

Quinceañeras, Gender Roles, and the Influence of Culture: Latino Teens and Dating Violence

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TEENS & DATING OVERVIEW





How Teens View LOVE

- Romantic love
- Nurturing love
- Addicted love

-Barrie Levy , 1997


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Challenges Teens Face

- Experiencing a first time relationship
 - Uncertainty over the changes or steps in the relationship
- Acting out the relationship roles they have witnessed and grew up with
- Hormones/puberty—suddenly noticing and having interest in the opposite sex
- Peer pressure to have a relationship
- Equating love with being needed and accepted

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LATINO TEENS AND DATING

Challenges Latino Teens Face

- Keeping strong relationships with the family
- Keeping in good standing with the church
- Negotiating differences between cultural expectations and familial expectations
- Dating outside their culture
- Pressure to be accepted in peer group (dating, drug/alcohol use, social networking)

What is a Quinceañera?

- A quinceañera is a celebration of a girl entering womanhood
- Held when the girl turns 15 years old
- Means that she can now wear makeup and grown up clothes that are not too revealing.
- She is also now able to date
- The reason for celebration is because in the past, life expectancy was 30 years of age

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Transition to Adulthood

- Define adulthood as a movement from an irresponsible to a responsible member of society and church
- Idea that girls should give without thinking of themselves (they think of others first)
- She cannot blame her parents for her faults
- Entering the responsibility of womanhood
- The responsibility lies with the girl to preserve her (sexual) purity until her wedding day

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Cost of a Quinceañera

- Hispanic families would rather incur debt than compromise their customs
- Average cost from \$5,000 to \$10,000 (similar to the average cost of a wedding)
- *Padrinos* and *madrinos* (godparents) participate in funding the event

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The Ceremony

- During the ceremony
 - Girl prays to God in order to renew her baptismal commitment, strengthen her faith, and ask for blessing as she enters adulthood and gives thanks for 15 years of life, and honoring her parents
- Ceremony focuses on the relationship between the girl, her parents, and God

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Symbolism of Gifts

- Gifts are presented to the quinceañera
- Some gifts include: bouquet of red flower, tiara, earrings, bracelets, and medallion
 - Bouquet of red flowers: presented to the Virgin Mary at the alter to thank her for watching over and protecting the quinceañera
 - Tiara: signifies her standing as a princess in the eyes of God
 - Earrings: remind her to listen to God's word.
 - Bracelet: represents the unbroken nature of God's love
 - She also receives a saint medal, rosary, or quinceañera Bible to remind her of her foundation in faith

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Church Requirements

- Churches have made requirements:
 - About objects (rings, flower bouquets, escorts) allowed in the ceremony
 - About who may sponsor the girl
 - The event should not resemble a wedding because a wedding permits sexual activity
 - Requirements to attend classes
- Color of dress is intended to represent purity and innocence
 - Colombian—yellow
 - Salvadoran—pink
 - Red or black dresses are considered inappropriate

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Quinceañera Court

- Court may include all men or both men and women
- Each persons or couple is suppose to represent a year of my life (therefore 14 individuals or 7 couples)
- Some will included prince and princes—small children dressed identically to the quinceañera and the honor escort—symbols of innocence

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Other Traditions

- 4 dances are performed at the ceremony
 - They are practiced for up to 6 months depending how fancy or simple the dances are
 - Introduction of the court: usually the done with the Marcha
 - Vals: is where the quinceañera is presented to society
 - Dance with her father
 - Modern dance
- Changing of the shoes—change from flats shoes and receive their first pair of high heels
- Their last doll—is given to a younger sibling or cousin (some girls receive their last doll)

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Clergy Attitudes

- Some clergy support the event
 - Is seen as an extension of particular Catholic sacrament, rite of passage, as a practice that has historical continuity or tradition
 - Support the religious expressions of the common people
 - Opportunity for a teachable movement or opportunity for evangelize—since most youth do not attend church.
 - Some clergy sees quinceañera as traditional religious ceremony: rite of passage into adulthood

