

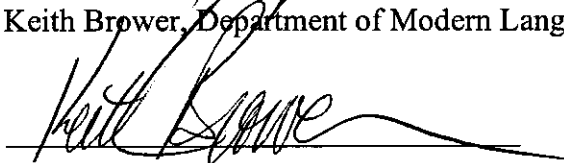
**Mothers and Daughters in the Spanish-Speaking World: A Relationship
of Struggle and Love**

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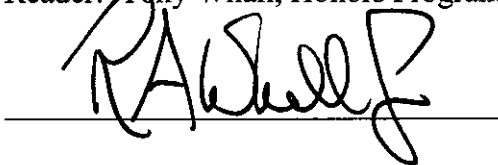
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A Brief History and Introduction

It is well known that there is a special bond between mothers and their daughters. Although this bond is familiar to the public, very little research has been done on it by professionals before the last few decades. Most studies on family relationships done in the past have focused on mother-son relationships as well as father-son relationships. However, as this mother-daughter relationship has become a more common field of study society has embraced it and encouraged this research. "Ideally, mothers should guide their daughters and teach them how to live, how to love, how to make wise choices, how to accept responsibility, and how to have a successful and satisfying family life of their own" (White 33). However, a common struggle has emerged as a theme of many mother-daughter relationships. The mother often sees her daughter as an extension of herself, and this causes difficulties for the daughter. The daughter must "simultaneously develop her personal identity separate from that of her mother, while accepting the mother as a model for her own gender identity"(Wodak 9).

As stated by Sigmund Freud, "a girl's relationship with her mom is of vital importance to her development as a woman"(Wodak 7). The mother provides her daughter with many lessons on how to and how not to live her life. Whereas most young

boys learn about their gender and roles in life from the outside world and friends, young girls tend to learn mainly from their mothers at home (Wodak 4). This leads to the mother having a major influence on her daughter, and how she chooses to live her life both as a child and an adult. The girl's relationship with her father is very important; however, she learns much more from her mother. It is important to note "the girl's relationship with her mother, their interdependence and continuity, their lack of separation and differentiation, [and] their fluid and permeable ego boundaries" (Hirsch 26). This concept shows how a mother's relationship with her daughter is different than that with either her husband or her son.

Although, this strong mother-daughter bond is very important in a girl's life, at times it is difficult to retain. "A girl's developmental task is to form a firm sense of self without severing her powerful connection to the woman who nurtured and helped shape her" (Jonas 7). Often mothers relate to their daughters in ways based on the relationship they had and currently have with their own mothers. If that relationship was and is good then the mother will work her relationship with her daughter in a similar manner in an effort to create the same positive effects. On the other hand, if the mother had a bad relationship with her own mother she may change things with her own daughter to try to create a healthier relationship.

The mother serves many roles while bringing up her daughter. Among other things, she provides a source for emotional, cognitive, and communicative socialization. Also, the mother displays her values and morals to her daughter while at the same time being a role model of the female gender. Daughters usually learn the difference between right and wrong from their mothers by following her examples. A daughter's relationship

with her mother is more often than not the first strong relationship in her life. Many of her future relationships with friends and colleagues will have a basis from this early relationship (Wodak 5).

The interaction between a mother and father and the way they treat each other also impacts the daughter's future relationships. If she sees her mother being treated well by her father she will tend to trust men more than if there is an abusive or unstable relationship between her parents. If she sees her mother being treated as inferior to her father, she may be left with the impression that females are the weaker sex. The mother is a very strong role model to the younger generation of how females should act and how they are viewed in society.

An important part of the mother-daughter relationship is the mother as a role model for her daughter. The mother not only provides insight on morals and actions, she also provides a role model for the female gender to her daughter. "As a girl child of a female parent, we are not only protected and nurtured by mother, as is her son, but we also model ourselves after her and see our impending womanness in relationship to her" (Firman 4). Young girls learn so much about themselves through interactions with other people. The girl's relationship with her mother is the first and usually strongest relationship in which she learns about the female gender and their role and place in society. The mother also has a need to pass on her values to her daughter as a way of her living on in the next generation. "The intriguing complexity of the bond, however, goes beyond worrying about the dangers facing a child in a fast-moving society. I think it originates in the recognition of a shared gender, an unacknowledged need of a mother to

convey her feelings (positive or negative) about being a woman, and her longing to entrust her traditions and values to the next generation.” (Caron 4)

Another important aspect of the mother-daughter relationship is the daughter’s struggle to develop her own identity. This struggle is closely intertwined with the mother’s desire to make her daughter an extension of herself. “Most mothers quickly discover, however, that each generation defines its own meaning and each young woman will define her own self” (Caron 4). Even though most women do realize this fact it is difficult to draw the line between controlling one’s daughter and allowing her the freedom to discover her identity. “If women are seen as wives and mothers, and daughters as potential wives and mothers, it is hard for mothers and daughters to see themselves or each other as separate people, as individuals” (Hammer xiii). Some girls, who are not able to draw this line between themselves and their mothers, never develop their own selves.

The roles and lives of mothers and daughters have changed throughout the years, resulting in changes in the relationship between them. In the early 20th century women were mainly housewives who performed domestic chores around the house and raised the children every day. A daughter saw her mother and other females in this role and grew up to take on the same role in her adult life; it was the only example she was given. However, in the 1950s things began to change. Daughters began working outside the home before marriage. Their mothers had never experienced this and did not understand why their daughters would want to do this. This misunderstanding due to changes in society put a strain on many relationships between mothers and their daughters (Phillips

5). Daughters now were not always following the typical female role in society. This generation was developing a changed model of the role of women in society.

Things changed once again in the 1960s regarding the place and role of women in society. Many daughters of this generation “became flower children and abandoned the decorum and sexual monogamy their mothers had been taught to value” (Phillips 20). This once again led to strong tension between mothers and their daughters. The mothers were trying to impart their values and morals onto their daughters, but society was imparting totally different ones, which most mothers did not agree with or understand completely.

Another issue that created tension in this relationship was a new trend that occurred in the early 1970s. During this time it was seen as fashionable to not have children. Many of the young adults of this era chose to forgo having children so that they could participate in society without being tied down by a family. Mothers of these young adults had great difficulty understanding why their daughters chose not to have children. A main role of women has always been to bear and raise children. This vast difference in opinions led to additional tension between mothers and daughters during this time period (Phillips 20).

As the 1970s ended and the 1980s began women became more and more common in the workplace. Some people in society saw this as a woman neglecting her children by holding a full time job. However, studies show that “working mothers have very respectful and close relationships with their daughters” (Phillips 16). Daughters of working mothers tend to have higher self-esteem, higher achievement, and high aspirations for their own lives.

Today mothers are commonplace in the workforce. Many children grow up in daycare under the eyes of some other adult other than their own parents. These mothers tend to have less time for their daughters and often this leads to a weaker bond between them. Mothers today want their daughters to have as many opportunities as possible but face challenges in allowing their daughters to have these opportunities. Drugs and violence are two of the many challenges and dangers that children face growing up in the world today (Caron 5). Mothers are forced to set tight restrictions on their children as a result of these dangers. Often the differences of opinion on these subjects lead to tension and conflict between mothers and their daughters. Daughters do not want to be tied down in their social lives, but mothers want to be sure their daughters stay safe.

Throughout the years the expert opinions of how to care for children has continuously changed. It is quite difficult for mothers to keep up with these changes or, they simply choose not to change their ways. Daughters grow up and often do not understand why their mother is not raising them according to the expert opinion of the current time. This misunderstanding also results in increased tension and conflict between mother and daughter.

Daughters often fight with their mothers on a variety of issues. These quarrels can actually be beneficial to the daughter. When fighting with her mother, a daughter is standing up for what she believes in and developing her own ideas and feelings. By discussing and arguing over these issues with her daughter, the mother encourages individuality in her child. However, often times the quarrels get out of hand and cause more damage than good. In this case the fights just lead to more anger and conflict in the mother-daughter relationship. If the daughter never stands up for what she believes in or

never presents any opposition to her mother she will have a tougher time developing her own self; she will just follow in her mother's footsteps. A combination of a healthy amount of quarreling and some following of her mother will lead to the best outcome in the mother-daughter relationship.

