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The Generational Impacts of Sexual Violence:
In the Context of the Rwandan Genocide
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Seattle Pacific University
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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the Rwandan Genocide as a main case study to examine the generational impacts of the sexual violence perpetrated. The research will also examine the history of sexual violence against women in periods of conflict. These generational impacts can be seen in the public health sector, the Rwandan economy, psychological and spiritual effects on future generations, and cultural significance in Rwanda. Mothers struggling to parent their children conceived out of rape and trying to work through trauma while also working to heal their daughters. The generational impacts will be observed specifically from the female perspective (i.e. girl, young woman, woman, and the roles of wife and mother). The generational impacts of sexual violence in the context of the Rwandan Genocide will be studied to understand the generational effects of sexual violence in times of conflict more deeply. Overall, the consequences of the sexual violence during the Rwandan Genocide devastated more than one generation of people. The sexual violence resulted in devastatingly negative effects on the physical, mental, emotional wellbeing of an entire generation of women and their children. The consequences of the sexual violence perpetrated during the genocide was transferred by the women that became mothers to their children. The Rwandan government should recognize the children of the victims of sexual violence during the genocide as victims as well. The international community must encourage Rwanda to support its victims. The international community must also continue to financially support the reconstruction of Rwanda. The reconstruction of Rwanda may take decades, but it is paramount to the continued success and peace of Rwanda. International aid organizations should focus on reconstructive efforts as well. Priority should be on mental health services for victims and political stability. Together, the Rwandan government and the international community with the help of international aid organizations can support victims of sexual violence during the genocide and their children for generations.

DISCLAIMER

The following paper describes sexual violence against women, dealing with topics including war, genocide, rape, power structures, and domestic violence. The information presented on these topics is reflective of the research I have completed on these subjects. I recognize that this information may not be consistent with each person's experiences, however, I am presenting the information as I have found it in my research. I am not an expert on this topic, nor do I claim to have all the answers surrounding these complex issues. Due to the complexity of this topic and limited time, I have focused my research on the issue of understanding the generational impacts of sexual violence against women in Rwanda. This paper was written for helpful and strategic educational purposes. If you are uncomfortable with or upset by any of the content, you are in no way expected to continue reading.

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women has taken the backseat in history. The histories of war are told by men and the violence committed against women is conveniently left out. According to an article published by PBS, "Violence against women has been accepted and even condoned throughout history" (PBS). In the United States, 1 in 3 women will experience some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime and 1 in 5 women will be raped in their lifetime (NCADV.org/statistics).

It is important to understand and define what sexual violence is and how different nation states and the international community define it. It is important to be aware of the sexual violence that women face across the globe. Each nation-state, organization, and individual must support and empower women to work towards gender equality. Ending violence against women is simply a first step. The United Nations (UN) has set a precedent that we all must follow. In developing nations, gender equality is of the utmost importance. Many developing countries miss out on the potential human capital that lies within the power of women. Making women safe is a first step to empowering them but it is a fundamental one.

Context

The research will be analyzing the Rwandan Genocide as a main case study. The research will examine the generational impacts of the sexual violence perpetrated during the Rwandan Genocide. The research will also examine the history of sexual violence against women in periods of conflict. The atrocity of sexual and genocidal crimes affects generations of the Rwandan people. These generational impacts can be seen in the public health sector, the Rwandan economy, psychological effects on future generations, and cultural significance in Rwanda. Mothers struggle to parent their children conceived out of rape and try to work through trauma while also working to heal their children. The generational impacts will be observed specifically from the female perspective (i.e. girl, young woman, woman, and the roles of wife and mother). The generational impacts of sexual violence in the context of the Rwandan Genocide will be studied to understand the generational effects of sexual violence in times of conflict more deeply.

Definitions

The UN has written their effort of violence against women into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG #5 is Gender Equality. Target 5.2 is a goal centered around violence against women: "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation". Sexual violence is defined by the Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN) as follows: Domestic

violence, femicide, sexual violence including rape, sexual harassment, and rape culture, human trafficking, female genital mutilation, child marriage, and online violence. For the purposes of this paper, sexual violence will be defined as attempted rape, rape, torture, and femicide. The generational impacts will be discussed based on the latter definition.

Wachala writes that sexually violence crimes against humanity are as follows, “a crime against humanity are: Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity” (Wachala, 543). Rape as a crime against humanity for the purposes of this paper is defined as

1. “The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.
2. The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent” (Wachala, 543).

The Rwandan Genocide did not have a specific battlefield, so to speak. Therefore, the violence occurred in people’s homes, on the street, at work, and throughout the country. As Hynes writes, “Few have noted that the greatest casualties of modern war are non-combatant civilians not soldiers. Fewer still have acknowledged that, among civilian casualties, women and girls are deliberately targeted and disproportionately harmed by war and its aftermath” (Hynes, 431). This research will illuminate the women deliberately targeted for ethnic cleansing and the destruction of the Tutsi people.

For the sake of this paper, we must also define genocide and a crime of war, according to the UN. Article Two in the UN’s Convention on the Prevention and Punishment on the Crime of Genocide define genocide as,

“any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

Killing members of the group;

- a. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- b. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- c. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- d. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group”.

The definition also specifies that genocide includes two main elements: mental element, “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such” and the physical as defined in parts a through d above. A genocide may occur during a time of peace or a time of conflict, or civil conflict. A war crime is defined by the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and The Responsibility To Protect as,

War crimes are those violations of international humanitarian law (treaty or customary law) that incur individual criminal responsibility under international law. As a result, and in contrast to the crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity, war crimes must always take place in the context of an armed conflict, either international or non-international.

