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A Woman's Right to Organize

An Interview with Members of the Colectiva Feminista Binacional

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In early 2007, Vicky (a pseudonym) was a worker in a border factory, or maquiladora, that assembles cardboard boxes in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico. She had worked as a general assistant for eight months, yet in March of that year she was asked to organize boxes on a high shelf because her assembly line had slowed down. Climbing a forty-eight-step ladder, she proceeded to do as asked. The next thing she remembers is waking up in the company infirmary; she had fallen from the top of the ladder and had been unconscious for twenty minutes. When asked to sit up, she felt a sharp pain in her back and was unable to feel her legs. By the time she was taken to seek emergency medical care, permanent physical damage had already set in.

When I interviewed Vicky in 2009, she was thirty-six years old and married, with four children ranging in age from two to fifteen. The accident had left her permanently paralyzed from the waist down. The company she worked for denied responsibility for her fall and refused to cover her medical costs or provide compensation for lost wages. After a desperate year of searching for solutions and finding only closed doors, Vicky turned to two grassroots organizations in Tijuana for assistance: the Centro de Información para Trabajadoras y Trabajadores (Workers' Information Center, CITTAC) and the Colectiva Feminista Binacional (Binational Feminist Collective, CFB).¹ For the first time since her fall, her injuries were recognized, and people were willing to advocate on her behalf.

I share Vicky's story to illustrate the extreme conditions faced by workers along the border since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993 and the arrival of transnational corporations

in search of cheap labor and low overhead costs. In this essay, I briefly contextualize the realities of women workers in the border region through the literature on maquiladoras and globalization. As a way to historicize and contextualize activists' responses to worker conditions, I focus on the narratives of two women from CFB who describe their struggle through a feminist Zapatista lens.² Their stories foreground the everyday strategies for survival on the border and the political, perhaps utopian, imaginaries that undergird this movement.

The Lives of Maquiladora Women

The intersecting power structures of capitalism, racial hierarchy, and patriarchy have left Mexican border cities with critical infrastructure problems. Housing, health facilities, and schools are all shockingly inadequate. Environmental contamination from border industries is widespread. These conditions create what some analysts have called "structural violence" endemic to the region (Segura and Zavella 2007).

Many scholars have highlighted the transnational maquiladora industry on the US-Mexico border as an example of the effects of global capital on social and economic environments. Recent scholarship has examined the ways in which globalization affects the day-to-day lives of maquila workers, who suffer exploitation through low wages, exposure to environmental risks, sexual harassment, and discrimination (Bandy 2000; Cravey 1998; Landau 2005; Muñoz 2004; Peña 1997). The multinational companies maximize profit, efficiency, and productivity by recruiting cheap local labor, enforcing strict rules for worker conduct, and failing to comply with safety, environmental, and labor standards (Bandy 2000). These business practices create catastrophic environmental, health, and social problems that affect both workers' labor experiences and life in their communities, which are already disadvantaged by the underdeveloped public service infrastructure (Bacon 2004; Landau 2005; Lorey 1999; Martínez 1994).

These conditions have their most severe impact on women. Although there have been some recent shifts, historically women have made up a majority of the maquiladora workforce. Employers have strategically recruited female factory workers, presuming that they are both more

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dexterous and more naïve and easily led (Domínguez 2002; Fernández-Kelly 1983; Peña 1997; Sklair 1989; Tiano 1987). The city of Tijuana has forty-seven industrial parks; each employs 200,000 workers in two twelve-hour shifts, enabling production to continue twenty-four hours a day (Pool 2008). The minimum wage is 54.80 pesos (\$4.00), not per hour, but per day, while a gallon of milk costs approximately 45 pesos. Most maquiladora workers earn no more than \$50.00 a week, a dangerously low salary for a worker supporting a family.

The impact of low wages is exacerbated by the humiliation workers face in the factories. To be hired, they often must agree to a set of rules related to dress code, bathroom breaks, and drinking water consumption. Women's rights are frequently violated through use of random pregnancy tests (one worker described to me being required to show her underwear to prove she was having a menstrual cycle). Supervisors and other power holders engage in sexual harassment.