Although a daughter needs freedom from her mother in order to develop her own identity and self, too much freedom can be harmful. On the other hand, too much controlling by the mother can cause great strain in a relationship as well. Often when a mother tries to share her values and morals with her daughter it is seen as being controlling by the daughter. The best-case scenario is a balance of responsibility by the mother in her role as mom and freedom for the daughter, which allows her to develop herself and her own identity. This is very difficult to establish and takes much work and patience by both the mother and her daughter.

The adolescent years of girls have often been compared to the two-year old stage of a child. During both of these stages the daughter wants to do things herself, she is growing up and does not need her mother's help in many things. However, throughout both of these stages the daughters do need their mothers to be there as a place to turn to for reassurance (Caron 5). She may not outwardly show a strong connection with her mother during this time of exploration and development, but the daughter does rely on her mother during this stage of her life.

The relationship between mother and daughter is very important in Hispanic cultures. The importance of the mother in these cultures is evident due to the reverence of the Virgin Mary. As the mother of Jesus, the Virgin Mary is the ultimate mother figure in this as well as other cultures. The mother in Hispanic societies is traditionally

the head of the household even though the father traditionally brings in the money. The mothers are not weak, but have a strong presence in the everyday family life. In addition to being the primary caretaker for the children, the mother also runs the household, is the religious leader in the family, and supervises the education of the children as well. The mother in this society is not a weak person who sits back and lets someone else run her family.

These various struggles between mothers and daughters that this first chapter has explored are seen in many works of Hispanic literature as daughters attempt to discover who they are. It is not a problem experienced by just one population; mothers and daughters of all cultures share these similar conflicts and issues throughout their lives. However, the mother-daughter relationship in Hispanic cultures is especially strong and vulnerable to changes in society. The differences between traditional and modern society creates tension that can lead to conflict in this important relationship. The increasing number of studies and research done on this topic should prove valuable in helping mothers and daughters develop a healthy relationship that is beneficial to both.

This investigation will focus on the struggles and importance of the mother-daughter relationship in Hispanic cultures as seen through contemporary works of literature. One section will focus on mother-daughter relationships in various works by Hispanic writers, including; Cien años de soledad by Gabriel García Márquez and How the García Girls Lost their Accents by Julia Alvarez. The next chapter will focus on the mother-daughter relationship as presented in Hispanic film. Como agua para chocolate and Todo sobre mi madre are two of the works comprising this section. Self-created surveys, which were completed by women from various Hispanic backgrounds, will

comprise the next section. These surveys will provide insight into the perceptions particularly of contemporary Hispanic women on a variety of women's issues within the context of mother-daughter relationships in the twenty-first century. The last section will draw conclusions as to how the struggles between mothers and daughters, portrayed in contemporary Hispanic literature, are comparable to the issues between actual mothers and daughters in the Hispanic world today as revealed in my research.

A Study of Hispanic Literature

Family relationships are one of many themes in contemporary Hispanic literature. Although the son and father are often key players in these works, there are many texts that focus on the mother-daughter relationship as well. This relationship is presented in various ways depending on the specific work and views of the author. The time period in which the work was written also influences how the women are portrayed. Usually more modern works portray them with more rights and choices in their lives. For this investigation four novels were used: one from Colombia, one from a Hispanic author in the United States, a third from Mexico, and the fourth a novel from Cuba.

Cien años de soledad (1967) by Gabriel García Márquez is a work that has many different mother figures as well as many different daughter figures. Throughout this book there are examples of mothers serving as role models of the female gender for their daughters. The novel covers seven generations of one family, the Buendía family. Although there are many more men in the story than women, the women are still portrayed as strong and are very important in the narrative.

Úrsula Buendía is the matriarch of the Buendía family and lives for over a hundred years, almost the entire narrative. She holds the role of a mother figure for her

own children, her grandchildren, and even the whole town of Macondo, where the action takes place. She is the central mother figure throughout the novel. However, in the beginning of the story even Úrsula's mother is mentioned. Úrsula takes her mother's advice very seriously in this part of her life. She goes so far as to not sleep with her husband for the first year and a half of their marriage because of the advice of her mother. Úrsula and her mother were both afraid that her offspring would be born with a pig's tail due to Úrsula marrying her cousin. "Hubieron sido felices desde entonces si la madre de Úrsula no la hubiera aterrorizado con toda clase de pronósticos siniestros sobre su descendencia, hasta el extremo de conseguir que rehusara consumir el matrimonio" (García Márquez 21). Although this one section is the only mention of Úrsula's mother but her advice and ideas obviously had a large impact on Úrsula's life and her decisions. The pig's tail so feared by Úrsula's mother finally appears at the closure of the family's 100 years of solitude, bringing great poignancy to Úrsula's mother's century long shadow.

Although there are many strong women and many daughters in this novel, the relationships between most mothers and daughters are not especially healthy. In fact, there are very few relationships at all in this novel that appear really strong and essential to the characters. Most everyone in the Buendía family keeps to himself or herself and lives with the family but in actuality lives in his or her own little private world. For example, Amaranta, Úrsula's daughter spends most of her life plotting against her adopted sister Rebeca and then later on, weaving her own burial shroud. At times it appears that there is some jealous competition between Amaranta and Rebeca for the attention of their mother, Úrsula. This jealousy leads to conflict between not only the

two sisters, but also the girls and their mother. Distance between mother and daughter occurs when each daughter cannot have as strong a relationship as she would like. As a result of this, Amaranta hardly ever converses with her mother, or anyone else for that matter, and never marries or has children of her own. The conflict that arises from this conflict in the mother-daughter relationship condemns both mother and daughter to her own solitude deprived of the support and company of the other.

Another mother-daughter pair in this book is Santa Sofía de la Piedad and her daughter Remedios the Beauty. Once again, this relationship is not a healthy one. Remedios the Beauty is an unusual character who is incredibly beautiful but yet very naïve. She lives her own life without following the norms of what a woman should do. She shaves her head bald, wears a cassock instead of regular clothes, and eventually ascends into heaven one afternoon. None of these are normal actions for a proper woman. Remedios obviously does not follow the gender role model set by her mother, Santa Sofía. Santa Sofía is a proper woman of her time who helps in the family business and spends her time raising children. She is such a selfless domestic worker that she keeps the Buendía household running for decades without other members of the family even acknowledging her presence. “Nunca se le había oído un lamento a aquella mujer sigilosa, impenetrable...que consagró toda una vida de soledad y silencio” (García Márquez 304). Santa Sofía’s servitude and her daughter’s rebellion to that role model are both so exaggerated that these two women also are condemned to lives of solitude without the love and support of the other.

The women in this novel are portrayed as strong and important for the most part. However, the relationships with their daughters are often unhealthy. The daughters do

not often follow the gender and role models set by their mothers; they develop their own identities totally apart from their mothers. Everyone in this book is an individual who lives in his or her own world; the family is always present but does not greatly affect the daily lives of each character. This individuality is a result of the dysfunctional nature of the Buendía family. As Hirsch says, it is important to note “the girl's relationship with her mother, their interdependence and continuity, their lack of separation and differentiation, [and] their fluid and permeable ego boundaries” (26). However, in this story there is great separation between mother and daughter. The mother-daughter relationship in Hispanic societies is typically incredibly strong; when a division occurs here the results are drastic. This problem occurs in Cien años de soledad and results in unhealthy relationships between mother and daughter and lives of solitude for them both..

Julia Alvarez's, How the García Girls Lost their Accents (1991), is a contemporary novel written originally in English in the United States that vividly displays the struggles of four sisters in developing their own identities while growing up. The Garcia family is originally from the Dominican Republic but flees to the United States after the father's role in a plot against the country's dictator. When arriving in New York City the Garcia girls, Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, and Sofia, desperately want to fit into this new American culture. However, their parents are set in their Dominican ways, which leads to many struggles and arguments throughout the girls' lives. The mother, Mami, tries to pass on to her daughters her ways and ideas from the old country and ignores the mainstream culture in New York. The girls have a difficult time dealing with this pressure from their mother as well as the pressure to fit in with their peers.

