

Four Generations of Maya Marriages

What's Love Got To Do With It?

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This paper examines the connections between globalization, economic trends, and generational patterns of marriage among Caste War Maya women in Quintana Roo, Mexico, during the twentieth century. Caste War Mayas descend from Mayas who participated in the Caste Wars of Yucatán during the mid-nineteenth century. These wars, purportedly based on caste or race, involved indigenous Maya struggles for autonomy and independence from the Mexican state of Yucatán, the longest and most successful indigenous resistance movement in the Americas.¹ The eastern-most portion of the Yucatán peninsula was controlled by Caste War Mayas, guided in their cause by miraculous crosses and saints, until Mexican president Porfirio Díaz took control in 1901.

Tulum, where my research is based, had been one of two competing centers of power that had developed in opposition to the Yucatec and Mexican governments during the mid-nineteenth-century Caste Wars. Tulum was attacked in about 1888 by its rival Santa Cruz because Tulum had appointed a white man who had married into an elite Caste War Maya family to “govern” the Tanchah and Tulum Maya ruins.² Subsequent political Caste War Maya struggles over leadership, trading alliances, and military strategies led to Tulum’s decline and neglect throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Populated by just a handful of families in the early twentieth century, Tulum relied on horticultural production (*milpa*), hunting, and gum (*chicle*) collecting for its subsistence. By the mid-twentieth century, Tulum’s residents also worked on neighboring coconut plantations and cattle ranches. By the 1960s and 1970s, Yucatec and Mexican immigrants began to outnumber Caste War Mayas as the Mexican government and private investors intensified the region’s development. Meanwhile, the area between Tulum and Cancún was being developed into what is now Mexico’s largest tourist region.

Using ethnographic fieldwork methods, including participant observation, oral histories, and interviews, I began my research of Caste War Maya women of Tulum, Quintana Roo, in 1990.³ At that time four generations of women lived in Tulum. The eldest generation of women, roughly in their seventies and older, were survivors of devastating smallpox epidemics. Both disease and the jumbled, contradictory state policies directed toward Caste War Mayas had disrupted their lives. Their mixed subsistence economy revolved around horticultural production, hunting, and modest trade. The women in the next oldest generation were born and/or were married after the Mexican government established *ejidos* (communal land grants) in the late 1930s. While continuing the economic practices of their elders, they were increasingly involved in day and migrant labor, and they established more habitual relationships with (mostly male) immigrant Yucatec, Mexican, and other workers and employers. The women in the third generation, the middle-aged generation, were young adults or teenagers in the early 1970s when the Cancún–Tulum road and tourist corridor radically transformed the pueblo, and they lived their lives within the early tourist culture and economy. Finally, the women of the fourth and youngest generation were either teenagers or young adults when I began my fieldwork. By then, Tulum was a key part of the region's tourist attractions.

For the eldest of the four generations, marriage had been primarily a pragmatic, economic arrangement between families. For the following three generations of women, marriage increasingly involved the joining of individual men and women based on personal choice and romantic love. In the first section of this article I describe early twentieth-century marital practices, arguing that arranged marriages of the eldest generation functioned to structure labor and to reproduce families and social organization within their mixed trade and subsistence economy. However, I also show that couples chose their spouses within the institution of arranged marriage, and that notions of love and sexual attraction were a basic part of the process. In the following sections of this article, I describe shifts and trends in the meanings and practices of marriage in the second oldest and younger generations. I situate Tulum within an increasingly capitalized and industrialized economy, drawing on research that shows how notions of love, marriage, family, and sexuality change under these conditions. Because new social, cultural, and economic practices had begun to privilege men, but did not yet provide women with equivalent forms of power, women of the second and middle generations endured abusive marriages marked by violence and jealousy. The youngest generation of women is better situated to negotiate sex, love, and marriage, but they still operate within a system of gender inequality. Thus, love and love-based marriages can give young women greater autonomy, but they can also lead to other forms of oppression.

Like various other subsistence-based Maya peasant societies, Caste War Maya marriages can be characterized as having gender interdependence and balanced relations of power within marriages. Numerous historical and ethnographic descriptions show that women are dependent on men producing and acquiring food for consumption, while men are dependent on women for processing and cooking.⁴ Even as scholars provide increasingly nuanced analyses of gender among Mayas, they have continued to rely upon the principles of interdependency and complementarity to explain gender relations. For example, Betty Bernice Faust and Mathew Restall have recently evoked these notions for the precolonial and colonial eras, as have Ellen Kintz and Alicia Re Cruz with respect to contemporary society, although they all pay more attention to the limitations of complementarity and areas of gender inequality.⁵

While the nuances of gender complementarity and interdependence in Tulum's marital practices is still significant, within subsistence-based households, Maya men have had access to particular forms of power and privilege denied women, including political leadership, polygyny, and control over women's movements.⁶ During the Caste War the relative balance of power between spouses was further disrupted. Evidence exists that Maya men raped and otherwise used captured (white) women as domestic slaves, indicating the fundamental subordination of women.⁷ Thus, in accord with other warrior or military-based societies, the balance of power shifted toward men during the Caste Wars, although community sanctions worked against extreme shifts in power.⁸ For example, in 1917 one village refused to allow a leading Caste War general to bring a Mexican prostitute to live in his home.⁹

Twentieth-century marriages must be situated within a world where socioeconomic, racial, and gender relations were changing. The eldest generation of women in Tulum had survived the early twentieth-century smallpox epidemics. According to Alfonso Villarojas, who studied another Caste War community in the 1930s, *haancab*, or a period of bride-service when the groom lives and works for the bride's family, was still widely practiced. Bride-service had previously stabilized marriages, provided family support for young brides, and contributed to the autonomy of young wives during the early years of marriage.¹⁰ Bride-service typically contributes to the gendered balance of power within marriage. In Tulum, however, bride-service was not commonly practiced; even marriages of the eldest generation rarely included bride-service. The devastating population losses due to smallpox, combined with Tulum's socioeconomic marginality, probably contributed to the decline of bride-service.¹¹ Although not quite as idyllic as Villarojas's reports of Xcocal during the

1930s, the majority of eldest generation unions in Tulum, or at least first marriages, were relatively free of domestic violence and generated enduring relationships.¹² In speaking of her grandmother's marriage, Doña Francisca portrayed marital relations that were most typical for the eldest generation:

[In my grandmother's time], when a woman got married, she doesn't, she doesn't look for another husband. Neither does the husband look for another woman. My grandmother married when she was very young until my grandfather died. They never separated.

