Published in final edited form as:

Health Place. 2014 November ; 30: 205–214. doi:10.1016/j.healthplace.2014.09.005.

Dwelling within political violence: Palestinian women's narratives of home, mental health, and resilience

Cindy A. Sousa,

Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research

Susan Kemp, and

University of Washington School of Social Work

Mona El-Zuhairi

Abstract

Political violence is increasingly played out within everyday civilian environments, particularly family homes. Yet, within the literature on political violence and mental health, the role of threats to home remains under-explored. Using focus group data from 32 Palestinian women, this paper explores the implications of violations to the home within political violence. Threats to the privacy, control, and constancy of the family home – key dimensions of ontological security (Giddens, 1990) – emerged as central themes in women's narratives. Surveillance, home invasions, and actual or threatened destruction of women's home environments provoked fear, anxiety, grief, humiliation, and helplessness, particularly as women struggled to protect their children. Women also described how they mobilized the home for economic, familial and cultural survival. Study findings illuminate the impact of threats to intimate environments on well-being of women and their families living with chronic political violence, and underscore the importance of attention to violations of place and home in research on civilian experiences of and responses to political violence.

Keywords

Political violence; Mental health; Resilience; Home; Parenting

Introduction

Political violence increasingly erodes the boundaries between the “war front” and the “home front” (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development [UNRISD], 2005). In ongoing occupations in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine, military incursions routinely involve everyday civilian environments, including workplaces, schools, and sites of

Correspondence may be addressed to Cindy Sousa, PhD, MSW/MPH, Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, 300 Airdale Road, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-1697; 206-734-5040 (phone). Electronic mail may be sent to: csousa@brynmawr.edu.

Publisher's Disclaimer: This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final citable form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

worship (Coward, 2004; Graham, 2004; Gregory, 2008). A central target of contemporary political violence is the family home, which is regularly subject to surveillance, invasions, and repeated actual or threatened demolitions (Brickell, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Falah, 2004; Fluri, 2011).

A small body of literature, mainly from data collected among women in Palestine, points to the mental health implications of the home invasions and demolitions that, in part, characterize political violence in this region (Johnson, 2010; Harker, 2009; Giacaman, Shannon, et al., 2007; Qouta, Punamäki & Sarraj, 1998; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2006, 2009). Findings from these studies are consistent with scholarship on the negative impacts on well-being of threats to home related to mass disasters (Carroll, Morbey, Balogh, & Araoz, 2009; Cox & Perry, 2011; Erikson, 1976; Norris et al., 2002; Sims et al., 2009; Tapsell & Tunstall, 2008), urban renewal (Fried, 1963; Fullilove, 1996, 2004), and chronic environmental degradation (Speldenwinde, Cook, Davies & Weinstein, 2009). Yet, while evidence suggests that one-third to one-half of people exposed to political violence will endure some type of mental distress (deJong, Komproe & Van Ommeron, 2003; WHO, 2002), there is limited information about how the intrusion of political violence into everyday places, particularly family homes, affects well-being.

This paper uses data from a series of focus groups with Palestinian women to both draw together and deepen the literature on place, political violence, and health. Although the study focused generally on women's experiences of the occupation, threats to homes and their implications emerged as central themes in women's narratives, underscoring the importance of attention to violations of place and home in scholarship considering how well-being is affected by political violence. Informed by theoretical and empirical work on home, ontological security, and well-being (Antonovsky, 1987; Giddens, 1990; Seamon, 1979); by scholarship on the implications of *solastalgia*, or threats to everyday environments while residents are *in situ* (Albrecht et al., 2007, 2012); and by feminist scholarship on gender and home (hooks, 1990; Young, 2005), this study illuminates the critical relationships between home and well-being in the context of political violence. In the sections that follow, we describe the theoretical and geographic contexts that inform our interpretations. We then present the study methods and findings. The paper closes with discussion of the implications of the study for further research and policy practice.

Home and well-being

Although 'home' is by no means an unproblematic concept (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Fluri, 2011), homes are nonetheless critical sites for safety, meaning, belonging, and refuge; the formation and fortification of individual and collective identity; and the nurturance of families and relationships (Bachelard & Jolas, 1994; Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Mallett, 2004; Proshansky et al., 1983; Tuan, 1980; Young, 2005). Humanistic and phenomenological geographers (Buttimer, 1980; Tuan, 1980; Relph, 1976) have argued that human well-being depends on the experience of "at-homeness": "the taken-for-granted situation of being comfortable and familiar with the world in which one lives his or her day-to-day life" (Seamon, 1979, p. 78). Paralleling medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky's (1987) proposal that well-being amidst adversity depends on a person's *sense of coherence*, or experience of

the world as meaningful, manageable, and comprehensible, theories of home and well-being highlight the multiple ways that homes and their material contents support human needs for constancy and predictability (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983; Young, 2005).

Giddens (1990) referred to this sense of the world as a reliable, comprehensible place as *ontological security*: “the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action” (p. 92). Empirical studies of home and well-being drawing on Giddens' theoretical work affirm the psychological importance of constancy, along with privacy and control (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Hawkins & Maurer, 2011; Kearns, Hiscock, Ellaway, & Macintyre, 2000; Padgett, 2007). Constancy, or a “[c]onfidence in the routine and reliability of persons, places, and things” (Hawkins & Maurer, 2011, p. 144) provides stability and security, essential not only for well-being, but also for personal and collective identity (Kearns et al., 2000). Privacy, including freedom from surveillance, establishes the home as a refuge and endows inhabitants with crucial experiences of freedom and autonomy (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Padgett, 2007). Both constancy and privacy, in turn, are inextricably linked to agency, or control over what happens within and to one's domestic environment (Porteous & Smith, 2001). Affirming Seamon's (1979) assertion that “the person who is at home holds a space over which he [sic] is in charge” (p. 80), control thus emerges as a central theme in a range of empirical studies exploring connections between home, ontological security, and health (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Hawkins & Maurer, 2011; Kearns et al., 2000; Padgett, 2007).

Theorists of space and place have long emphasized the central importance of attention to issues of control and power; Lefebvre (1991), for example, asserted that to make space, we must have “practical capabilities and sovereign powers” (p. 34) over it (see also Tuan, 1980, esp. p. 52). At the same time, such perspectives surface the complexities inherent in discussions of domestic spaces. The capacity for agency and control within the home and the meaning this holds varies not only in relation to external and internal power relations (related, for instance, to gender and age) but also as a function of family, household, and cultural diversity. Much of the humanistic and phenomenological theoretical work summarized above has thus been rightly critiqued for embodying nostalgic, patriarchal, classist, and culture-bound interpretations of home (see e.g., Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Domosh, 1998; Young, 2005). Clearly, domestic environments are by no means universally agentic and positive. Nonetheless, research with groups who traditionally hold less power, including women, children, the formerly homeless, and the elderly, also underscores the fundamental importance of control to people's positive experience of home; indeed, findings from these studies highlight how, for these participants, their home, however defined, is the rare place in which they feel a modicum of control and thus peace (Akesson, 2014; Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Harker, 2009; Padgett, 2007). Moreover, the home has specifically been theorized as a site where women derive power, largely through caring for the space and its inhabitants and promoting individual and collective identity, confidence, and wellness (Harker, 2009, 2010; hooks, 1990; Young, 2005).