As the four sisters are growing up, Mami allows for very little differentiation and individuality in her daughters. "The mother dressed them all alike in diminishing-sized, different color versions of what she wore, so that the husband sometimes joked, calling them the five girls" (Alvarez 40). This lack of uniqueness affects the girls as they attempt to grow up individually and with differences from their mother. "The color system had weakened the four girls' identity differentiation abilities and made them forever unclear about personality boundaries" (Alvarez 41). This example of lack of individuality in the Garcia family is concurrent with the ideas of Signe Hammer in her book, Daughters & Mothers Mothers & Daughters. "They are bound together by a shared destiny. Daughters have been expected simply to assume the identity of their mothers, 'naturally' growing up to become wives and mothers in their 'own right'" (Hammer 17). Mami sees her daughters as an extension of herself and makes it difficult for each of the girls to develop in her own unique way.

When the family first arrives in the United States the sisters are unhappy and just want to return to the Dominican Republic, a familiar place where they fit in among their peers. However, as they become more used to New York City, the girls do not want to go back to the island, not even for just the summer. "We began to develop a taste for the American teenage good life, and soon, Island was old hat, man" (Alvarez 108). Although the girls get used to being in the United States their parents are increasingly worried about losing their daughters to the American popular culture. This worry leads to the girls having to spend every summer back in the Dominican Republic with their extended family. Mami feels that these summers back on the Island are necessary so that the girls do not forget their culture and so that they can meet good Dominican men and grow up

into good Dominican women. Mami sees this to be the only option for her daughters. They need to grow up and marry good Dominican men and start their own families, as she had done in her own life. However, the girls have different ideas when it comes to discussing their plans and ideas for the future.

As the girls reach their teenage and college years the differences in opinions between Carla, Sandra, Yolanda, Sofia and their parents become even more evident. The girls are old enough now that they do not need to be totally dependent on their parents any more. This results in many arguments and frustrations as ideas and morals clash between generations. These quarrels and conflicts between mother and daughters in their adolescent years is a common thing in all cultures. However, the added tension of the cultural and societal pressures resulting from being Dominicans exiled in the United States intensifies the strain. The García girls want to develop their own identities and not be exactly like their mother, however, Mami is not ready yet to let the girls go off on their own and live independently.

During these years the sisters experiment with many normal teenage things. Sofia (Fifi) tries smoking while Carla experiments with hair removal cream. Yolanda (Yoyo) brings home a book about women and their bodies and Sandra (Sandi) stays out all night while at college. These activities, although relatively normal for many teenagers, cause great distress for the girls' parents, especially Mami. Mami still wants them to be proper Dominican women and follow the norms for women in the Dominican Republic. Experimenting with US popular culture does not fit this model. Mami repeatedly tries to limit the girls' activities that she does not approve of. However, the girls decide to do something about this constant struggle in their lives. "It was a regular revolution:

constant skirmishes. Until the time we took open aim and won, and our summers – if not our lives – became our own” (Alvarez 111). The girls stand up for what they believe in and fight to become who they want to be, not necessarily who Mami wants them to be. Each of the daughters here must “simultaneously develop her own personal identity separate from that of her mother, while accepting the mother as a model for her own gender identity” (Wodak 9). Even though they fight with Mami to gain privileges and independence, the relationship with her still remains important to all four of the Garcia girls.

Later in her life, Yolanda returns to the Island to visit her extended family. It is obvious here that she has become American and forgotten much of her Dominican heritage. She wishes to do many activities there that she would have done in New York City but are still not common for women in the Dominican Republic. For example, one afternoon she wants to travel alone through the countryside. This suggestion meets much resistance from the family. “By yourself?” one Aunt questions. Another Aunt continues, “This is not the States, a woman just doesn’t travel alone in this country. Especially these days” (Alvarez 9).

During this visit, Yoyo also encounters the language issue. She is so used to speaking English that when on the Island, and forced to speak Spanish, she has trouble. “In halting Spanish, Yolanda reports on her sisters. When she reverts to English, she is scolded, “En Español!” (Alvarez 7). This encounter with her extended family shows Yolanda developing her own identity and breaking off from the ways of her mother, which, are rooted in the Dominican heritage. Yolanda’s language has changed as well as her view on what a woman is able and allowed to do. The American culture, in which

she now lives, evidently plays a large part in influencing Yolanda's new ideas and behaviors. As stated by Susan Jonas, "A girl's developmental task is to form a firm sense of self without severing her powerful connection to the woman who nurtured and helped shape her" (7). In this part of the story Yolanda is trying to find herself. Her mother as a role model is playing less of a part in influencing Yolanda during this time of self-discovery.

In this novel the Garcia sisters are all trying to develop their own identities as they grow up in a new country and new culture. The relationships between each of the girls and their mother are strained at many times due to differences in ideas and cultures. However, the mother figure is still important to the girls and they still want her as a part of their lives. "Daughters want to separate by becoming individuals, perhaps with some different values and choices, but they don't want to cut ties and feelings. They know they are joined to their mothers by gender and feeling" (Phillips 51). As the novel discusses the girls in their grown-up lives Mami is still a strong presence. Although the sisters often have different ideas and feelings on issues than Mami does, the girls still want her in their lives. This is a good example of how "a young woman can and should separate herself from her mother, while remaining connected to her through respect, admiration, and love" (White 33). Mami eventually learns to accept the girls in their American ways as she herself adjusts to this new culture. Although it takes much time and many different struggles, the sisters and their mother end up with a good relationship in the adult years of their lives.

Oficio de tinieblas (1962) by Mexican writer, Rosario Castellanos portrays various relationships between females. Only one of these is a biological mother-daughter

relationship. The other two portray women who have filled the mother role but have no blood relations with the daughter.

Before her father, Isidoro, is killed, young Idolina has a very strong relationship with him. After his death, Idolina clings to her mother Isabel. "Idolina se volvió hacia Isabel con un afecto doloroso, exigente, al que no le bastaría absorbar la totalidad de la vida ajena" (77). Unfortunately, this affection is too intense for Isabel who ends up pushing her daughter away in a time when she needs her mother the most. "Isabel ya no pudo, de allí en adelante, dar un paso sin que lo siguiera la sombra de su hija. La impacientaba tal asiduidad y con desdenes, con mofas, procuraba alejarla de sí" (77). Isabel soon remarries and Idolina suddenly falls ill and is confined to her bed for many years. Idolina "de pronto se derrumbió, revolcándose, arrojando espuma por la boca, inconsciente. Cuando volvió en sí ya no pudo moverse sin ayuda" (78). Idolina does learn to move and walk again but she hides this from her family in an effort to punish her mother for having remarried and forgotten Isidoro, her father. From this point on their relationship is never genuine or loving. Isabel occasionally visits her daughter, but more out of feeling of obligation than out of desire to see her child. In addition, Idolina is not cooperative when her mother does come. There is no love in this relationship, only tension, hate and resentment.

The person who actually raises Idolina and acts more like her mother is one of the family's servants, an Indian woman named Teresa. When Idolina is born, Isabel cannot nurse her and Teresa ends up being the one to nurse the baby. Her own baby dies because Teresa is physically forced to give her milk to Idolina. This nursing does provide an immediate bond between Idolina and Teresa, whom she calls nana. As Idolina

grows and is confined to bed, Teresa is the only one who can provide her any comfort or assistance. Various times in the book, Teresa refers to Idolina as her child, which exemplifies her mothering role. In one section Teresa says, “porque cuando un hijo se pierde...no se puede hablar” (248). Her life has a void that cannot be filled except with her “child,” Idolina. This shows how strong a connection there is between Idolina and her nana, Teresa.

