



MEXICO: WOMEN BYLINES MEXICO CITY



ICHIME FOR CHANGE's Women Bylines, a journalism project highlighting quality first-person stories of global relevance, held its first workshop in Erbil, Iraq in 2015. Last year's edition featured workshops in Paris and Mexico City.

From October 8-12, 2018, 12 intrepid female journalists participated in CHIME FOR CHANGE's third Women Bylines workshop in Mexico City, led by CHIME FOR CHANGE's Managing Editor Mariane Pearl. The five-day workshop provided a safe space for writers, filmmakers and photographers to discuss and develop under-reported stories affecting women in Mexico.

Participants in Mexico City ranged in age from 24 to 50, all bringing their unique

backgrounds and experiences. The workshop covered topics from violence against women and rape culture, to the mistreatment of pregnant and postpartum women, toxic masculinity and the true meaning of consent. Guest speakers included award-winning photographer Pedro Prado, Mexico's most notable advocate for female journalists Lucia Lagunes, and CHIME FOR CHANGE Advisory Board member Lydia Cacho—one of Mexico's most famous investigative journalists. *Vogue Mexico* recently featured Ms. Cacho, where she spoke about the ongoing need to amplify female journalists' voices and experiences.

Women Bylines Mexico City produced seven powerful pieces—four films and three multimedia pieces:

Films

People Like Carmen by Maya Goded, 50 (Photographer)

Brought up in a politically committed family, as a child, Maya was encouraged to develop her social consciousness and to keep an eye open for the unbeaten paths in life. Today, she has spent more than 30 years taking photographs of the women Mexico would rather not see or show. Her journey starts when she becomes pregnant. To confront her fear of having her life taken over by her baby, she decides to find unconventional women who are about to become mothers as well. This is how she meets Carmen, a prostitute who becomes Maya's friend and subject over the years. Carmen is also Maya's first step in her in-depth journey exploring lives on the sidewalks of Mexico.

Steady Paths by Laura Hernandez, 26 (Communication Major and Therapist)

Laura is a professional therapist and communication major who specializes in gender violence. Her role is to help victims recover from abusive relationships and rebuild their self-esteem. When she herself started experiencing domestic violence, Laura had a difficult time accepting it. Yet she couldn't help but recognize that she was

experiencing the different stages her patients had been describing to her. Here, she tells her story and interviews four other women whose accounts seem shockingly like her own: most perpetrators are partners and husbands, men who once promised to love you.

There Is No Why by Hazel Zamora, 25 (Journalist)

Hazel was six years old when a wave of femicide swept the town of Juarez. Girls and young women between the ages of 15 through 25 were being raped and murdered. Now 25 years old, and a young journalist, Hazel is assigned the killing of young women as a beat. She introduces us to the family of some of the girls who have been murdered recently in senseless acts of violence and amidst a frightening sense of impunity. To seek justice and truth, relatives are left alone, often re-victimized by the cynicism and casualness of the authorities for whom these young women's lives hold no value. Hazel shares her emotions as she realizes that the victims are girls just like her.

The Protest by Veronica Munoz, 27 (Journalist)

Every member in Veronica's family has been ill since anyone can remember. Today she herself has multiple infections, and her two sons are also suffering from chronic bronchitis and other pulmonary diseases. Veronica is from Pachuca, a region known for its silver mining activities. But the dust left by the extraction has been making people very sick for decades with no one protesting the powerful interest of multinationals involved in the industry. Veronica has also experienced sexual violence, including rape when she was 15 years old. Here, she draws a parallel between the violence that women confront in Mexico and the violation of life-sustaining natural resources. Veronica argues that it is the same profound disrespect towards life that allows both types of abuses to exist and continue.

Multimedia

“Who Cares” by Daniela Rea, 36 (Photojournalist)

As a photo reporter covering femicide and a journalist working in a particularly violent country, Daniela acted like a man in a world made for and by men. But everything changed the day she became the mother of two girls. In this intimate diary, she shares with striking honesty her journey to become a caregiver. Now bound to protect someone else, she understands that, one way or the other, we all have received the care of a woman in our lives and how basic that love is to human emotional survival. Even still, one of the most recognizable traits of a caregiver is how easily taken for granted she can be.

“Trauma at Birth: The Truth Behind Obstetric Violence” by Dunia Verona, 44 (Writer and Doula)

In 2001, when Dunia gave birth to her daughter, she discovered a new genre of violence she didn't have a name for. Obstetric violence refers to the torture or ill treatment of pregnant or postpartum women. Medical professionals engage in abusive behavior that ranges from non-consensual episiotomies to sexual assault. Dunia soon realized that many health centers in the country suffered from the same circumstances. She has since dedicated her career to creating a safe space for women to give birth in a respectful environment, and providing support for women who have suffered from obstetric violence so they can express themselves, rebel against it and finally heal. Dunia tells her own journey to provide a safe place to be born in a world that is all about violence from the start.

“What Makes a Man? A Letter to my Son” by Miriam Cruz, 26 (Radio Station Director)

In one generation, Miriam has captured and spread her voice in ways that would have been unimaginable to her mother, who never went to school. She now manages a radio station broadcasting more than 25 shows, all with a gender perspective. But in this intimate, at times funny

and emotional, letter to her son, Miriam talks about what she considers her main achievement: raising a son that has no attraction to the machismo that is ravaging her country.

[View highlights from the Mexico City workshop in the gallery](#)



