

Article 12

**Contributions to peace through professional wrestling:
Examining the peacekeeper performances
by the gender twisted women of Lucha Libre Femenil**

Dr. Nicholas Zoffel

[Department of Communication Studies](#)

[San Jose State University](#)

Nicholas.Zoffel@sjsu.edu

&

Sarah McGaffey

Undergraduate Student

[Department of Communication Studies](#)

[San Jose State University](#)

sarah.mcgaffey@gmail.com

Abstract

This essay explores how professional women wrestlers from Lucha Libre Femenil actively engage in peacekeeping the global south as gender twisted women. In this federation, they are communicatively able to work toward peace in the public sphere given their performative space in the ring. Performatively, the LLF peacekeeping wrestlers are advocating gender issues relating to economic development, legal reforms, the media, gender stereotypes, peacekeeping non-profit work, local politics, and for a select few, national politics. Struggles and obstacles are presented for the LLF wrestlers in the attempt to continue their peacekeeping activities. Simultaneously their global audience struggles to take notice of their peacekeeping agenda because of the objectified nature of their business.

Key Words: Women wrestlers, peacekeeping, professional wrestling, identity gender roles

It is a Monday night and we are watching International Professional Wrestling in a Gender, Sexuality, and Identity course. It has become a bit of a ritual in this space, the popular meeting the intellectual. I notice that as I am sitting by a group of men while watching the women wrestlers that the women of the room are almost invisible. I notice this while sitting in the back of the classroom so I can watch the students as I notice there are clusters of men sitting together, in ways that only occur when we are watching wrestling. Every person in the class cheers for the faces (good characters) and boos for the heels (bad characters). People have taken to acting out entrances in tandem with the characters on the screen. Performing the complexities of gender in the mundane way the women wrestlers walk with muscular confidence to the ring and at the end of their matches point from the heart to the crowd in a motherly way saying "I love you." All of us caught up in the pomp and circumstance of the moment yell in support for our favorite wrestlers as a cue from their music. The language barriers are irrelevant as we watch Lucha Libre Femenil (LLF), which is the primary and oldest global south women's wrestling federation.

While primarily in-ring entertainment, there is a clear agenda to Lucha Libre Femenil (LLF), which aims to familiarizing participants with the identity, roles, characteristics and relationships, that men and women face, which are socially constructed and shared among people. The constructions done through wrestling performances often create prejudices, stereotypes and different expectations about men and women, whereby gender violence, embedded within deep structures and cultures hinders the full development of human beings and creates injustice and inequality at different levels.

The approach "face" wrestlers take toward the peace paradigm, argues that men and women have common problems that they can solve together, for the mutual benefit of both parties. This perspective analyzes masculinity, patriarchy and systems of domination in order to understand the root causes of gender-based violence and to assess when, why, and how both men and women participate in violence. As well as when, why and how both men and women participate in efforts towards peace building. This perspective is contrast with "heel" women wrestlers who focuses on men as the problem, essentializing men as violent and women as passive and peaceful by nature.

Viewers of LLF often are asked to question the development of gender identity, gender violence (direct, structural, and cultural), and to view the in-ring performances as a creative way to transform gendered conflicts.

Many of the LLF's wrestlers spend significant time involved advocating gender issues relating to economic development, legal reforms, the media, gender stereotypes, and the role of individuals and organizations through community advocacy, peacekeeping non-profit work, local politics, and for a select few, national politics. Ultimately, the goal of the advocacy is to contribute progressively and proactively to the transformation of society and to the maintenance of social justice and equity within/through peacekeeping. Literature contains numerous examples of advocacy that are currently committed in issues global peace such as domestic violence (Donaldson, 1951; Fairhurst, 1993; Spectra, 1998; Shields & Coughlin, 2000; Sectra, 2001; Jackson, 2007). One example of direct advocacy in action is an organization called Peace Over Violence. The organization is a non-profit, feminist, multicultural, volunteer organization dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence. In the constant pursuit of achieving this mission the agency manages five departments delivering the services of Emergency, Intervention, Prevention, Education and Advocacy (Peace over violence: One by one). Lucha Libre Feminil wrestlers who have volunteered with the Education and Advocacy wing of the organization are Sara Del Rey, Christie Ricci, and Nikki Roxx who have conducted publicity tours and used their ring promos to advocate on the organizations behalf. Another example of advocacy is the Institute for Community Peace (ICP). They serve as a leading national organization working to prevent violence and promote peace. ICP is guided by three fundamental beliefs: that violence is preventable, peace is possible, and that both are best achieved through community-driven strategies that demonstrate the power of collective local actions (Institute for Community Peace, 2003). These acts of advocacy are part of a greater performance. According to Bell (2008), "Performance causes, creates, produces both itself and things outside of itself. This productivity has many purposes that are often languaged as functions, uses, or intentions" (p. 16).