The third female relationship in Oficio de tinieblas is between Idolina and Julia Acevedo. Julia is a woman new to the city who is not entirely accepted into society. She is more daring and open than proper ladies are supposed to be during this time. Julia and Idolina create a strong bond after Julia discovers that Idolina can walk and is hiding it. Julia begins to visit Idolina regularly and helps “cure” her even though she is fine to begin with. A relationship is born between these two women who are both seen as outcasts in society. Julia is Idolina’s only friend besides Teresa and takes over in caring for her much of the time. Julia becomes a stand-in mother for Idolina, who lacks this figure in her life. She feeds Idolina, nurses her when she is sick, and shows her the world, something her own mother never does. One important aspect of a mother figure is to display her values and morals to her daughter while at the same time being a role model of the female gender. Idolina learns much about how women are seen in society and how they should act, according to what Julia feels is correct. Since Isabel provides little love to her daughter, it is important to Idolina to have Julia around as a friend and stand-in mother. The complicated mother-daughter relationships in this novel highlight Castellanos’s depiction of a society that is profoundly ill. The chaos in this, most

intimate of relationships is symbolic of the greater conflict in Southern Mexico between the indigenous and non-indigenous populations.

A fourth text that investigates the mother-daughter relationship is Dreaming in Cuban (1992) by Cristina García. This novel weaves the tale of three generations of females in a Cuban family. The matriarch of this novel is Celia, an advocate of the Cuban revolution, who resides in Cuba until her death. Celia has two daughters, Felicia and Lourdes, both of whom are not sympathetic to the revolution. This factor alone causes conflict between the generations.

The relationship between this mother, Celia, and her daughter is also strained by the fact that Lourdes and her family flee to New York City to escape the revolution. The physical distance between them does not allow for any reconciliation between Lourdes and her mother. That relationship has been strained since the day Lourdes is born and never is reconciled. Lourdes never really looks up to her mother as a role model, more often she does things to oppose her mother since their relationship is not one of great love and strength.

The relationship between Felicia and her mother also has much strain in it. Felicia practices Santería, of which her mother does not approve. Also, Felicia does not raise her own children, Luz, Milagro, and Ivanito in the same way that Celia would have. Felicia, like Lourdes, does not look up to her mother and follow her examples as she goes about living her own life.

Felicia and Lourdes too have their own daughters and have difficult relationships with them. Felicia and her twin daughters Luz and Milagro never really develop a close relationship. They are angry that Felicia harms their father and takes him out of their

lives. This anger leads to the twins basically ignoring their mother and living their own lives. Felicia focuses all her attention on her son, Ivanito, and pays little or no attention to her daughters. The relationship between these two generations is never made strong or whole. The twin girls have a stronger relationship with their grandmother, Celia, who often cares for them when their mother fails to do so.

Lourdes and her daughter Pilar have a difficult relationship as well. Pilar is much closer to her grandmother, Celia, than to her own mother. Lourdes is very opposed to the Cuban revolution and Pilar somewhat sympathizes with it. In addition to that factor, Pilar goes through a punk stage during their life in New York, of which her mother does not approve. This difference in lifestyle between mother and daughter adds additional tension in their relationship. This is yet another example in which the daughter does not closely follow her mother's examples on values and morals and how a woman should live her life.

Unfortunately for the characters in this novel, Celia dies before she and her daughter, Lourdes ever reconcile their differences. On the same note, Pilar and Lourdes never fully understand each other either, however they do learn more about each other by traveling back to Cuba together.

The mother-daughter relationships in this novel are not healthy; however, the father-daughter relationships and the mother-son relationships are much healthier. This reflects the Spanish culture in some ways. In this culture sons are usually looked on as more important and special than daughters are. "Sons traditionally enjoy preferential treatment in these families, though fathers are also inclined to pamper their daughters. The latter are, nevertheless, viewed by the mothers as extensions of themselves and are

therefore treated more harshly, for they had to learn to be prepared for life” (Davis 5). The sons are often seen as the future of the family and are given special treatment and privileges over the daughters. The mother-daughter relationships in this book that when faced with conflict, they explode under the pressure. Differences in opinions on politics and Santería, two very Cuban issues, come between these sets of mothers and daughters. As in the case of Oficio de tinieblas the instability in this nearly sacred mother-daughter relationship represents greater tensions in the society.

These four works of contemporary Hispanic literature portray the mother-daughter relationship in a variety of ways. For the most part, there is tension between all the mothers and daughters as the mother tries to share her values and morals with her daughter, but at the same time the daughter is trying to develop her individual self. Because of the importance of the mother-daughter relationship in Hispanic cultures, it is featured as a symbol of greater conflict and tensions that the texts explore.

A Study of Hispanic Film

Another genre that has been used to portray mother-daughter relationships is film. For this investigation three films are used: one from Argentina, one from Mexico, and one from Spain. These films provide a visual representation of the tensions and joys in motherhood and in the mother-daughter relationship.

La Historia oficial (1985) is an Argentinean film that tells the story of one woman and her search to discover the truth about the origins of her adopted daughter. The film takes place in 1983 in Argentina, a time of political and social unrest in the country after the fall of the military junta. Thousands of Argentineans had been kidnapped from their homes and tortured and most often killed. Many of the women kidnapped had children who were then sold to wealthy families while the mothers were killed. “Y otras que se las llevaban pero que volvían solas porque al chico se lo daban a esas familias que los compran sin preguntar de dónde vienen” (La Historia oficial). The Argentinean government covered up these “desaparecidos,” or disappeared ones, and no one knew what happened to all these people. During the time of the movie, information about these kidnappings and murders was being published in the news and demonstrated in the Plaza de Mayo, a central location in Buenos Aires.

At the beginning of the movie the main character, Alicia, is content with her job, home, husband, and adopted daughter. However, soon she begins to hear about these “desaparecidos” and wonders if her daughter, Gaby, is one of them. Alicia and her husband Roberto adopted Gaby through a deal from Roberto’s workplace. Roberto is part of the right-wing government, however, and his deals involve buying children from the people the government has kidnapped and made disappear. Alicia never met the parents or anyone involved in Gaby’s adoption, which leads her to be suspicious about the origins of her daughter. After much investigation, Alicia finds Gaby’s grandmother and learns that she was in fact the child of two people who had been kidnapped and killed by the government. This realization changes Alicia’s life forever.

After the truth of Gaby’s identity comes out, the relationship between Alicia and Roberto is strained. Roberto just wants to forget about Gaby’s past and keep living their current life. He says to Alicia, “Ya perdió una madre. ¿Qué quieres? ¿Que pierde otra?” (La Historia oficial). Gaby has already had to suffer through being separated from her first mother, why make her go through it again when she will actually know what is going on? Roberto feels that Gaby is happy with them now, why go and disrupt her and their own lives? Alicia is tormented by her daughter’s origins and will never feel the same way again. She cannot just forget about it and move on as Roberto wishes. This dilemma puts a strain not only on the relationship between Roberto and Alicia but also between Alicia and Gaby.

There are various mother-daughter relationships in this film. The strongest relationship is between five-year old Gaby and her adopted mother, Alicia. At the beginning of the film these two are very close and love each other very much. They are

each other's best friends. However, problems do occur throughout the movie, which lead to a strain on this relationship. When Alicia finds out the truth about her daughter's past she does not know what to do. Should she tell Gaby the truth or should she leave her and start a new life away from the shame of her past actions? Forgetting about the truth is not an option to Alicia. Throughout her life she has tried to be a good role model to her daughter and provide her with everything she needs, however, she may give all that up when she finds out her daughter's past. At the end of the film Alicia leaves Gaby at her parent's house and Alicia leaves her own house. We are left to wonder what will happen to Gaby now. She is alone in the world and has no identity, an uncertain past and an uncertain future.

