

A teary echo
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A teary echo

“Blame-shifting is an emotionally abusive behaviour or tactic” (“What is Blame-Shifting?”, 2011). **Not sure how this fits.** In the 21st century, many women still feel coerced and controlled through the male-dominated landscape in which we live in.

Amongst medical anthropologist Maria de Bruyn’s archival collection, a piece written by Tamil Kendall and Hilda Pérez Vázquez (2004) echoes to the disempowerment felt by many women in patriarchal societies. Across the original declarations of Mexican women, the reader explores how machismo disconnects women from their voices, their freedom, and their self-protection.

Feels like a random shift. Through the use of the Humument technique developed by Tom Phillips, the artist, Margot Neveux, uses her work as a mean of propaganda to raise awareness towards the impact of an inequitable society and how it affects emotional health. Through her art, she allows the viewer to shift perspective and place himself in a woman’s mind: he sees her struggles, her emotions, her vulnerability as well as her attempt to raise her voice against the oppression of which she is victim, making “la mujer se siente responsable” (“the woman feels responsible”). The description of emotional discomfort, highlighted in the indirect interaction between the two individuals in the piece of art, suggests the role cultural environment plays in normalizing interactions, and sustains the spread of negative stereotypes through an emotional representation of women and a dominating representation of men. **HOW??**

The upper part of the artwork is subjugated by a feminine gaze, from which teardrops are weigh down and invade the piece, imprinting on the witness of the situation. The darker contoured tears highlight specific words, all resonating with the powerless feeling of women. The position of the eyes presents the women as external to the situations they describe, staring down at the shadow used to symbolize that blame has no face, yet always pointing onto someone to differ its sense of responsibility. **Needs more here.** Women’s attempt to regain agency challenges the established order dictated by the simple darkened figure, emphasized through the darker colored tears as a symbol of power.

The emblematic use of the eyes provides clarity into women’s sentiments and highlights the honesty in their spoken words. The shedding of tears becomes the manifestation of the oppression placed on by “the other”, one that has the power to physically touch its perpetrator. Through the encirclement of words and phrases, emotions become the everlasting uncontrollable scream of the prisoners. They are the cry for help, the cry for attention, but most importantly the cry of rebellion. The echo of the word “infidelidad” (“infidelity”) shows the urgency to rightfully associate actions with their culprits.

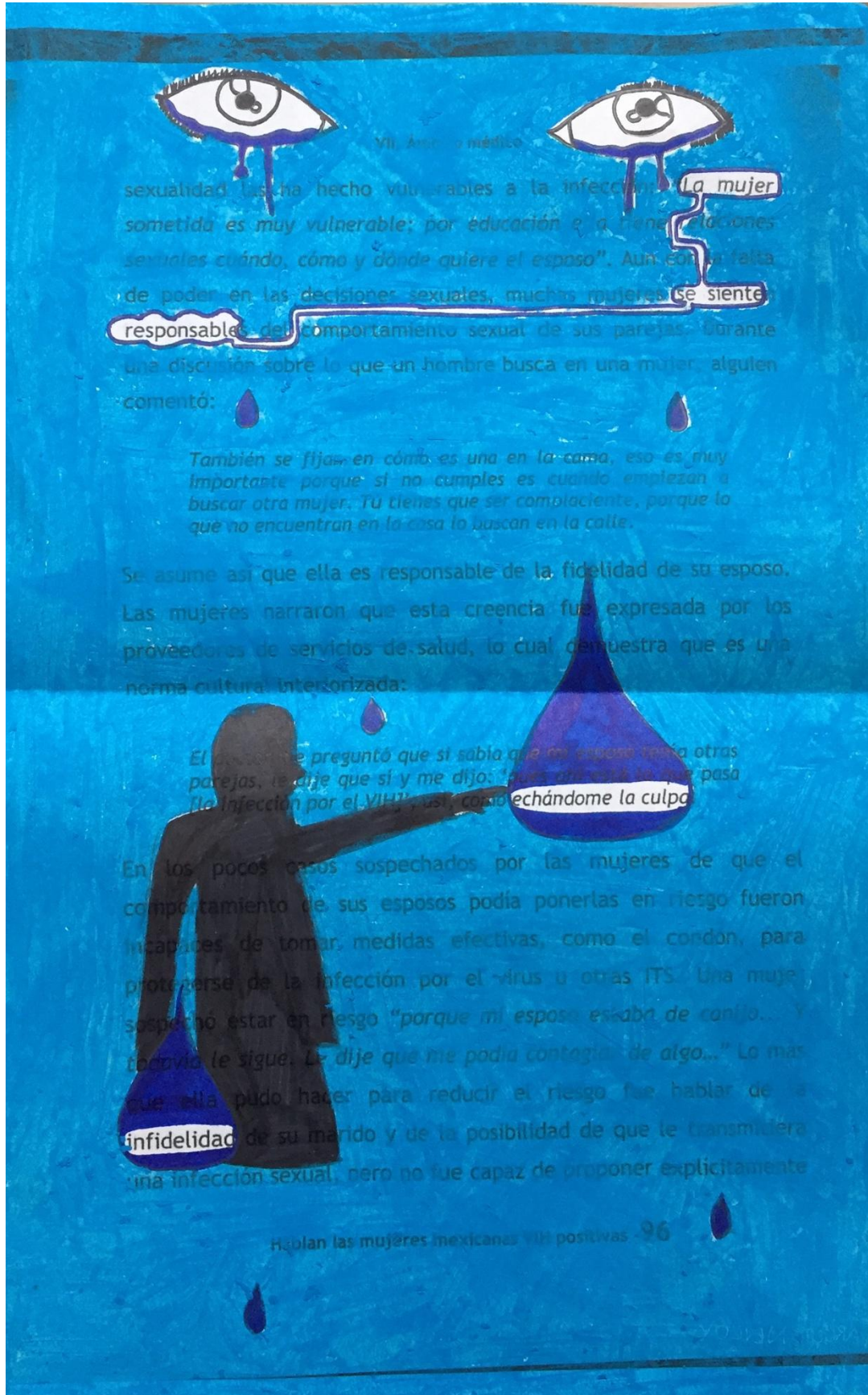
Through her choice to present a banal emotion like sadness to address gender inequalities, Neveux’s composition shows that “something like a traditional sense of