Given the tenacious entanglement of power with the experience of home, along with the gendered assumptions ‘home’ evokes (Bowlby, 1997), our topic demands careful attention to

how women describe their emotional experiences of home. Research about women's experiences of both home and political violence often highlight, for instance, the importance that women ascribe to their role as mothers (Berman, Giron, & Marroquin, 2009; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2006; Ward, 2009), a theme that also emerged in our data. In this context, disruptions to home environments might well be understood as profound assaults on women's agency and control, particularly as they undermine the tasks of care-taking (Akesson, 2014; Sims, Medd, Mort, & Twigger-Ross, 2009). Indeed the environments in which mothering takes place (Kemp, 2001) take on increased salience in the context of political violence, where the care and protection of children is both more challenging (Berman, et al., 2009; Bradley, 2007), and more urgent (Barber, 1999; Berman et al., 2009; Bradley, 2007; Garbarino & Kostelny, 1996; Freud & Burlingham, 1943).

Further, as our data made clear, in Palestine, women's experiences of 'home' cannot be separated from their geo-political context. Below we briefly describe how the geographic and political context specifically relates to the experience of place and home in Palestine; for a more thorough timeline of the issue and its relationship to health, see Giacaman et al. (2009) and other articles in the associated Lancet series on health in Palestine.

Palestine: Spacio-cide and solastalgia

By its nature, political violence threatens conventional notions of home as a safe, autonomous refuge. Always porous, in the context of political violence unstable boundaries between public and private space (Massey, 2004) are essentially obliterated: political arrangements interpenetrate domestic environments directly, as in home invasions and demolitions, and indirectly, through the challenges of living within chronic spatial insecurity.

In Palestine, the deliberate destruction of home, which Porteous and Smith (2001) term *domicide*, operates across geographic scales from the personal home to the nation (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). The protracted history of conflict with and occupation by Israel has long involved onerous spatial controls: an 8-meter high, 436-mile long separation wall, hundreds of checkpoints, roadblocks, and areas that are either closed to specific populations or require special permits for entry, curfews, and constant invasions into and surveillance of villages and homes (UN-OCHA, 2011b, Weizman, 2007). The seizure or destruction of family homes and their surrounding lands and expulsion of inhabitants have been long-standing strategies of the occupation (Smith, 2011; UN-OCHA, 2011a; UNRWA, 2012). Home destructions facilitate Israeli expropriation of Palestinian land by transferring the Palestinian population (Falah, 2003, 2004; Harker, 2009), a process Hanafi (2009) terms *spacio-cide*. As Hanafi (2009) notes, "In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Israeli target is the *place*" (p. 109), a strategy which threatens Palestine's geographic contiguity and collective 'homeland' and has significant implications for the well-being of Palestinians.

Although many Palestinians have been displaced from their homes and homeland, more remain *in situ*, contending on a daily basis with threats to the integrity, quality, and safety of their home environments. Narratives of the everyday experiences of Palestinians highlight the spatial dimensions of emplaced experiences of suffering and survival within political violence where invasions, check-points, and road closures interrupt even the most basic activities, such as being at home or visiting friends (Allen, 2008; Richter-Devroe, 2013;

Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2006). The growing literature on the mental health implications of chronic environmental degradation and change provides helpful insights into this experience, capturing the particular distress that comes with living in an environment that no longer facilitates ease and well-being (Sartore et al., 2008; Tschakert, Tutu, & Alcaro, 2013; Warsini, Mills & Ushe, 2014). This distress has been conceptualized by Albrecht and his colleagues as *solastalgia*, or “the homesickness you have while you are still located within your home environment” (Albrecht, 2010, p. 227). In exploring emplaced threats to intimate civilian environments, particularly homes, the research presented here adds important spatial dimensions to scholarship on health and political violence, taking up the critical question of what it means to “dwell within the context of warfare” (Brickell, 2012, p. 577).

Study Procedures

Sample and Recruitment

Data for this study come from a collaborative research project aimed at better understanding women's experiences of political violence, trauma, and resilience to inform programs for the main study partner, the Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS, one of the oldest and largest Palestinian-based healthcare NGOs). Five focus groups were conducted in 2008 with 32 adult Palestinian women in different sectors of the West Bank. Respondents were drawn from general health, children's and eye-care clinics. The groups included the following number of participants: Al Khalil (Hebron) (5), Nablus (7), Jerusalem (4), Qalqiliya (10), Tulkarem (6). The University of Washington Human Subjects Division approved the study procedures.

PMRS staff approached potential participants, using a prepared script explaining the study and its potential benefits and risks. Women were informed that participation in the study was strictly voluntary and that their services would not be affected by their decision regarding participation. To assure the privacy of participants, we did not collect demographic or life history information. Nonetheless, in one focus group, participants refused to take part once the taping was explained. A new group was recruited for this location.

Staff from PMRS set up the focus groups and translated the focus group materials, including the recruitment and consent forms. The focus group team consisted of the lead researcher, an American academic woman who does not speak Arabic but has spent considerable time in Palestine, and two Palestinian women: a community psychology graduate student from Birzeit University and a PMRS employee. The Palestinian women, who had been trained in focus group facilitation, co-facilitated the groups in Arabic, with one woman doing most of the active moderation of the group and the other taking extensive notes. The lead researcher, who only had rudimentary Arabic skills, listened and aided with facilitation by working with the lead moderator prior to, during, and after each focus group. Participants were asked to describe their experiences of political violence and its effects on themselves, their families, and their communities. They were also asked to share their perspectives about strategies of resilience, or how they, their families, and their communities managed the stresses associated with political violence. The groups were audiotaped. Immediately following each focus group the research team discussed the main themes, allowing the team

to assess when data saturation was reached (Morse, 2005) and providing a venue for thematic triangulation and validation (Barker & Pistrang, 2005; Devers, 1999).

Focus groups as a choice of method

Focus groups were selected as a study method because of their potential to draw out narratives of people who are most affected by an issue (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2003, 2009). Their dialogic nature also affords a space for “collective testimony” (Madriz, 1998, p. 116), giving women a shared venue to explore problems that may previously have been individualized (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005; Madriz, 1998)¹. In this sense, focus groups may help to capture how meanings, particularly around shared experiences, are often co-constructed, not only during the actual group process, but also within the context of long term collective struggles that result in oft-repeated themes of violence and resistance. Narratives from focus groups, particularly in vulnerable communities where members share experiences of trauma, might thus be considered as both individual and collective testimony (Madriz, 1998; Seaton, 2008). We were mindful of this dynamic throughout our process, for while the notion of a dual individual-collective narrative is a particular strength of focus groups, it also presents specific challenges for interpretation, a dynamic that we discuss below.

Within focus groups, participants may perceive various levels of freedom to share views, particularly those that may not be met with general acceptance, resulting in censoring or suppressing of views or the repetition of specific, purposeful, or ‘communal narratives’ (Seaton, 2008, p. 304; see also, Carey & Smith, 1994; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Sim, 1998; Smithson, 2006). As suggested in the literature, the research team contended with the potential limitations of the focus group method in both the preparation for and the actual facilitation of the groups. For example, the moderator actively invited an open dialogue; in several areas, women had different, sometimes heated, opinions; and her facilitation allowed for disagreements to unfold. During the analytic process, the team sought out and considered counter-narratives or areas of dialogue that appeared to be overshadowed by group processes or rhetorics, or by the social practices of women's narratives and the relationships between participants and researchers (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008).