As a teacher, I am caught up in the enjoyment of the students. As a student, I am caught up in the fact my teacher shares my favorite wrestler. Our favorite female wrestler is Shinobu Kandori, a Japanese transplant to the LLF since 1992. Her time since 2006 is split between her duties with LLF and as a member of the House of Councilors in the Diet (Japan's National Legislature). As teacher and student we appreciate the subtleness of her physique, the multitude of colors in her short hair and costumes, and the overt communicative theatrics of her actions. When this "Rainbow Warrior" theme song plays, we, like everyone light up with excitement and cheer. During the match, we hear commentary on her wrestling technique, the difficulty of her "Twisting Crucifix" maneuver (apply a three-quarter arm bar, reaching back and grabbing the arm of an opponent, thus pulling the opponent's upper body above the wrestler's shoulder) before falling backwards), and the thrill of hearing her articulate her sense of feminism and passion during interviews denouncing domestic violence.

Performatively, Shinobu Kandori, like all global professional women wrestlers, have an identity that is part entertainer and part peacekeeper. This dual identity is a unique critical communication position that has been examined as a site of negotiation and contestation for the 'self,' both a negative and positive space. History has long established professional women wrestlers as positive women role models. With the amount of exposure that professional women wrestlers receive from a global audience, there is a performative platform that presents opportunities for peacekeeping through professional women wrestlers.

Giroux (1993) speaks of it as "the shifting, multiple and often contradictory nature of identity" (p. 26). Butler talks of it as a space where a "subject is understood to have some stable existence prior to the cultural field that it negotiates. Or, as Butler (1990) discusses, if the subject is culturally constructed, it is nevertheless vested with an agency, usually figured as the capacity for reflexivity" (p. 182). In the process of negotiating a feminine identity, it is beneficial to first examine what it means to have an ascribed identity or to move toward a constitutive body. These scholars' notions together, move literature toward a constitutive body that can allow us to view Lucha Libre Femenil as a production. Warren (2003) suggests a "more dialectical, perspective

of race and the body". He argues, "some scholars find that by using the material body in order to demonstrate rhetorical social effects, one can create a powerful and complex consideration" (p.23).

While this notion is typically of race, the shifts of recognizing the role of women in wrestling should turn its attention to the rhetorical social effects of a produced woman. A woman in this light takes on the performative traits of an identity that is conceptualized as a site of negotiation and contestation for the 'self' in a person who is faced with the manner of what Dyer writes as an unraveling of "raced bodies [that] get wrapped in a discourse of power" (Warren, 2003, p. 24).

The performativity of wrestlers like Shinobu Kandori engages bodies that have ranges of power, voice, and agency all intersect at specificity between identity and power. For example, the Lucha Libre Femenil's performs female athleticism and advocates peacekeeping politics. This essay shares a dialectical opportunity in which professional women wrestlers are serving as peacekeepers. In essence they use their politics as a constitutive act upon their body (Butler, 1990) and the (re) constitution of identity through an understanding of perceptions and expectations. Acts that focus on the point of intersection on both how best to perform athletic contexts and also feminist politics. Like Warren and Kilgard (2001), Pineau (2000), Pelias (1999), Butler (1989, 1990, 1993), and others, a dialectical approach to examining identity and power through performance offers the possibility of engaging multiple types of performance, specifically the ability to examine the reality of that what it means to be a woman. It is constantly changing, and it is a process (Flusser, 1983). Assuming that culture is never stagnant, culture becomes a space where power, meaning, and identity are negotiated (Collier, Hedge, Lee, Nakayama, & Yep, 2001). For the body that has identity ascribed to it, the body becomes a historical idea...a set of possibilities that takes on appearance, perception, expectations, rejection of interior essence, a space where it is continually materializing possibilities, it and others are constructing its reality (Butler, 1990). The women of the global south's identities are constantly shifting from one point of athleticism to a social space of politics. In this sense, the LLF wrestlers are nowhere really, mildly praised for their athletic ability and adulation thrust upon them for the look of their bodies. They are

