



Centre for  
Human Rights and  
Restorative Justice

# REFERENCES TO WOMEN

Guatemala Truth Commission

## Abstract

Notes on discussions of women, as well as a list of coding themes and references to women in the Guatemala Truth Commission.

Chelsea Barranger

## Table of Contents

Researcher Notes .....	2
Links to Data Visualization.....	3
Coding Women for the Guatemala Report .....	4
References to Women .....	5
Child Node References to Women .....	8
<i>Disappearances</i> .....	8
<i>Human Rights</i> .....	9
<i>Mayan</i> .....	11
<i>Military</i> .....	13
<i>Politics</i> .....	15
<i>Violence</i> .....	16

## Researcher Notes

Report details:

- published in 1999
- pdf is 82 pages
- no chapter or section on women
- according to NVivo's text search, the word women (using stems) is referenced 22 times, representing 0.38% coverage
- after deleting references from the bibliography, notes or headers, there are **17 broad references** to women in the content of the report
- women are usually discussed in terms of the violence committed against them

Women are referenced in the following ways:

- Mayan women experienced institutionalized violence
- discussions of women's rights
- state forces and paramilitary groups responsible for most of the violence and disappearances
- women were killed, tortured, and raped for their political and social participation
- civilians forced by the army to commit crimes (e.g., rape, torture, etc.)
- extermination of Mayan communities en masse based on racist conceptions
- extreme acts of violence on the part of the State and army
- majority of victims of rape Mayan women
- shame for legacy of sexual violence

## Links to Data Visualization

This section contains links to all data visualization for the Guatemala report.

### Word Frequency Cloud

- [word frequency cloud](#)
- [excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings](#)

### Word Trees

- [history](#)
- [women](#)
- [children](#)
- [youth](#)
- [forgive](#)
- [victim](#)
- [truth](#)
- [reconciliation](#)
- [land](#)

\*NVivo software can only edit word trees by changing the central search term and branch sizes. Word trees includes references from bibliography, headers, and notes that cannot be edited out using NVivo software. Researchers will need to manually remove unsightly branches using editing software (e.g., paint, photoshop, etc.)

## Coding Women for the Guatemala Report

The following chart breakdowns the child nodes used for coding references to women based on themes and discussions surrounding women in the Guatemala report.

Women	References or discussions of women
Disappearances	References or discussions of disappearances
Human rights	References or discussions of human rights, civil codes, or human rights violations
Mayan	References or discussions of Mayans
Military	References or discussions of the military
Politics	References or discussions of politics, politicians or political parties
Violence	References or discussions of violence

## References to Women

This section contains all references to women from the Guatemala report.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 17 references coded [2.77% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

emerged from the triumph of liberal forces in Central America. Guatemala has seen periods marked by beauty and dignity from the beginning of the ancient Mayan culture to the present day; its name has been glorified through its works of science, art, and culture; by men and women of honour and peace, both great and humble; by its Nobel Laureates for Literature and Peace. However, in Guatemala, pages have also been written of shame and infamy, disgrace and terror, pain and grief, all as a product of the armed confrontation among brothers and sisters. For more than 34 years, Guatemalans lived under the shadow of fear, death and disappearance as daily threats in the lives of ordinary citizens. The Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) was established through the Accord of

### Reference 2 - 0.17% Coverage

the State, affect civilians and particularly the Mayan people, whose women were considered to be the spoils of war and who bore the full brunt of the institutionalised violence? Why did defenceless children suffer acts of savagery? Why, using the name of God, was there an attempt to erase from the face of the earth the sons and daughters of Xmukane', the grandmother of life and natural creation? Why did these acts of outrageous brutality, which showed no respect for the most basic rules of humanitarian law, Christian ethics and the values of Mayan spirituality, take place? We received thousands of testimonies; we accompanied the survivors at such moving

### Reference 3 - 0.08% Coverage

Report, this Memory of Silence, into the hands of every Guatemalan, the men and women of yesterday and today, so that future generations may be aware of the enormous calamity and tragedy suffered by their people. May the lessons of this Report help us to consider, hear and understand others and be creative as we live in peace.