There is also a strong relationship between Alicia and Sara, Gaby's blood grandmother. Sara and Alicia first meet at the archives where they are both searching for records about loved ones. Sara is searching for information on her pregnant daughter and son-in-law who disappeared, while Alicia is looking for the true past of her adopted daughter, Gaby. Sara helps Alicia in her search since she is more experienced through her involvement in the Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo, an organization that fights to find the truth about the disappeared people and make these horrible actions known in the community. During their searches, Sara provides Alicia with support in a very maternal way. As this relationship grows Sara begins to notice similarities between Gaby and her own lost daughter. It ends up that Gaby is the child that her daughter was pregnant with at the time she disappeared. Most likely Sara's daughter was killed and then Gaby was sold to Roberto and Alicia through the right-wing government. The end of the film

leaves the viewer uncertain as to where Gaby will live the rest of her life, with her blood grandmother or her adopted mother.

Alicia faces the issue of whether to continue in her role as mother to Gaby or not. If she continues can she fulfill the necessary role to provide her daughter a happy life? “Ideally, mothers should guide their daughters and teach them how to live, how to love, how to make wise choices, how to accept responsibility, and how to have a successful and satisfying family life of their own” (White 33). Alicia must decide whether she can provide these things to her daughter. If she chooses to leave Gaby, what sort of image will Gaby have about mothers for the rest of her life? She will have had two mothers love her and leave her and not provide these life lessons. As was the case in the literature, this film seeks to explore the great evil of Argentinean society, the Guerra Sucia and the thousands of “desaparecidos” lost to political violence in 1970’s Argentina, finds its most powerful symbolism in the nearly sacred relationship of mother and daughter.

Another work with a strong theme of the mother-daughter relationship is the movie, Como agua para chocolate (1993), based on the novel of the same name by Laura Esquivel. This film exemplifies the daughter’s struggle to develop her own identity. In this Mexican film the youngest daughter, Tita, faces a dilemma between the traditions and ideas of her strong willed mother and her own thoughts and desires. Tita’s mother, Elena, believes very strongly in the tradition that the youngest daughter in the family must never marry. This youngest daughter’s purpose in life is to care for her mother in old age. Elena is unrelenting with Tita regarding this tradition. However, Tita meets a boy, Pedro, and falls in love with him. When Pedro asks for Tita’s hand in marriage,

Elena forcefully says no and instead allows Pedro to marry one of her other daughters, Rosaura. This forever causes a rift between Tita and Rosaura and Tita and her mother. Pedro only agrees to this marriage so that he can be closer to his true love, Tita. This tradition never gives Tita the opportunity to develop her own identity and live her life in the way she wants to. Tita is constantly reminded by her mother of her purpose and place in life, and that falling in love and marrying is not part of that life.

On the other hand, Elena wishes for her two older daughters, Rosaura and Gertrudis to marry respectable men and have children, just as she did with her life. This is the proper way for a Mexican woman to live according to Elena. The pressure to grow up in the same fashion as their mother did limits the girls' abilities to develop their own identities. One daughter succeeds in becoming her own person only after she runs away from home and the pressures of her mother. The daughter must "simultaneously develop her personal identity separate from that of her mother, while accepting the mother as a model for her own gender identity"(Wodak 9). Unfortunately, Gertrudis and Tita do not feel that their mother is a good role model of the female gender. They look to other women, such as the servant Nacha, to fill this role.

One afternoon Gertrudis rides off from home with some soldiers from the Mexican revolutionary army. Only after she has left home and the confines of her mother is Gertrudis able to be happy and live her life the way she wants to. She becomes a general in the revolutionary army and marries a fellow soldier. In this life she finds respect and a happiness she never could have found while living at home under her mother. However, once Gertrudis leaves home her mother refuses to even recognize her as a member of the family. Gertrudis has broken away from what is expected of her by

her mother and for that Elena disowns her. Being a woman and a revolutionary general does not fit the mold of a proper Mexican woman in Elena's mind. However, Gertrudis is a symbol of the Mexican Revolution. She joins the army and fights against injustice and for changes in society. Elena is not accepting of this individuality of her daughter, Gertrudis. It is interesting to note that Elena ends up being killed when the Revolutionary forces invade the family's property. The fighters of injustice kill off the old traditional ways by killing Elena.

Rosaura is the only one of the three daughters who ends up as Elena wishes. She marries a respectable man and has a child, Esperanza. Rosaura fully intends to follow in her mother's footsteps and continue the tradition, which would not allow Esperanza to marry or leave home. However, Tita is adamant in her fight that the tradition will end with her; no other generations will be forced to face this restriction. Tita has a close relationship with her niece and wants Esperanza to have many opportunities in her future that were not available to Tita. Rosaura ends up dying before Esperanza is of marrying age. After her mother's death Esperanza does fall in love and marries with the blessing of her father, Pedro, and her surrogate mother, Tita. The cycle of this tradition has been broken and the future generations will be able to choose how to live their lives without certain harsh restrictions.

All three of the daughters in this film have to struggle to develop their own identities due to the overbearing personality of their mother. The youngest, Tita, is strong and secretly lives her own life but is forced into the ways of her mother until Elena dies. After her mother's death and the dispelling of her ghost, Tita is able to live more freely and eventually express her love for Pedro when his wife, Tita's sister, Rosaura

dies. Rosaura is stuck in the ways of her mother and never tries to become independent. She ends up much like her mother with no personality or identity of her own. Gertrudis also lives under the rules of her mother and struggles with her identity for much of her life until she runs off from home with the Mexican revolutionaries. Away from home she finds the love and happiness that she cannot find in her mother's home.

There is one healthy mother-daughter relationship in this film. However, in this case the mother who raises Tita is not her biological mother, it is the maid in the house, Nacha. Tita's real mother, Elena, has more important things to do with her time than spend it all with her young daughter. Tita finds solace and comfort in the kitchen, learning to cook and talking with Nacha. Tita learns so much about the type of person she wants to be from Nacha. At the same time she learns about the type of woman she does not want to be from her real mother. Elena is cruel and angry most of the time, especially when her daughters do not act as she wishes. There is little love in the house except from Nacha and between Tita and her one sister Gertrudis. Throughout her life, Tita looks back on the lessons Nacha had taught her while growing up. It is evident that Nacha is a role model of the female gender, and one that Tita follows closely in her adult life. It is interesting to compare this mother-daughter relationship with that between Idolina and Teresa in Rosario Castellanos's novel. In both narratives the healthiest mother-daughter relationship is between the "white" upper class daughter and the poor Indian servant mother figure. This symbolic mother-daughter relationship hearkens back to the great myths of Mexican heritage: La Malinche and the brown skinned Virgen de Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico. These national icons capture the power of the

mother in Mexican culture and the importance of the mother-daughter relationship in the Mexican mind.

Mother-daughter relationships also show up in works of film in Spain. Todo sobre mi madre (1999), a film directed by Pedro Almodovar, is one of these works.

Although the title of this movie comes from a mother-son relationship, the daughter is still present in this work. The movie tells the story of Manuela who leaves her home in Madrid and goes to Barcelona in search of her recently killed son's father, a transvestite named Lola. While there, Manuela becomes friends with a pregnant nun named Rosa. Eventually Manuela meets up with Lola who is shocked and saddened to learn of his son and his death. Manuela then takes over in the roll of mother to Rosa's son, Esteban, after she dies in childbirth. At the end of the film Rosa and Lola are both dead and Manuela is left to care for Esteban, who is named after her deceased son.

After Rosa finds out she is pregnant she needs a place to hide. She turns to Manuela who resists at first. "Oye, Rosa, no tienes ningun derecho pedirme ser tu made. Ya tienes una aunque no te cae bien" (Todo sobre mi madre). Manuela has her own job and does not have the time to care for Rosa. However, eventually she changes her mind and Rosa moves in with her. While they live together, Manuela provides love, comfort, friendship, and care to Rosa, just as a mother would do for her daughter. "Ideally, mothers should guide their daughters and teach them how to live, how to love, how to make wise choices, how to accept responsibility, and how to have a successful and satisfying family life of their own" (White 33). Manuela does provide many of these things to Rosa. She shows Rosa that she must face the fact that she is pregnant and that that is not going to change. Rosa learns to love her unborn child and focuses on making

choices for the good of the child. Manuela stays by Rosa's side throughout her pregnancy and until her unfortunate death upon the birth of her child. Manuela promises to care for Rosa's child if something should happen to Rosa during childbirth. The relationship between Rosa and her biological mother is strained and that is why she turns to Manuela.