more often championed for their positions of advocacy as peacekeepers. The women wrestle, but as Victor Turner points out, “novelty emerges from unprecedented combinations of familiar elements” (p. 27); in essence it’s their advocacy for divorce rights, issues surrounding domestic violence, body rights, educational rights, and pioneering women’s roles in male dominated politics that pins us to our seats.

Lucha Libre Femenil performs a gender twisted performance like following through with a “twisting crucifix” in the ring. The peacekeeping role of women in LLF is unique, fascinating, and has evolved through gender accomplishment. Women wrestlers are unique in the fact that they have a gender embodiment of male wrestlers while in a headlock to feministic performances. We like Lucha Libre Femenil view gender as a continuum. While in the US, wrestling is viewed through the World Wrestling Entertainment; wrestling is actually something more global. The wrestling characteristics of gender in the US are placed into two categories, masculinity and femininity. We are accustomed to gender being performed through binary mannerisms through repetition in society. Our culture has created expectations of how one performs “woman” and how one performs “man” through social construction. Through Lucha Libre Femenil, exploring the gender performances of women that cross the boundaries between the binaries of “feminine” and “masculine,” appropriately includes peacekeeping. Wrestling in the global south, recognizes that these binaries are not absolute, and in the performances exists a greater grey area.

Our purpose of this essay is to explore how the women wrestlers in Lucha Libre Femenil accomplish the peacekeeper performance. To address this argument, we organize literature into four areas: the indexicality of women peacekeepers, the reflexivity of women in the ring, the essence of peacekeeper membership, and accomplishing the role of peacekeeper.

The Indexicality of women peacekeepers

Indexicality is simply the means that people use to make sense of a remark, sign, or particular action by reference to the context in which it occurs; that is, people index

communication through particular circumstances (Garfinkel and Sacks, 1970). In *Lucha Libre Femenil*, social life is constituted through actions in the ring, but primarily through the language used during interviews. Indexical expressions are those expressions that draw their meanings from its context. In this central concept, the women wrestler's work focuses on the sense they make of a particular situation or activity. Given that communication is a product of our personal biographies (the experiences and expectations we bring to a situation), it is the contingent elements of the situation that create the communicative moment (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). For someone like Shinobu Kandori, who was raised with an abusive father, herself a victim of domestic violence; she was torn, wanting something different from her traditional Japanese values and the *Lucha Libre Femenil* would become her outlet.

Through indexicality, we derive meaning, through reflection of the utterances, gestures, rules, and actions, which on their own seem meaningless, but when performed together make sense. Wrestling organizations of the global south understand how to express the ongoing (re)construction of meaning and the sense of continuity that we maintain in the interpretive work of athlete and peacekeeper. Once defined, a situation or person "becomes," in our understanding, the "thing" we have defined. And the "objective reality" of that person or situation becomes an indexical feature of our next interaction and interpretive process.

For the professional women wrestler identity, indexicality is the beginning of an account of the particular expressions whose meanings depend essentially on some sort of explicit or implicit position within common language. Therefore, some contribution by the women is necessary to understand the indexical expressions that give rise to their sense of accomplishment. Garfinkel (1967), in fact, speaks explicitly of "occasional expressions;" that is, of expressions like "this" and "that" whose meanings depend on features of the occasion of use. It is possible to gauge the full implications of these remarks, these indexical or occasional meanings, only if they are read in context with other expressions. Moreover, Garfinkel's acknowledgement for generalizability is in the indications for understanding perceptions and expectations. Like everything in wrestling, the performance seeks to look toward both in ring movement for strength and activism

in the public. This helps better understand women's needs, meanings and possible structures for how female voice can be used in actualizing a critical perspective.

The reflexivity of women in the ring

Through reflexivity we can better understand the expressions within activities that serve to understand members' production and management of meaning. Reflexivity, according to Pollner (1991), reflects upon how what members do in, to, and about social reality that constitutes that social reality. Thus, language and action are not merely responses to reality, but contribute to its constitution (Pollner, 1991).