### Reference 4 - 0.12% Coverage

organisations made extremely valuable contributions to the CEH's work. In general, the organisations of Guatemalan civil society, including those working for with human rights, victims, indigenous peoples, women's rights and various other concerns, as well as the private sector and professional associations, lent their continuous support to the work entrusted to this Commission. The national and international media fulfilled, in exemplary fashion, their function to

### Reference 5 - 0.15% Coverage

1. With the outbreak of the internal armed confrontation in 1962, Guatemala entered a tragic and devastating stage of its history, with enormous human, material and moral cost. In the documentation of human rights violations and acts of violence connected with the armed confrontation, the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) registered a total of 42,275 victims, including men, women and children. Of these, 23,671 were victims of arbitrary execution and 6,159 were victims of forced disappearance. Eighty-three percent of fully identified victims were Mayan and seventeen percent were Ladino. 1

### Reference 6 - 0.19% Coverage

15. During the armed confrontation, the State's idea of the .. internal enemy", intrinsic to the National Security Doctrine, became increasingly inclusive. At the same time, this doctrine became the raison d'etre of Army and State policies for several decades. Through its investigation, the CEH discovered one of the most devastating effects of

this policy: state forces and related paramilitary groups were responsible for 93% of the violations documented by the CEH, including 92% of the arbitrary executions and 91 % of forced disappearances. Victims included men, women and children of all social strata: workers, professionals, church members, politicians, peasants, students and academics; in ethnic terms, the vast majority were Mayans.

#### Reference 7 - 0.15% Coverage

21. Along with a clear definition of the Army as its enemy, insurgent groups also included some civilians in this category, especially representatives of economic and political power who were considered to be allies of the repression and those people suspected of providing support to the Army, or who held local economic power, especially in rural areas. Among the cases registered by the CEH, insurgent actions produced 3% of the human rights violations and acts of violence perpetrated against men, women and children, including 5% of the arbitrary executions and 2% of forced disappearances.

#### Reference 8 - 0.24% Coverage

##### Women

29. The CEH's investigation has revealed that approximately a quarter of the direct victims of human rights violations and acts of violence were women. They were killed, tortured and raped, sometimes because of their ideals and political or social participation, sometimes in massacres or other indiscriminate actions. Thousands of women lost their husbands, becoming widows and the sole breadwinners for their children, often with no material resources after the scorched earth policies resulted in the destruction of their homes and crops. Their efforts to reconstruct their lives and support their families deserve special recognition.

30. At the same time, the CEH recognises the fact that women, the majority of them relatives of victims, played an exemplary role in the defence of human rights during the armed confrontation, promoting and directing organisations for relatives of the disappeared and for the struggle against impunity.

#### Reference 9 - 0.22% Coverage

50. The CEH counts among the most damaging effects of the confrontation those that resulted from forcing large sectors of the population to be accomplices in the violence, especially through their participation in the Civil Patrols (PAC), the paramilitary structures created by the Army in 1981 in most of the Republic. The CEH is aware of hundreds of cases in which civilians were forced by the Army, at gun point, to rape women, torture, mutilate corpses and kill. This extreme cruelty was used by the State to cause social disintegration. A large proportion of the male population over the age of fifteen, especially in the Mayan communities, was forced to participate in the PAC. This deeply affected values and behavioural patterns, as violence became a normal method of confronting conflictive situations and promoted contempt for the lives of others.

#### Reference 10 - 0.10% Coverage

85. The Army's perception of Mayan communities as natural allies of the guerrillas contributed to increasing and aggravating the human rights violations perpetrated against them, demonstrating an aggressive racist component of extreme cruelty that led to the extermination en masse, of defenceless Mayan communities purportedly linked to the guerrillas - including children, women and the elderly -

#### Reference 11 - 0.27% Coverage

87. The CEH has noted particularly serious cruelty in many acts committed by agents of the State, especially members of the Army, in their operations against Mayan communities. The counterinsurgency strategy not only led to violations of basic human rights, but also to the fact that these crimes were committed with particular cruelty, with massacres representing their archetypal form. In the majority of massacres there is evidence of multiple acts of savagery, which preceded, accompanied or occurred after the deaths of the victims. Acts such as the killing of defenceless children, often by beating them against walls or throwing them alive into pits where the corpses of adults were later thrown; the amputation of limbs; the impaling of victims; the killing of persons by covering them in petrol and burning them alive; the extraction, in the presence of others, of the viscera of victims who were still

alive; the confinement of people who had been mortally tortured, in agony for days; the opening of the wombs of pregnant women, and other similarly atrocious actS,