In 1993, the UN Commission on Human Rights (replaced in 2006 by the UN Human Rights Council) declared systematic rape and military sexual slavery to be crimes against humanity

punishable as violations of women's human rights. Additionally, in 1995, the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women specified that rape by armed groups during wartime is a war crime.

BACKGROUND

Rwandan Genocide

Now, since we have defined our terms, it follows to understand the civil conflict that birthed the Rwandan Genocide. At the Berlin Conference in 1884, Rwanda became a German territory. There were two different ethnic groups, the Tutsi and the Hutu. The Tutsi continued to govern the Hutu, who were the majority group at the time. In 1924, Belgium gained control of the then Ruanda-Urundi territory, in which Tutsi kings ruled. Intermarriage between the 'ruling group' or Tutsi's and the Hutu, who were mainly farmers, was not common. Ethnic tensions began to grow when Belgium began to require identification cards in 1936. In 1962, the Ruanda-Urundi territory became the two separate states, Rwanda and Burundi, and Rwanda gained its independence while the Hutu continued living under Tutsi suppression with tensions rising. In 1987, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a Tutsi-dominated military organization formed the organization that would eventually fight in the genocide. Fighting had commenced in 1993 and the UN tried to call a cease fire. It failed. But in 1994 the UN sent a peacekeeping operation. In April of 1994, the plane of President Habyarimana of Rwanda and President Ntaryamira of Burundi crashed at Kigali airport. The genocide began with the terrible deaths of 10 UN peacekeepers and the prime minister of Rwanda. Eventually, the UN peacekeepers were sent home and French troops were sent in to complete another peacekeeping mission (Outreach Programme on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations). The proper genocide lasted from April 6th to July 4th, 1994.

According to BBC, "By the end of the 100-day killing spree, around 800,000 Tutsis and Hutus had been killed". It is estimated that about 75% of the Tutsi population were killed. It is estimated that 49% of the Tutsi women and girls were raped (Burnet, 2015). The perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide used "sexual torture, mutilation, and enslavement as weapons of genocide" (Burnet, 2015) to destroy people's lives. Burnet also mentions, "In almost every case, these crimes were inflicted upon women after they had witnessed the torture and killings of their relatives, and the destruction and looting of their homes. Some women were forced to kill their own children before or after being raped" (Burnet, 2015). The sexual violence that occurred during the genocide destroyed Rwanda for generations to come. This destruction is illustrated in the Rwandan people's mental health, spiritual, psychological, cultural, and economic sectors.

Although the Rwandan Genocide occurred in 1994, a lot of the research on the generational impacts is current. The children of the women who lived through the genocide have become adults within the last few years. The UN has supplied most of the current literature on the topic of sexual violence as genocide and as a war crime. With the case of the Rwandan Genocide specifically, there have been many female survivors interviewed on their experience. There is a vast amount of literature on Rwandan culture and shifts within the culture beginning with the colonialist takeover of the Rwandan territory. While the UN and public news outlets have chosen to write about the sexual violence perpetrated during the Rwandan genocide, there is a gap in the literature as it refers to the generational effects of said sexual violence.

The Rwandan Genocide occurred in recent history. These people are still suffering the consequences. There are current regimes in other parts of the world currently using sexual violence as a weapon of war. There are governments currently committing genocide. But the public does

not read these stories in the global news circuit today. This paper is a call to action to prevent history from repeating itself and to protect, defend, and empower women across the world.

History of rape as a weapon of war

Throughout history, rape has been used as a weapon of war. Men have raped women in periods of conflict to assert power and to destroy communities. As early as Mesopotamian cultures, women were viewed as property to men. Women could be sold as prostitutes by their families, and it was considered a sacred ritual. In some cases, in Mesopotamian culture, “rape was a serious offense, but the injured party was primarily the father or the husband of the victim, rather than the violated woman herself” (Strayer and Nelson, 74). Another point in history riddled with sexual violence is the discovery of the Americas and colonialism in the 15th and 16th centuries A.D. When Christopher Columbus voyaged to the Caribbean in the 1490s, him and his men were popular for ‘taking women as their own’. One of Columbus’ men accounts of an indigenous woman who he raped and tortured. Stearns quotes,

“I captured a very beautiful Caribe woman, whom the Lord Admiral [Columbus] gave to me. When I had taken her to my cabin she was naked — as was their custom. I was filled with a desire to take my pleasure with her and attempted to satisfy my desire. She was unwilling, and so treated me with her nails that I wished I had never begun. I then took a piece of rope and whipped her soundly, and she let forth such incredible screams that you would not have believed your ears. Eventually we came to such terms, I assure you, that you would have thought she had been brought up in a school for whores” (Stearns, 34).

This man does not think his actions were formidable. He believed it was his right. Shockingly, there are many similar stories. Examples of mass rape and rape used as a weapon of war carry throughout the 20th century. In 1937 and 1938 an episode of mass murder and rape was perpetrated by Imperial Japanese soldiers. Now known as the Rape of Nanjing or the Nanking Massacre, Japanese General Matsui Iwane ordered the city to be destroyed to break the spirit of the Chinese Resistance. Strayer and Nelson state, “over 200,000 to 300,000 Chinese civilians were killed, and often mutilated, and countless women were sexually assaulted” (Strayer and Nelson, 912). Academics suggest that over the course of seven weeks, there were at least 20,000 cases of rape. The male soldiers that were perpetrating the crimes called their victims, “comfort women”.

During World War II, Strayer and Nelson state “women were almost exclusively the victims of the widespread rape that accompanied World War II-- Japanese soldiers against Chinese women, Soviet troops against German women, among others” (Strayer and Nelson, 914). Beginning in 1960 and throughout the 1980’s, the Guatemalan Genocide resulted in the death and rape of many women of Mayan origin. This was part of a counter-insurgent operation to destroy Mayan villages and eradicate Guatemalans of Mayan origin. According to Sanford, Alvarez-Arenas, and Dill, “Guatemalan soldiers were trained to think of gang rape as a bonding exercise among the troops as well as an effective weapon for the extermination of the civilian enemy” (Sanford, Alvarez-Arenas, and Dill, 39).