For peacekeepers, there are two types of reflexivity that make an effort to make the world "seeable sayable:" personal reflexivity and epistemological reflexivity (Wieder, 1974). "Personal reflexivity" involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, and accomplishments shape our social construction of life and how this is treated at the intersection of "we" that have shaped what "we" do. It also involves thinking about how commonplace knowledge may have affected and possibly changed us. "Epistemological reflexivity," on the other hand, requires us to engage with questions such as: How have our actions defined and limited what can be "done" about a perceived context? How has the design of the actions and the method analyzing those actions "constructed?" How could the actions be investigated differently? To what extent would this give rise to a different understanding of the communication phenomenon under investigation? Thus, epistemological reflexivity encourages us to reflect upon the assumptions (about the world, about knowledge) that will be made in the course of the peacekeeping activity. Further, it helps to think about the implications of such assumptions for the various participants of the LLF experience.

As a whole, reflexivity expresses that paradoxical characteristic of female existence whereby they are often objectified in relationship to the interpretive meaning that is socially beholden to them as sex objects, the weaker sex, feeble bodied, mother figures, heroines, and role models—assorted positive and negative ascriptions. In other words, the interactions are never independent of the way in which they are institutionally

constructed and expressed. Wieder (1974) writes that there is no pure objectivity, or for that matter pure subjectivity, everything is in relationship to everything else. By the very principles of indexicality, we, like LLF understand interpretations of another to be bound by the social and material context in which it is related.

This spiral of indexicality and reflexivity is the central interpretive process through which communication labels are produced and applied. It is also through this process that individuals are “understood” to be communicating, as well as, to see themselves clearly. The key component here is that it is the audience, not the wrestlers who typically fail to see, or at least see and then forget that it is through their “work” that a positive, peaceful reality is constructed. It takes on a natural, taken-for-granted character, not unlike the larger-than-life in-ring personas.

Garfinkel (1967) notes that situations tend to offer insights to their reflexivity after decisions have been made. Peacekeeping has this same effect in the essence that women are predominately placed as active peacekeeping roles. Much of the peace existing in the world is carried on the shoulders of women. Johan Galtung (2008) suggests:

Capacity should benefit humanity at all levels, micro-personal, meso-social, macro-states, mega-regions. Women should emerge from victim hood to leadership in mediation-negotiation, without becoming too self-righteous. More important than negotiation tables would actually be myriads of women, and men, capable of holism, dialectics, empathy, compassion, nonviolence, dialogue, handling conflict, building peace, creatively. Men alone around a negotiation table may be up to some mischief; women are needed. NGO mediation open to women should precede state-region mediation closed to them.

For this LLF, wrestlers’ constant narration of their actions based on an after-the-fact rereading of their actions conveys much more coherent stories of their actions as peacekeeper advocates than they do in the moment itself. If one was to examine the in-ring antics in context of their interview and public advocacy work, than a

construction/reconstruction would demonstrate how feminist equality that happens in the ring could appear to be normal, natural, and “real” outside the ring.

Butler (1997), using performativity, discusses two cognitive rules that people use in organizing information to construct social reality: rules of consistency and rules of economy. The former suggests that once people have categorized events and persons, they organize past information and future perceptions consistently with these categories. For example, the “at risk” female wrestler may be tracked into a less rigorous feminine role—viewed as weak and feeble. Once a woman wrestler is labeled “at risk,” audience members tend to search for and remember confirming cues. They may note the “at risk” status, lower participation, higher victimization, style of dress, personal habits—all of which would have been ignored and organized differently if they had not initially categorized the person as “at risk.” The economy rule, on the other hand, refers to a tendency to “lock in” categories. That is, once a general category is selected for interpreting a situation, people tend not to reorganize situational cues to test the application of alternative categories. Once labeled “at risk,” institutional norms are put in place to maintain said label (Fassett, 2003).

