions. I was asked about my marital status, whether I had children, and about my own comfort in listening to stories about intense emotions and feelings. Many times I was asked if I had some history of incestuous relationships or if I had been sexually abused as a child. In these conversations (which at times took more than an hour), potential informants wanted to make sure of my personal and professional ability to explore a sensitive topic.

These inquisitions did not necessarily stop after people agreed to be interviewed. During the actual interviews, I was asked for my opinion about their own personal issues and concerns exposed during the interviews, including but not limited to their relationships, HIV/AIDS, and sex education of their children, among other sensitive issues. As in my previous study with immigrants, I did not give a personal opinion during the interviews. When we finished our interviews, however, I made myself available to answer their questions only if the informant still had a special interest about these issues. When it seemed appropriate, I referred them to a professional in the area.

Some of the professionals I interviewed, and some of the professionals who referred informants to me, also quizzed me about my professional training and asked endless questions about the project in an attempt to assess my suitability and my ethics and also to protect potential informants. Some of these professionals inquired about my knowledge with regard to local and national issues to assess my professional legitimacy for doing research on a sensitive topic. My cultural status was also a question for some who were concerned that because I had “left” Mexico more than twenty years earlier, I had perhaps become Americanized, or “a gringa” (see González-López 2007). On these occasions, I realized some of the different ways in which institutional review board approval unexpectedly validated and protected me as a researcher as I explained repeatedly about the institutional protocol I had to follow, a surprise in itself for most of these inquiring professionals.

Even though these preinterview and postinterview inquisitions were not new to me as a researcher, I now realize that being completely open and honest, and frequently vulnerable to potential informants, was paving the road for me to experience a state of consciousness that I had not experienced in previous research. This state of mind involved a keen awareness, which made me awake and alert not only emotionally but also at the spiritual and cognitive levels. I gradually experienced this state of consciousness during the interviews, and it had a special effect on me. I used the concept “epistemologies of the wound” to identify this state of consciousness (see below).

Learning about Consensual and Nonconsensual Sex within Families

As I conducted the interviews, my own preconceived (and at times prejudiced and judgmental) notions of sexual activities within the family context were challenged. For instance, I was surprised to learn that some sexual relationships within the context of the family could be consensual, especially between individuals belonging to the same age groups or within the context of romantic exchanges. This became more fascinating when a given informant would explain to me that what had happened with an “uncle” was painful but what had happened with a “cousin” of the same age was not painful at all but rather an opportunity for sexual exploration and pleasure. Some of my informants were especially careful to make sure that I understood their explanations as they educated me about the subtleties of some forms of sexualized relationships between relatives.

These insights led me to refocus on exploring variation and romance within intrafamily sexuality. As I conducted interviews, I was surprised by some informants’ creativity in sustaining stable, long-term relationships with relatives within both heterosexual and same-gender arrangements. I found myself feeling both naïve and humbled by the stories of women and men who wanted to make sure that I understood that they were not traumatized by the relationships they had sustained in secret and through creative arrangements that have lasted for a long period of time with a close relative (for example, between first cousins). For instance, I found myself moved by the story of a young man who had successfully maintained a meaningful relationship with his girlfriend, a first cousin he had loved deeply. Another young man explained that the relationship he had maintained with his cousin, another man about his same age, had actually helped him to develop a healthy idea and “the ideal” of the kind of relationship he wanted to develop at some point as a self-identified gay man.

Deciphering the Meaning of Family

As I conducted my interviews, I found myself being interviewed again by some of my informants, who cleverly inquired about my personal and professional understanding of what I meant by the concept of “family.” “When you say ‘family,’ what do you mean by that? What does ‘family’ mean for you?” some informants asked me as they inquired if I also wanted to hear stories about being sexually harassed by a member of their extended family, for example, an aunt’s boyfriend, or an adult friend who was very close and dear to their parents and who was part of their “family.” I recall an informant who

told me, “So, what counts as family, anyway . . . isn’t a family supposed to wish the best for you?”

