From War to Peace: The Reintegration Experience of Guatemalan Ex-Combatants: A Grounded Theory Inquiry

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From War to Peace: The Reintegration Experience of Guatemalan Ex-Combatants: A Grounded Theory Inquiry

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Abstract

The reintegration of ex-combatants has become a major focus of cease-fire agreements in the past 20 years (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007). However, the success of these programs remains elusive. In this study, I interview members of Nuevo Horizonte, an intentional cooperative comprised of Guatemalan ex-guerrillas who fought during the 36 year civil war that ended in 1996. These men and women reflect on two questions: What was the process of reintegration like? and What advice do you have for others who are going through the process? Using grounded theory, I develop a set of themes or strategies that these ex-combatants utilized during this transformative process to achieve a degree of successful reintegration: being united, being autonomous, being connected, being visionary, and being role models. The collective voice of these ex-combatants calls into question conventional reintegration programs in two major ways. Firstly, it challenges the premise that demobilization is necessary to maintain stability and peace in a post-conflict society by showcasing how their unity was integral to their reintegration experience. Secondly, it challenges the Development Model (where ex-combatants are viewed through a *deficit* lens and where outside experts deliver solutions) by highlighting how reliance on their own capacity engendered a sense of empowerment and resulted in their successful reintegration. These ex-combatants believe their experience can be used to assist other ex-combatants who are reintegrating into post-conflict societies around the world.

Definitions and Key Words

Ex-combatant refers to a former member of an armed group who took up arms to further a political or social cause. Following a negotiated peace agreement, these men and women are usually collectively referred to by the term ex-combatant, not only by external agencies which have brokered peace deals, but also by the civilian population and by the ex-combatants themselves. Former rebels, guerrillas, and insurgents are labels that are often used to describe the ex-combatants. Typically the term ex-combatant refers to insurgents or rebels, not to members of state armed forces.

Post-conflict Society refers to a society (such as a nation state) that has recently ended a civil war. A post-conflict society has achieved an end to direct violence, but is still struggling with indirect violence (such as injustice, fear) the members are collectively dealing with restitution, reconciliation and social justice.

Reintegration refers to the process of ex-combatants making the transition back into a civilian life. Typically this is part of a formal program of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration. Reintegration for ex-combatants typically has political, economic, social and psychological aspects.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) is an official component of the peacekeeping process occurring in post-conflict situations around the globe. Through disarming and disbanding former rebel groups and assisting them to re-join the larger society, the transition to lasting peace is thought to be measurably improved.

Nuevo Horizonte is an intentional cooperative comprised of approximately 400 Guatemalan ex-combatants and their families. This community, located in the rural remote tropics of northern Guatemala, was formed after the signing of the Guatemalan Peace Accords, and represents the collective intentions of its members to re-integrate into Guatemalan civilian life.

URNG, or National Revolutionary Union of Guatemala, was the umbrella organization of insurgent rebels who fought against the Guatemalan forces from 1960-1996.

Key words: Ex-combatants, Grounded Theory, Guatemala, Peace, Demobilization Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR), Social Constructionism

Table of Contents

Abstract……..……4

Definitions and Key Words……..……..5

Table of Contents……6

Acknowledgements……..11

Dedication……12

List of Figures and Tables……..……..13

Chapter 1: Introduction……14

An Invitation to the Reader

My Lived Experience in Nuevo Horizonte

Background Information

Definition of the Issue

Purpose of the Study

Research Question

Summary

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature ……29

Introduction

Peace Studies: A Foundation for Studying Reintegration of Ex-combatants

Peace Building and the Reintegration of Ex-combatants: The Current Global Context

What does Successful Reintegration Look Like?

Reintegration and Rational Reconciliation

Reintegration and Sentient Reconciliation

Summary

Chapter 3: Methodology.....51

Introduction

Philosophical Foundations of Methodology

Ontological Assumptions

Epistemological Assumptions

Axiological Assumptions

Establishing Trustworthiness and Authenticity

Anticipated Ethical Issues

Description of Methodology

Grounded Theory

Role of Researcher

Sources of Data

Data Collection Procedures

Selection of Participants

Pre-Interview Preparation

Description of the Interviews

Data Analysis Procedures

Part 1: Transcribing Conversation from Video Discs

Part 2: Primary Coding

Part 3: Secondary Coding: Creating Categories Around a Core Phenomenon

Part 4: Theoretical Sampling

Part 5: Developing a Theoretical Model

Summary

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings.....75

Introduction

Analysis

Part 1: Informal Review Prior to Transcription

Part 2: Primary Coding

Part 3: Secondary Coding: Creating Categories around a Core Phenomenon

A) What Were the Conditions That Influenced Reintegration?