Translation of data

Focus group data were first translated in Palestine by the lead facilitator. A professional Lebanese translator also interpreted the focus group content verbatim for the lead researcher, who transcribed. For each focus group, the lead researcher then considered the two transcripts side-by-side. Any discrepancies were reconsidered by the lead researcher, the Palestinian lead focus group facilitator, and the Lebanese translator, in consultation with people from the region, until a final consensus was reached. This iterative process allowed us to explore choices inherent in translation that ultimately affect the analysis and interpretation of cross-language data (Esposito, 2001; Larkin, Dierckx de Casterlé, &

¹Consistent with these theories, many women reported after the focus groups that they were happy to have taken part in the process, that the process was helpful for them emotionally, that the nature and scope of the inquiry were appropriate and timely, and that they longed for more group dialogues to talk about how political violence specifically affects their lives.

Schotsmans, 2007; Wong & Poon, 2010). While our translation process allowed for cross-checking and quality assurance (particularly because our moderator was also a translator and an analyst of the data), it should be noted that our process was still subject to the many challenges inherent within cross-language research (Lincoln & González y González, 2008; Squires, 2008; Temple, 2002; Temple & Young, 2004; Temple, Edwards, & Alexander, 2006).

Analysis methods

Codes and themes were used to classify, organize, and interpret data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Initial coding was done line by line. A coding matrix described codes and their relationships to each other, to data from the larger project (e.g. photographs, field notes, interview transcripts), and to theories, grey literature and other scholarly research on political violence (particularly within the West Bank), aiding in the integrity of interpretation (Devers, 1999). Using mind-mapping software (XMind, 2010), “thematic network” displays were constructed to depict themes and the relationships between them and to build broad thematic categories (Attride-Stirling, 2001). These helped in the exploration and refinement of categories and codes and analysis of their relationships. Memo writing was used to track analytic decisions and ensure reflexivity regarding issues of positionality and bias (Krefting, 1991). Themes and interpretations were also shared with a group of qualitative researchers, allowing for peer auditing (Barker & Pistrang, 2005) and exploration of counter-factuals.

Findings

Threats to the privacy, control, and constancy of the family home – key dimensions of ontological security (Giddens, 1990) – emerged as central themes in the women's narratives. Surveillance, home invasions, and actual or threatened home demolitions provoked fear, anxiety, grief, humiliation, and helplessness, particularly as women struggled to protect their children. Narratives also illuminated resilience and determination as women described utilizing the home for refuge and resistance.

“Where is our freedom?”: Surveillance

The photograph below was taken from the roof of a Palestinian home in Al Khalil. The circled area is an Israeli military post constructed on top of Palestinian homes. Clearly illustrated here is the vertical as well as horizontal architecture of the Israeli occupation (Smith, 2011; Weizman, 2007): soldiers and settlers can literally watch over Palestinian residents (Segal, Weizman & Tartakover, 2003).

Descriptions of disruptions to privacy emerged as a consistent thread in women's narratives. Concerns about being constantly watched were particularly acute among women living in Al Khalil (pictured above), who pointed out that even if Israeli soldiers don't enter their homes, their scrutiny is always present. One woman described the emotional stress of surveillance, as she lives with her family in a home that is completely surrounded by the structures of an Israeli settlement:

Once, my daughter and I were going up the stairs and she sat on the stairs because she heard shooting. We were sitting and hiding-we were so afraid-we had a feeling

they were watching us. So every time we go to that certain area in the stairs –where it's open- we fear they are watching us from the towers. When we go up the stairs we have a feeling that someone is watching us. –Al Khalil

“We cry” she went on to say, “and we are afraid.” Fear compromised the family's ability to move freely in their own home. “Sometimes a month goes by” the woman said, “and we do not go up the stairs.” She also said that sometimes her family can only move about the house by crawling because they are afraid of being detected if they stand up in their home.

Heightening the need for vigilance is the ever-present possibility that surveillance will escalate into violence. Another woman shared that if something threatens the settlement or the settlers, soldiers from the military camp adjacent to the settlement shoot “from all sides” into her house. “One time they were shooting a lot,” she said, “and my 3 brothers were wounded” (Al Khalil).

Like other violations of the family home, the fear associated with surveillance was often linked to the pursuit of family members by Israeli forces:

I am a mother of a martyr² and activist/ freedom fighter. For 4 years I didn't sleep in my house... Because my house is right on the street it's very exposed. Everybody can see us; whoever is coming or going can see us. -Nablus

Women's narratives of relentless surveillance highlight their constant doubt regarding the integrity of their homes. Under incessant surveillance, home is no longer a refuge of privacy and autonomy but rather a place of fear and insecurity, a transformation that incited frustration among the women:

If we want to go into our houses and we are afraid, where is our freedom? Every time we need to enter they are all stopping us and watching us. There's no security. How can we feel safe? The Israeli army is always getting in and out, in and out, all the time. -Tulkarem

“They attacked my house and ruined everything”: Home invasions

Under normal conditions, families use the physical structure of the home to ensure privacy and safety, opening the door to welcome guests and closing it to refuse entry to unwelcome intruders. Women in the focus groups, in contrast, talked about living in constant fear of their homes being violently entered and searched (with doors being “barged down”), particularly in the middle of the night. One said that even if she didn't see soldiers daily, their presence is felt, because “there is not even one single house that they haven't entered.” Women living in a refugee camp were particularly likely to describe home invasions as routine occurrences:

²With regards to the use of the term martyr, we refer readers to Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2003), who explains that the term holds particular meaning in the Palestinian context, where it “refers to any and every person who falls, dies or is being killed by the “enemy,” in this case, Israel. This person could be a girl killed while playing in her house, a baby in his mother's lap, a child on his way to school, a stone thrower, a suicide bomber, a woman who died during delivery due to the Israeli occupation's prohibition to allow her to reach a hospital...” (p. 394).

Every night, near 2:00 am, IDF soldiers start to scream, shoot, and torment our neighborhood. They have entered our house many times for no reason, with no consideration for children or elders. – Nablus (woman from Balata refugee camp)

Even if their own homes are not invaded, women regularly see or hear soldiers knocking on or breaking down their neighbors' doors. Underscoring the relentless nature of home violations and echoing descriptions in other studies (Doumani, 2004; Hanafi, 2009; Harker, 2009), one woman said simply, “This is our life.”

During invasions soldiers seize control, undermining residents' authority over the home, its inhabitants, and its material objects. Although our analyses are focused on the mental health implications of these and other acts of spatial violence, women's narratives make clear that violations to the home harm both physical and mental health. Many of the women's experiences of home invasions involved physical violence. One stated that the soldiers “enter like barbarians,” creating fear by using forceful, violent tactics:

First thing they did is start hitting people. They brutally came to the house and opened the door. –Qalqilyah

Violence to family members and violence to the home often went hand in hand. “I was really afraid,” one woman said:

...they started breaking everything inside. They were searching our house upside down and destroying everything and saying ‘you are hiding some weapons here inside the house.’ We told them we did not have any weapons but they did not listen. They destroyed everything in the house. -Qalqilyah

In the most immediate sense, invasions devastated the functionality of the home. One woman described how the soldiers turned things asunder and “broke everything,” including “the bed we sleep on and all the couches and the kitchen.” Another said: “They attacked my house, and ruined everything, even the food.” Yet personal belongings are more than practical necessities; they are also vital repositories of history, meaning, and identity, and their loss is deeply felt (Carroll et al., 2009; Sims et al., 2009), particularly among members of groups whose cultures are threatened (Turan, 2013). The grief and sadness associated with the violent destruction of personal and family possessions is clear in women's language. As one woman simply said, “they left nothing for me.”