The concept of family continued to be fluid and malleable as I conducted my fieldwork. A professional I met in Mexico City wondered if I was going to interview people who have been sexually abused by priests. When I explained that I was conducting research with people who have been involved (involuntarily and/or voluntarily) in some kind of sexualized interactions with a family member, this activist told me to seriously reconsider my definition of family. Based on her experience, she had met survivors who identified abuse by priests as “incestuous” given the moral stature a priest holds within the church “family.” This is reflected linguistically as “*el padre*,” who represents the mother church, or “*la madre iglesia*.” Being betrayed by someone who might symbolically function as a father figure was brought up by this professional who invited me to rethink my understanding of family.

Learning about Emotional Pain, Healing, and Resilience

I was also profoundly transformed by the stories of women and men who appeared to be deeply affected by forms of sexualized abuse that, in a prejudiced manner, seemed insignificant to me and did not merit my attention. I had initially perceived these experiences as less relevant when compared with experiences of abuse of other informants whose experiences of sexual violence involved disturbing descriptions of physical wounds, bruises, and blood. As I learned to monitor myself with regard to my own preconceived notions and judgmental attitudes, I was more inclined to explore the reasons why apparent “minor” sexualized violence might have such damaging consequences while deeply violently and graphic experiences may not have a comparably damaging impact. As I write this article, I am still in the process of articulating and making sense of these narratives and some of the surprises they held for me. Most significantly, this growing awareness prompted me to want to understand stories illustrating the latter pattern and to ask informants more about it. In particular, I recall the story of a woman whose father had raped her in a violent way and who reported being in a healthy relationship and being a happily functioning adult who had never been in therapy. When I asked her about the reasons why some people seem to be deeply affected by trauma while others do not, she assertively explained to me, “because my mother believed me and took action.” In the process of exploring the intricate processes responsible for these dynamics, my informants offered me more questions than answers with regard to dynamics involving healing, forgiveness, justice, wisdom, and my very limited understanding of the human condition.

Defining “Victim” and “Survivor”

I also learned how limited and limiting the concepts of “victim” and “survivor” can be from my informants’ personal assertiveness in defining their own experiences as survivors, as victims, or in alternative ways. I learned to be respectful with regard to the ways in which my informants contested some of my careless use of these concepts. Gradually I learned to ask their opinions with regard to concepts such as “survivors” (*sobrevivientes*) or “victims” (*víctimas*) and an alternative concept that I learned, “*supervivientes*,” which may not have a literal translation in English but seems to convey the idea that people with these stories might not be survivors or victims but rather human beings with a special capacity to successfully embrace life in spite of excruciating life experiences.

Frequently, in the process of identifying informants, I was asked if I would include people who had been in psychotherapy. Some professionals and informants told me about the ways in which people with these traumatic sexual abuse histories have been retraumatized by what they identified as “poorly trained” psychotherapists. Because of this, I decided to include informants who have been in psychotherapy with the hope that by learning more about these cases, I could potentially help some of the professionals expand their own concepts of victim and survivor and provide insights that would help their clientele.

I was also interested in learning more about the emotionally damaging interventions used by some professionals, and I became more aware of how these “treatments” may reflect larger social and cultural ideologies about incest and sexual abuse within families, in particular, and gender and sexuality, in general. For instance, I interviewed a self-identified gay man who described to me the ways a therapist had placed electrodes in his genitals, nipples, fingers, and anus as he explained that electroshock therapy and hypnosis would help him “cure” his homosexuality, which presumably had some connection to abusive sexual history.

Exploring Human Connections

As I immersed myself in the field, I became more aware and less naïve with regard to some of the reasons why research in the area is so limited. Collecting data, especially conducting interviews, was an emotionally exhausting journey that required me to develop specific ways to take care of myself professionally and personally. Some of the interviewees expressed awareness of the difficult process this represented for me. “Are you ok? How do you

take care of yourself? How do you do it?" were among some of the many questions people would ask in the process of helping me understand that they understood the challenges I must have encountered while doing research on topics that were not easy to explore. Intriguingly, many of the same informants who had grilled me about myself and my credentials in prestudy interviews also tried to comfort me and make sure I was okay as we wrapped up the interview. This experience of caring humanized me in a way I was not expecting and allowed me to show and share a few tears, a warm handshake, or a supportive hug after the interview. I was grateful for the endless lessons I learned after each and every one of interviews, both as a sociologist and as a human being.