African American women in the United States currently battle racism and sexism. While slavery was legal in the United States, “the rape of enslaved women by white men was common and legal” and “after slavery ended, sexual and physical violence, including murder, were used to terrorize and keep the Black population from gaining political or civil rights” (Greensite). Now.org reports that Black women in the United States are 2.5 times more likely to experience physical or sexual violence from a partner or spouse. But they have less access to resources to help combat physical assault and less access to mental and physical health services.

International law & rape as a weapon of war

Throughout history, women are the silent yet shocking victims of war due to sexual violence. What does the international community have to say about rape as a weapon of war? And how long were they silent? In 1993, the UN adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This was the first time the UN had addressed violence against women as a global issue. That same year, the UN Commission on Human Rights (replaced in 2006 by the UN Human Rights Council) declared systematic rape and military sexual slavery to be crimes against humanity punishable as violations of women's human rights. Then in 1995, the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women specified that rape by armed groups during wartime is a war crime. This was significant because military leaders and their soldiers could be held accountable to the UN and possibly to the International Criminal Court for systematic rape and rape by armed groups. Many political leaders, prominent international lawyers, and alike believe that the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women was the first-time rape during war was concerned a crime.

Patricia Sellers, special advisor for prosecution strategies to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, says otherwise in her interview with Women's Media Center: Women Under Siege (WMC). She declares, "Rape itself, during international war, has been illegal for centuries—from as far back as the 1470s, when a trial for Peter von Hagenbach, a mercenary soldier, convicted him of war crimes raping and killing innocent civilians. Or we can look back at the creation of the Geneva Conventions in 1949" (Sellers). She later states in the interview that the international community has been silent on the issue for long because most international law and military lawyers are male. Not until recently has the international legal community enforced those laws. Sellers concludes, "Since when are international sexual assault crimes being enforced? A slow, imperfect process has been under way for the last 60 years. When will deterrence and prevention supersede the inflictions of rape? When international wartime rape culture subsides" (Sellers). As far as intentional law is concerned, Wachala argues that international law can be used as a tool by the international NGOs and the international courts (Wachala, 549). However, these laws concerning women's rights are not enforced. It is the lack of enforcement that allows the continuation of the violation and rape of women in armed conflict.

According into Mutuyimana, more than 75% of the Rwandan population was exposed to traumatic events during the genocide. Women were the most vulnerable group during the Rwandan Genocide (Mutuyimana).

Rwandan people suffered physical violence, sexual violence, forced removal from their homes, destruction of their homes and property, and witnessed family members killed. Amnesty International in 2004 estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000 women were raped with extreme torture.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE PERPETRATED DURING THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE

Women in Rwanda

First, it is important to understand the role of women in Rwanda before the genocide. The cultural norms and cues play a large role in how women were affected by and how they participated in the genocide. In Rwanda in the late 1990's women were viewed as subordinates to men. According to Hogg, "Rwandan woman is a symbol of 'fertility and weakness' while the man is a symbol of strength and protection, who 'makes all major decisions'" (Hogg, 72). Girls were taught how to work in the house from a young age and their education was not a priority. Obedience, respect, politeness, submission, and resignation were all values that Rwandan women were taught to be and exemplify (Hogg, 72). The Rwandan government states "according to tradition, physical

violence is perceived as a punishment. In most cases, women accept it as such ... The inferior status of the woman [and] her ignorance encourages her into submission and expose her to rape and sexual services” (Government of Rwanda). Women held very few political leadership positions. Zero of the mayoral positions before the genocide in 1994 (Hogg, 72).

Rwandan women & their participation in the Rwandan Genocide

As for female participation in the genocide, there are three views held. The first is women were not involved in the genocide at all. The second is women were a minority of the people involved. The third is many women were involved in the genocide. However, it is commonly believed that most women did participate in the conflict. Since there are no comprehensive survey scientists, the research relies on anecdotal evidence (Hogg). Hogg interviews various female prisoners condemned to life sentences for their active participation in war crimes in 1994. Women did not actively murder or rape as the men did, but they were involved in other ways.

Hutu and Tutsi women were taught to hate each other. The genocide was a purposeful act of violence against the Tutsi. It was premeditated. There was consistent anti-Tutsi hate propaganda. Rwandan women were taught from birth that ethnicity mattered more than sex (Hogg). Therefore, Hutu women were conditioned to hate Tutsi women. If Hutu women did not participate somehow in violence against the Tutsi people, they would fear for their lives.

A female genocide suspect (an educated Hutu women) interviewed by Hogg in detention in Rwanda explained that there were three reasons in which Hutu women believed they needed to kill Tutsis. The reasons are as follows: “1. Tutsis were perceived to be associated with the RPF. Women, like men, believed the propaganda. Most women had confidence in what they heard 2. Hutu women hated and were jealous of Tutsi women 3. Hutu women were jealous of Tutsis’ wealth. Women wanted their goods” (Hogg, 87).

It is important to understand the role of women in Rwanda and their participation in the genocide for many reasons. First, the role of women in Rwanda before the genocide speaks to their lack of political, social, and physical power in society. Second, it emphasizes the power dynamic between Rwandan men and Rwandan women. Third, it emphasizes the importance of ethnicity over sex in Rwanda at the time of the genocide. Fourth, it demonstrates the extent to which women were conditioned to hate each other based on ethnicity. While in many cases, female participation in the genocide was out of survival or due to a lack of pushing back against their male counterpart, it is valuable to understand that women did participate in genocide.