character emerges” (Smyth, 2012). She pushes the stereotypical, or conventional, representation of gender through the organization of an imbalanced hierarchal order by raising themes such as sexuality, strength, and power, and highlights a necessary reorganization of women transitioning from passive victims to active fighters. Their combat comes to life through the utilization of the Humument technique which “generates a dynamic, synaesthetic reading experience: we are offered a series of relationships between text and image” (Smyth, 2012). Through the vigorousness of images in constant movement, such as tears falling down, the artist calls for a reform on our society’s dominant gender ideologies.

The tears also come as a saving light. Through their fall, they suggest the possibility of touching someone and have their voices heard. Art becomes the vehicle of expression. It engages the public into the situation, and asks him to reflect on the situation through his own eyes and interpret it in his personal context based on the shapes and symbols that are left in front of him. Margot Neveux’s use of a creative medium in addressing ever-lasting cultural and societal issues shows that each person may have different interpretations of the piece, but she attempts to guide the viewer and encourages him or her to find his own role in the narrative outlined by the painting.

Neveux’s work denounces gender-based violence, inequalities, and injustice, but also transcribes the hope of many to be heard through their tears. Through stereotypical representation, we see how the conventionally accepted cultural definition of masculinity and femininity influences the interactions between gender. Victim blaming, while engaging in untactful behaviors towards women, shifts the attention away from the male due to the definition of masculinity.

The perpetration of patriarchy damages the emotional health of those who are more vulnerable. Blame has a face, and it is time to disclose its true identity and shift the responsibility from the victim onto the enabler.



VII. Atención médica

sexualidad las ha hecho vulnerables a la infección. **La mujer** sometida es muy vulnerable; por educación e **la tiene relaciones sexuales cuándo, cómo y dónde quiere el esposo**". Aún con la falta de poder en las decisiones sexuales, muchas mujeres **se sienten responsables** del comportamiento sexual de sus parejas. Durante una discusión sobre lo que un hombre busca en una mujer, alguien comentó:

También se fija en cómo es una en la cama, eso es muy importante porque si no cumples es cuando empiezan a buscar otra mujer. Tú tienes que ser complaciente, porque lo que no encuentran en la casa lo buscan en la calle.

Se asume así que ella es responsable de la fidelidad de su esposo. Las mujeres narraron que esta creencia fue expresada por los proveedores de servicios de salud, lo cual demuestra que es una norma cultural interiorizada:

El médico me preguntó que si sabía que mi esposo tenía otras parejas, le dije que sí y me dijo: "¿quién está lo que pasa fíjate infección por el VIH?", así, como echándome la culpa

En los pocos casos sospechados por las mujeres de que el comportamiento de sus esposos podía ponerlas en riesgo fueron incapaces de tomar medidas efectivas, como el condón, para protegerse de la infección por el virus u otras ITS. Una mujer sospechó estar en riesgo "porque mi esposo estaba de canjío... Y todavía le sigue. Le dije que me podía contagiar de algo..." Lo más que ella pudo hacer para reducir el riesgo fue hablar de la **infidelidad** de su marido y de la posibilidad de que le transmitiera una infección sexual, pero no fue capaz de proponer explícitamente

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