When I discuss this project with others, including fellow scholars, a frequently asked question is what effects such challenging fieldwork has had on me. In the next section, I describe some of the emotional and spiritual consequences of this research and the transformative effects it has had for me.

Witnessing

While conducting my interviews, I realized that all dimensions of my humanity (cognitive, spiritual, emotional) are equally important in the production of knowledge. The research process humanized me in many ways. One of the most significant for me was the unexpected experience of becoming a "witness" to the pain my informants revealed to me.

As I started to conduct my first interviews, I realized the significance of being the witnessing adult. In many cases, I came to understand that my informants saw me as an authority figure who was willing to believe the child telling the story of his or her abuse. I was an adult who was witnessing previously unrevealed stories of secrecy and silenced violence, especially in the case of informants who had, as children, engaged in sexualized activities against their will and with relatives who were a lot older than them. The pre-interview interrogations I was subjected to can actually be interpreted as the potential informant's attempt to determine whether I was a suitable witness for the pain that he or she carried. For example, in Ciudad Juárez, one young man asked not only about my marital status and if I had children and my age, he also wanted to know if I would feel comfortable listening to stories of pain. He asked me about my comfort level while listening to and potentially experiencing pain and anxiety. He told me that someone who is married and with children is more likely to be sensitive to pain: a mother can understand better. Even though I told him that I was a childless, never-married woman, he agreed to be interviewed when I explained about my professional background and my own personal growth and comfort with the topic. I talked to

him about my previous research with immigrants and my clinical expertise with women who have been sexually abused. Like him, other informants interviewed me to assess my own comfort and to make sure they would feel comfortable opening up with me.

As I conducted these interviews, I gradually discovered the symbolic presence I was developing in my informants' lives. I eventually realized that from the perspective of many informants, I was the family adult, the respectful figure whose intention was to do what others had not done when they first experienced abuse and pain. I eventually realized I was becoming some kind of ethnographic, symbolic mother who unconditionally believed; I was becoming the family adult figure who would respectfully and nonjudgmentally finally listen to their stories. This was the case for people for whom the interview had become the first time recalling, articulating, and sharing this aspect of their life stories with someone. After I collected my data and started to examine my own ethnographic journey in retrospect, I also felt that not only had I become a symbolic mother to some of the participants involved in this research project, but it taught me more about the fictitious boundaries that presumably separate our personal and professional lives and responses in the field.

Epistemologies of the Wound

Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of "A heart with a reason—un corazón con razón," is emblematic of what I was experiencing as a researcher (see Lara 2005). This state of consciousness allowed me to place myself inside the sexualized wounds of my informants during the interview process (see González-López 2006). The wound became the location and the place where the production of knowledge was beginning to emerge in this project. As an attempt to make sense of this process to myself, I started to use the concept of "epistemologies of the wound" to explore and examine how *all* dimensions of my human condition (i.e., intellectual, emotional, and spiritual) had become equally foundational and valuable in the process of interviewing.

Epistemologies of the wound is inspired by Gloria Anzaldúa's theorizing, and it has helped me to deal with the "messiness of human social life" and the complexities of conducting sociological research (see O'Brien 2009, 5) on unexplored and challenging sensitive topics—in this case, sexual violence within the family in Mexican society. In addition, having a language to understand and accept my own inner complexities has helped me explore how my own "lived experience" as a researcher is transforming the ways in which I am engaging in intellectual conversations within sociology and across disciplines as I participate in the production of knowledge that has been traditionally marginalized (see O'Brien 2009, 19).