-Salcedo, M. (2008); Davalos, K.(1996)


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Clergy Attitudes

- Some clergy do not support the event
 - Believe that individuals who celebrate quinceañeras are misguided
 - Feel that the event is overly concerned with money, social prestige, and sex
 - Believe that families spend too much money
 - Also concerned that they encourage sexual activity among youth

-Salcedo, M. (2008); Davalos, K.(1996)

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Parental Concerns About Dating

- Mistrust of males
- Belief that boys will take advantage of their daughter
- Fear that their daughter will become pregnant
- Daughter's behavior reflects on the family—do not want daughter to shame the family
- Communication—reluctant to speak about birth control or sex

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Parental Concerns About Dating

- Restriction on what age daughters can date
- Restrictions on what types of dates can occur (such as group dates only)
- Restriction on locations where social interactions can occur
- Only allowed to interact with boys or men in public or at social gatherings at which parents and relatives are present (e.g. weddings or community dances)
- Perception that boys can do whatever they want

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Culture, cont'd

- Traditional values vs. acculturation
 - *Familismo*
 - Emphasizes that family comes first, places strong value on children, traditional female gender roles
 - *Respeto*
 - Honoring family and community by displaying good behavior
 - *Marianismo*
 - Premarital virginity, submissive to their husbands, spiritual, traditional gender roles (taking care of the household)
 - *Machismo*
 - A strong or exaggerated sense of power or the right to dominate (dictionray.com)

-Raffaelli, 2005; Raffaellia & Ontai, 2001

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TEEN DATING VIOLENCE OVERVIEW

General Information on Teen Dating Violence

- According to a Violence Against Woman Online Resource (VAWOR): Research Brief (2009)
 - Teen dating violence
 - Starts at 11 years old and continues into young adulthood
 - 24% of tweens (10-13) have experienced physical violence in their relationship
 - Young adults (16-24) experience the most relationship violence
 - 32% of teens experienced emotional/physical abuse

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General Information on Teen Dating Violence

- Physical dating violence in teens can result in risky behaviors (CDC - Physical Dating Violence Among High School Students-United States, 2003 survey)
 - 34.3% - currently sexually active
 - 8.5% - attempted suicide
 - 33.0% - physical fighting
 - 28.3% - episodic heavy drinking

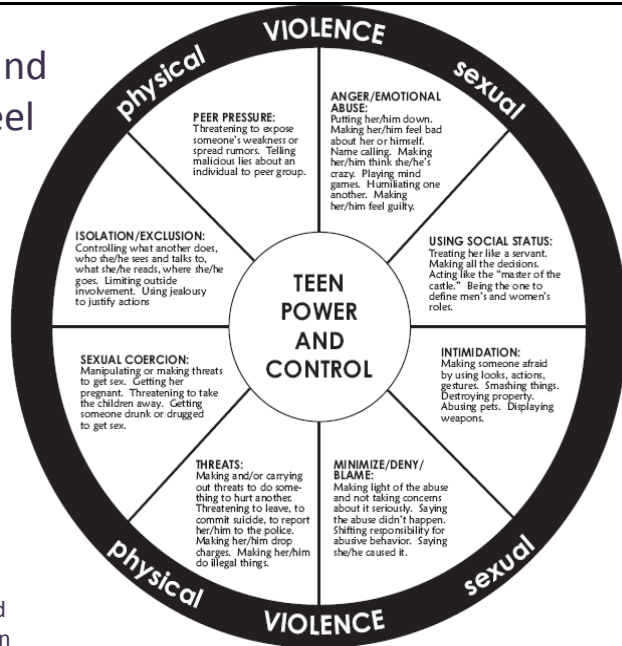
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Demographics

- According to a survey done by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Physical Dating Violence Among High School Students-United States, 2003)
 - The prevalence for physical dating violence for
 - Males - 8.9%
 - Females - 8.8%
 - Prevalence reported for physical dating violence victimization among ethnic groups
 - Blacks -13.9%
 - Hispanics - 9.3%
 - Whites -7.0%