Rosa hides her pregnancy from her mother for quite awhile because it is against her vows as a nun to have sex and to become pregnant. When she does tell her mother, her mother is upset and shocked. Her mother is not able to provide support and love to her daughter during this crucial time because of the awkward circumstances. Her mother cannot believe that Rosa, an unmarried nun vowed to chastity would get herself pregnant. However, when it comes time for Rosa to give birth her mother stays by her side. Her love for her daughter overcomes the shock and shame she previously felt about her daughter's pregnancy. Rosa does not tell her mother the truth about who the father of her child is though. The father is Lola the transvestite who has AIDS. Manuela eventually tells her and Rosa's mother is again shocked.

Manuela overlooks the fact that Rosa broke her vows as well as getting pregnant before marriage. The younger and more contemporary Manuela is able to meet the needs of Rosa. However, Rosa's mother is more set in the traditional ways of Spain. These views cause her to be unable to fulfill the role of mother to her own daughter. She is unable to understand her daughter or the situation she has gotten herself into. As has been the case in Latin American texts, here to, the cultural crisis that post-Franco modern Spain has brought to the pillars of traditional Spanish values and institutions is symbolized in the mother-daughter relationship. The novelty of the new options for

filling the roles of mother and daughter represent a great hope for a meaningful Spain of tomorrow, absent the traditional institutions but with its spirit intact.

A Study of Contemporary Hispanic Women

This chapter contains information gathered from a brief survey I created and distributed to Hispanic women in the world today. The survey consists of fifteen questions that can be answered in one of four different ways: completely agree, partially agree, partially disagree, or completely disagree. Each participant in this survey was asked to provide her age by picking from one of the following five categories: 10-20 years, 20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-60 years, or 60+ years. No other personal information was requested from the participants. I distributed these surveys to women of various ages during my 5-week stay in Málaga, Spain as well as to various Mexican and Puerto Rican women now living in the United States. The survey was written in Spanish and therefore taken by Spanish-speaking women in these two different locations. A total of twenty-one women from Spain participated in this survey as well as eleven different women in the United States. The results were tallied and separated based on in which of the two locations the surveys were given.

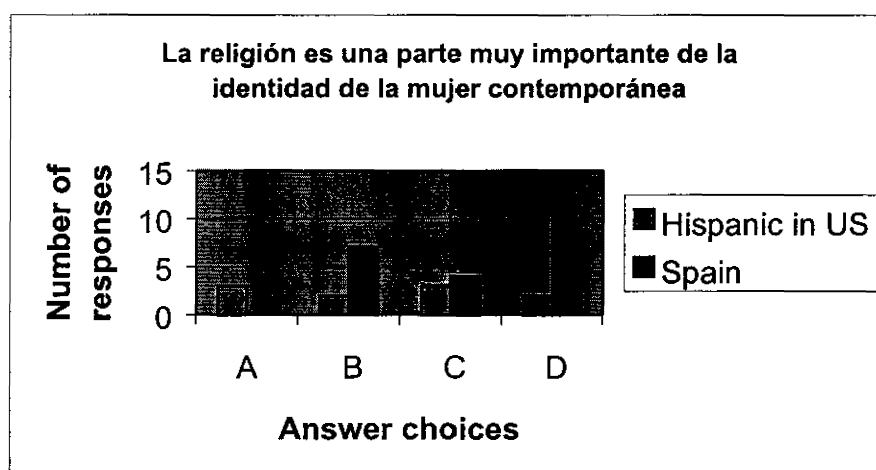
The idea behind this survey was to get input on a variety of issues that affect contemporary Hispanic women in the world today. The information provided by these surveys is of a totally different type than any found in books and magazines. This

information reflects the actual feelings and attitudes of specific Spanish-speaking women today. Each woman who took a few minutes to take this survey has provided me with invaluable information in my study. Although the questions do not directly mention mother-daughter relationships, the ideas and concepts that they are based on do reflect certain things regarding the topic of this paper. Many current issues in society, including women in the workplace and the changing roles of women, lead to changes and different effects on the relationship between a mother and her daughter. Therefore, I feel the questions in these surveys will provide appropriate information to add to this investigation.

One question on this survey that created a wide spread of answers was a question dealing with religion. Hispanics are overwhelming Catholic and typically religion is a very important part of Hispanic societies. This question stated "la religión es una parte muy importante de la identidad de la mujer contemporánea." Ten women, almost fifty percent of the total participants, from Spain completely disagreed with this statement, but at the same time seven partially agreed. No one completely agreed. Six of the ten disagreeing votes came from the 20-30 year old bracket and on the other hand two-thirds of the 40-60 year olds partially agreed (see diagram page 35).

In the surveys from the Hispanics in the United States the answers were also varied. The answers were pretty evenly spread between all four answer choices but the general trend shows the older participants saying religion is very important and the younger ones leaning more towards it not being as important. These results portray a change in attitudes towards religion in two different generations. The older generation seems to be more traditional and tends to feel that religion is an important aspect for a

woman. However, the younger generation is starting to drift from that sentiment. Other activities and feelings are becoming more important and religion is becoming less important to many women in this generation. This data could reflect on daughters developing their own identities and not always following exactly in their mother's footsteps. Even though religion may be very important to the mother, it is not necessarily that important to her daughter. This sentiment is reflected in Cristina García's Dreaming in Cuban. The matriarch in the story, Celia, does not approve of her daughter Felicia practicing Santería. Celia believes that Felicia should be a practicing Catholic like herself. This difference in opinion between the generations causes a rift in their relationship.

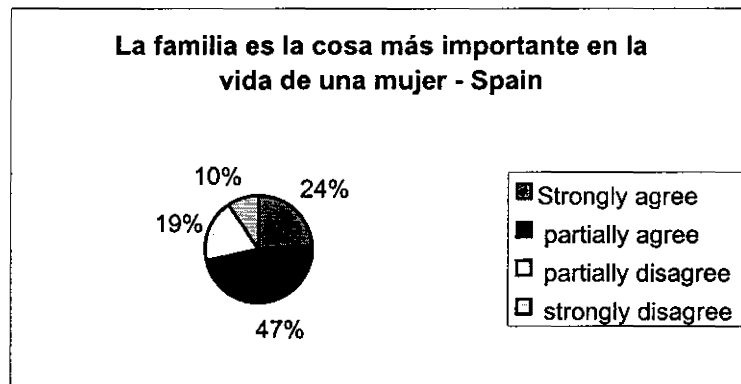
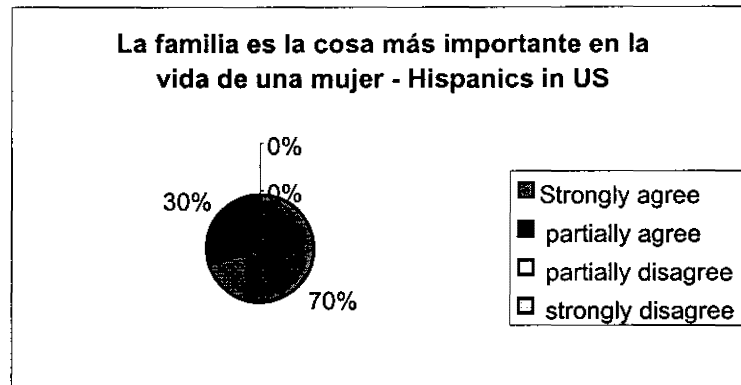


A: Strongly agree, B: Partially agree, C: Partially disagree, D: Strongly disagree

Another question that provided interesting results was regarding family relationships. This question asked the women if “la familia es la cosa más importante en la vida de una mujer.” Traditionally being a wife and mother has been seen as the most important role for a woman: “Daughters have been expected simply to assume the identity of their mothers, ‘naturally’ growing up to become wives and mothers in their

'own right'" (Hammer 17). Also, "La sociedad ha enseñado a las mujeres que son ellas las que tienen que llevar al niño al médico u organizar las tareas domésticas, son las máximas responsables de la familia" (Morillo 23). The results of the surveys show that in all age groups the importance of family to a woman still ranks very high. Seventy percent of the Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in the United States surveyed strongly agreed that family is the most important thing in a woman's life while the other thirty percent partially agreed. No one disagreed at all about this statement. This result shows how the mother can play an important part as role model for her daughter. Her daughter sees how the family is extremely important to her mother and so she grows up learning this same value. These lessons stay with the daughter and are reflected upon in her own adult life and in future generations.