Women's narratives also emphasized the dehumanizing nature of home invasions, especially when family members were deprived of basic necessities like toilets, shade, and water. The women's accounts remind us of the centrality of the home as a place for the mundane, deeply private aspects of daily life that assure dignity (Padgett, 2007; Young, 2005):

They brought all of us and put all of us outside the house just like the animals. They said stand there. It was so sunny and hot and they put old women and kids everyone outside. There was no place to sit. They took us and searched us in groups: women, children, just like animals. There were only 2 bathrooms in the whole place outside and there's no water. You cannot go to the bathroom; you can't wash yourself, something awful. This is the occupation, what can we say? This is how they occupy us. –Qalqilyah

As illustrated above, threats to loved ones, particularly children, were at the emotional center of women's narratives of home invasions. One woman's daughter lost an eye when (not understanding the risks) she touched a soldier's gun and he broke a window, sending shattered glass into her eye. Another described the lasting effects of invasion on her child's well-being, in the face of which she struggled to maintain her maternal power:

One time they came to our quarter. They searched our home for weapons. They destroyed many things and then they left. My son was 2 years old when the Israelis came and attacked our quarter. Now he's 4 years old, and when he hears the Israelis are coming, he's afraid. He starts shaking sometimes and his face changes, it becomes frightened and yellow... I can't stop his fear. This has happened many times-it's a repeated thing-it's not like one incident or two incidents-that's why I cannot shield him from this fear that overtakes him.

-Qalqilyah

Two interlocking themes can be identified in these accounts. The women are clear that they lack the power to “shield” their children and other family members from these events. Yet they also convey a sense of strategic perseverance. Divested of her ability to physically protect her child from unrelenting threats of invasion, and faced with his chronic fear and anxiety, the woman with the young son nonetheless provides what comfort she can. “I give him reassurance and hope that things will be ok,” she notes, “but I can't do more than encourage him.” A second woman attempted, if unsuccessfully, to intervene on behalf of her child:

In another intrusion of my house they asked all of us to stay in a room. I wanted to get my daughter from her room myself because she is deaf. The soldier insisted on waking her up and got her by himself. He opened the door on my daughter, waking her up, and she got really frightened. – Nablus

Others said that they were scared but that they and their family members did what they were told during home invasions. A woman who described soldiers' deliberate humiliation of male family members, for example, pointed also to the men's reasoned decision to comply:

Once, and I will never forget this, when they intruded into our house they asked all the males to take off their pants, in front of their women and children. Eventually they did to keep their lives, and that is how we live inside our house now. –Nablus

The life of the home takes on, in other words, a new reality, marked by the adaptations and compromises necessary to “getting by” (Allen, 2008) in the context of chronic instability and violence.

“Where is the security of our life?”: Demolition, Displacement, Despoliation

Although few women in the groups had themselves experienced the demolition of their homes, many described demolitions in their local communities. A woman from the Jerusalem district noted that, “in our district, there are about 160 houses that have been destroyed.” Another woman explained that her family was not able to start an addition to their house out of fear that the Israelis would order construction to be halted or the entire house demolished: “We will start remodeling but then we are afraid they won't let us finish.

This happened in the past, and it makes the children afraid.” Women attributed such restrictions to multiple factors: violence from settlers; confiscation of land for the building of the Wall; and increased mandates for permits and paperwork to enter areas of the West Bank (see Figure 2):

We need a license for building our houses on our lands... we all have this same constraint. We had another house before, but now we only have this house. And even on this one there's red tape on it from the court warning us that it's going to be demolished. –Jerusalem

A woman who was the victim of a home demolition noted that even though her family had another place to live, feelings of insecurity and instability associated with the loss of her family home persisted. Whether threatened or enacted, home demolitions create what one participant tellingly described as a “yo-yo type of life.”

Loss of home and loss of land were deeply connected, particularly in the narratives from the rural areas of the West Bank. Even if land isn't confiscated outright, access to it may be severely limited or denied (see Figure 2), or the land may be contaminated. Due to these ruptures, women were concerned about impacts on their families' health and economic survival. In one area, Tulkarem, which is adjacent to the wall, women reported: “we used to sow crops, and now we cannot do that.” Another woman from Tulkarem added:

The land where we plant things, they dump their waste. [They do this] in the Palestinian land instead of the Israeli land. This is not good for our health; it will make us sick. We ask them not to put these chemicals but they don't listen.

For these women, the severance of ties to land goes beyond threats to physical survival. One woman angrily exclaimed: “And the land, they don't let us use our land... there's no respect for our property or for what belongs to us.” Another reiterated the same theme:

“How is it that even our land, they won't let us access it. They are sitting and occupying it themselves. So where's our life? Where's the security of our life?” – Tulkarem

Underscoring the inextricable links in Palestine between ‘home’ and homeland in its most fundamental, ancestral sense (Porteous & Smith, 2001), the frustration and anger in these women's words speaks to a deeper agony; the pain caused by the severance of not only practical, but also deep-rooted emotional and cultural connections to place.

“They want to starve us, we will find a way to feed ourselves”: Home, Resilience, and Resistance

Narratives of resilience often immediately followed narratives of suffering, and women's individual stories almost always evoked a political and collective narrative. “The more they challenge us,” one woman said, “the more we become resilient and strong.” When we asked women about the ways in which they, their families, and their communities endure the occupation, two themes surfaced related to their use of the family home: women's re-appropriation of their homes for nutritional and economic caretaking; and women's physical and figurative defense of individual and collective claims to home.

Amplifying the point that in the context of continuous violence and oppression, domestic spaces take on increased significance (hooks, 1990), women described a range of ways in which they used their homes to survive the ongoing constraints and privations of the occupation. Many of these “everyday acts of resistance” (Scott, 1985) centered on food. As one woman stated, “They want to starve us, we will find a way to feed ourselves.” One participant noted that she used her home to help the community, saying, “In our house, we cook different meals to distribute.” Others described how they persisted in gathering native plants or raising chicken and sheep to feed their families.

Noting that they felt they “had to do something,” women also mobilized the space of the home to ensure the economic survival of themselves and their families. As one woman said, “They’ll try to not let you work so you have to find some way to create some work and create some way to get money and food.” One woman started a kindergarten in her home to help support the family when her husband lost his job. Underscoring the cultural as well as practical importance of women’s home-based activities, others made and sold traditional products, such as za’atar (a mix of thyme, sesame, and sumac that is perhaps the epitome of Palestinian spice) and embroidery (intricate designs with geographic and historic significance).