Workers Respond: CITTAC and CFB

CITTAC is a civil society organization of men and women in Baja California who support the struggles of the workers in the maquiladora industry to better their living and working conditions and defend their human rights. The organization has over thirty active members, with two paid staff who handle most cases of workplace violations brought to the organization. Legal aid is a basic service of the group, although no member has had any legal training beyond hands-on experience. The group also produces print media for workers: the factory newsletter called *Boletín Maquillero* offers updates, stories, and information for workers, while the pamphlet *Primeros Auxilios Laborales* (Labor First Aid) provides a summary of workers' rights. Both are passed out to workers in public places such as bus stops, at events, and sometimes even at the factories.

The Colectiva Feminista Binacional complements the work of CITTAC. Over the years, CFB participants have included activists, feminists, maquiladora workers, Zapatistas, environmentalists, students, artists, and organizers from the United States and Mexico, identified mostly as Chicanas and Mexicanas. There are currently seven active members, ranging in age from twenty-five to fifty-five, and a broader circle of occasional participants. The collective's stated mission is to help construct a new movement that supports women in the border region who are most affected by the implementation of NAFTA. These women have also seen

their lives changed by the increased security measures at the San Diego-Tijuana crossing under Operation Gatekeeper, launched the same year (Nevins 2002). According to the CFB's mission statement, these policies have created more pressure on women by lowering salaries, increasing the threat of unemployment, and afflicting border communities with chemical contamination and toxic waste from irresponsible transnational companies.

A fundamental part of the collective's strategy is to seek transborder support. In 2004, after ten years of organizing at the local level, members realized that their work needed to move beyond their own communities. As one said, "The policies that inform transnational capital do not stay in the locality, nor should the collective responses be tied to particular locations." With the goal of building networks, in September 2004 the collective organized an *encuentro*, or encounter, with other activists working on issues affecting women in the border region. This gathering was the first of its kind and was held at the women's center in the autonomous community of Maclovio Rojas, between the cities of Tecate and Tijuana (Mancillas 2002; Télez 2006, 2008). The collective currently offers workshops for maquiladora workers on gender rights in the workplace and reproductive rights, as well as educational sessions on patriarchy. They have also produced a video about sexual harassment that they screen at their workshops and provide free of charge to other groups. As most members of the collective are underemployed or unemployed, the CFB created a kitchen collective that runs a catering business.

In March 2009 I had the opportunity to interview several workers and activists from CITTAC and CFB.³ For many years I had been deeply involved in the local politics of the area through various projects, including these two collectives. As someone who was born and raised in the region, I identify with the borderland experience (Anzaldúa 1987). One of the ways I negotiate my identity as a borderlander and a scholar is by bridging the supposed divide between "community" and "academy" (Télez 2005). Following the example of other feminist scholars (Behar 1993; Flores 2000; Garcia 1997; Villenas 1996; Weber 1990), I foreground oral narratives in my work as a way to share the stories, lived experiences, and everyday realities of women on the border. Researchers who are interested in documenting the richness of the past and the nuances of the present have "efficaciously used narrative in their diverse configurations of life histories, testimonios, auto-ethnographies, memories and memoirs as a precise and rigorous methodological tool" (McClaurin 1999). Personal narratives contain a dimension of oppositionality, because through stories, communities create

discourses about themselves that can replace dominant representations and resist social determination (Flores 2000). Solely through their own words can their stories be told.

In this tradition, Carmen and Inés, both members of the CFB, shared their thoughts about the emergence and evolution of the organization. They highlight the ways in which they have negotiated their relationship with external funders and other local political actors, and discuss the ideologies that shape their work. These tensions and lessons, in turn, shape the mission of the organization and the ways in which it addresses the needs of women workers. Inés Castillo is originally from Tijuana and teaches at a public high school. She is getting her master's degree in education and also sings for the punk rock band *Parche de Ira*. Carmen Valadez is a longtime Tijuana-based activist originally from Guadalajara, Jalisco. She has been involved in labor and feminist struggles in the border region since the late 1980s. I interviewed both women at the CITTAC offices in Tijuana. The following are excerpts of their stories, translated from the Spanish and edited for length.

Interview with Carmen and Inés

TÉLEZ: Why don't we start with a little history of the CFB, what the organization does, to provide a context for your work.