Teen Power and Control Wheel



Developed from the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
Produced and distributed by the National Center on Sexual and Domestic Violence

Warning Signs

Common signs that may indicate an adolescent is experiencing intimate partner violence:

- Signs of physical injuries
- Missing classes, dropping out of school
- Lower grades
- Indecisiveness
- Changes in mood or personality
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Emotional explosions
- Isolation
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts
- Loss of interest in being with friends or doing certain activities
- Low self esteem
- Changes in appearance

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Technology Abuse

- The use of cell phones
 - Excessive text messaging/calling/paging
 - Constant monitoring of whereabouts and activities
 - Requiring passwords to voicemail and checking call logs, messages, pictures, texts
 - Coerced sexting
- Social networking sites
 - Example: Facebook
 - Posting inappropriate information
 - Threatening to humiliate/degrade on site

-Violence Against Women Online Resource (VAWOR), 2009

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Physical and Emotional Scars

Barrie Levy (1997) talks about 7 scars that are caused by teen dating violence:

- Physical scars
- Neglected appearance
- Shame
- Fear
- Isolation
- Protective feelings
- Depression

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LATINO TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Teens' Views on Dating Violence

- Study to examine the attitudes about violence and dating in the Latino adolescent population (Ulloa, et al., 2008)
 - Past dating experiences
 - Latinos teens may incorporate bad behavior, and may expect the same behaviors in future relationships
 - Gender roles
 - Males less likely to believe in gender equality
 - Approve of gender roles

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Teens' Views on DV, cont'd

- A study of Latino teenagers' reactions to dating violence (Rayburn, et al., 2007)
 - Boys and girls are different in their expression of disapproval of violence
 - Differences in teens' acceptance based on the gender of the perpetrator
 - Sympathy was shown for female perpetrators—justify their actions
 - Showed concern for female perpetrator, feared for her safety in case the male victim should respond back to the violence
 - Male victims were ridiculed and categorized as being weak


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Differences in opinion based on the teens' familiarity with the perpetrator (i.e. friend vs. stranger)

- Stranger perpetrators were seen as more threatening than perpetrators who were friends
 - Teens more likely to intervene with strangers
 - Such as call the police or help the victim escape
- Perpetrator as friends
 - loyalty to friend made them less willing to try to stop the violence
 - Worried about negative consequences for their friendship
 - Less likely to call the police or get help from adults
- Girls are more conflicted when it is a friend
 - Girls were less likely to protect the victim
 - They also rationalized the behavior


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Teens Experiencing Abusive Relationships: Who do they turn to?

- Do not trust professional adults when seeking support (doctors, lawyers, police, school staff)
 - Confidentiality concerns
 - Fear professionals will tell parents, law enforcement
 - Feelings of embarrassment prevent teens from talking to school personnel
 - Boys who are victims
 - Boys more than girls will seek help from doctors, police, minister/priest

-Weidmer Ocampo, B., Shelley, G. A., & Jaycox, L. H., 2007

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Teens Experiencing Abusive Relationship: Who do they turn to?

- Trust their friends and family to seek support
 - Support is limited with friends
 - Emotional support and listening, and feeling better about themselves
 - Family
 - Will go to parents if the problem becomes more serious
 - Will often go to mother for support, will avoid talking to fathers
 - Reasons they would avoid going to parents
 - Fear that parents will require them to seek legal action or talk to law enforcement

-Weidmer Ocampo, B., Shelley, G. A., & Jaycox, L. H., 2007

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Resources

- National Campaign To Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
www.stayteen.org
- National Dating Abuse Hotline - loveisrespect
1-(866) 331-9474 www.loveisrespect.org
- National Eating Disorders Association
(800) 931-2237 www.nationaleatingdisorders.org
- United States National Suicide & Crisis Hotlines
suicidehotlines.com/national.html
- Walking In Their Shoes - Teens and Dating Violence
www.wscadv.org/resourcesPublications.cfm?aId=CAED6100-C29B-57E0-8BC7DD70F6FF931D

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