Women also spoke to expressions of solidarity and helpfulness that were enabled by the physicality of the home. One woman noted that because extended family members all live together in the same house, they are all available to help each other. Another described how Palestinians still stand together and defend areas that Israelis enter. Faced with direct threats such as home invasions, women also attempted to defend their homes and the physical and emotional integrity of these spaces. One challenged soldiers and told them that there were no weapons in the house; another pleaded with the soldiers to be the one to wake up her child so she wouldn’t be so scared. The woman who described her son being martyred went on to describe how, when soldiers continually came to her house, she refused to surrender and instead told them to take whatever they want but to leave her, her home, and her family in peace.

Spatial practices of resistance are intimately tied to collective identity and culture, particularly in the context of conflicts over territory (Moore, 1998). Women’s responses to questions about resilience reflected this permeability between private and public both in terms of their experiences and in the ways they narrated their reactions (Seaton, 2008). For these women, defense of the personal home and defense of the collective homeland were clearly deeply connected. As a woman from Al Khalil asserted, “This is our land and our homes and they occupied us; we’re not going to give it to them.” This sentiment is also evident in another woman’s reflection on people’s insistence on continuing to literally access their home land – no easy task considering that people must apply for permits and go through checkpoints that are open only at certain times, often having to plead with Israeli guards to pass through:

Even with the army and the occupiers – even with this, those people who still have their land in their name, they still take their permit and go to their land. – Qualqilya

Other narratives spoke to a defense of homeland that was more philosophical and emotional. As the Khalili woman who initially described constant surveillance and fear continued her narrative, for example, she detailed her efforts to make meaning of the experience for her daughter:

I tell her don't worry-I encourage her and give her hope. I tell her you have not done anything wrong, why are you afraid? You should not be afraid. You did not occupy them, you didn't take their land. You are on your own land-don't feel guilty or like you did something wrong. –Al Khalil

Responding directly to threats to place as threats to collective, cultural identity (Evans-Campbell, 2008), this mother teaches her daughter about pride and the right to home. In Palestine, where the undermining of the home represents the undermining of one's people, defending the home's provision of “the security of being in place” (Harker, 2009, p.325) is an act that is not simply in one moment and for one's family, but is rather aimed at safeguarding a future where both one's family and one's people persist. Insistence on one's right to be *at home* is thus a strategy at once practical and emotional, individual and collective.

Discussion

The women in this study described disruptions to their homes ranging from extreme events, such as home invasions wherein every item in the house was broken and its inhabitants profoundly humiliated, to the more quotidian challenges of constant surveillance or the seemingly endless daily quest for permits to build on one's land. The study findings suggest that, regardless of their scale, violations to the family home, which are increasingly common within contemporary political violence, have significant implications for women's emotional well-being and thus warrant further research and practice attention.

Although women detailed extraordinary acts of spatial violence, such as home demolitions, their narratives are particularly eloquent on the weathering effects of chronic spatial and thus emotional insecurity. The salutogenic properties of home, we have suggested, lie in a sense of constancy: the experience of home as, by and large, a “taken-for-granted situation” (Seamon, 1979, p. 78), characterized by both structure and predictability (Antonovsky, 1979). In sharp contrast, our data illustrate multiple disruptions to home that fundamentally threaten stability and coherence. Even if one is not the direct recipient of violence, its threat is constantly felt (Punamäki, 1990). These findings on the emotional effects of constant spatial insecurity are consistent with both the growing literature exploring the health effects of chronic stress and uncertainty (Afifi, Afifi, Robbins, & Nimah, 2013; Banki, 2013; McEwen, 2000; Williams, 2002), and with studies of the debilitating psychological impacts of long-term environmental degradation and change (Fried, 1963; Fullilove, 1996; Sartore et al., 2008). This study extends these literatures by illuminating women's emotional experiences within the relentless undermining of the home typical of contemporary warfare, which women describe as provoking feelings of anxiety and grief that we suggest are consistent with *solastalgia*: the agony of being unable to derive comfort (for oneself) and foster well-being (in others) within one's home environment (Albrecht et al., 2007).

Often, women's accounts tied the emotional costs of threats to their homes to the importance they ascribed to their role as mothers, and specifically to their perceived helplessness in the face of their children's suffering. Although the critical protective role of parenting in the context of political and community violence is well understood (Aisenberg & Herrenkohl, 2008; Garbarino & Kostelny, 1996), the literature is quite slim on how such violence affects mothering (Levendosky, 2000), how mothers strategize to keep themselves and their children safe (Dixey, 1999; Ford-Gilboe, Wuest, & Merritt-Gray, 2005; Mohr, Fantuzzo, & Saburah, 2001; Olsen, Bottorff, Raina, & Frankish, 2008), and the mental health implications for women of these experiences (Berman et al., 2009; Punamäki, 2006). While exploratory, our findings reflect the findings of the few studies that exist about mothering within political violence, which point to the despair mothers experience when they cannot protect their children (Berman, et al., 2009; Punamäki, 2006).

At the same time, women's narratives illustrate how they use the home as an everyday site to support individual and collective perseverance within and struggle against political violence. The women in our study used their homes to uphold the economic and nutritional well being of their families and thereby counter the material effects of the occupation. Additionally, both directly, as in their confrontations with soldiers during home invasions, and indirectly, as when they tried to assure children of their right to be in place without shame or fear, women used the home to quite literally stand their ground, echoing Lefebvre's (1991) notion of appropriation – the human right to make, inhabit, and determine a space. These findings bring to mind Ward's (2009) conclusions from research among women in Lebanon that within conflict settings women may harness private space to contribute to shared survival and resistance. The ways that women in this study described efforts to ensure well-being for themselves, their children, and the larger nation underscore the interpenetration of public and private spheres emblematic of political violence. Scholars have suggested that the utilization and defense of 'home' by women is a poignant strategy of mothering within contexts of extreme violence, serving to simultaneously protect not only individual children, but also larger networks (Mohr et al., 2001; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2006). Within our data, narratives of endurance and struggle within the home usually invoked the notion of struggling for not only one's family, but also for larger collective well-being. Here our findings are consistent with a regularly emerging theme in other research on violence in Palestine – that of importance of *sumud*, or steadfastness: ongoing, daily acts of resistance (both large and small) aimed at protecting the survival of Palestinian land, identity, dignity, and well-being in the face of the occupation (Giacaman et al., 2009; Nguyen-Gillham et al., 2008; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2006).

Women's descriptions of their use of home for both personal and shared well-being in the context of ongoing violence illustrate the point made by Richter-Devoe (2011) in her research with women in Palestine that resistance (particularly under massive oppression) may be neither overt nor directly combative. Rather, as Abu-Lughod (1990) notes, women's resistance to domination takes multiple forms. Indeed, consistent with the broader scholarship on resistance in the context of ongoing violence, our findings suggest that despite any assumption or assurance of success, people's constantly-negotiated attempts to maintain their power within violence, from strategic endurance to outright opposition,

constitute adaptive, tactical strategies that ultimately nurture and underpin resilience (Anderson & Danis, 2006; Wade, 1997).

In bringing together themes of place, well-being, and political violence, this study underlines the felt impacts on women of threats to home environments within conflict settings. Nonetheless, both the limited number of respondents and potential selectivity bias affect the transferability of the findings (Krefting, 1991). Additionally, as noted, our findings underscore the reality that in research exploring experiences which are widely shared, individual and collective narratives often overlap, which can be analytically rich but also challenging (Madriz, 1998; Seaton, 2008).