CARMEN: The Binational Feminist Collective was formed in March of 2004. I got together with some friends who are currently a part of the collective, as well as other groups such as residents of Chilpancingo⁴ and factory workers and former workers who were in Factor X.⁵ We decided to form another group after we decided to dissolve Factor X for a number of reasons. After fifteen years, we had worked for rights for women working in the factories, ensured gainful employment for sixteen of our fellow organizers, and received large grants in order to be able to continue with our organizing. However, the institutions that funded us went through a shift in politics and were no longer willing to support organizations that were involved with Zapatismo and human and labor rights. Funding institutions, such as the Ford Foundation, were only interested in things like reproductive rights.

We had internal disagreements over Zapatismo, but it was mostly the lack of money. Some of us suggested decreasing our salaries so that we would all be able to continue participating, but most didn't want to, so the founders opted for a clean break: everyone would do whatever they

wanted to do. That is how some of us decided to form the CFB collective and the alliance with CITTAC. We decided to create this group because we wanted to belong to an organization where we could define ourselves as feminists, but also as Zapatistas. The first project we proposed was the *encuentro*, though we also worked on the Maclovio Rojas situation.

The *encuentro* was a call for working women, shantytown inhabitants, labor and community rights organizers, and social change activists like those from Maclovio. Maclovio Rojas was undergoing a lot of attacks from the government, with the persecution of Hortensia Hernández, who was the leader of the land settlement, and so forth. We decided to focus on that and participate with the Zapatista network; this was before it was called the Other Campaign [a Zapatista political program that began in 2006]. We managed to get organizers from Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, and Tijuana and Mexicali in Baja California to come to the *encuentro*, along with maquiladora workers from the Flor de Baja factory in Mexicali, and people from here who were struggling. We talked about what our struggles were, how we were organizing, and how to defend our jobs, both as women in opposition to government policies and [as activists] within organizations.

Incredible things happened, things we didn't plan. For instance, a group of indigenous women mentioned that they weren't being recognized as indigenous women and that they wanted that recognition, so we created that space. Young women also brought up an important point. They described the problems they have as young women in movements, particularly in terms of how much is asked of them. They have to study, work, be good organizers, be good workers, be good partners, be good wives, and who knows what else. So we said "enough is enough." It's our time.

So we decided to create the organization, and we presented CITTAC with a proposal to be their women's group. This caused unrest and discontent, because some men couldn't understand why we had to be feminists in the labor movement and in the wage movement. There were very long discussions and horrible meetings. Within CITTAC, we showed them that we were relevant, that feminist organizers have a place in CITTAC and in the maquila movement.

Now it's Inés's turn.

INÉS: I joined the CFB collective in 2006. I knew Carmen from before, since I had participated in the Zapatista civil organizing for about ten years; that's where I met Carmen and other women from Factor X. I worked at Factor X

for about six months, but I left because I had to go to school. I came back and joined the collective and I liked it.

I've been working with the collective kitchen, which is a co-op, a group of women who get together to make different types of food for events such as factory tours. We also put on an event where we all chip in to make the food and share recipes. We learn a lot and cook for a bunch of people. Three of us usually cook for about forty-five people. We submitted a grant application to the International Community Foundation in Tijuana and used the grant money to buy cooking equipment such as pans and stoves. The kitchen collective has been around since about 2007 and stems from a tradition we had in meetings of the worker's network at CITTAC, Factor X, and the Feminist Collective. When we had meetings or workshops but lacked funds, each person would bring something to eat and we would share it, since the meetings sometimes go all day on Saturdays. That's also something important about how we created the collective kitchen: we're all unemployed, or students who can't work regularly for pay because we're going to school, or former maquila workers or housewives. If there's going to be a workshop here at CITTAC or elsewhere, the collective kitchen is in charge of bringing the food. If there is an event somewhere, the collective kitchen sells food there.

Also at the Feminist Collective, when we have workshops here, we tell people to bring their children and we try to provide child care, because it's a problem. It shouldn't be a problem, but it became one because women have to bring their children with them wherever they go. Sometimes they decide that they can't go out because their children might be distracting to others or become bored. Since women are usually the ones who are in charge of taking care of the children, we had to do something to make sure that the women could have a place where their children are welcome. We take care of the children so that the women can attend the workshops.