Rwandan women & their experience during the Rwandan Genocide

The experience of Rwandan women after the genocide is clothed in traumatic memories. Some women suddenly became the head of their households and are responsible for financially providing for their families. Rwandan women have suffered psychological repercussions as well. Studies have shown that “major depression occurs within populations depending on the degree of exposure to traumatic events (Gros, Price, Magruder, & Frueh, 2012). This suggests that Rwandan women are a predisposed group to major depression (Mutuyimana, et. al, 2).

Women’s experiences during the genocide were full of violence, specifically sexual violence. Some estimates by international aid organizations are over half a million women were victims to rape. There are three specific types of rape that occurred during the genocide. They can be classified: opportunistic rape, sexual enslavement, and genocidal rape. Opportunistic rape in the context of the Rwandan Genocide is when a soldier, caught up in the violence of murdering and destruction sees an opportunity to sexually take advantage of women and physically asserts

himself to rape her. Opportunist rape was the least frequent type of rape that occurred during the genocide. Sexual enslavement is when a person is forced into prostitution or other sexual acts that they do not consent to. It often goes hand in hand with genocidal rape. Genocidal rape is different than other forms of rape because it attempts to eliminate a population through violent and systematic rape (D'Arville, 2). Genocidal rape during the Rwandan Genocide was also used to prevent the birth of Tutsi babies. Women were raped with spears or sharp objects. Often, they would die or suffer genital mutilation. In some cases, for women that did become pregnant, their child would be considered Hutu ethnically. Therefore, "eliminating" the Tutsi ethnicity because this prevents the birth of more Tutsi children (D'Arville, 2). Rape was also used to transmit HIV/AIDS to Tutsi women. During the genocide the previous Rwandan government ordered the release of aids patients to be used as agents of genocide. According to the Survivors Fund, over 67% of women raped during the genocide were infected with HIV or aids. Some women would purposefully not be killed to discourage them from having Tutsi children and to suffer through life with HIV/AIDS.

The violence perpetrated during the Rwandan Genocide & the community

The violence that these women experienced did not affect them solely. The purpose of this paper is to explore the generational effects of the sexual violence that these women experienced. The whole country suffered the effects of the violence perpetrated over those 100 days. Many families had family members killed; in some instances, these people were witnesses to their deaths. Others had to pay reparations to other families for participating in the genocide, and some were imprisoned. Berckmoes et al 2017 found that there was both direct and indirect pathways of intergenerational transmission of mass violence (Berckmoes et. al, 13).

Generational transmission of violence

Indirect transmission was found to be the largest way that this violence is transmitted into the next generation. Some examples of indirect transmission are stigmatization, social exclusion, parenting behaviors, shared risk factors, or disadvantages like poverty. Denov and Piolanti address the mental health, well-being and psycho-social support interventions for mothers that became pregnant and had their children out of rape. Denov discusses high levels of psychological stress and mental disorders that these victims suffer. Victims also suffer physical pain and illness. The social effects victims suffer include stigmatization, discrimination, poverty, and rejection by family and community. Denov's article concludes that the latter is the most disheartening for these women. For example, the most major form of social rejection the mothers reported was pressure to have an abortion (Denov 2019; 817). Their families and communities did not want them or their babies. Society named them "killers" or "war babies" (Carpenter, 2010). Sexual violence continues to have long term consequences on the mother in terms of psychological and social impacts. These symptoms included challenges with sleep, low mood, detachment from emotions, and suicidal ideations. Victims also suffered somatic symptoms like chronic headaches and gastrointestinal problems (Denov 2019; 820).

There was direct transmission of the sexual violence too. This direct transmission was conversations about the genocide or silence.

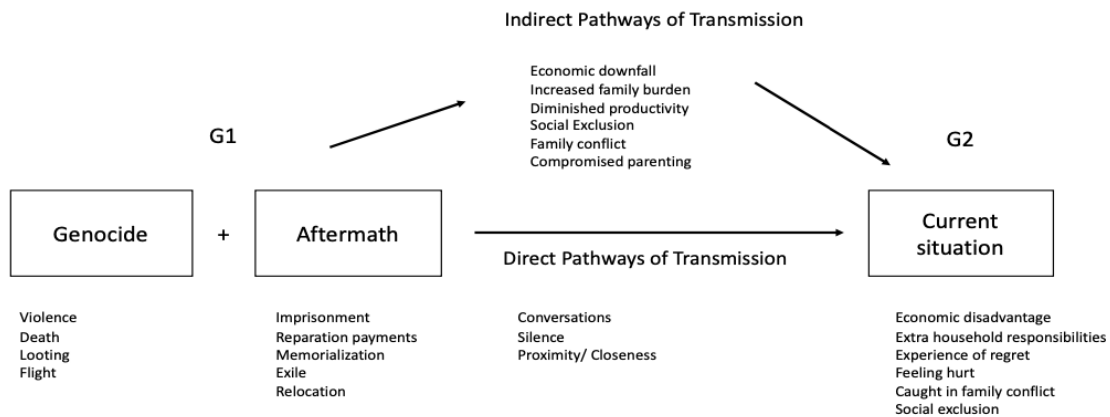


Figure 1. Mechanisms in the intergenerational transmission of legacies of genocide and its aftermath.

Above is Figure 1 from Berckmoes et al 2017 that clearly illustrates the pathways of transmission of violence during and after the genocide. The direct mechanisms of generational transmission were passed mainly by mothers to their children. These mothers had experienced sexual violence during the genocide and either became pregnant out of rape during the genocide or experienced sexual violence during the genocide. Their parenting and relationships with their children were directly affected by their experience of sexual violence during the genocide. This is how generational trauma from sexual violence is transmitted to the next generation.