We must also note that our focus group data represent just one snapshot in time. In the context of generations of political violence, when women talk about the loss of home it is impossible to know if there was ever a time when home truly represented security, or if the women's notions of home instead reflect an imagined sense of what 'home' can or should be. Similarly, these cross-sectional data cannot resolve the question of whether the threats to ontological security posed by home violations represent a temporal disjuncture, for example between security and insecurity. We suspect, given the political context in Palestine, that longitudinal research, if conducted, would reveal not clear disjunctures but rather shifting, complex patterns of security and precarity. At the same time, we are mindful, as Padgett (2007) suggests in her study of ontological security among homeless adults, that provocative narratives can emerge during times of great instability. As Dupuis and Thorns (1998) point out, ontological security is not simply a psychological condition afforded (or not) to people by external conditions, but is rather "a form of social action (p. 30)"; a fundamental human need that people actively pursue, regardless of constraints.

Given the exploratory nature of this study, additional theoretical and empirical scholarship is needed to better understand the meanings of and responses to chronic threats to home. The theoretical frameworks that we have proposed as potential mechanisms by which home violations affect women's well-being, ontological security and sense of coherence, warrant further exploration. Place identity (Proshansky et al., 1983; Abujidi, 2014) and place attachment (Manzo, 2003), both of which are the subject of increasingly robust bodies of scholarship, may also afford fruitful lines of inquiry as potential mediators of the health outcomes of violence directed to the home. Regarding empirical research, the results of this study signify a need for additional explorations focused on the implications of violations to the home within political violence (such as, for example, Akesson, 2014; Bleibleh, 2014). Future studies might also attend to how other forms of violence that are often played out within the terrain of the family home such as intimate partner violence, community violence, and police violence (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Fluri, 2011; Mallett, 2004; Waite, 2007) undermine experiences of home and consequent well-being.

By surfacing interlaced themes of home, motherhood, and well-being, our study also points to the importance of future research focused more specifically on the emotional geographies (Kemp, 2001) of women living in contexts of chronic violence. The study findings regarding women's home-centered strategies of perseverance, for example, suggest that scholarship exploring women's endurance in violent contexts should be extended by more explicitly

focusing on how, as Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2006) and hooks (1990) assert, despite constraints on their choices for action, women living within political violence and oppression regularly mobilize home as a “counter-space” of resistance for both themselves and their children.

Ontological security is not a fixed notion. Rather, like home, it is continually made and re-made through ongoing relations of power (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Massey, 1994), invariably reflecting a particular “politics of place” (Manzo, 2003). This is especially the case within contemporary political violence, where violence to the home not only affects one's family but also signifies threats to a shared homeland (Falah, 2003, 2004; Hanafi, 2009). In the Palestinian context, efforts to assert the right to home and place (Lefebvre, 1991) can be understood as an ongoing defense of the rights of inhabitants to safety, identity, and well-being for not only themselves, but also for their families and communities. We are reminded, indeed, of Bachelard's reflection that “come what may, the house helps us to say: I will be an inhabitant of the world, in spite of the world” (1994: 46). Perhaps most centrally, the findings of this study and the many others we reference underscore the importance of policy and practice efforts aimed at protecting the universal human right to a safe and stable home (Equality and Human Rights Commission, n.d; UN General Assembly, 1948; Young, 2005), particularly, though not only, during times of war and conflict.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the Palestinian Medical Relief Society, particularly the front-line staff from the local clinics around the West Bank who diligently arranged for data collection and thus enabled this project.

Funding acknowledgement: This research was funded in part by NIMH Grant T32MH20010.

The content of this paper is solely the responsibility of the author and does not necessarily represent the official views of the funding agencies.

References

- Abu-Lughod L. The romance of resistance: Tracing transformations of power through Bedouin women. *American Ethnologist*. 1990; 17(1):41–55.
- Abujidi N. *Urbicide in Palestine: Spaces of oppression and resilience* New York: Routledge; 2014
- Afifi WA, Afifi TD, Robbins S, Nimah N. The relative impacts of uncertainty and mothers' communication on hopelessness among Palestinian refugee youth. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. 2013; 83(4):495–504. [PubMed: 24164521]
- Aisenberg E, Herrenkohl T. Community violence in context: risk and resilience in children and families. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 2008; 23(3):296–315. [PubMed: 18245570]
- Akesson B. Castle and cage: Meanings of home for Palestinian children and families. *Global Social Welfare*. 2014; 1:81–95.
- Albrecht Glenn. The age of solastalgia. *The Conversation* 2012 Retrieved May 15, 2013, from <http://theconversation.com/the-age-of-solastalgia-8337>
- Albrecht G, Sartore GM, Connor L, Higginbotham N, Freeman S, Kelly B, et al. Pollard G. Solastalgia: the distress caused by environmental change. *Australasian Psychiatry*. 2007; 15:S95–S98. [PubMed: 18027145]
- Allen L. Getting by the occupation: how violence became normal during the Second Palestinian Intifada. *Cultural Anthropology*. 2008; 23(3):453–487.
- Anderson K, Danis F. Adult daughters of battered women: Resistance and resilience in the face of danger. *Affilia*. 2006; 21(4):419–432.

- Antonovsky A. Unraveling the mystery of health: How people manage stress and stay well San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 1987
- Attride-Stirling J. Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*. 2001; 1(3):385–405.
- Bachelard G, , Jolas M. The poetics of space Boston: Beacon Press; 1994
- Banki S. Precarity of Place: a complement to the growing precariat literature. *Global Discourse*. 2013; 3(3-4):450–453.
- Barber BK. Political violence, family relations, and Palestinian youth functioning. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 1999; 14(2):206–230.
- Berman H, Giron ERI, Marroquin AP. A narrative study of refugee women who have experienced violence in the context of war. *The Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*. 2009; 41(1):144–165. [PubMed: 19485050]
- Bleibleh S. Walking through walls: The invisible war. *Space and Culture*. 2014; 1206331213512919. first published on February 11, 2014 as. doi: 10.1177/1206331213512919
- Blunt A, , Dowling RM. Home London; New York: Routledge; 2006
- Bowlby Sophie, Gregory Susan, McKie Linda. “Doing home”: Patriarchy, caring, and space. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 1997; 20(3):343–350.
- Bradley RH. Parenting in the breach: How parents help Children cope with developmentally challenging circumstances. *Parenting*. 2007; 7(2):99–148.
- Brickell K. Geopolitics of home. *Geography Compass*. 2012; 6(10):575–588.
- Buttimer A. Home, reach, and a sense of place. In: Buttimer A, , Seamon D, editors *The human experience of space and place* London: Croom Helm; 1980 166187
- Carey MA, Smith MW. Capturing the group effect in focus groups: A special concern in analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*. 1994; 4(1):123–127.
- Carroll B, Morbey H, Balogh R, Araoz G. Flooded homes, broken bonds, the meaning of home, psychological processes and their impact on psychological health in a disaster. *Health and Place*. 2009; 15(2):540–547. [PubMed: 18996730]
- Coward M. Urbicide in Bosnia. In: Graham S, editor *Cities under siege: The new military urbanism* London; New York: Verso; 2004 154171
- Cox RS, Perry KME. Like a fish out of water: Reconsidering disaster recovery and the role of place and social capital in community disaster resilience. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 2011; 48(3-4):395–411. [PubMed: 21287261]
- De Fina A, Georgakopoulou A. Analysing narratives as practices. *Qualitative Research*. 2008; 20088(3):379–387.
- deJong J, Komproe IH, Van Ommeron M. Common mental disorders in postconflict settings. *The Lancet*. 2003; 361(9375):2128–2130.
- Devers KJ. How will we know “good” qualitative research when we see it? Beginning the dialogue in health services research. *Health Services Research*. 1999; 34(5):1153–1188. [PubMed: 10591278]
- Dixey R. Keeping children safe: The effect on parents' daily lives and psychological well-being. *Journal of Health Psychology*. 1999; 4(1):45–57. [PubMed: 22021433]
- Domosh M. Geography and gender: home, again? *Progress in Human Geography*. 1998; 22(2):276–282.
- Doumani B. Scenes from daily life: The view from Nablus. *Journal of Palestine Studies*. 2004; 34(1): 37–50.
- Dupuis A, Thorns DC. Home, home ownership and the search for ontological security. *Sociological Review*. 1998; 46(1):24–47.
- Equality and Human Rights Commission. Human rights at home: Guidance for social housing providers. n.d Retrieved April 2014, from http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/humanrights/human_rights_at_home.pdf
- Erikson K. Everything in its path: destruction of community in the Buffalo Creek flood New York: Simon and Schuster; 1976
- Esposito N. From meaning to meaning: The influence of translation techniques on non-English focus group research. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2001; 11(4):568–579. [PubMed: 11521612]