They never fought. They never fought. She got along very well with my grandfather. (Doña Francisca, June 5, 1992, 4)

Such nuptials were private and uncomplicated; the most commonly mentioned prerequisite involved learning three or four standard Catholic prayers. Doña Demetria, a woman from the second-eldest generation, succinctly described the rite of passage as practiced by members of the Iglesia Maya throughout the twentieth century:

[I kneel] because of my marriage. Mass is said, I'm kneeling. Mass is happening. Your hand is placed thus, you take your candles here, your husband also.

When you kneel [to get married], the writing is done on your face.¹³ They say, In the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy spirit, Amen, Jesus. Thus.

Do they do it like that in your town? As for me, I'm true Maya. True Mayas speak thus. (Doña Demetria, August 1, 1990, 5)

In contrast, a woman of the next generation, a middle-aged woman, Doña Felipa, had rejected the Caste War Maya's regional Iglesia Maya, or Maya Church, in favor of the Mexican Catholic Church. Like other Catholics in the community, she professed that Iglesia Maya ceremonies were elementary, trifling rituals relative to sacred Mexican and Yucatec western-style weddings (Doña Felipa, April 20, 1993). Despite these distinctions, the most consequential aspect of matrimony for both the eldest and second-eldest generations of women was the ritualized marital arrangements, or *kóonsito*, which were negotiated between parents and godparents. When discussing their marriages, these women always spoke of the marital arrangements and *muhul*, or gifts and exchanges such as food, clothing, and jewelry given by the groom and/or his family to the bride and her family.¹⁴ They clearly saw the bride-gifts they and their families received as a defining part of their identity and as a source of pride and empowerment.

Even a middle-aged woman who rejected many traditional marital practices

still appreciated the power of her bride-gifts. After telling of her relatively elaborate courtship, Doña Felipa described her fiancé's delivery of the agreed-upon items, proudly proclaiming: "He took everything that they asked for, and I already had it in my power [possession] (laughs). Yes, when the time came for me to marry, I married. Yes, I married" (April 20, 1993, 3–4).

Doña Thalia's case was more typical of arranged Caste War Maya marriages in Tulum. A woman from the second-eldest generation, Doña Thalia was not allowed to "speak" to her future husband until the wedding day:

They asked for me. Like before, not like people get married now. At that time, before, well, even if he has asked four times, you don't talk to him until you're married.

As long as you are not married, even if he comes to visit, you don't think that they are going to let you go out and talk, or that you would stop in the street. Nothing!

When he comes, he sits here. "Here's a stool, *muchacho* [young man]," my father tells him. And me, if I'm grinding [corn], I'm grinding. If I'm carrying water, I'm carrying water. They don't let you talk with a young man before. Nothing. Nothing. Until the time for you to marry arrives, you join with him. Umhm. (Doña Thalia, April 22, 1993, 5–6)

Many women recalled the imposed silences regarding not only their choice of a partner, but also in terms of actual conversation between them and a suitor. Most women emphasized that in the old days people were not allowed to marry for *gusto* (by their choice and for love). Although they had to marry whom their parents chose, few women expressed unhappiness with their particular spouses.

As it turned out, women's overall satisfaction with their spouses was partly due to the informal "conversations" and "selections" discreetly taking place between couples despite imposed silencing. From what I could discern, young women did not "talk" to men or "choose" their spouses unless they had decided to marry without their parents' consent. However, young women did avail themselves of the opportunities for informal conversations that occurred at festivals and *vaquerías* (sacred, *jarana*-style) dances, work sites, or in the course of other activities. When I tried to verify that Doña Thalia had not actually spoken to her husband prior to marriage, she revealed that what she really meant was that they had not "officially" or "publicly" spoken, and, most importantly, she had not agreed to marry.

AUTHOR: Then, you had never spoken with [your husband] before you married?

DOÑA THALIA: Well, yes. But without my mother's presence. Just me. But I told him, "Well, if you enter to speak with my father, and my father says yes, well [then] yes [I will marry you]. But if he says no, then no." (April 22, 1993, 5–6)

In other words, couples could physically talk, but they could not "speak" for themselves; they could not have a voice that spoke with power regarding marriage. As I have suggested elsewhere, Maya notions of gender were quintessentially about labor, as symbolized by the *hetzme* ritual. This ritual sets infant boys and girls on their roads in life by symbolically introducing them to the work and tools of their respective genders.¹⁵ Moreover, marriage was the institutional structure within which gendered labor was practiced. In fundamental ways, marriage was an economically based arrangement between families. Writing about Yucatec Maya marital practices in the late nineteenth century, Piedad Peniche Rivero asserts:

Maya communities placed special emphasis on marriage as an institution that strengthened mutual relations between families and their control over economic resources. The function of marriage was to bring together families or social groups and oblige them to cooperate and share territory and resources.¹⁶

Maya marriages for the eldest and most of the second-eldest generations were clearly recognized as economically driven arrangements, not just for the soon-to-be interdependent spouses, but also for their families. The ritually exchanged bride-gifts cemented reciprocal kin relations and provided the new couple with some basic household commodities such as hammocks or blankets, together with a set of woman's clothes and a small emergency fund (usually spent on children's illnesses) in the form of jewelry. Although Doña Thalia is proud of the love she and her husband now share, she was quite explicit about the importance of economic considerations, not love, in both her parents' consent and her own desire to be married.

DOÑA THALIA: My father worked very hard to find food, so he said yes [that I could get married]. We got married in the Iglesia Maya . . .

AUTHOR: And how was the wedding? When he came to ask your father for you, did you already know that you wanted to marry? Or didn't you want to marry?

DOÑA THALIA: Well, I believed, I thought that if my father said yes, then yes.

AUTHOR: But did you want to marry?