While the concept of “epistemologies of the wound” helped me understand what I was experiencing during the interviews, it has also helped me to explore ways to better articulate (and to explain to myself) what I have encountered as I listen to the interviews again and again, as I read transcripts of interviews, or as I analyze and organize my data, and eventually as I try to develop conceptual frameworks to theoretically contextualize this study. As I have been analyzing my interviews, for example, I read interviews over and over while placing myself in the wound of informants who experienced coercive experiences of sexualized contact. In this process, I have encountered tension, ambiguity, and discomfort; I have experienced a special transformation coming from within and from the data at the same time; I have been stretching out methodologically and theoretically; and I have learned to feel comfortable with my own intellectual discomfort as I identify and explore fictitious lines between myself and informants, and between myself and my professional life.

Methodological *Nepantla*: Between Academic Rigor and Spiritual Growth

While organizing and analyzing my data, I have found myself in a state of mind that could be identified as “*nepantla*.” According to Gloria Anzaldúa,

Bridges span liminal (threshold) spaces between worlds, spaces I call *nepantla*, a Náhuatl world meaning *tierra entre medio*. Transformations occur in this in-between space, an unstable, unpredictable, precarious, always-in-transition space lacking clear boundaries. *Nepantla es tierra desconocida*, and living in this liminal zone means a constant state of displacement—an uncomfortable, even alarming feeling. (Anzaldúa 2002, 1)

As an interviewer, being in *nepantla* has meant experiencing ambiguities, tensions, and contradictions and developing tolerance and even comfort with this unexpected process of intellectual, professional, and personal evolution. At the analytical level, for example, I have been especially curious about the lives of participants who shared very disturbing histories of abuse as children, but whose personal adult lives did not seem to be affected by the experiences they related to me. The profound resilience of these informants sparked in me a keen interest for learning more about this dimension of the human condition. During the interviewing, I became aware that I was asking more and more questions about this resilience: where did it come from; how did they sustain it? I have also found myself feeling repeatedly naïve even when

I thought I was done with this inner process, and especially after I finished the last interviews.

My daily spiritual practices have also played an important part in enabling me to do this research. Through these practices, I always endeavor to be present, nonjudgmental, respectful, peaceful, and compassionate during the interview process. As an apprentice of Buddhist philosophies, I have incorporated some of the paradigms promoting unique states of awareness. In his discussions of what is called “Mahamudra meditation,” Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist Rob Preece best summarizes what has become foundational for me while exploring topics that are at times disturbing and shocking, while experiencing peace and tolerance in my own methodological *nepantla*. According to Preece,

“Quiet” means settling and being free of distracting thoughts; “present” means we recognize the significance of being utterly present, in relationship to what is happening, not caught in past or future, and not split off, disengaged, or “spaced out.” “Openness” means being relaxed, spacious, and accepting, remaining loose and natural, not clinging to anything; and, finally, “clarity” means being sharp, alert, and not sluggish or dull. (Preece 2006, 125)

These dimensions (i.e., experiencing state of quietness and being present, open, and clear) were enormously beneficial during the interview process, but they have been even more helpful during the phase of analysis and initial writing by enabling me to experience intellectual vulnerability. This vulnerability allows me to acknowledge the emotional insights that are a basis for intellectual insight and transformation. In other words, as I allow myself to fully engage with the experiences of my informants, including my own emotional responses, I am more open to my intuition as well as to my abstract intellectual processes as I work on analyzing the interviews.

This project has helped me to create bridges between my professional career, my personal growth, and my spiritual life. This project has also helped me engage with the communities that have been involved in this project. Another concept from Anzaldúa that has been useful to me in this process is “spiritual activism.” This idea has helped me to identify a sense of social and emotional interconnection, a sense of social and emotional intimacy among those who participated in the study (including myself) and the rest of us. Keating (2002, 18) examines Anzaldúa’s theorizing on this particular concept:

spiritual activism begins with the personal yet moves outward, acknowledging our radical interconnectedness. This is spirituality for social change, spirituality that recognizes the many differences among

us yet insist on our commonalities as catalysts for transformation. What a contrast: while identity politics requires holding onto specific categories of identity, spiritual activism demands that we let them go.