Understanding what the mother's experience enlightens the experience of the child. It is important to understand how to support these mothers to improve their mental health and therefore improve their children's lives. What exactly are the generational implications of the mother's experience transmitted to her children?

Experience of the children born from rape

Consideration for children born of rape during the genocide is largely absent from the international community (Denov 2020, 3289). The realities of their lives reflect that. Denov et al 2020 interviewed and conducted focus groups from a sample of 60 youth born out of the Rwandan Genocide. The children told stories of nicknames like children of hate, children with bad memories, and little killers. Many of the of the children have a negative stigma attached to them because of their father. If their father was known as the enemy, raped their mother, or was the ethnic "other", these children will be discriminated against in society. They are victims of direct and indirect violence such as abandonment, infanticide, abuse, and discrimination (Denov et al 2020, 3293).

It is also common for these children to be denied membership to their mother's family and be outcasted by their mothers' community. Eramian and Denov discuss this concept further, "Children born of rape may thus possess the ethnic "heritage" of two groups, but do not fully belong to either. In addition, they may face the negative social and practical implications of not knowing who their fathers are because they are in prison, because their mothers have concealed their identities, or because their mothers never learned their attackers' names or identities (Eramian & Denov, 374). One of the most profound intergenerational consequences of genocidal rape is the loss of identity and social inclusion experienced by the children (Denov et al 2020, 3293). In many cases, these children did not receive the same affection from their mothers as their half siblings or had strained relationships with their mothers. Many of them though still expressed a great deal of

concern for their mother. They often felt responsible for their mothers' quality of life (Denov et al 2020). These children suffer various forms of indirect and direct violence as a fundamental result of the sexual violence perpetrated during the genocide.

In addition to the violence and abandonment these children experience outside of the home, the children also face growing up under stress, abuse, and abandonment at home. With an overwhelming majority, the children reported growing up "in a bad period" "and their parents "had nothing," since all of their possessions were destroyed during the genocide" (Journal on Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and Prevention of Torture, 36). Almost all the children told of physical and verbal abuse from their mothers in the home. The Journal on Rehabilitation of Torture Victims and Prevention of Torture states, "a mother who survived the genocide exposed her children to genocide-related emotional suffering, which was particularly pronounced when living with her (36). Some children also reported their mothers isolating themselves away from the child conceived during the genocide. Additionally, these children reported a feeling of high responsibility for their mother's feelings. In some cases, the child was the only emotional support for the mother. This is called parentification. When this happens to a child early in their life, they experience feelings of guilt and shame, unrelenting worry, and social isolation. They are at a higher risk for physical symptoms of anxiety and depression, such as stomachaches, headaches, etc. later in life (Science Direct). Many of these children experience emotional neglect because their father is dead or imprisoned and they have a strained relationship with their mother. Children that experience emotional/affectional neglect may have

"devastating consequences, including failure to thrive, developmental delay, hyperactivity, aggression, depression, low self-esteem, running away from home, substance abuse, and a host of other emotional disorders. These children feel unloved and unwanted. They may strive to please others, or they may misbehave to receive the attention they crave. They may withdraw from people and appear uncaring and indifferent. They may be afraid of emotional closeness and may shun intimacy in relationships. They are at risk for emotional problems throughout the rest of their lives. The degree of neglect and the individual vulnerability apparently affect the magnitude of the consequences" (Science Direct).

It is clear these children are suffering the generational consequences of the sexual violence their mothers experienced during the genocide.

Eramian and Denov often used art to illustrate the complexities and realities of genocide-related experience. During the interviews, the participants (children born out of rape during the genocide) drew a "river of life" to describe their story (Eramian & Denov, 377). Using art to tell their story allows the children to explore and describe what may be traumatic events and social interactions. It also a way for Rwandans to discuss the genocide without having to name it specifically. Eramian was told throughout the interview process that "only fools say exactly what they mean and mean exactly what they say and that Rwandans prefer to communicate by indirectly talking around things. It is a truism in Rwanda that one can never know the "heart" (umutima) of another, and that the interior of the person is hopelessly inaccessible" (Eramian & Denov, 381). For example, the children that Eramian and Denov interviewed did not identify as children born out of rape during the genocide but as "youth born in this situation," "youth who have the same problem," or "these children" (Eramian & Denov, 385). They also referred to themselves with various degrading terms like bastard.

What is the significance of their experience in the context of intergenerational trauma? According to Eramian and Denov, the social experiences of abandonment, abuse, and discrimination "place these youth at risk of profound forms of stigma and marginalization,

alongside physical, psychological, and structural violence at the hands of family, community, and the broader society” (Eramian & Denov, 374). The infanticide resulted in the loss of potential life. The abuse may lead to child traumatic stress (Nation Children’s). Abuse may also lead to depression, anxiety, the inability to have healthy relationships, suicidal thoughts, and death (Child Welfare.Gov). In general, the abuse and social discrimination they experience places these children at risk for physical, psychological, and behavioral consequences later in life. These consequences may affect the greater community as well.

The experience of women, mothers, and children have been discussed. The physical, psychological, and structural violence will have negative physical, psychological, and behavioral consequences for both the mother and the child. What can the international community do to relieve and assist the Rwandan children born out of rape during the genocide? What is the solution?

RESULTS

There are a few solutions and relief programs that the previous literature on sexual violence during conflict suggest. Jansen 2006 suggests that social workers and mental health professionals working for international non-for-profit organizations (NGOs) have a responsibility to serve those in need during an armed conflict. Jansen argues that social workers have a “dual focus and expertise” to provide both basic needs like housing, food, healthcare, and psychological needs as well as “promoting and defending” women’s rights during reconstruction work. Jansen states, “Social workers also have an ethical responsibility to be advocates for women’s rights and can be instrumental in helping women raise their voices, disseminating information, and engaging more women in mobilizing for the development of strategies and actions for civic participation” (Jansen, 143-4).