DOÑA THALIA: Yes. I wanted to marry also, because I saw, well, it's the work

that I have. Well, there is nothing, I have no clothes. Until I got married with my husband, I had nothing. Not even my little clothes. They gave me them – a simple little blouse, and a shawl, as they say, and just my, my hair! And that was it. Just with that.

AUTHOR: And that's what your husband gave you?

DOÑA THALIA: Yes. Yes. [He just gave you that?] Just that. A pair of shoes, and my clothes, and a gold chain, and my earrings. Just that. (April 22, 1993, 5–6)

Besides relatively minor, everyday things given as bride-gifts, other terms of the marriage were likewise flexible and negotiable. Unlike other Maya regions, such as highland Chiapas, where young men become indebted to their relatives in order to obtain the bride-gifts needed to marry, among Caste War Maya bride-gifts were easily obtainable and affordable.¹⁷ In their subsistence economy, the union of women and men was economically efficient and essential. Although matrimony could relieve families of an extra person to feed and clothe, it did not have a significant impact on the financial wealth of either the bride's or the groom's kin. In fact, families who had already established everyday reciprocal relations were very informal in marital negotiations. It was not uncommon for the customary seven visits (with their accompanying household "gifts" of bread, chocolate, and sometimes alcohol and cigarettes) to be reduced almost by half. Doña Thalia explained why this was possible:

AUTHOR: So then they came four times to ask for your marriage?

DOÑA THALIA: Yes. Four times. Because everything, well like my deceased father says, since my father-in-law, well, he is, how do they say it, an *anciano* [elder].

Because there are times when you have to enter seven times to ask for your wife. Umhm. That's what my father says. But since he gets along very well with my father-in-law, well no.

Afterwards, when they are setting the time, they are bringing the things here. And they brought some bread, some chocolate, just things like that. When one week passed, we married. (April 22, 1993, 5–6)

After the ritualized marriage arrangements, the most notable aspect of the eldest and second-eldest generations' marriages was the advice, or *consejo*, given to the couple. When I first embarked on predissertation fieldwork in Tulum, I was engaged to be married, and my fiancé joined me for a short time. Later, when I returned to the field, my friends all wanted to know whether we had indeed gotten married and what the wedding itself was like. The foremost things Mexican and Yucatec immigrants asked about were the clothes and reception. But Maya's first question was, "What prayers did you say?" followed

by “What did they tell you?” I responded with a little information about both (I had a fairly “traditional” Catholic Chicano wedding), assuming the questions pertained to something like the Catholic mass and the priest’s homily. However, Mayas were not referring to a communal-style mass and public sermon, but rather to the private prayers they were required to know and the ritual advice they were given. “Mass” in the Iglesia Maya was rarely a communal event; at weddings, only the *nohoch tatich*, or priest(s), couple, and their parents and/or godparents were usually present. It was during this private church service that couples were given their advice. In keeping with the spirit of marriage as the institution within which gendered labor was practiced, most women’s recollections of their marital advice focused on the complementary labor obligations of spouses. Sometimes they included a comment about their lifetime commitment and the need to “love” and be considerate of each other and also of their godparents. Thus, marriage for the eldest generation emphasized labor and social relations, not romantic love and individual choice.

At the same time, love and sexual attraction were a basic, essential but unavowed part of these arranged marriages. Love-based marriages and arranged marriages were not mutually exclusive concepts. As more attention is paid to the relationship between love and sexuality, scholars are beginning to realize that both love and sexuality are culturally constructed concepts that must be historically situated for analysis.¹⁸ In that vein, Victor de Munck has tried to “debunk this dichotomous and ethnocentric conception of arranged versus love marriage practices.”¹⁹ He argues that historical “processes of modernization” have shifted notions of “love” from a “background” criterion to a “foreground” criterion for marriage among Sri Lankans. He describes how Sri Lankans “harmonize” love and sexual desire into the process of arranging marriages. Similarly, Caste War Mayas of the eldest generation incorporated their love and desire into their arranged marriages through covert meetings with lovers in which their own voices were subordinated to those of their parents.

THE SECOND AND THIRD GENERATIONS AND TRAJECTORIES OF CHANGE

Following the eldest generation, subsequent generations of women were increasingly influenced in marriage by socioeconomic changes combined with new ideologies of love and sexuality. Although women of all three subsequent generations have been affected by these changes, it was the second and third generations whose marriages and lives were especially marked by gender inequality, hardships, and oppression. These two generations lived during a moment of transition when neither old nor new social institutions and cultural ideologies provided them with the means to protect their interests. As we will

see, the youngest generation of women is better situated to negotiate love, sexuality, and marriage, but they, too, are still operating from an inherently subordinate position.

Tensions over marital relations and sexual jealousy are well-documented aspects of Yucatec Maya culture and folklore.²⁰ Although Villarojas downplays marital conflicts and sexual jealousy in his 1930s ethnography of Caste War Maya, all the examples he selected to illustrate the political authority of the chiefs involved marital conflicts related to sexual jealousy.²¹ However, I contend that by the mid-twentieth century Caste War Maya women and men in Tulum began having more conflicts related to marital relations and sexual jealousy.

Historians and other social scientists have extensively documented changes in Western notions of love, marriage, family, and sexuality, especially as influenced by the political economies of colonialism, capitalism, and industrialization.²² John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman, for example, argue that the meaning of sexuality in the United States changed from being associated primarily with "reproduction within families" to being associated primarily with "emotional intimacy and physical pleasure for individuals."²³ They, and other scholars, have examined how changes in sexuality have been gendered, how sex has been commercialized, the consequences and possibilities of emphasizing love and intimacy within marriages and families, and the intersections between race, class, gender, and sexuality.²⁴

Similar kinds of processes were occurring among Maya in Quintana Roo. Although Caste War Maya had regularly interacted with peoples and cultures outside their own communities as they engaged in trade and other kinds of socioeconomic relations, the twentieth century intensified their interactions with immigrants, new economic practices, and new ideologies. Before the mid-twentieth century, they had occasional meetings with outsiders, or required outsiders to conform to their cultural practices. But women of the second and subsequent generations were more regularly surrounded predominantly by male immigrant workers as they and their husbands worked at new gum-collecting camps, cattle ranches, and coconut plantations. The more extensive contacts exacerbated conflicts about marriage and sexual jealousy. New sources of tension further arose from men's economic power, independence, and the introduction to foreign understandings of sexuality that assumed men had more active sexual needs (and the right to act on these needs) than did women.