- Falah GW. Dynamics and patterns of the shrinking of Arab lands in Palestine. *Political Geography*. 2003; 22(2):179–209.
- Falah GW. War, peace and land seizure in Palestine's border area. *Third World Quarterly*. 2004; 25(5): 955–975.
- Fluri JL. Bodies, bombs and barricades: geographies of conflict and civilian (in)security. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. 2011; 36(2):280–296.
- Ford-Gilboe M, Wuest J, Merritt-Gray M. Strengthening capacity to limit intrusion: Theorizing family health promotion in the aftermath of woman abuse. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2005; 15(4):477–501. [PubMed: 15761094]
- Freud A, , Burlingham DT. War and children New York: Medical War Books; 1943
- Fried M. Grieving for a lost home. In: Duhl LJ, editor *The Urban Condition* New York: Basic Books; 1963 151171
- Fullilove MT. Psychiatric implications of displacement: contributions from the psychology of place. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*. 1996; 153(12):1516–1523. [PubMed: 8942445]
- Fullilove Mindy Thompson. *Root shock : How tearing up city neighborhoods hurts America, and what we can do about it* New York: One World/Ballantine Books; 2004
- Garbarino J, Kostelny K. The effects of political violence on Palestinian children's behavior problems: A risk accumulation model. *Child Development*. 1996; 67(1):33–45. [PubMed: 8605832]
- Giacaman R, Khatib R, Shabaneh L, Ramlawi A, Sabri B, Sabatinelli G, Khawaja M, Laurance T. Health status and health services in the occupied Palestinian territory. *The Lancet*. 2009; 373(9666):837–849.
- Giacaman R, Shannon HS, Saab H, Arya N, Boyce W. Individual and collective exposure to political violence: Palestinian adolescents coping with conflict. *European Journal of Public Health*. 2007; 17(4):361–368. [PubMed: 17142245]
- Giddens A. *The consequences of modernity* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press; 1990
- Graham S. Introduction: 'Target intercept...'. In: Graham S, editor *Cities under siege: The new military urbanism* New York: Verso; 2004 XIXXX
- Gregory D. The biopolitics of Baghdad: Counterinsurgency and the counter-city. *Human Geography*. 2008; 1(1):6–27.
- Hanafi S. Spacio-cide: Colonial politics, invisibility and rezoning in Palestinian territory. *Contemporary Arab Affairs*. 2009; 2(1):106–121.
- Harker C. Spacing Palestine through the home. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. 2009; 34(3):320–332.
- Harker C. On (not) forgetting families: family spaces and spacings in Birzeit, Palestine. *Environment and Planning*. 2010; 42(11):2624–2639.
- Harker C. Precariousness, precarity and family: notes from Palestine. *Environment and planning A*. 2012; 44(4):849–865.
- Hawkins RL, Maurer K. 'You fix my community, you have fixed my life': The disruption and rebuilding of ontological security in New Orleans. *Disasters*. 2011; 35(11):143–159. [PubMed: 20735461]
- Hooks B. *Yearning: race, gender, and cultural politics* Boston, MA: South End Press; 1990
- Hsieh HF, Shannon SE. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2005; 15(9):1277–1288. [PubMed: 16204405]
- Johnson P. Displacing Palestine: Palestinian householding in an era of asymmetrical war. *Politics & Gender*. 2010; 6(2):295–304.
- Kamberelis G, , Dimitriadis G. Focus groups: Strategic articulations of pedagogy, politics, and inquiry. In: Denzin NK, , Lincoln YS, editors *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; 2005 887908
- Kearns A, Hiscock R, Ellaway A, Macintyre S. 'Beyond four walls'. The psycho-social benefits of home: evidence from West Central Scotland. *Housing Studies*. 2000; 15(3):387–410.
- Kemp SP. Environment through a gendered lens: From person-in-environment to woman-in-environment. *Affilia*. 2001; 16(1):7–30.