Even if I do not have actual physical contact with the communities involved in my study or I may not stay in permanent communication with all of the professionals who helped during the research, they remain active participants in my mind, and this awareness helps to further dissolve the boundaries that presumably divide researchers from communities and informants.

Spiritual activism explains the evolving connection I have experienced from day one (back when I started to figure out the best way to immerse myself in this study). Now as I analyze and organize my data and share my findings with professional and activist communities as well as with the informants themselves, it resonates more than ever. The process has also given me a strong sense of interconnection with all those I will never interview but who may share similar life stories to those of the informants who so generously opened their hearts to me.

Through these experiences of “witnessing,” epistemologies of the wound, *nepantla*, and spiritual activism, I have been transformed and have evolved as both a scholar and a human being. Navigating internally through all dimensions—intellectual, emotional, and spiritual—I have learned to become more open and awake as a sociologist who is learning to do socially responsible research on sensitive topics.

Writing these reflections has also been an opportunity for spiritual growth. As I conclude, I am prompted to revisit an exercise that was given to me many years ago as I went through the last psychotherapy sessions with a kind and wise clinician. He invited me to look in retrospect as I imagined the last year of my life—hopefully at least eighty and healthy, as I recall telling him back then. He asked me, “What is the kind of life would you be recalling? How would you describe the life you had lived as it gets to its end?” I have played this exercise in my mind more than once, especially during the past five or six years of my life, in considering the kind of professional sociologist I would like to remember in that imaginary futuristic space. The process of writing this article has become a kind of methodological journaling as I explore the best answers to this question, as I do my best to be mindful while not neglecting all dimensions of my humanity as a sociologist. As I work on this project, I am learning to grow and mature intellectually through the contradictions, tensions, and lessons involved in all aspects of my human condition. May the reflections shared in this article be of help to others similarly exploring this endless path of intellectual development and personal growth.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The author(s) declared no conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research and/or authorship of this article: This research project was made possible thanks to support received from the Woodrow Wilson Career Enhancement Fellowship for Junior Faculty (2005-2006) and financial and professional support provided by the University of Texas at Austin through a Dean's Fellowship (fall 2006), and the Center for Mexican American Studies, the Department of Sociology, and the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies.

References

- Anzaldúa, G. E. 2002. Preface, (Un)natural bridges, (Un)safe spaces. In *This Bridge We Call Home*, ed. G. E. Anzaldúa and A. L. Keating, 1-5. New York: Routledge.
- González-López, G. 2006. Epistemologies of the wound: Anzaldúan theories and sociological research on incest in Mexican society. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 4IV (Summer): 17-24.
- González-López, G. 2007. Crossing-back methodologies: Transnational feminist research on incest in Mexico. *Forum* 37 (2): 19-20.
- Keating, A.L. 2002. Charting Pathways, Making Thresholds...A Warning, An Introduction. In *This Bridge We Call Home*, ed. G. E. Anzaldúa and A. L. Keating, 6-20. New York: Routledge.
- Lara, I. 2005. Daughter of Coatlicue: An interview with Gloria Anzaldúa. In *Entre-nundos/Among worlds*, ed. A. L. Keating, 41-56. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- O'Brien, J. 2009. Sociology as an epistemology of contradiction. *Sociological Perspectives* 52 (1): 5-22.
- Preece, R. 2006. *The psychology of Buddhist tantra*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion.

Bio

Gloria González-López is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Texas at Austin. She teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on sexuality, gender and society, qualitative methods and sexuality research, and sexual violence. She is the author of the book *Erotic Journeys: Mexican Immigrants and Their Sex Lives* (University of California Press, 2005). She is currently conducting sociological research on the sexual, romantic, and life experiences of adult women and men with histories of incestuous relationships and who currently live in four of the largest urbanized areas in Mexico.