The workshops have been very interesting. We've had a number of them since I joined: ones about labor rights, about working women's health, an anti-patriarchy workshop, workshops on women and Zapatismo, on women and La Sexta [La Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona, or Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle, a Zapatista manifesto issued in 2005]. Female Zapatista commanders came and talked to us. We talked to them about our issues as women on the borderlands, as young women, as housewives, as workers, etc.

TÉLEZ: Where do you hold these workshops, and who is the intended audience?

INÉS: We hold them here, for the most part, or we look for more or less autonomous spaces that we aren't required to pay for—because we can't—such as homes or backyards. The workshops are open to everyone. I don't think there are any restrictions. For instance, we had an occupational health workshop here at CITTAC, but the first session focused on women. We had medical specialists come from Mexico City through CILAS, the Center for Labor Research and Union Consulting. They put us in contact with some physicians who work with them: a female and a male doctor, both specialists in occupational health. They came and taught a workshop on how the chemicals we work with in the factories can affect us, particularly in the case of the optical equipment industry. We have two cases where the factory is refusing accountability and the workers are in danger. The workshop focused on how women's reproductive health is affected; for instance, lead in the factories causes menstrual irregularities and miscarriages. Men's sexuality is affected too, since libido decreases for both women and men, and men's sperm production is affected. That is something that is rarely talked about, and the men avoided the subject. We had a workshop attended by a number of young male laborers, and when the chemical specialist talked about it, the men had that reaction. It was funny, but the doctors talked about it. It was good.

We are also very interested in women's intellectual participation. Activism is all well and good, but we're also aware that it's sometimes based on books, so we have to read to get things done. Sometimes you can just do things and that's fine. But two friends and I had just graduated from college and we decided to organize an anti-patriarchy workshop. That way, we would be able to take advantage of what we had learned in college. We quoted Foucault and a whole bunch of male and female philosophers. Well, male philosophers, because you only learn about men in college. They rarely talk about female philosophers; you had to research them on your own. So we began working on this workshop with the Feminist Collective when we were straight out of college. We called it "Theory in Practice." We prepared an essay and the women who attended told stories of their struggles. The workshop was very interesting because women from all over attended, even from the Kumeyaay and the Cocopah [indigenous groups in the region], and because we had both women and men. We presented our texts and several women offered their testimonies. The men participated

from their gender, as men, but supporting women, at least in that workshop. The participation of the women from the factories was also interesting. For instance, there were things that they maybe experienced on a daily basis but they needed someone else to mention it in order to realize that they were having similar experiences.

TÉLEZ: How do you recruit new participants? Do you go to the maquilas to pass out flyers about these meetings and workshops in order to invite people?

INÉS: They come because of that, but also through the *Boletín Maquillero*, a factory newsletter published by CITTAC and the Tijuana Maquiladora Workers Network, which we pass out at the factories. We also invite people to the workshops by using a directory that's been around for years. We call them and they spread the word. People also come through Zapatismo. We had over fifty people on anti-patriarchy day; most were women but we also had men. There are always anywhere from thirty to forty-five people in the maquila workshops. The place is well known, and people will come and show us a flyer they got five years ago.

TÉLEZ: How many women are active participants in the collective?

INÉS: There are very few, really, about six or seven. There were fourteen of us but some have left on account of their jobs or their responsibilities at home. So now there are six active members.

TÉLEZ: I have several questions. First, you talk a lot about Zapatismo. Could you summarize your relationship, as a collective, to Zapatismo? How do you link Zapatista politics to your experience in Tijuana?

INÉS: I was a Zapatista before I joined the collective. I connected with Zapatista thought from the time the EZLN [Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional] was created. My active political development was through Zapatismo and now that I'm a part of the collective, I can see how relevant it is because there are a whole bunch of women, a whole bunch of indigenous people, a whole bunch of workers, a whole bunch of housewives in the collective. I identify with a number of different groups, with a number of different anecdotes, women's testimonies. I feel as though the collective or feminists or women should be a part of the Other Campaign or Zapatismo in order to further the development and vision of women in politics and in activism, because women in the old left were treated just like women in the right wing: the woman had a voice and a vote, but not

really. The Zapatistas have rectified a lot of the mistreatment we suffered in the old left; we are now taken into account as women. We are seen not as victims, but as equals. I think that being a feminist and a Zapatista is the best thing that's happened to me. Unfortunately, a lot of women will stop speaking to you because for them, being a feminist and a Zapatista is the worst; it's the devil. But so what? Unfortunately, a lot of women don't even like feminism because they mistakenly think that it's machismo, and it's not. They're wrong.