The second and third generations of women were those who most struggled with marital relations. New social, cultural, and economic practices had begun to privilege men but did not yet provide women with equivalent forms of power. They did not have access to institutionalized alternatives for female au-

tonomy, economic independence, empowerment, or balanced power relations. Consequently, more women and children from these generations were impoverished or endured extraordinarily abusive marriages marked by unequal power relations, violence, and jealousy.

The second generation of women have marriage histories that often emphasize love, jealousy, and conflict. For example, Doña Demetria's memories about advice included the customary counsel about gendered labor, but her recollections expounded on what for most women was a minor reference to love and its frequent counterpart, sexual jealousy:

As soon as [the wedding mass] is over, they tell you: "Here, son," it's said to men, "you are married with the girl, but you must love one another. Don't dishonor one another. Don't say bad things to your spouse. Don't be spying on your spouse. Don't spy on your wife because it's bad. Because jealousy, son of shit, it brings bad things." That's said to people in Maya.

Another thing that is said to the girl: "You, too, daughter, you've just married with that boy. You, your obligations are that you make his food, so that you make his *gracia* [corn-based foods] that he puts in his *sabucan* [carrying bag] when he goes to work. Don't say bad words to him, that your food may go with his heart to his work. You make *masa* [corn dough], you make tortillas, you make it, you put it in his bag when he goes to work."

"Your [husband's] obligations, you bring firewood for her to put underneath her *comal* [griddle], your wife, for her to make food for you to eat." Thus, that's what's said in the church thus. (August 17, 1990, 6)

Doña Demetria suffered extensive physical abuse and lived a "bad life" with her husband through the institution of marriage. After rejecting several suitors who would have required her to live away from her parents' home, she "chose" to marry a man who was originally from a *rancho* near Chumpon, a ceremonial center near Tulum, where her family had previously lived. Because of domestic violence, his first wife, also from Chumpon, refused to cook or wash his clothes, thus effecting a separation or "divorce."²⁵

Unlike the *nohoch maakoob* (big men) of Villarojas's ethnography who protected women from domestic violence, not only were the big men failing to protect women of the second generation from violence, they were just as likely to be the perpetrators of domestic violence. The man Doña Demetria chose to marry was a "worldly" man, having worked during his youth in Valladolid and other parts of Yucatán, but had settled in Tulum to grow corn, gather gum, and follow the day-migrant labor work stream of the 1940s. Although he asked for her in the customary way, with the required marital arrangements, visits, and bride-gifts for the bride and her family, the couple had only about three months of happy marriage. After that, her husband began drinking and phys-

ically abusing her. Nearly everyone I spoke to, including Doña Demetria herself, commented on Don Narciso's remarkable jealousy and violence. Her father was the *nohoch tatic*, or patron of Tulum's sacred cross, and during my fieldwork she was the most important woman in Tulum's Iglesia Maya. Still, Don Narciso, a *nohoch maakoo*, did not allow her to go to church during much of her married life because he did not trust her and so restricted her activities. On the other hand, he once tried to bring a second wife home, although Doña Demetria soon managed to get rid of her.²⁶

Twentieth-century changes in ideologies about love and sexuality, combined with socioeconomic changes, exacerbated the sexually mediated jealousy and deceit that had previously existed in Maya marriages. Life stories from the eldest generation of women included jealousy as well as other sources of tension in their marriages, but the marriages of Doña Demetria's and subsequent generations indicate significantly more sexually mediated gender conflict. The twentieth-century permutations made marital and gender relations increasingly charged sites of conflict because of the intensified, asymmetrical eroticization of women and men. Sexually mediated notions of jealousy were not new to Caste War Maya, but the highly gendered interpretations of it were. Furthermore, since marriage had been primarily about the exchange of gendered labor rather than the fostering of romantic and sexual love, marital infidelity had not been as charged an issue for Mayas. However, as romantic love became the foundation for marriage, romantic and sexual infidelity became a greater betrayal than it had been when marital relations were more grounded in the exchange of labor.

Maya women of all generations asserted that jealousy, affairs, and marital separations became more common in the contemporary tourist era. Women who were active members of the Iglesia Maya understood these changes to be consistent with prophecies about the end-of-the-century *wuts*, or inversion of the contemporary epoch.²⁷ In addition to documented prophecies regarding things such as the coming of roads, airplanes, and foreigners, I discovered that women also considered specific changes regarding femininity and motherhood to be fulfillments of prophecies. For example, they believed that women would lose the desire to become mothers, and saw contemporary attempts to delay marriage and practice birth control as proof of the prophecies.²⁸

More pragmatically, women explained the eroticized conflicts as being due to more temptations and opportunities to act on those temptations because of the large numbers of people who then lived in town. Certainly, the internal and external conflicts of the Caste Wars had severely limited social intercourse as Mayas evaded their enemies. Furthermore, their horticultural economy depended on small, relatively isolated, kin-based ranches or settlements that circumscribed everyday social contacts. In the early and middle twentieth century, interactions with strangers was mainly restricted to the regional cycle of

festivals or at trade and work sites, where Mayas of Tulum typically sought out potential spouses. All that has changed:

But now in this life, [marriage] has already changed because now a lot of women . . . get separated like that. But before, hmm, when you got married your husband was your husband and your wife was your wife.