More specifically Denov et. al 2020 suggests that the children born out of rape during the genocide have access to the Fund for Neediest Survivors of Genocide in Rwanda (FARG). They currently do not have access to it because they were born after 1994. Denov writes that while “young people recogniz[e] that they were not survivors of the genocide many consider themselves victims of genocide crimes perpetrated against their mothers and families” (Denov et al 2020, 3303). Therefore, the authors call for the Rwandan government to officially acknowledge this group of people whose origins from the Genocide (Denov et al 2020, 3303).

Additionally, further research needs to be done on the “psychosocial and biological predictors that may contribute to intergenerational depression” (Mutuyimana, et. al, 9-10). These things must be done alongside a community wide mental health effort with practical and appropriate care to support these women and children suffering from depression, PTSD, and trauma. Mutuyimana argues that this genocide acted as an “alarm signal for clinicians and policy makers to improve the mechanisms of prevention and treatment of depression, especially in women, to interrupt the transmission of the disease” throughout the globe (Mutuyimana, et. al, 9-10).

DISCUSSION

Overall, the consequences of the sexual violence during the Rwandan Genocide devastated more than one generation of people. The sexual violence resulted in devastatingly negative effects on the physical, mental, emotional wellbeing of an entire generation of women and their children. The consequences of the sexual violence perpetrated during the genocide was transferred by the women that became mothers to their children. This transfer resulted in negative physical, social, mental, emotional consequences for the children of the women who were victims of sexual

violence during the genocide. The sexual violence that occurred during the Rwandan Genocide destroyed many Rwandan women and their families.

The results found from this study conclude that mental health counseling and continued support for victims is essential to the holistic health of victims of sexual violence during the Rwandan genocide. This support must be carried out by the Rwandan government, the international community, and international aid organizations. The research has been conducted in the context of the Rwandan Genocide, but the nature of the findings may be applied to other civil conflicts. A future research proposal would examine the generational impacts of sexual violence in other conflict zones and analyze reconstructive strategies to support victims.

CONCLUSION

The international community must recognize the children born from rape during the Rwandan Genocide. These children – who are now in the twenties – must be classified as victims of the genocide. Individual counseling must be made available for the women who were victims of sexual violence. While it is important to hold the Rwandan government responsible for providing mental health services for their citizens, it is not their sole responsibility. The international community and international aid organizations share in the responsibility of the Rwandan government. In addition to individual counseling for the women who were victims, there must also be family counseling available to support the family unit and improve the mental, physical, and social health of these family units. Family counseling will provide an outlet for families to discuss the trauma and violence however they feel appropriate in the presence of a mental health professional. It will provide a safe space for all members of the family including the mother, children, and other family members.

The Rwandan government must begin by recognizing the children of the victims of sexual violence as victims too. The Rwandan government can give them access to the Fund for Neediest Survivors of Genocide in Rwanda. This access will allow these children, now young adults, to have access to education, health, shelter, social assistance, and income generation (FARG). Since FARG has recently been passed into Rwanda's mainstream social protection programming, it will be paramount that survivors of sexual violence during the genocide and their children are maintained as a priority.

The international community must encourage Rwanda to support its victims. The international community must also continue to financially support the reconstruction of Rwanda. The reconstruction of Rwanda may take decades, but it is essential to the continued success and peace of Rwanda. International aid organizations should focus on reconstructive efforts as well. Priority should be on mental health services for victims and political stability.

The international community and international aid organizations must recognize the harm that colonialism has throughout Africa. The hatred between the Hutu and Tutsi originally began because the Belgians favored the Tutsi and forced the Hutu and Tutsi to live together. Working to deconstruct harmful colonialist views and philosophies is required for the health of Rwanda. Together, the Rwandan government and the international community with the help of international aid organizations can support victims of sexual violence during the genocide and their children for generations.

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Appendix A: Presentation Speech

Hello. Welcome. Thank you all for coming. I am grateful you all are here to support Nathan, Rachel, and I in our academic honors pursuits. I wanted to begin with my talk with a disclaimer. The following presentation describes sexual violence against women, among other violent topics including war, genocide, rape, power structures, and domestic violence. The information presented on these topics is reflective of the research I have completed on these subjects. I recognize that this information may not be consistent with each person's experiences, however, I am presenting the information as I have found it in my research. Due to the complexity of this topic and our limited time, I have focused my research on the issue of understanding the generational impacts of sexual violence against women during the Rwandan Genocide. This paper was written for helpful and strategic educational purposes. If you are uncomfortable or become upset by any of the content, you are in no way expected to continue listening. I also wanted to acknowledge the two things that inspired my research. The first being Dr. Ruth Ediger's Global Women's Issues course. The second being my own mom who inspires me to be a better woman every day. Love you, Mom. With that, let's get started.

Violence against women takes a backseat in history. The histories of war are told by men and the violence committed against women is conveniently left out. Throughout history, rape has been used as a weapon of war. Men rape during periods of conflict to assert power and destroy communities. As early as Mesopotamian cultures, women were viewed as property to men. According to an article published by PBS, "Violence against women has been accepted and even condoned throughout history" (PBS). In the United States, 1 in 3 women will experience some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime and 1 in 5 women will be raped in their lifetime (NCADV.org/statistics).

My research analyzed the Rwandan Genocide as a main case study. The Rwandan Genocide was a calculated civil conflict that escalated into genocide. In the late 1880's, Rwanda was colonized by Germany. At the time, there were two different ethnic groups, the Tutsi and the Hutu. The Tutsi continued to govern the Hutu, who were the majority group at the time. In 1924, Belgium gained control of the

then Ruanda-Urundi territory and it was clear Belgian rulers favored the Tutsi. Inter-marriage was not common between the two ethnic groups. Ethnic tensions rose throughout the 1900's. In 1987, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a Tutsi-dominated military organization was formed. This organization that would eventually start the violence years later. Fighting had commenced in 1993 and an attempted United Nations cease fire failed. In April of 1994, the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were killed in a plane crash at Kigali airport. The genocide began. The proper genocide lasted from April 6th to July 4th, 1994.