#### Reference 12 - 0.14% Coverage

##### The rape of women

91. The CEH's investigation has demonstrated that the rape of women, during torture or before being murdered, was a common practice aimed at destroying one of the most intimate and vulnerable aspects of the individual's dignity. The majority of rape victims were Mayan women. Those who survived the crime still suffer profound trauma as a result of this aggression, and the communities themselves were deeply offended by this practice. The presence of sexual violence in the social memory of the communities has become a source of collective shame.

#### Reference 13 - 0.20% Coverage

100. As regards international humanitarian law, which contains the obligatory rules for all armed conflicts (including non-international armed conflicts), the CEH concludes that Guatemalan State agents, the majority of whom were members of the Army, flagrantly committed acts prohibited by Common Article III of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, particularly with respect to attacks against life and bodily integrity, mutilation, cruel treatment, torture and torment, the taking of hostages, attacks on personal dignity, and particularly humiliating and degrading treatment, including the rape of women. Therefore, the State of Guatemala, whiCh was legally obliged to comply with these precepts and prohibitions throughout the confr.ontation, is responsible for these infractions.

#### Reference 14 - 0.11% Coverage

134. Massacres, that is, the collective killing of the defenceless population, are also included in the acts of violence committed by the guerrillas during the confrontation, gravely violating the right to life. The CEH has knowledge of different acts of this kind which occurred especially between 1981 and 1982; thirty-two were registered by the CEH. The CEH has reliable information that women and children were also killed in some of these massacres.

#### Reference 15 - 0.17% Coverage

situation, the CEH recognises the admirable effort and courage of those men and women who contributed to the signing of the Accords after nine years of rapprochement and negotiation between the Parties; the presidents of the Republic over this period and the public officials of the administrations that participated in the negotiations and initiation of the first conciliatory initiatives; the URNG Command; the citizens who participated in the National Reconciliation Commission and the Assembly of Civil Society; as well as the religious sector, especially the Catholic Church. The significant contribution of Army representatives to this process is also worthy of mention.

#### Reference 16 - 0.14% Coverage

151. To achieve true reconciliation and construct a new democratic and participatory nation which values its multi ethnic and pluricultural nature, the whole of society must, among other things, assume the commitments of the peace process. This doubtless requires a profound and complex effort, which Guatemalan society owes to the thousands of brave men and women who sought to obtain full respect for human rights and the democratic rule of law and so laid the foundations for this new nation. Among these, Monsignor Juan Gerardi Conedera remains at the forefront.

#### Reference 17 - 0.12% Coverage

16. That the Board of Directors of the Programme be composed of nine members: i) two persons appointed by the President of the Republic; ii) twO persons appointed by the Congress of the Republic; iii) one person designated by the Human Rights Ombudsman; iv) a representative from the victims' organisations; v) a representative from the human rights organisations; vi) a representative from the Mayan organisations; vii) a representative from the women's organisations.



## Child Node References to Women

The following section contains references to women from the Guatemala report organized by the child nodes outlined in Coding Women for the Guatemala Report. Some references appear under several subheadings since they contained discussions of multiple themes.

### *Disappearances*

References or discussions of disappearances

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 3 references coded [0.49% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.15% Coverage

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#### Reference 2 - 0.19% Coverage

15. During the armed confrontation, the State's idea of the .. internal enemy", intrinsic to the National Security Doctrine, became increasingly inclusive. At the same time, this doctrine became the *raison d'être* of Army and State policies for several decades. Through its investigation, the CEH discovered one of the most devastating effects of this policy: state forces and related paramilitary groups were responsible for 93% of the violations documented by the CEH, including 92% of the arbitrary executions and 91 % of forced disappearances. Victims included men, women and children of all social strata: workers, professionals, church members, politicians, peasants, students and academics; in ethnic terms, the vast majority were Mayans.