But that was because there were no people, there was no highway, there was nothing. Well, where are more women and men going to come from? There are just the ones that live here in Tulum, about five little houses. Just that. But now, well, things have changed more, because now there are many houses that are coming. (Doña Francisca, June 5, 1992, 13)

Besides the women's own prophetic and pragmatic explanations, other things help explain the increase in eroticized conflicts. Problems between women and men after the mid-twentieth century were complicated by hypersexuality and the greater differentiation of male and female sexual temperaments and bodies. Men increasingly had access to a world of eroticized entertainment, which allowed them to explore and experiment with carnal pleasures. In fact, some of the earliest immigrants to the Tulum area included female sex workers who labored in makeshift "cabarets" that usually doubled as places of prostitution. Because immigrants conceptualized males as having legitimate, "naturally" stronger sexual needs than females, women were not provided with similarly sanctioned opportunities, and monogamous, heterosexual marriages could not ordinarily be balanced sexually.²⁹

Middle-aged women, whose lives were most influenced by the burgeoning sex industry and related changes in ideologies of gender and sexuality, developed various strategies to deal with these changes. As women's status and power became increasingly subject to their eroticized beauty, some Maya women tried to maximize their feminine allure. They wore more makeup, more body-conscious clothing, or embraced ideologies about love-based marriages. Doña Felipa, for example, was proud of having various suitors and marrying for gusto. In contrast, women who were active members of the Iglesia Maya and/or remained in a subsistence-based economy tended to pursue other strategies. They consciously and deliberately rejected foreign, eroticized constructions of gender with their concomitant conflict-ridden unions and marital instability. They did not use makeup or wear fashionable clothes, and they rejected romantic honeymoons, instead priding themselves on avoiding these foreign practices and emotions. This strategy helped stabilize marriages only when their husbands also resisted the changes and rejected the power of new masculinities.

The gender inequalities and marital conflicts suffered by women of the second generation likewise influenced their daughters. These middle-aged women were also caught up in the transition between arranged and freely chosen marriages, as well as new gendered cultural and economic practices. Their lives and marital experiences were marked by conflict and exploitation by both their fathers and their husbands. Their fathers continued the practice of arranging marriages for their daughters, but the couple's covert relationship and desires were not necessarily taken into consideration. Consequently, this generation of women sometimes speak of their fathers "selling" them or forcing them into marriages against their wills.

According to Doña Magdalena, whose father was a *Mayapax* musician in Chumpon who provided ritual music in the Iglesia Maya, her father sold her when she was fifteen. A young man from Chumpon who had acquired lots of gold chains, like they had in Yucatán, wanted to marry her, but she did not want to marry him. However, when her father threatened to kill her mother, who had suffered physical abuse throughout her marriage, she relented. The couple skipped the customary marital arrangements, although her husband provided her father with some gold. Tragically, her father eventually murdered her mother anyway, and Doña Magdalena left her husband after he insisted on acquiring a second wife (her cousin) because she felt she might kill one of them if she stayed. Consequently she and her children returned to work and live at her father's house, where she cried for two years before she decided it was time to have fun. She learned to drink and dance, which she has been doing since. She has married several other men she met while drinking and dancing, and has borne several other children. Sometimes in her life she has lived well; at other times she has struggled to survive.

Similarly, Doña Mercedes spoke of being forced to marry when she was fourteen. She initially tried to escape, fleeing to another woman's house, but her father found her and took her home. Both her husband and her mother-in-law abused her, forcing her to sleep outside at night and locking her up in the house during the day while they were gone. Her husband finally abandoned her with seven children, and she began working to support them. Significantly, the advice she recalled from her wedding focused on marriage being a lifetime commitment, and the need for a wife to feed her husband, even if he had another woman.

CONTEMPORARY PATTERNS OF THE YOUNGEST GENERATION

Marriages have also been marked by changes in the nature of the ceremony and the kinds of exchanges. Initially, some middle-aged women experienced

these changes, but they mostly apply to the youngest generation of women. Rather than having a small, private ritual involving a handful or two of people in the Iglesia Maya fashion, Mexican- and Yucatec-style weddings were large, public, festive, elaborate parties that focused on the couple's love. Rather than (or in addition to) the bride-gifts given to the bride and her family, the couple's extended families and community members provided individual gifts for the couple at the marriage ceremony.

Because I indiscriminately lumped all "gifts" together using the same word *regalos* (a Spanish word for presents), I initially had a difficult time distinguishing Maya and immigrant marital exchanges. As I eventually realized, for Caste War Maya *regalos* referred exclusively to items given to a couple at a Mexican- or Yucatec-style wedding reception, not to *muhul*, or bride-gifts provided in a Maya marriage. A case in point, Doña Francisca once mentioned that her grandmother had been *pedida* (petitioned or asked for) in the customary way, and, because I knew that the "asking" usually involved an exchange of goods or gifts from the groom's family to the bride and her family, I tried to elicit that information. However, my follow-up question, "When they went to ask for her, did they take any *regalos*?" was interpreted as referring to Mexican-style wedding presents. Therefore, Doña Francisca responded by asserting that there were no *regalos*; they just asked for her seven times. She went on to describe other aspects of the visits, including the oft-mentioned fact that only the parents and godparents, and not the couple, were allowed to converse. Attempting again to return to information about bride-gifts, I once more asked, "So they didn't take any gifts?" to which Doña Francisca again answered, "No. Nothing." Despite my misunderstanding of the differences between bride-gifts and celebratory presents, Doña Francisca nevertheless went on to describe some goods given by the groom's family to the bride and her family.

Doña Francisca continued with a summary of the wedding day itself, emphasizing the Maya clothing, such as *huipil* (embroidered tunics) for women and *éex* (short drawstring pants) for men.³⁰ Still misusing the term "regalos" and consequently obfuscating the meaning of bride-gifts, I continued to press her about it, again asking, "So then it [the wedding day] was the very day when they brought the gifts [*regalos*]?" By this time in the interview, Doña Francisca began losing patience with my continued misuse of the term, and with frustration proclaimed, "There is no *festejo* [celebration]!" Still not getting it, and comically confusing the matter even further, I insisted:

"But isn't there chocolate? Like *chocomilk* [chocolate milk powder] or . . . ?"
Doña Francisca exasperatedly interrupted, "No [it's not *chocomilk*]! It's chocolate, like *chuk wa*! That's how they say it."

I asked, "And where did they buy it?"

She said, "In Valladolid. They go walking, yes."