CARMEN: The Sixth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle, to which we adhere as a feminist collective, makes several points. We are from below: in other words, poor people mostly. Even if you're not working class, there are people who identify as such anyway. I'm with the men and women from below, those who are also leftist and anti-capitalist. The Zapatistas' approach is to walk while asking questions (*caminar preguntando*).⁶ That's something completely new to me, since I'm used to leftist leaders pretending to know everything about everything. Zapatistas say "I don't know; I'm not there. The ones who are going to decide are the ones who are there." One thing we've decided is that the struggle has to be anti-patriarchal because capitalism is, and I don't know if this is the right word, imbricated with patriarchy. Capitalism uses patriarchy against women and against anyone who is young, homosexual, indigenous, lesbian, etc. Capitalism has always despised us, we can see that in the factories. It's despotism against women and against the youth working in the factories and maquilas. So we figure that the struggle can't be exclusively about wages or better work conditions, but must also be against capitalist exploitation and patriarchy within the factories and in communities. That's why we had the anti-patriarchy workshop.

On the other hand, we see that it's not a dream. We were just at the Digna Rabia festival [Dignified Rage, held in Mexico City in December 2008], and Comandanta Ramona from the EZLN and other women spoke. Zapatista children, Zapatista youth, Zapatista single mothers, Zapatista mothers, Zapatista grandmothers, Zapatista women spoke. First, they told us about everything that happened before Zapatismo. Indigenous people are still treated like slaves, as they were during the Porfiriato, when the landowners had rape rights and they raped everyone from children to old women.⁷ They told us that they couldn't work for their families, only for their boss, so families often starved. They couldn't even taste the sugar.

Terrible things, like how the boss and his sons raped and abused the women whenever they felt like it.

I'm fifty years old and I've been in the movement thirty years. I've been a feminist for twenty-seven years. I've been to a lot of feminist gatherings in Mexico and Latin America. I have learned a lot from feminism. We have our women's meetings but we're aware that we have to struggle alongside men for liberation.

TÉLEZ: I want to ask you about migrants. The Feminist Collective is aware of the migrant women working in the maquilas. Do you see people from different parts of Mexico?

CARMEN: Within the collective, we realized a long time ago that a lot of people don't just migrate abroad. That was something we realized when we began this new phase in maquila work. Since 1992, before NAFTA, there have been a lot of people from southern Mexico, Central America, and Latin America who don't just come here to cross the border. Although getting to the US has been the main objective for some people, other people—especially women, although also young men—came here to work in the maquilas. There is a migration to the maquilas.

All of the obstacles—dogs, walls, military operations, police, immigration officers, and so on—make it so that people don't have a social network here. Migration makes you lack a social network. Your family and the community where you learned things—your rural village or indigenous community or neighborhood in the south—is no longer here to help you. So we have to create a solidarity-based network here.

We've developed a lot of small things, since we're small groups. For instance, the collective kitchen. We come from everywhere and can tell our story about our struggle in the maquilas; if you're young, a student or a worker, you should also have rights. If they didn't pay you enough or you don't have insurance, I can talk about that. Also, we have our culture, and an important part of that culture is culinary. We don't work directly with immigration but we do take it into account. For instance, we've had several co-workers at the maquila who have returned to the south, while there are some who went to the US, like you in Arizona.

TÉLEZ: Have you noticed an increase in the migrant population in Tijuana since 1992, or rather 1994?

CARMEN: Since before then . . . with the Border Industrialization Program. The maquila industry in Tijuana has been around since the 1950s. When the Bracero Program ended and [the United States] deported a lot of mostly unemployed men, the US government decided to create the Border Industrialization Program in order to create jobs for the men and get rid of the unemployment problem on the border. But it didn't work, because [the factories] ended up hiring women, young people without experience or education, so that the employers and government could exploit them, since they assumed that women wouldn't complain or organize. The maquilas exploit women but women have fought back. Since the program started in 1965, factory workers in Mexicali have been struggling against Mattel. Mattel went to China. The people organized a strike and unionized. Women formed their own executive committee in the union and demanded higher wages and better work conditions, so in 1975, Mattel moved to China.