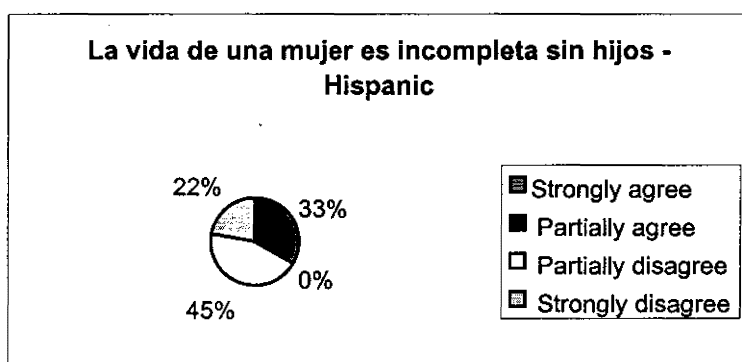
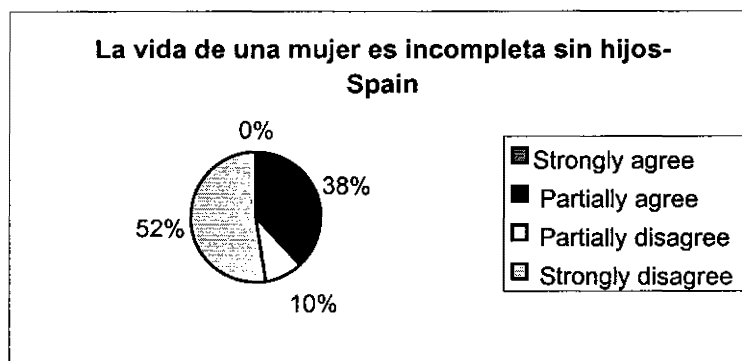
The results on this question were different in Spain than they were in the Latin American group; a more modern society shows through here. Fifty percent of the responses in Spain partially agreed that the family is most important while only twenty-five percent strongly agreed. The most interesting part of this question is that in Spain there existed some women who totally disagreed with this statement, ten percent. The ages varied widely on which groups agreed and which disagreed. Here are two pie charts depicting the results of this question.



There are many social and economic differences between Spain and Mexico and Puerto Rico. The economic and educational levels are much higher in Spain than in Mexico especially. Women are going to school more in Spain. This education opens up many new opportunities in the workforce and outside the home for these women. However, the levels of education are not as high in the other countries. There women still face limited opportunities to advance themselves. This is true of the economic status in these different countries as well. The women of Spain are more economically stable than their Latin American counterparts. This stability also offers the women more opportunities and allows them to move forward into the future. The women in Mexico are still struggling to make it and have not been able to advance as significantly

A third question that brought in an interesting result deals with children. The statement says "La vida de una mujer es incompleta sin hijos." This statement once again is trying to see if traditions have changed over the years for these women. Typically having children, like being married, is seen as one of the main roles of a woman in her lifetime. However, many people today feel that having children is not necessarily an important or essential part of their lives. Fifty percent of the women surveyed in Spain strongly disagreed that children were necessary for a complete life. No one felt that a woman's life was incomplete without children but forty percent did partially agree with this statement.

The answers to this question were slightly different among the Hispanic women in the United States. Here, thirty percent strongly agreed that a woman's life would be incomplete without children while only twenty percent strongly disagreed. The remaining forty percent partially disagreed. Overall these results show that times are changing and the focus of women's lives is changing away from the home. Children are not the only aspect of a woman's life anymore. However, some of the differences that are present between Spain and Mexico and Puerto Rico can once again be attributed to the differences in economic and social class. The women in Spain are more stable and secure. They are more common in the business world, which leaves less time for being home with children. However, in Mexico and Puerto Rico women are still more common as domestic workers in the home. These different ways of life and thought contribute to the changing views on children between these different societies.



Another question on this survey deals with women working outside the house while the men care for and raise the children. This question also reflects on the changing times and attitudes in the Spanish speaking world today. Traditionally, the men in the household leave the home to work and make money while the women stay home and care for the house and raise the children. However, as is seen in the United States today by the drastically changing number of working women, this tradition is also changing in the Spanish-speaking world.

Seventy-six percent of the respondents in Spain strongly disagreed that the woman should be the one to stay home and care for the children not the man. Similarly eighty percent of the Mexican and Puerto Rican women either strongly or partially

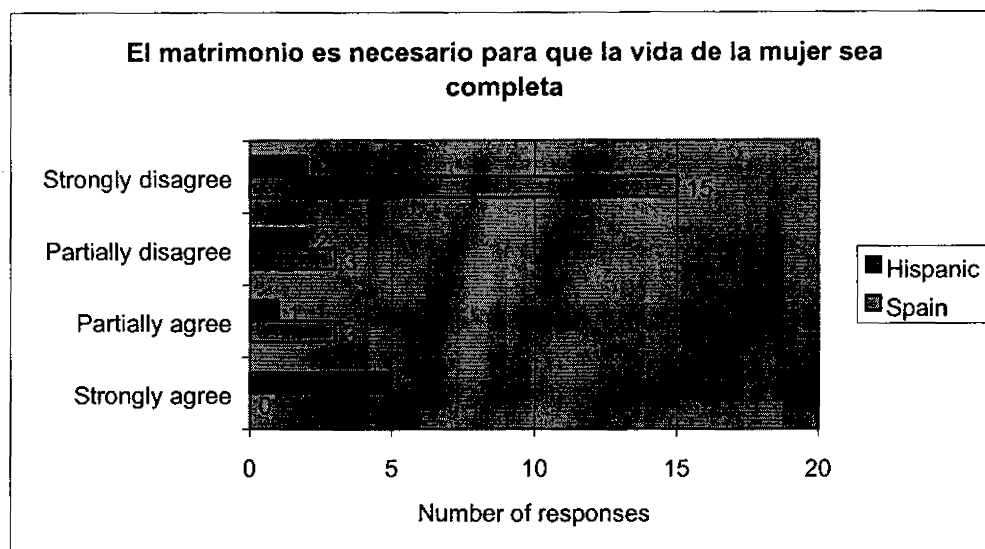
disagreed with this statement. Only one woman out of everyone surveyed strongly agreed and felt that only women, not men, should be the ones to care for children. These results reveal how women are becoming more a part of the working society and not just a part of the home. These changes will be reflected on the next generation of daughters in these families. These daughters will often grow up with working mothers, and will see that it is acceptable that women work outside of the house. Some people in society see a woman as neglecting her children by holding a full time job. However, studies show that “working mothers have very respectful and close relationships with their daughters” (Phillips 16). As a previous question has shown, the family is still important to Hispanic women today even though they are working outside of the house more often.



The increasing number of workingwomen in Hispanic countries ties in with the question regarding salaries for women. Nearly everyone in both groups surveyed strongly agreed that women should receive the same pay for doing the same work as men do. Although the beliefs on this issue are very strong, they are not being realized in the workplace yet. According to “Mujer de Hoy,” a magazine insert in the Málaga Spain

newspaper, women are being paid on average twenty-five percent less than men. The average monthly salary for men in Spain is 263,172 pesetas where as for women it is only 200,023 pesetas. It is often more difficult for women to find jobs than it is for men as well. "España tiene la tasa de actividad femenina más baja de toda Europa" (Escabias 32). Women currently only make up thirty-six percent of the workforce in Spain. This continues to show how men and women are not being treated equally in the workplace yet.