As a special case of this cognitive process, LLF has been particularly interested in retrospective interpretation—a cognitive process whereby a person’s past behavior is reinterpreted on the basis of present typifications. Events of wrestler’s patterns that were once disjointed or independently considered as meaningless take on a new significance. Goffman’s (1981) earlier work provides a relevant connection between Butler (1997, 1993, 1990, 1989) and his discussion of the importance of understanding the process of retrospective interpretation. Goffman’s larger argument is that typification is part of the “moral career” of those defined by difference (1981). The subjective understandings generated through current experiences allow for “turning points” during which the stigmatized individual may single out and retrospectively elaborate experiences. This serves as an account for coming to the beliefs and practices of perceived normalcy.

Again, out of the spiral of indexicality and reflexivity a sense of structure emerges as a practical accomplishment of everyday interpretive processes, confirming and elaborating changing identities. A need exists subjectively for the individuals involved (i.e., women and men, wrestlers and audience, social roles and wrestling roles) and objectively for the institutions like LLF and other wrestling organizations that employ women as advocate for new ways to document these emerging and unaccounted identities and voices. The overt role of peacekeeper in professional wrestling becomes in essence a major respecification of female identity.

The essence of peacekeeper membership

Another element is the notion of membership that is highlighted by the LLF as peacekeepers. This concept describes how a member is one who knows and does one's self so fluidly that he or she is seen as belonging.

Observations are treated as expressions of underlying patterns or structures. According to Garfinkel (1967):

Not only is the underlying pattern derived from its individual documentary evidences, but the individual documentary evidences, in their turn, are interpreted on the basis of 'what is known' about the underlying pattern. Each is used to elaborate the other (p. 78).

People use notion of member to make sense of other people and how one forms a sense of place and a feel for the group.

These are the experiences that offer the thick and rich detail, the micro-communicative moments that allow for greater sense of connectivity because of their generalizability or ability to relate to what has been observed. As Warren (2003) puts it in relation to performativity, we take bits and pieces of information, those presented informally in interaction and those that are a part of the "official record," and construct a reasonable account of the individual that then seems to confirm our "reading" of the documents.

Regarding notion of member in relationship to sexual identity, Warren and Zoffel (2006) argue that in attributing intentions to others, people are sensitive to whether their actions seem to be caused by external forces (social pressures, group norms, or accidents). If external forces are not apparent, people tend to attribute acts to choice and to impart motives, dispositions, and intentions of the self (the way they should act). The women of LLF are members who are people that embody the ethno-methods of a particular group, or can “naturally” exhibit the social competence to be recognized and accepted as a cultural ideal (i.e. strong woman, role-model, heroine, motherly, and even accepted political advocate). We watch LLF, seeking to find the production of meaning in wrestling. LLF stands out as an organization that considers how female wrestlers produce membership through their daily actions in ways that make them accountable and role models to others.

Given the media is considered “one of the most pervasive sociocultural forces in constructing gender and body ideals for women” (Soulliere & Blair, 2006, p. 271). The media perpetuates standards for women in much fashion such as magazines, television, and advertisements in both of those forms. Women’s bodies are more sexualized in the United States, presenting them more as objects than actual humans (Frith, 2005). In the LLF, the women are also portrayed in this manner as they wrestle, it has created an observation platform for various social causes—funds from shows often are donated to various organizations that support female peacekeeping efforts. From this observation platform, the media is making a choice in how they are constructing the objectification and advocacy. LLF wrestlers’ also break various gender barriers by being tough, aggressive and politically independent; they have an impact on women and girls through men’s eyes. Women and girls want to look like LLF wrestlers’ but more importantly they are encouraged to get involved in community causes. Given the media has an immense impact on what culture considers “standard” with gender. LLF wrestlers are in between struggling with a new twisted gender, but also adhering to the impact of their sexualized mass media medium.

Accomplishing the role of peacekeeper: Mimicry and symbolic reversals as peacekeeping advocacy

We were sitting at an LLPW and World Wrestling Entertainment event in San Diego. At the time we were studying the mimicry and symbolic reversals and had a rare opportunity to go back stage and talk to some of the wrestlers at the event. One LLF wrestler pointed out that in her interviews that people see prior to their matches, she tries to provide the metaphorical stop sign that forces listeners to stop and to understand that professional wrestling is not a one-sided process that is typically inferred by observed/observer communication. She discussed the importance of mimicry and symbolic reversals because people do not always readily succumb to the process of being identified through categorization or they are actively seeking an outlet to change their position.