#### Reference 3 - 0.15% Coverage

21. Along with a clear definition of the Army as its enemy, insurgent groups also included some civilians in this category, especially representatives of economic and political power who were considered to be allies of the repression and those people suspected of providing support to the Army, or who held local economic power, especially in rural areas. Among the cases registered by the CEH, insurgent actions produced 3% of the human rights violations and acts of violence perpetrated against men, women and children, including 5% of the arbitrary executions and 2% of forced disappearances.

## *Human Rights*

References or discussions of human rights, civil codes, or human rights violations

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 10 references coded [1.52% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.12% Coverage

organisations made extremely valuable contributions to the CEH's work. In general, the organisations of Guatemalan civil society, including those working for with human rights, victims, indigenous peoples, women's rights and various other concerns, as well as the private sector and professional associations, lent their continuous support to the work entrusted to this Commission. The national and international media fulfilled, in exemplary fashion, their function to

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#### Women

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#### Reference 6 - 0.10% Coverage

85. The Army's perception of Mayan communities as natural allies of the guerrillas contributed to increasing and aggravating the human rights violations perpetrated against them, demonstrating an aggressive racist component of extreme cruelty that led to the extermination en masse, of defenceless Mayan communities purportedly linked to the guerrillas - including children, women and the elderly -

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## Mayan

### References or discussions of Mayans

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 6 references coded [1.09% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.20% Coverage

emerged from the triumph of liberal forces in Central America. Guatemala has seen periods marked by beauty and dignity from the beginning of the ancient Mayan culture to the present day; its name has been glorified through its works of science, art, and culture; by men and women of honour and peace, both great and humble; by its Nobel Laureates for Literature and Peace. However, in Guatemala, pages have also been written of shame and infamy, disgrace and terror, pain and grief, all as a product of the armed confrontation among brothers and sisters. For more than 34 years, Guatemalans lived under the shadow of fear, death and disappearance as daily threats in the lives of ordinary citizens. The Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) was established through the Accord of

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#### Reference 3 - 0.22% Coverage

50. The CEH counts among the most damaging effects of the confrontation those that resulted from forcing large sectors of the population to be accomplices in the violence, especially through their participation in the Civil Patrols (PAC), the paramilitary structures created by the Army in 1981 in most of the Republic. The CEH is aware of hundreds of cases in which civilians were forced by the Army, at gun point, to rape women, torture, mutilate corpses and kill. This extreme cruelty was used by the State to cause social disintegration. A large proportion of the male population over the age of fifteen, especially in the Mayan communities, was forced to participate in the PAC. This deeply affected values and behavioural patterns, as violence became a normal method of confronting conflictive situations and promoted contempt for the lives of others.

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## *Military*

### References or discussions of the military

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 6 references coded [1.12% Coverage]

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## *Politics*

References or discussions of politics, politicians or political parties

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 4 references coded [0.83% Coverage]

### Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

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## Violence

### References or discussions of violence

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\The Americas\\Guatemala-Report-of-the-Commission-for-Historical-Clarification> - § 9 references coded [1.68% Coverage]

#### Reference 1 - 0.17% Coverage

the State, affect civilians and particularly the Mayan people, whose women were considered to be the spoils of war and who bore the full brunt of the institutionalised violence? Why did defenceless children suffer acts of savagery? Why, using the name of God, was there an attempt to erase from the face of the earth the sons and daughters of Xmukane', the grandmother of life and natural creation? Why did these acts of outrageous brutality, which showed no respect for the most basic rules of humanitarian law, Christian ethics and the values of Mayan spirituality, take place? We received thousands of testimonies; we accompanied the survivors at such moving

#### Reference 2 - 0.15% Coverage

1. With the outbreak of the internal armed confrontation in 1962, Guatemala entered a tragic and devastating stage of its history, with enormous human, material and moral cost. In the documentation of human rights violations and acts of violence connected with the armed confrontation, the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) registered a total of 42,275 victims, including men, women and children. Of these, 23,671 were victims of arbitrary execution and 6,159 were victims of forced disappearance. Eighty-three percent of fully identified victims were Mayan and seventeen percent were Ladino. 1

#### Reference 3 - 0.19% Coverage

15. During the armed confrontation, the State's idea of the .. internal enemy", intrinsic to the National Security Doctrine, became increasingly inclusive. At the same time, this doctrine became the *raison d'être* of Army and State policies for several decades. Through its investigation, the CEH discovered one of the most devastating effects of this policy: state forces and related paramilitary groups were responsible for 93% of the violations documented by the CEH, including 92% of the arbitrary executions and 91 % of forced disappearances. Victims included men, women and children of all social strata: workers, professionals, church members, politicians, peasants, students and academics; in ethnic terms, the vast majority were Mayans.