While not all of the women surveyed felt children were necessary in life, the results on whether or not marriage is necessary are somewhat different. The question states "El matrimonio es necesario para que la vida de la mujer sea completa." In Spain, seventy-two percent of the women who participated strongly disagreed with this statement. This continues to reflect the more modern tendencies of the women in Spain in comparison to the Latin American women in the United States. Consistent with other questions as well, the Mexican and Puerto Rican women are more traditional in their views. Fifty percent of these women strongly agreed that marriage was a necessary part of a woman's life. Interestingly, the women here who strongly agreed were in the 10-20 year old and 40-60 year old bracket. Perhaps the younger women are still being influenced by their mothers more than the 20-30 and 30-40 year olds, who were more against marriage being a necessary part of life.



Although the number of participants in this survey is too small to come to any definite solutions, the results are fascinating. The differences in the ideas and views of more traditional women in Mexico and Puerto Rico versus the more modern Spain are evident in these participants. Many of the traditional roles of women seem to be facing changes in society today, especially in Spain. Women are finding alternatives to being stay-at-home moms; they are filtering into the workplace more and more often.

These changing roles and ideas are being reflected in the younger generations of women. The daughters use their mothers as role models of the female gender. The mother provides her daughter with many lessons on how to and how not to live her life. Whereas most young boys learn about their gender and roles in life from the outside world and friends, young girls tend to learn mainly from their mothers at home (Wodak 4). This leads to the mother having a major influence on her daughter, at both a young and old age, and how she chooses to live her life. The more mothers begin to work and

take an active part in society, the more their daughters will as well. The changing role of women in society today is reflected in these surveys.

Conclusions

The mother-daughter relationship is becoming an increasingly common topic of study by researchers today. Similar ideas and relationships to these studies are being revealed throughout this research.

First off, the mother consistently fills two main roles in her relationship with her daughter. The mother is a caretaker who passes on her values and morals on how to live and how not to live life. The daughter, who grows up under her mother, sees the actions of her mother and learns how she should and should not go about living her own life.

The second main purpose of the mother is as a role model of the female gender for her daughter. Through her mother, a daughter is able to see how women should be treated in society and what place they should take in and out of the home. If the mother is treated as inferior and accepts it, the daughter may likely grow up believing that women are inferior and this will greatly affect how she acts in her own life. Julia Acevedo acts as a role model of the female gender to Idolina in Oficio de tinieblas. Since Idolina does not have much of a relationship with her biological mother, she latches on to Julia who becomes her close friend. Julia is seen as somewhat of an outcast in society but Idolina has no problem with her, she looks up to her and respects her.

Although mothers do fill many roles while raising their daughters, conflicts do arise. Often the mother sees her daughter as an extension of herself and tries too hard to force her own ways on her daughter. This conflict is very evident in How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents by Julia Alvarez. The mother in this novel goes so far as to dress her daughters in the same way she is dressed in an effort to make all her girls identical to herself. On the other hand, in Oficio de tinieblas, Isabel makes no effort at all to have her daughter, Idolina, be an extension. She rarely even communicates with her daughter let alone tries to see herself in her daughter.

The other main conflict that arises in many mother-daughter relationships is the daughter struggling to develop her own identity. This ties in closely with the mother seeing her daughter as an extension of herself. The three daughters in Como agua para chocolate definitely face this problem. Their mother has an overbearing personality that leaves little room for uniqueness in the girls. Rosaura succumbs to her mother and ends up living just like her. However, Gertrudis and Tita rebel against their mother. This rebellion puts a permanent rift in between mother and daughter but without it the girls never would find happiness. The Garcia girls also have trouble developing their own selves in light of their mother grouping them all together as one. Each girl eventually develops herself but only after a lot of struggles with her mother regarding living in American ways and culture and not those of the Dominican Republic.

The mother-daughter relationship in Hispanic cultures is a very strong bond. This relationship is much stronger and closer than between fathers and sons, fathers and daughters, or mothers and sons. As this study has made clear, artists have latched onto this symbol in their attempt to explore the conflicts and tensions present in their greater

cultures. When we investigate this relationship with actual Spanish-speaking women, we likewise find this relationship to be at the heart of the cultural shifts as the Hispanic world moves into the twenty-first century. The basis of the mother-daughter relationship and the changes it is facing are reflected in the Hispanic cultures of today.

	1					2					3					4					5					6			
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30-40		1		2		2		1			1		1	1					3			1		1	1		2	1	0
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	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D
Age 10-20				2		2					1	1				2					2					1			1
20-30		1		2			1	1	1		2	1				2			1		3							3	
30-40				3		1		1	1		2	1				1	1	1			2	1				1		1	
40-60				2		2					2					2					2					1			1
60+																													
Totals	0	1	0	9		5	1	2	2		7	3	0	0		7	1	1	1		9	1	0	0		3	0	4	2
	13					14					15																		
	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D															
Age 10-20	1			1					2		2					A= Strongly agree B= Partially agree C= Partially disagree D= Strongly disagree													
20-30		1	1	1		1			2		3																		
30-40			2	1				1	2		2		1																
40-60				2		1		1			2																		
60+																													
Totals	1	1	3	5		2	0	2	6		9	0	1	0															

	1					2					3					4					5					6												
	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D									
Age 10-20				1		1								1					1				1			1												
20-30			2		8		9	1						10		1			9			2	2	6		10												
30-40			1	1	5		5	2					1	1	5				7			3	1	3		7												
40-60				1	2		3							3					3			2		1		3												
60+																																						
Totals	0	3	2	16		18	3	0	0		0	1	1	19		1	0	0	20		0	7	4	10		21	0	0	0									
	7					8					9					10					11					12												
	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D									
Age 10-20			1						1				1					1			1								1									
20-30			3	4	3			1	1	8		3	3	3	1		10				9	1					4	1	5									
30-40		2	3	2				1	1	5			5	1	1		4	2	1		7						2	1	4									
40-60			2		1			1		2		2	1				1		1	1	3						2		1									
60+																																						
Totals	2	9	6	4		0	3	3	15		5	10	4	2		15	3	2	1		20	1	0	0		0	8	2	11									
	13					14					15																											
	A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D																								
Age 10-20			1						1		1					A= Strongly agree B= Partially agree C= Partially disagree D= Strongly disagree																						
20-30				10					10		9			1																								
30-40			2		5				1	6	6			1																								
40-60		1		2		1			2		3																											
60+																																						
Totals	1	3		17		1	0	1	19		19	0	0	2																								

Soy estudiante universitario de Estados Unidos y estoy trabajando en un estudio sobre los mitos de la mujer creados en las letras clásicas hispánicas y la situación actual de la mujer en varios países del mundo hispanohablante. Quedaría muy agradecida si pudiera responder con sus reacciones a las siguientes declaraciones sobre la mujer española en la actualidad. Muchas gracias por su ayuda.

Anne Neubauer

Edad: 10-20 años 20-30 30-40 40-60 60+

Por favor, responde a cada declaración con una de estas opciones:

- a) completamente de acuerdo b) parcialmente de acuerdo
c) parcialmente desacuerdo d) completamente desacuerdo

- ____ La mujer es la persona que debe cuidar para los niños y no el hombre.
____ Está bien si una mujer tener un trabajo atras de la casa
____ Es un problema si una mujer tiene relaciones sexuales antes del matrimonio.
____ Educación es más importante para un hombre que una mujer.
____ La religión es un parte muy importante de la identidad de la mujer contemporánea.
____ Está bien si una mujer trabaja antes del matrimonio.
____ Está bien si un hombre queda en casa y la mujer trabaja atras de la casa.
____ El casamiento es necesario para una vida completa de una mujer.
____ La familia es la cosa mas importante en la vida de una mujer.
____ En la familia la mujer y el hombre son iguales.
____ Es una buena idea si una mujer asiste la universidad.
____ La vida de una mujer es incompleta sin hijos.
____ La religión es una cosa para las mujeres más de los hombres.
____ Trabajos profesionales (como doctores y abagados) son por los hombres y no los mujeres.
____ Las mujeres deben ganar el mismo dinero para el mismo trabajo que los hombres ganan.

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