I finally understood when she explicitly compared new wedding practices with the old, emphasizing that Maya weddings were not celebrations or "gala affairs" in the Mexican and Yucatec manner. I restated her words, "And when you get married there is no party, there is nothing." Doña Francisca confirmed:

Just, well, like when my grandfather [married], his mother and his father made a pot of food. They killed two turkeys and a chicken, and they cooked it like that, and they made about this many tortillas, and three candles, and they delivered it. (June 5, 1992, 6)

In other words, the contemporary practice of inviting family and friends to "celebrate" a feast marking the marriage, and the wedding guests' reciprocation with *regalos* for the couple, shared little with Mayas' arranged marriages, the familial negotiations of marriage arrangements, and the giving of bride-gifts. Wedding celebrations, whether small or large, were not part of the Maya institution in the past. In the new manner, nuptials were no longer minor, private rituals enacted between parents and godparents of a couple, but rather major, expensive, time-consuming, romanticized public celebrations. Now, Mayas say, weddings are more fun but also more expensive because the couple and the couple's godparents are expected to treat a large network of extended family and friends to beer, soft-drinks, food, and even to provide a band for entertainment. Even young couples married privately in the Iglesia Maya often wear Western-style wedding dresses or other Western-style clothes, and have celebratory wedding receptions following the nuptials. More recently, many young couples skip legal and/or formal wedding ceremonies altogether; they are more likely to *juntar* or informally "join" together in a household arrangement, especially if the woman is already expecting.

The conflicts and instability of contemporary marriage was particularly poignant given the marked expense, ritualization, and community involvement that characterized Mexican- and Yucatec-style nuptials. Because Mayas previously attributed great spiritual significance to godparents, to whom couples had substantial, lifelong commitments and responsibilities, the new practice of having numerous godparents was ironically set against the contemporary precariousness of marriage. Maya matrimones had been marked with advice both from the *nohoch tatic*, who included counsel about how couples should treat both each other and their godparents, and from the couple's godparents. However, some Mayas now said that the current volatility of marriage had become so great that, no matter how many godparents you had, all their words com-

bined were ineffective in keeping a couple peaceably married. Doña Francisca explained:

Your *padrinos* (godparents) advise you. They advise you, saying: “Now you are married, now you are spouses. Now you lead one life. When the man is going to work, [you cook his food] . . .”

But now, when you marry, you can have up to ten *padrinos*, they start telling you that [that is, advising you], and in a little while, they have already separated. But before, no. You just had one *padrino*. Some say two *padrinos*, two *madrinas*. (June 5, 1992)

Even though the Maya practice of receiving counseling and guidance from godparents had been combined with the Mexican custom of having many godparents, their counsel could not easily be heeded by those who were significantly involved with new marriage practices.

Recent transformations, especially in the town’s growth, have both changed and intensified the sources of tension in conflict-ridden marriages and gender relations, but these changes are not summarily disdained. As I indicated elsewhere, Mayas of all generations appreciate much of the cultural and economic change resulting from twentieth-century and tourist-era political economies.³¹ At the same time, they are critical of other effects, such as environmental degradation and the loss of political and religious control. When I asked what they thought about people from outside coming to Tulum, many Mayas, like Doña Francisca, were uncertain:

Well, I don’t know. Well, like, before, since there was no highway, there weren’t any people like now. . . . Well, where [could you] go talk to someone? You get bored like that. (June 5, 1992)

Others, like Doña Thalia, recognized the contradictions inherent in the contemporary cultural prominence of marriage. Although weddings were eroticized, and pleasure-laden, at the same time marriages were characterized by destabilization and conflict, especially for women. While she mourned the loss of enduring marriages, she at once enjoyed the “fun” of Mexican- and Yucatec-style weddings. Doña Thalia explained:

Now [marriage] . . . is very different. It’s that now they do a lot of things like that. There are some who even have *conjunto* [bands]. There are some who don’t, but they have a big party. Not like before. Before it was nothing. Poor people! (April 22, 1993)

Ironically, these fun, expensive, romanticized wedding parties highlight an institution that is increasingly conflict-ridden. Today, most mothers express

their intention to let their daughters marry for gusto and to choose their own spouses. *Muchachas* (young, single women) are now much better situated to negotiate their love, sex, and marital lives, but they still work from a subordinate position. They are attracted to the world of eroticized romance, and actively participate by attending dances, visiting with *muchachos* (young, men), dressing stylishly and attractively, and consuming romanticized entertainment such as movies, magazines, and soap operas. To maximize their autonomy, these young women earn their own incomes, delay marriage, and usually continue to live with their parents.

However, their strategy's success normally depends upon their openly abstaining from the world's eroticized pleasures and/or being successful at preventing pregnancy. They hold the domain of sex, love, romance, and marriage in tension with greater social and economic autonomy. Although they live in a world where women's bodies and sexuality are openly valued and consumed, the open expression of their own sexuality is still stigmatized and needed to be controlled. Pregnancy also limits their social and economic autonomy.

Moreover, women still have more social and economic interests at stake in getting married than do men. Women and men are no longer economically as interdependent as they once were. Among full-time proletarians, wives and children are no longer considered essential for male survival; men can readily buy the domestic and sexual services that previously depended upon having a wife. Furthermore, new ideologies of gender and sexuality privilege men economically (because of wage differentials) and romantically (because of men's claim to biologically-based sexual needs). As women's bodies are increasingly objectified and commodified for male consumption, their own sexuality is neglected and has become further dependent on marriage, and the related notion of love, for its legitimacy. Meanwhile, women advise other women against wedding because of risks, especially in terms of drinking problems, physical abuse, lack of financial support, and abandonment.

Love-based marriages gave women of Tulum more control over whom they marry but have inserted them into an increasingly complex system of unequal gender and marital relations. Men can abuse ideologies of love to obtain sexual and other kinds of services, yet men also subscribe to romanticized ideologies of marital and gender relations. Similarly, women can use romantic love to negotiate resources and services from husbands and/or lovers. Sometimes, especially if alcohol abuse is not a problem, women and men develop satisfying, intimate, affectionate relationships using romantic love to mediate the political, economic, and sexual inequalities inherent in the system of gender.³²

As we have seen, marital practices have changed substantially over time for the four generations of women living in Tulum, Quintana Roo. The eldest generation of women had marriages arranged for them that served to structure labor and reproduce families and social organization within their mixed-trade and subsistence economy. Nevertheless, love and sexual attraction were fundamental aspects of these arranged marriage.