- Krefting L. Rigor in qualitative research: the assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 1991; 45(3):214–222.
- Larkin PJ, Dierckx de Casterlé B, Schotsmans P. Multilingual translation issues in qualitative research: reflections on a metaphorical process. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2007; 17(4):468–476. [PubMed: 17416700]
- Lefebvre Henri. *The production of space* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell; 1991
- Levendosky AA. Mothers' perceptions of the impact of woman abuse on their parenting. *Violence Against Women*. 2000; 6(3):347–271.
- Lincoln Y, González y González E. The search for emerging decolonizing methodologies in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 2008; 14(5):784–805.
- Madriz EI. Using focus groups with lower socioeconomic status Latina women. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 1998; 4(1):114–128.
- Mallett S. Understanding home: a critical review of the literature. *The Sociological Review*. 2004; 52(1):62–89.
- Manzo LC. Beyond house and haven: Toward a revisioning of emotional relationships with places. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 2003; 23:47–62.
- Massey Doreen B. *Space, place, and gender* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press; 1994
- McEwen Bruce S. Allostasis and allostatic load: Implications for neuropsychopharmacology. *Neuropsychopharmacology*. 2000; 22(2):108–124. [PubMed: 10649824]
- Mohr WK, Fantuzzo JW, Saburah AK. Safeguarding themselves and their children: Mothers share their strategies. *Journal of Family Violence*. 2001; 16(1):75–92.
- Moore DS. Subaltern struggles and the politics of place: Remapping resistance in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands. *Cultural Anthropology*. 1998; 13(3):344–381.
- Morse JM. Designing funded qualitative research. In: Denzin NK, , Lincoln YS, editors *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; 2005 220235
- Norris FH, Friedman MJ, Watson PJ, Byrne CM, Diaz E, Kaniasty K. 60,000 disaster victims speak: Part I. An empirical review of the empirical literature, 1981–2001. *Psychiatry: Interpersonal and Biological Processes*. 2002; 65(3):207–239.
- Nguyen-Gillham V, Giacaman R, Naser G, Boyce W. Normalising the abnormal: Palestinian youth and the contradictions of resilience in protracted conflict. *Health & Social Care in the Community*. 2008; 16(3):291–298. [PubMed: 18355248]
- Olsen L, Bottorff JL, Raina P, Frankish CJ. An ethnography of low-income mothers' safeguarding efforts. *Journal of Safety Research*. 2008; 39(6):609–616. [PubMed: 19064046]
- Padgett D. There's no place like (a) home: Ontological security among persons with serious mental illness in the United States. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2007; 64:1925–1936. [PubMed: 17355900]
- Porteous JD, , Smith SE. *Domicide: the global destruction of home* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press; 2001
- Proshansky HM, Fabian AK, Kaminoff R. Place-identity: Physical world socialization of the self. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 1983; 3(1):57–83.
- Punamäki RL. Relationships between political violence and psychological responses among Palestinian women. *Journal of Peace Research*. 1990; 27(1):75–85.
- Punamäki RL. Resiliency in conditions of war and military violence: preconditions and developmental processes. In: Garralda ME, , Flament M, editors *Working with children and adolescents: an evidence-based approach to risk and resilienc* Lanham: Jason Aronson; 2006 129177
- Qouta S, Punamäki RL, Sarraj E. House demolition and mental health: Victims and witnesses. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*. 1998; 7(4):279–288.
- Ralph E. *Place and placelessness* London: Pion; 1976
- Ritcher-Devroe S. Palestinian women's everyday resistance: Between normality and normalisation. *Journal of International Women's Studies*. 2011; 12(2):32–46.
- Sartore GM, Kelly B, Stain H, Albrecht G, Higginbotham N. Control, uncertainty, and expectations for the future: a qualitative study of the impact of drought on a rural Australian community. *Rural &*

- Remote Health. 2008; 8(3):950. [Accessed on-line on July 29, 2014] at <http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/subviewnew.asp?ArticleID=950>. [PubMed: 18702570]
- Scott JC. Weapons of the weak: Everyday forms of peasant resistance New Haven: Yale University Press; 1985
- Seamon D. A geography of the life-world: Movement, rest and encounter London: St. Martin's Press; 1979
- Seaton EE. Common knowledge: reflections on narratives in community. *Qualitative Research*. 2008; 8(3):293–305.
- Segal R, , Weizman E, , Tartakover D. A civilian occupation: The politics of Israeli architecture New York: VERSO; 2003
- Shalhoub-Kevorkian N. Liberating voices: the political implications of palestinian mothers narrating their loss. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 2003; 26(5):391–407.
- Shalhoub-Kevorkian N. Counter-Spaces as resistance in conflict zones: Palestinian women recreating a home. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*. 2006; 17(3-4):109–141.
- Shalhoub-Kevorkian N. The political economy of children's trauma: A case study of house demolition in Palestine. *Feminism & Psychology*. 2009; 19(3):335–342.
- Sim J. Collecting and analysing qualitative data: issues raised by the focus group. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 1998; 28(2):345–352. [PubMed: 9725732]
- Sims R, Medd W, Mort M, Twigger-Ross C. When a “home” becomes a “house”: Care and caring in the flood recovery process. *Space and Culture*. 2009; 12(3):303–316.
- Smith RJ. Graduated incarceration: The Israeli occupation in subaltern geopolitical perspective. *Geoforum*. 2011; 42(3):316–328.
- Smithson J. Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 2000; 3(2):103–119.
- Speldewinde PC, Cook A, Davies P, Weinstein P. A relationship between environmental degradation and mental health in rural Western Australia. *Health & Place*. 2009; 15(3):880–887.
- Squires A. Language barriers and qualitative nursing research: Methodological considerations. *International Nursing Review*. 2008; 55(3):265–273. [PubMed: 19522941]
- Tapsell SM, Tunstall SM. “I wish I'd never heard of Banbury”: The relationship between ‘place’ and the health impacts from flooding. *Health & Place*. 2008; 14(2):133–154. [PubMed: 17616427]
- Temple B. Crossed wires: Interpreters, translators, and bilingual workers in cross-language research. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2002; 12(6):844–854. [PubMed: 12109728]
- Temple B, Edwards R, Alexander C. Grasping at context: Cross language qualitative research as secondary qualitative data analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research Sozialforschung*. 2006; 7(4, Article 10) [Accessed on-line on July 29, 2014] at <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/176/394>.
- Temple B, Young A. Qualitative Research and Translation Dilemmas. *Qualitative Research*. 2004; 4(2)
- Tschakert P, Tutu R, Alcaro A. Embodied experiences of environmental and climactic changes in landscapes of everyday life in Ghana. *Emotion, Space and Society*. 2013; 7:13–25.
- Tuan YF. Space and place: The perspective of experience Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press; 1977
- Turan Z. Material objects as facilitating environments: The Palestinian diaspora. *Home Cultures*. 2010; 7(1):43–56.
- UN General Assembly. Universal declaration of human rights. 1948 Retrieved 16 August, 2014 from: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA)-Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt)Displacement and insecurity in Area C of the West Bank East Jerusalem: UN-OCHA OPT; 2011a
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA)-Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt)Movement and access in the West Bank: September 2011 East Jerusalem: UN-OCHA OPT; 2011b
- United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)The Impacts of Conflict on Women. In: UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development), editorGender

Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World Geneva: UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development); 2005 207231

- Wade A. Small acts of living: Everyday resistance to violence and other forms of oppression. *Contemporary Family Therapy*. 1997; 19(1):23–39.
- Waite ML. Reining in knock and talk investigations: Using *Missouri v. Siebert* to curtail an end-run around the Fourth Amendment. *Val UL Rev*. 2007; 41:1335. Available at: <http://scholar.valpo.edu/vulr/vol41/iss3/11>.
- Ward A. Women of the Lebanese mountains: A fight for edification. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 2009; 32(5):388–394.
- Warsini S, Mills J, Ushe K. Solastalgia: Living with the environmental damage caused by natural disasters. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*. 2014; 29(1):87–90. [PubMed: 24438454]
- Weizman E. *Hollow land: Israel's architecture of occupation* New York: Verso; 2007
- Williams D. Racial/ethnic variations in women's health: The social embeddedness of health. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2002; 92(4):588–597. [PubMed: 11919058]
- Wong J, Poon M. Bringing Translation Out of the Shadows: Translation as an Issue of Methodological Significance in Cross-Cultural Qualitative Research. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*. 2010; 21(2):151–158. [PubMed: 20220035]
- World Health Organization (WHO) *World Report on Violence and Health* Geneva: WHO; 2002
- XMind. XMind 3 2010 Retrieved from <http://www.xmind.net/>
- Young IM. *House and home: Feminist variations on a theme*. In: Young IM, editor *On female body experience: "Throwing like a girl" and other essays* New York: Oxford University Press; 2005 123145

Figure 1.
Israeli military instillation in Old City, Al-Khalil. Photo credit: [Author 1]

Figure 2.

Israeli sign at gate for residents attempting to pass through to Palestinian land in Qalqilya district. Photo credit: [Author 1]