TÉLLEZ: Would you say that women still make up the majority of the maquila workforce? Because some say that is changing.

CARMEN: Well, they're at least 60 percent of the general maquila workforce, although it depends on the type of factory. For instance, at the Hyundai factory where they make the chassis for the trailers, it's mainly men. There are a few women, about five, but most of them are sixty years old or so. Textile workers are mostly women; electronics workers are mostly women. Generally, it's mostly women, but there are men too. Before, 90 percent were women, but it's gone down to 60 percent in the last few years. The problem is that the maquila is pretty much the only type of work for women in the border area aside from commerce, services, and tourism. What hasn't changed despite the changing numbers are the conditions—the capitalist and patriarchal oppression inside the factories. Workers get yelled at; they are treated as though the bosses were their fucking macho husbands. The boss, the supervisor, the employer, Mexican or American, they treat you that way. He wants to yell at you, he wants you to obey him. He wants you working like a donkey all day, without rights. That's why we have a feminist collective within CITTAC: men and women don't go through the same things in the factories and the communities. Or in our homes. We're always going to be on the side of women in the maquila even though CITTAC works with everyone.

TÉLLEZ: Where do you see the Colectiva heading?

INÉS: We would like to write a book that describes all of the movement building that's happening in Tijuana. We've been talking about this project for a couple of years, and we want to do it but we also want to do concrete things. This year, for instance, we're putting on three workshops and a global festival, a binational festival. In the end, we're going to continue supporting women.

Finding Hope in the Borderlands

I began this essay with the case of Vicky, who was left with little hope following her workplace accident, but who has received support from CITTAC and the Colectiva Feminista. With their help, she has been able to reinstate and guarantee her medical leave and is currently working to extend and enforce compensation for her medical costs. This is by no means a resolution of the larger problem, but it is a small victory in an extended struggle for respect and dignity along the border. Conditions for workers in the maquiladoras are bleak, but the efforts described by Carmen and Inés demonstrate that despite the global restructuring and the structural violence endemic to the border, communities and individuals are coming together to imagine and enact counterhegemonic change. Their testimonies also provide a counterimage to the borderlands stereotype of violence, drug trafficking, and poverty. A new vision of borderland spaces is emerging, despite the toll of the day-to-day struggle on the lives of individuals and the strain of maintaining common visions among communities and activists. As Antonia Castañeda (2007) argues, gender on the borderlands is a site of violence and oppression, but also of struggle and liberation.

Notes

1. The correct spelling of the Spanish word for *collective* is *colectivo*, but members of the group chose to give the word a feminine "a" ending, *colectiva*, to mark their women-centered framework.

2. The Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional emerged in 1994, the same year NAFTA came into force. This group of rural, indigenous communities in the southern state of Chiapas came together to protest the impact of globalization on their way of life and to demand autonomy and control over their own lands and resources. Initially pursuing an armed insurgency, the Zapatistas are now a mainly nonviolent movement that has engaged in broad outreach and received

international support. Zapatista ideology has informed the work of many activists around the world with its demand for "un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos" (a world where many worlds fit).

3. This research was made possible through partial funding from the Ford Foundation and the Low Wage Work, Migration, and Gender Conference at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Special thanks to Anna Guevarra, who invited me into the project, and photographer Oscar Michel, for his help with the documentation of pivotal conversations and events. I also wish to thank Courtney Andersen, Elizabeth Miller, and Katie Norberg, Arizona State University graduate students who helped with the transcription and translation of the interviews.

4. The community of Chilpancingo, on the outskirts of Tijuana, has worked with the San Diego-based Environmental Health Coalition to fight the environmental hazards that the maquiladora industry has produced in their community.

5. La Casa de la Mujer-Grupo Factor X was founded in 1989, although its roots go back to the political and feminist movements of the 1970s and early 1980s. It evolved into a registered nonprofit organization that provided services (including legal counseling, psychological counseling, and medical assistance) to women until it closed its doors in 2004.

6. In Zapatista philosophy, to walk while asking questions means to allow learning along the way to determine the way (*el camino*) rather than following a predetermined path.

7. The Porfiriato was the period in which Porfirio Díaz was president of Mexico (1876–1911). His regime ended with the start of the Mexican Revolution.

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