The second-eldest and middle-aged generations of women had marriages that were most marked by violence, jealousy, and inequality. Just as notions of love, marriage, family, and sexuality changed in other societies as their economies became increasingly capitalized and industrialized, similar processes occurred in Tulum. The new social, cultural, and economic practices of the area began privileging men but did not provide women with equivalent forms of power. Still, women developed various strategies to deal with new economic practices and ideologies.

For the youngest generation of women, marriages are now festive, public celebrations of love, and their parents expect them to choose their own spouses, even though marriages are marked by a good deal of conflict and instability. As women become more integrated into the new economy, they are better situated to negotiate love, sex, and marriage. However, they are still inherently subordinate within the system of love-based sex and gender roles. Love and love-based marriage can mediate gender inequalities, but they can also lead to other kinds of oppression.

The process of removing economic production from family and household units continues around the world. As has happened elsewhere, in Tulum this process has resulted in families and marriages becoming more important as sites for love, affection and emotional commitments than as sites of economic production. Given that this process tends to occur along with global social, political, and economic changes, we must pay more attention to changes in families, gender relations, and local cultural practices such as marriage. Potentially, these processes might be mediated by equalizing the economic power of women and men, critiquing naturalized, gendered notions of male hypersexuality, investigating the effects of the sex industry and the commercialization of sex on women and men, and developing family support policies that spread the "costs" of child care and reproduction throughout society.

Given the role of multinational corporations, international tourists, and global cultures and economies in transforming this region, Maya women should not bear this burden alone. Similar issues affect women around the world, and we must continue to push for research and policies that contribute

to a greater balance of power between women and men, even when they are in love.

NOTES

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1. These uprisings were popularly attributed to racial hostility in order to delegitimize Maya demands, hence the name. However, the “rebel Mayas” were fighting against social injustice and exploitation, and their astounding success was due as much to their British allies, who were fighting Mexico for control of the territory occupied by Caste War Mayas. See Marie Lapointe, *Los Mayas Rebeldes de Yucatán* (Zamora: Colegio de Michoacán, 1983).

2. During the 1880s, Tulum’s patron of the cross was a woman, Maria Uícab, usually referred to as a “queen” in the press. It may be that the male/female “dual capitals” replicated Maya notions of gender complementarity and duality. The man who married the Maya woman was Juan Peon Contreras de Elizalde, the “eccentric brother” of an elite Yucatec family, and his Maya wife was an unnamed widow purportedly related to the elite Cocom family of Sotuta. See Manuel E. Monteagudo, “La Expedición de D. Juan Peon Contreras,” in *La Revista de Mérida*, Año 19:1537 (May 19, 1887): 2–3; and Don E. Dumond, *The Machete and the Cross: Campesino Rebellion in Yucatán* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

3. Tulum had a population of about two thousand residents in 1990. Most of these residents were immigrants from surrounding Mexican states who had come to work in the booming tourist economy after 1970. My research focuses on Caste War Mayas who lived in Tulum and surrounding settlements. Caste War Mayas make up about 10 percent of Tulum’s residents, most belonging to five to ten extended families. I spent the majority of my time with these Caste War Maya families, including a summer in 1990, ten months from 1991 through 1992, and about one or two weeks per year in subsequent years. I recorded interviews with about twenty women over the years and have selected parts of these recorded interviews to illustrate patterns and themes in my analysis.

4. June Nash, “Latin American Women in the World Capitalist Crisis,” *Gender and Society: Official Publication of Sociologists for Women in Society* 4:3 (1990): 338–53; June Nash, ed., *Crafts in the World Market: The Impact of Global Exchange on Middle American Artisans* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993); George Collier, *Seeking Food and Seeking Money: Changing Productive Relations in a Highland Mexican Community* (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development,

1990); Merielle K. Flood, "Changing Gender Relations in Zinacantan, Mexico," *Research in Economic Anthropology* 15:2 (1994): 145–73; Ana M. Juárez, "Epochs of Colonialism: Race, Class, and Gender Among Caste War Mayas in Quintana Roo, Mexico" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1996); and Mary L. Elmendorf, *The Mayan Woman and Change* (Cuernavaca: Centro Intercultural de Documentación, 1972), and *Nine Mayan Women: A Village Faces Change* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1976).

5. Betty Bernice Faust, "Cacao Beans and Chili Peppers: Gender Socialization in the Cosmology of a Yucatec Maya Curing Ceremony," *Sex Roles* 39:7/8 (1998): 603–42; Mathew Restall, *The Maya World: Yucatec Culture and Society, 1550–1850* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Ellen Kintz, "The Yucatec Maya Frontier and Maya Women: Tenacity of Tradition and Tragedy of Transformation," *Sex Roles* 39:7/8 (1998): 589–601; and Alicia Re Cruz, "Maya Women, Gender Dynamics, and Modes of Production," *Sex Roles* 39:7/8 (1998): 573–87.

6. David Freidel and Linda Schele, "Maya Royal Women: A Lesson in Precolumbian History," in *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Caroline B. Brettell and Carolyn F. Sargent (Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997), 74–78; and Restall, *The Maya World*.

7. Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), 175–76.

8. Although women sometimes gain power in militarized societies during periods of war, I have not seen any evidence to support this pattern in Caste War Maya communities.

9. Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán*, 252.

10. Alfonso Villa Rojas, *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1945).

11. See for comparison Villa Rojas, *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo*, 88–89, wherein he reports the continuation of bride-service among central zone Mayas in the 1930s. I did not document bride-service (haancab) for any women in Tulum, even among the eldest generation.

12. Because individual women were not blamed or stigmatized for having experienced domestic violence, and because they readily spoke of women who had suffered, I did not attribute these generational differences to nostalgia. Still, the general picture of marriage for the eldest generation was not quite as pleasant as suggested by Villarojas, who reported in *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo* hearing of only one instance of domestic violence, and none of polygyny, during his fieldwork.

13. I heard other Maya women make reference to the face when speaking of affairs and marriage and hope to explore this idea further in the future.

14. The Spanish word *concierto* refers to marital arrangements and is pronounced as *kóonsito* in Maya. Anthropologists use the terms progeny price, bride-wealth, bride-

gifts, or bride-price to refer to the gifts or resources that a groom and/or his family customarily give to a bride and/or her family.