According to BBC, "By the end of the 100-day killing spree, around 800,000 Tutsis and Hutus had been killed". It is estimated that about 75% of the Tutsi population were killed. It is estimated that 49% of Tutsi women and girls were raped (Burnet, 2015). The perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide used "sexual torture, mutilation, and enslavement as weapons of genocide" (Burnet, 2015) to destroy people's lives. The sexual violence that occurred during the genocide destroyed Rwanda for generations to come. My research examines the generational impacts of the sexual violence perpetrated during the Rwandan Genocide. These generational impacts can be seen in the public health sector, the Rwandan economy, psychological effects on future generations, and cultural significance in Rwanda.

First, it is important to understand the role of women in Rwanda before the genocide. In the late 1990's, Rwandan women were viewed as subordinates to men. According to Hogg, "Rwandan [women are] a symbol of 'fertility and weakness' while the man is a symbol of strength and protection, who 'makes all major decisions'" (Hogg, 72). Girls were taught how to work in the house from a young age and their education was not a priority. Obedience, respect, politeness, submission, and resignation were all values that Rwandan women were taught to be and exemplify (Hogg, 72). The Rwandan government states "according to tradition, physical violence is perceived as a punishment. In most cases, women accept it as such ... The inferior status of the woman [and] her ignorance encourages her into submission and expose her to rape and sexual services" (Government of Rwanda).

The experience of women during the genocide was full of violence. Some international aid organizations estimate that over 250,000 Rwandan women were victims of rape between the days of April

6th to July 4th of 1994. Genocidal rape was the most common form of rape documented during the genocide. It is different than other forms of rape because it attempts to eliminate a population through violent and systematic rape (D'Arville, 2). Genocidal rape was also used to prevent the birth of Tutsi babies. Women were raped with spears or sharp objects. Often, they would die or suffer genital mutilation. In some cases, for women that did become pregnant, their child would be considered Hutu ethnically. Therefore, "eliminating" the Tutsi ethnicity. Rape was also used to transmit HIV/AIDS to Tutsi women. During the genocide the previous Rwandan government ordered the release of AIDS patients to be used as agents of genocide. According to the Survivors Fund, over 67% of women raped during the genocide were infected with HIV/AIDS.

The experience of the Rwandan women after the genocide is clothed in traumatic memories. Some women suddenly became the head of their households and are responsible for financially providing for their families. Rwandan women suffer psychological repercussions as well. Studies have shown that "major depression occurs within populations depending on the degree of exposure to traumatic events (Gros, Price, Magruder, & Frueh, 2012). This suggests that Rwandan women are a predisposed group to major depression (Mutuyimana, et. al, 2). The sexual violence that these women experienced did not affect them solely. The purpose of this paper is to explore the generational effects of the sexual violence. There was both direct and indirect pathways of intergenerational transmission of violence to the next generation (Berckmoes et. al, 13).

Indirect transmission was found to be the most common way violence is transmitted to the next generation. Some examples of indirect transmission are stigmatization, social exclusion, parenting behaviors, shared risk factors, or disadvantages like poverty. Victims suffer high levels of psychological stress and mental disorders. They may also suffer physical pain and illness. For example, the most major form of social rejection the mothers reported was pressure to have an abortion (Denov 2019; 817). Their families and communities did not want them or their babies. Society named them "killers" or "war babies" (Carpenter, 2010). Sexual violence continues to have long term consequences on the mother in terms of psychological and social impacts. These symptoms included challenges with sleep, low mood,

detachment from emotions, and suicidal ideations. Victims also suffered somatic symptoms like chronic headaches and gastrointestinal problems (Denov 2019; 820).

There was direct transmission of the trauma from sexual violence too. This direct transmission is shared through conversations about the genocide or silence concerning the topic. The direct mechanisms of generational transmission were passed from mothers to their children. These mothers had experienced sexual violence during the genocide and became pregnant due to rape. Their parenting and relationships with their children were directly affected by their experience of sexual violence. Mothers struggled to parent their children conceived out of rape and try to work through trauma while also working to heal their children.

This is how generational trauma from sexual violence is transmitted to the next generation. Understanding what the mother's experience enlightens the experience of the child. The children that were convinced out of rape, battle many consequences. Infanticide was common. It is also common for these children to be denied membership to their mother's family and be outcasted by their mothers' community. One of the most profound intergenerational consequences of genocidal rape is the loss of identity and social exclusion experienced by the children (Denov et al 2020, 3293). In many cases, these children did not receive the same affection from their mothers as their half siblings or had strained relationships with their mothers.

These children suffer various forms of indirect and direct violence as a fundamental result of the sexual violence perpetrated during the genocide. Their experience is riddled with abuse and stigmatization. Almost all the children told of physical and verbal abuse from their mothers in the home. Childhood abuse may lead to child traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, the inability to have healthy relationships, etc (Child Welfare.Gov). The abuse and social discrimination they experience places these children at risk for physical, psychological, and behavioral consequences later in life. These consequences may affect the greater community as well. The children told stories of nicknames like children of hate, children with bad memories, and little killers. Many of the children bear a negative stigma attached to

them because of their father. If their father was known as the enemy, raped their mother, or was the ethnic “other”, these children will be discriminated against in society.