#### Reference 4 - 0.24% Coverage

##### Women

29. The CEH's investigation has revealed that approximately a quarter of the direct victims of human rights violations and acts of violence were women. They were killed, tortured and raped, sometimes because of their ideals and political or social participation, sometimes in massacres or other indiscriminate actions. Thousands of women lost their husbands, becoming widows and the sole breadwinners for their children, often with no material resources after the scorched earth policies resulted in the destruction of their homes and crops. Their efforts to reconstruct their lives and support their families deserve special recognition.

30. At the same time, the CEH recognises the fact that women, the majority of them relatives of victims, played an exemplary role in the defence of human rights during the armed confrontation, promoting and directing organisations for relatives of the disappeared and for the struggle against impunity.

#### Reference 5 - 0.22% Coverage

50. The CEH counts among the most damaging effects of the confrontation those that resulted from forcing large sectors of the population to be accomplices in the violence, especially through their participation in the Civil Patrols (PAC), the paramilitary structures created by the Army in 1981 in most of the Republic. The CEH is aware of hundreds of cases in which civilians were forced by the Army, at gun point, to rape women, torture, mutilate corpses and kill. This extreme cruelty was used by the State to cause social disintegration. A large proportion of the male population over the age of fifteen, especially in the Mayan communities, was forced to participate in the PAC. This

deeply affected values and behavioural patterns, as violence became a normal method of confronting conflictive situations and promoted contempt for the lives of others.

#### Reference 6 - 0.27% Coverage

87. The CEH has noted particularly serious cruelty in many acts committed by agents of the State, especially members of the Army, in their operations against Mayan communities. The counterinsurgency strategy not only led to violations of basic human rights, but also to the fact that these crimes were committed with particular cruelty, with massacres representing their archetypal form. In the majority of massacres there is evidence of multiple acts of savagery, which preceded, accompanied or occurred after the deaths of the victims. Acts such as the killing of defenceless children, often by beating them against walls or throwing them alive into pits where the corpses of adults were later thrown; the amputation of limbs; the impaling of victims; the killing of persons by covering them in petrol and burning them alive; the extraction, in the presence of others, of the viscera of victims who were still alive; the confinement of people who had been mortally tortured, in agony for days; the opening of the wombs of pregnant women, and other similarly atrocious acts,

#### Reference 7 - 0.14% Coverage

The rape of women

91. The CEH's investigation has demonstrated that the rape of women, during torture or before being murdered, was a common practice aimed at destroying one of the most intimate and vulnerable aspects of the individual's dignity. The majority of rape victims were Mayan women. Those who survived the crime still suffer profound trauma as a result of this aggression, and the communities themselves were deeply offended by this practice. The presence of sexual violence in the social memory of the communities has become a source of collective shame.

#### Reference 8 - 0.19% Coverage

100. As regards international humanitarian law, which contains the obligatory rules for all armed conflicts (including non-international armed conflicts), the CEH concludes that Guatemalan State agents, the majority of whom were members of the Army, flagrantly committed acts prohibited by Common Article III of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, particularly with respect to attacks against life and bodily integrity, mutilation, cruel treatment, torture and torment, the taking of hostages, attacks on personal dignity, and particularly humiliating and degrading treatment, including the rape of women. Therefore, the State of Guatemala, which was legally obliged to comply with these precepts and prohibitions throughout the confrontation, is responsible for these infractions.

#### Reference 9 - 0.11% Coverage

134. Massacres, that is, the collective killing of the defenceless population, are also included in the acts of violence committed by the guerrillas during the confrontation, gravely violating the right to life. The CEH has knowledge of different acts of this kind which occurred especially between 1981 and 1982; thirty-two were registered by the CEH. The CEH has reliable information that women and children were also killed in some of these massacres.