Luce Irigaray (1974,a,b) suggested that mimicry is a way for women to recover voice within communicative contexts. The technique of mimicry implies that women perform the feminine role, as it is outlined for them, without being entirely engulfed by it, playing with it and thereby positioning themselves someplace else:

To play with mimesis is thus, for a woman, to try to recover the place of her exploitation through discourse, without allowing herself to be simply reduced to it. It means to resubmit herself—inasmuch as she is on the side of the “perceptible,” of “matter” to “ideas,” in particular ideas about herself, that are elaborated in/by a masculine logic, but so as to make “visible,” by an effect of playful repetition, what was supposed to remain invisible: the cover-up of a possible operation of the feminine in language. It also means to “unveil” the fact that, if women are such good mimics, it is because they are not simply reabsorbed in this function.
(p. 76)

In regards to the LLF wrestlers, they recognize that they perform a hyper-feminine role, marketed by the various social politics—making women of LLF more conscientious of their peacekeeping roles than their American counterparts. The exploited role as a sex

object played by LLF wrestlers is marketed as a secondary performance of entertainment for men. The connection made to the larger product is the LLF women wrestlers are advocates for various feminist perspectives. Also having the women submit themselves for consumption as something secondary to the peacekeeper to fund their advocacy efforts. Like their American counterparts, they appear sexy for men first, wrestlers, second. However, within the implied peacekeeper communication process, viewed through mimicry and symbolic reversals we can consider that their actions as “sex objects” and “minor athletic figures” serve as a parody-play of patriarchal discourses. This is also why these women often lose their matches to the more feminist counterparts. To play this dualistic role of “sex object” and “peacekeeper,” if the LLF wrestlers perform more sexualized acts with their bodies they will also appear weaker in their feminist advocacy.

The construction of a peacekeeper identity often involves negotiation and bargaining. Often behavior is “normalized,” explained away as something that just is. However, to the women of LLF, this is a non-negotiable stance, they attempt for little information to be selectively interpreted; justifications are presented and evaluated by both LLF wrestlers, but presented as advocacy for women at the LLF sanctioned events. This is what makes the peacekeeping interaction unique, the focus on the how one change their feminized role, as opposed to the why they may be in that position to begin with, to arrive at “strong, female identity” as a communicative accomplishment.

Accomplishments, according to Garfinkel (1967), are the indexical expressions [taken-for-granted aspects of life] that emphasize identity under certain situations. Examples of accomplishment are illustrated by the works of deCerteau (1974) in the use of language, Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) discussions of metaphor, and Martin, Nakayama, Krizek and Bradford (1996) studies into the constitution of whiteness. This scholarship is extended by Johan Galtung and Michael Kuur-Sorensen (2009) in their work attempting to understand conflicting images accomplished through advocacy rhetoric. By pointing out that the accomplishment of language is used in the construction of social reality and control, individuals shape such control by their need for power, general hierarchies, efficiency, perpetuation of identity, and member accountability. This requires the

perception of a stable and simple categorical system by which the complex world can be described.

In cases of LLF wrestler identities, the process of negotiation is somewhat strained. The fixed categories and interests of an individual's decision-making process and the degree to which power is constituted cause events and behaviors that might otherwise appear quite normal. To then be viewed through indexical and reflexive constructions that confirm or advocate alternatives to the behavior or person's identity in question. Once confirmed or conformed within a certain type, the action of the control agent toward an "outsider" is determined by the prescribed routines of social control (e.g., lack of positive female roles in professional wrestling (or at least those propagated by the most visible federations)).

The peacekeeping work by LLF wrestlers provides a utility to recognize the inherent need for positive female role models in a larger socio-cultural environment that may not understand the polarizations of the social world or how participants accomplish their positive membership through their performance. However, discussions, or lack-there-of, clearly demonstrate the strained process of feminist advocacy and role negotiation. Common discussions of women in professional wrestling is to often discuss relationships tied to success and failure of feminine roles. This shows that a paradigm of fixed sexualized categories and interests can influence an observer's decision-making process as to the effectiveness of the peacekeeping advocacy. What makes the LLF work unique in communication, even with its focus on standard wrestling roles, is the claim that when LLF wrestlers conduct advocacy work, they are not discussing "inevitable facts or natural givens, but rather the residue of individual attitudes and assumptions regarding the value and purpose" (Boulding, 2004). This suggests that events and behaviors that might otherwise appear quite normal actually provided *the result of communication*.