When a child experiences the latter early in their life, they experience feelings of guilt and shame, unrelenting worry, and social isolation. They are at a higher risk for physical symptoms of anxiety and depression, as well as stomachaches, headaches, etc. later in life (Science Direct). Many of these children experience emotional neglect because their father is dead or imprisoned and they have a strained relationship with their mother. According to Science Direct, children that experience emotional/affectional neglect may have “devastating consequences, including failure to thrive, developmental delay, aggression, depression, low self-esteem, substance abuse, and a host of other emotional disorders. These children feel unloved and unwanted. They may withdraw from people and appear uncaring and indifferent. They may be afraid of emotional closeness and may shun intimacy in relationships” (Science Direct). It is clear these children are suffering the generational consequences of the sexual violence their mothers experienced during the genocide.

The results found from this study conclude that mental health counseling and continued support for victims is essential to the holistic health of victims of sexual violence during the Rwandan genocide. This support must be carried out by the Rwandan government and the international community. The research has been conducted in the context of the Rwandan Genocide, but the nature of the findings may be applied to other civil conflicts. A future research proposal may examine the generational impacts of sexual violence in other conflict zones and analyze reconstructive strategies to support victims.

Overall, the consequences of the sexual violence during the Rwandan Genocide devastated more than one generation of people. The transfer of the sexual violence resulted in negative physical, social, mental, emotional consequences for the children of the women who were victims of sexual violence as well as their mothers during the genocide. The consequences of said sexual violence was transferred from women to their children.

So how can the international community and the Rwandan government support these women and their children? The international community must recognize the children born from rape during the

Rwandan Genocide. These children – who are now in the twenties – must be classified as victims of the genocide in addition to their mothers. Individual counseling must be made available for the women who were victims of sexual violence. While it is important to hold the Rwandan government responsible for providing mental health services for their citizens, it is not their sole responsibility. The international community and international aid organizations share in the responsibility of the Rwandan government to support victims of the genocide. In addition to individual counseling for the women who were victims, there must also be family counseling available to support the family unit and improve the mental, physical, and social health of these family units. Family counseling will provide a safe space for all members of the family to discuss the trauma and violence however they feel appropriate in the presence of a mental health professional.

The Rwandan government must begin by recognizing the children of the victims of sexual violence as victims too. The Rwandan government can give them access to the Fund for Neediest Survivors of Genocide in Rwanda, known as FARG. This access will allow these children, now young adults, to have access to education, health, shelter, social assistance, and income generation (FARG). Since FARG has recently been passed into Rwanda's mainstream social protection programming, it will be paramount that the survivors of sexual violence during the genocide and their children are maintained as a priority for FARG funding.

The international community must encourage Rwanda to support its victims. It must also continue to financially support the reconstruction of Rwanda. Aid organizations should focus on reconstructive efforts as well. Priority should be on mental health services for victims and political stability.

Both the international community and aid organizations must recognize the harm that colonialism has throughout the entire continent of Africa. The hatred between the Hutu and Tutsi originally sparked because of colonialist leadership and their governing decisions. Working to deconstruct harmful colonialist views and philosophies is required for the health of Rwanda. Together, the Rwandan government and the international community must support victims of sexual violence during the genocide and their children for generations.

Our panel worked together this entire academic year to understand Institutions and their Role in Policing Knowledge and Bodies, hence the title of our panel. We found throughout history and today, those that possess knowledge hold power. When an institution possesses power, they have authority to police others' access to knowledge. A person's lack of access to knowledge results in inequitable power structures and therefore their lack of power. This is what gives institutions the power to then regulate the policing of the bodies.

Hence why it is important to be aware of the sexual violence that women face across the globe. Every nation-state, institution, and individual must support and empower women to continue working towards gender equality. Ending violence against and making women safe is a first step to empowering us but it is a fundamental one.

Thank you

Appendix B:
Presentation Visual

GENERATIONAL IMPACTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE



IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE



RWANDAN GENOCIDE

- Hutu & Tutsi
- April 6th to July 4th, 1994
- Estimates upwards of 800,000 people killed
- Estimates of 250,000 women raped

RAPE AS A WEAPON OF WAR

- UN Human Rights Council declared systematic rape & military sexual slavery to be crimes against humanity punishable as violations of women's human rights



ROLE OF WOMEN IN RWANDA (1994)

- Symbol of fertility and weakness
- Obedience, respect, politeness, submission, and resignation

EXPERIENCE OF A WOMAN DURING THE GENOCIDE

- Genocidal rape
- Transmission of HIV/AIDS
- Grief, loss, and financial stress
- Conceiving a child due to rape



EXPERIENCE OF THE CHILD

- Infanticide
- Unhealthy/Strained relationship with mother
- Stigmatization, social exclusion, parenting behaviors, poverty

SOLUTION/SUPPORT

- Access to FARG (Fund for Neediest Survivors of Genocide in Rwanda) for the children of victims of sexual violence



SOLUTION/SUPPORT

- Individual counseling
- Family counseling
- Reconstructive efforts

ACTION

- **RESEARCH:**
 - <https://www.rainn.org/> (Nation's largest anti-violence organization)
- **READ:** *Development As Freedom* by Amartya Sen
- **SUPPORT:** listen, believe, empower women in your everyday life

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Photo credit: top to bottom: <https://report-new.org/supporting-genocide-survivors-of-sexual-violence-in-rememberance-of-the-1994-genocide-against-the-tutsi-in-rwanda/>, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314844092>, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/health/article-3455702.html>, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/2007-08-12-treaty-child-recovery-justice-genocide-rwanda>, <https://www.un.org/development/dga/justice/genocide-remembered-what-happened-child-recovery>, <http://www.farg.gov.rw/uploads/news-detail/farg-registering-bag-relation-to-improving-survivors-welfare>, <http://www.us.org/whosnews/magazine/july-2006/protecting-victims-genocide>, <https://help.un.org/good/good5>