15. Juárez, "Epochs of Colonialism," 156–59.

16. Piedad Peniche Rivero, "Gender, Bridewealth, and Marriage: Social Reproduction of Peons on Henequen Haciendas in Yucatán, 1870–1901," in *Women of the Mexican Countryside, 1850–1990: Creating Spaces, Shaping Transitions*, ed. Heather Fowler-Salamani and Mary Kay Vaughan (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 79.

17. Collier, *Seeking Food and Seeking Money*.

18. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1978); and Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, eds., *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

19. Victor C. de Munck, "Lust, Love, and Arranged Marriages in Sri Lanka," in *Romantic Love and Sexual Behavior: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*, ed. Victor C. de Munck (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 1998), 285.

20. Many historical documents and analyses have provided evidence of these tensions regarding the precolonial and colonial era, including Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society Under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984); Inga Clendinnen, "Yucatec Maya Women and the Spanish Conquest: Role and Ritual in Historical Reconstruction," *Journal of Social History* 15:3 (1982): 427–42, and *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatán, 1517–1570* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Restall, *The Maya World*; Faust, "Cacao Beans and Chili Peppers"; and studies of the Books of Chilam Balam (indigenous Maya texts recorded in Spanish and Maya during the colonial era containing information on Maya society, history, and prophecies), for example, Munro S. Edmonson, trans., *The Ancient Future of the Itza: The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982); and Munro S. Edmonson, trans., *Heaven Born Merida and Its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986). This theme has also been documented in various collections of folklore, and twentieth century ethnographies and analyses. For example, see Margaret Park Redfield, *The Folk Literature of a Yucatecan Town* (Washington DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1935); Allan F. Burns, trans., *An Epoch of Miracles: Oral Literature of the Yucatec Maya* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); Victoria R. Bricker, *The Indian Christ, The Indian King: The Historical Substrate of Maya Myth and Ritual* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Re Cruz, "Maya Women, Gender Dynamics, and Modes of Production"; Kintz, "The Yucatec Maya Frontier and Maya Women"; and Faust, "Cacao Beans and Chili Peppers." Paul R. Sullivan, in *Unfinished Conversations: Mayas and Foreigners Between Two Wars* (New York: Knopf, 1989), shows how even the language of love and courtship were adopted to negotiate Caste War settlements in the early twentieth century.

21. Villarojas, *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo*, 92–94.

22. Early scholarship in this area includes works by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Max Weber, and Talcott Parsons.

23. John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), xv–xvi.

24. For example, see the collections by Sylvia Yanagisako and Carol Delaney, eds., *Naturalizing Power: Essays in Feminist Cultural Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Louise Lamphere, Helena Ragoné, and Patricia Zavella, eds., *Situated Lives: Gender and Culture in Everyday Life* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Roger N. Lancaster and Micaela di Leonardo, eds., *The Gender/Sexuality Reader: Culture, History, Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Susan Schroeder, Stephanie Wood, and Robert Haskett, eds., *Indian Women of Early Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); Solange Alberro, ed., *Familia y Poder en Nueva España. Memoria del Tercer Simposio de Historia de las Mentalidades. Seminario de Historia de las Mentalidades* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1991); Nash, *Crafts in the World Market*; Asunción Lavrín, ed., *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989); and special issues of *Ethnohistory* (1995) and *Sex Roles* (1998), among others.

25. Doña Demetria and her future husband had “spoken” publicly prior to the marital arrangements, or *kóonsito*, so she was considered to have married by choice, or *gusto*. Because Don Narciso was “at fault” in his “divorce,” his first wife kept most of their household goods. In keeping with Villarojas’s discussion of divorce and desertion in the 1930s, which he claims was rare, a woman could be left with nothing but her clothes if it was deemed to be her fault. However, if it was a man’s fault, the household resources were divided in half and she was allowed to keep her bride-gift (Villarojas, *The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo*, 66). Today, Caste War Mayas distinguish between state-sanctioned divorce, which requires a civil ceremony, and separation, which occurs between all other couples, whether they were informally “joined” or married by the Iglesia Maya. Regardless of who was “at fault,” divorce now leaves women in Tulum financially worse off, especially if they have children. Given the contemporary tourist era’s prevalent incidence of divorce, some Maya parents now require their daughters to register their “marriages” with the state in order to provide some financial protection. For comparison, see Tracy B. Ehlers’s description of various types of formal (state-and/or church-sanctioned) and informal marriages in Guatemala, in *Silent Looms: Women and Production in a Guatemalan Town* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000).

26. According to Villarojas, polygamy was “entirely unknown and scarcely conceivable” in neighboring Xcacal (*The Maya of East Central Quintana Roo*, 89).

27. For a discussion of the concept of *wuts*, which is more generally glossed simply as folding or doubling something over (as in folding cloth), see Paul Sullivan, “Contemporary Yucatec Maya Apocalyptic Prophecy: The Ethnographic and Historical Context” (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1983), 98–99. In documenting the role of indigenous women in Mexico, Louise Burkhart has recently suggested that it

might be more appropriate to reconceptualize the layers of the Maya cosmos as analogous to the layers of folded cloth (Louise Burkhart, “Mexican Women on the Home Front: Housework and Religion in Aztec Mexico,” in Schroeder, Wood, and Haskett, *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, 35–54).

28. Sullivan, “Contemporary Yucatec Maya Apocalyptic Prophecy”; and Juárez, “Epochs of Colonialism.”

29. See Juárez, “Epochs of Colonialism,” Chapter 7.

30. Prior to the middle generation, women in Tulum wore huipils on their wedding days. The preferred type of huipil had multicolored embroidery and was new. Brides of the third generation began to wear expensive western-style white wedding dresses and veils; grooms wore suits.

31. Juárez, “Epochs of Colonialism.”

32. Angela Valenzuela has reported similar contradictions among Chicano high school student romances in Houston. Her research showed that a “culture of romance” could hold Chicanas in high school back from their own aspirations, but it could also help their schoolwork when they had high levels of “social capital” (“‘Checkin’ Up on My Guy’: Chicanas, Social Capital, and the Culture of Romance,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 20:1 [1999]: 60–79).