Providing color commentary: Analysis of communication and advocacy of LLW

Peacekeeping is usually thought of as a method to the promotion of negative peace, or the absence of physical violence. “‘Peace’ is a situation where conflicts are transformed equitably and projects of equitable cooperation are built; security is a situation of low probability of violence to oneself, often fueled by paranoia. Peace is a relation between parties and peacekeeping is an active engagement toward peace” (Galtung, 1976). We add to this as a way to identify a systematic set of ideas and statements about the social world, while aiming to make sense of the said world. To be communicatively useful, these ideas and statements should be able to stand up to empirical observation and testing within the social world. If an approach is to be useful in the social world, it should also provide some conclusions that help us to understand or explain the (re)making of the social world. Thus, as Fenstermaker and West (2002) point out, we must be concerned with the mechanisms that sustain the institutional and social world. The approach should also be able to guide in the making of predictions that can be used to form sound observations concerning the social world. As such, we can view various performances, like professional wrestling, to improve the nature of understanding the everyday expressions of our social world. It helps communication by placing interactions in this kind of meaningful context.

As discussed earlier, because identity is made possible through repetitious and performative communication acts and because of the advocacy relationship of LLF wrestlers like Shinobu Kandori and a handful of others allow the changing of perceived situations to be treated as something that is constitutive, not additive. They offer women an opportunity to escape their negative situations and view something different, something more positive.

It stands to reason that the transformation of female identity in cultural avenues like professional wrestling will lead to advocates, who watch these “popular figures” transcend negative female roles. In turn, they will become women advocates themselves who can possibly transform society. In fact, it is particularly this framing of the dominant mentality that LLF wrestlers aim to challenge, shake, expose, and critique.

For this precise reason, a more direct usage of peacekeeping philosophies should be employed by female wrestlers in other global regions to allow women space to discuss and perform their assessments of practical accomplishments, which give sense to and accomplish their daily actions (i.e., communicating, decision-making, and reasoning).

As we watched and talked with the LLF women, we took particular notice of how these wrestlers co-produce their voices. Changing women's belief that their behaviors need to be a homogenous, externally produced process, sold ready-made for consumption. Listening to these women, outside of the ring, during their interviews, and watching their performances in the ring made us want to challenge the comfort zones provided by their American counter-parts. Being forced to wear clothing that typically is skin tight, revealing of the midriff, and exploiting their cleavage objectifies women. These are the same outfits that the American wrestlers often are made to wrestle in enforcing the sexualized nature of their performance for the pleasure of the viewers because they are skillfully wrestling in sexy clothing performing sexualized wrestling maneuvers. They are further objectified by participating in extra events that are designed for pure sexualized pleasure, and not for wrestling, and those are lingerie and bikini contests. There is no space of peacekeeping or feminist advocacy that can be heard over the enthusiastic roars from the crowd and even the announcers. Listening to LLF wrestlers like Diana la Cazadora, Intrusa, La Chacala, Tsunami, Polly Star, American Angel, and Ariel, force us to want to take notice of opportunities—ruptures—where we might, as Butler (1989) says, “repeat the regulatory norm, re-signify and re-articulate possibilities” for peacekeeping and feminist-perspective development.

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About the authors

Sarah M. McGaffey is an undergraduate student of the Communication Studies program at San Jose State University. In December of 2009 she will earn a B.A. in Communication studies and a minor in Journalism. She has presented a paper at the 2009 Bay Area Undergraduate Communication Research Conference discussing the issue of gender and sexuality of WWE women wrestlers. She enjoys researching on issues of gender, culture and power, and the adoption identity, Currently she is studying how Performance Studies can make invisible boundaries of gender and culture visible and discussable through performance.

Nicholas A. Zoffel is an Assistant Professor of Interpersonal Communication in the Department of Communication Studies at Manhattanville College. He earned his Ph.D. in Communication from Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, Ohio, U.S.A.) He has published, presented, and organized conference presentations for the National Communication Association, American Cultural Association, and other academic communities on various issues that consider gender, sexuality, identity, and popular culture. Specifically, his teaching and research focuses on how people understand, see, describe, struggle, succeed, and develop their identities— individually, culturally, and through their performances as part of local and global communities.