B) What Strategies Were Used to Reintegrate?

C) What Were the Consequences of Reintegration?

D) What Were the Lessons Learned?

Part 4: Theoretical Sampling

Part 5: Developing a Theoretical Model

A) Developing Themes

B) The Concept of Success

C) A Theoretical Model

Summary

Chapter 5: Discussion.....103

Introduction

The Social Construction of the Ex-Combatant

Identity Construction

The Vulnerable Ex-Combatant

Being United

Being Autonomous

Being Connected

Being Visionary

Being a Role Model

The Social Construction of Reintegration

Relevance to the Existing Literature

Limitations

Suggestions for Future Research

Summary

Chapter 6: Conclusion.....134

References.....137

Appendices.....148

Appendix A: Consent form

Appendix B: Primary and Secondary Coding

Appendix C: Developing a Two-Dimensional Framework

Appendix D: Summary for Member Checking

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Dedication

Firstly, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Mary Ann, and my two sons, Sol and Dunavan. My family's support for this project was a key factor in the ultimate success and completion. In addition, I thank Mary Ann for forging the initial relationship with the community of Nuevo Horizonte, Guatemala, which enabled the development of the initial idea for this study. I also thank my children for putting up with living with the heat and insects in Nuevo Horizonte, and their willingness to give up their familiar and comfortable lives to live and experience another way of being.

Secondly, I'd like to dedicate this dissertation to the people of Nuevo Horizonte, who shared with me their stories – filled with their dreams, successes and disappointments. I hope that this dissertation can in some small way, assist them in their ongoing struggle to create a society built on the principles of social justice.

Finally, I'd like to dedicate this dissertation to the memory of Maurilia Coc Mac, 1988-1995, our neighbour in 1993 when Mary Ann and I accompanied Guatemalan refugees back to their homeland, and subsequently a victim of the last Guatemalan Army massacre. For Maurilia, the Guatemalan Peace Accords did not come soon enough.

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 3.1: Methodology Outline

Figure 4.1: Reintegration Viewed as a Linear Process

Figure 4.2: Reintegration: The Five Themes/Strategies

Table 1.1: A Brief Outline of the History of Guatemala

Table 4.1: Secondary Codes

Chapter 1: Introduction

An Invitation to the Reader

I begin this paper on a personal note by sharing with the reader not only how and why this dissertation came to be written, but more importantly, why I believe it is relevant. Firstly, this paper is a life-long culmination of my personal interest in the ideas, theories and hopes about peace, which in my younger years was manifested in activism, volunteer work and self-learning, but has since transformed into a formal academic pursuit into the growing but still young discipline of Peace Studies. In the Fall of 2007, I returned to university to take my doctoral course work in Peace Studies. As part of my foray into studying Peace Studies, I, along with my wife and two sons, had the privilege of living in Guatemala for a year–a country where 14 years ago we volunteered as international human rights observers to accompany thousands of Guatemalan refugees who were returning from southern Mexico following their exodus during the genocidal violence of the civil war.

When we returned in 2007, the community where we lived was called Nuevo Horizonte, which means New Horizon–an intentional cooperative in rural Guatemala comprised of former combatants from the Guatemalan civil war. The members of this community had taken up arms and joined the National Revolutionary Union of Guatemala (known by its Spanish acronym URNG) to fight against the Guatemalan army in the bloodiest and most violent civil war in the history of the western Hemisphere. The signing of the Peace Accords in 1996 transformed their lives and initiated their engagement in the challenging process of reconstructing and re-integrating into a new post-conflict Guatemalan society. These men and women made the intentional decision to reintegrate into Guatemalan society collectively, rather than individually, and 14 years later, their successes and their challenges are readily seen in the community they have created out of the sparsely populated northern Guatemalan jungle. My lived experience with these former guerrillas and their families generated a desire to better understand how soldiers and combatants make the transition from war to peace. In this inquiry, I do not focus on their experience as guerrillas or insurgents, and do not offer an analysis of their decision to take up arms, or their underlying political and social struggle. Rather, this paper is about their post-conflict story–their reintegration back into a civilian society. This paper is about their story, but it is for all Guatemalans, and I believe, relevant to us all. Therefore, I hope the reader will gain deep understanding and appreciation for the transition people make, collectively and individually, from war to peace, and at the same time understand why I, as a Canadian-born male whose mother tongue is English, have joined the community of Nuevo Horizonte in telling their story.

Secondly, my hope is that the reader gains a clear understanding of why the discipline of Peace Studies offers an important academic and practical perspective to our world. Peace studies is multi-disciplinary by nature, and inherently normative in perspective–that is, Peace Studies is more than merely the pursuit of understanding war and human conflict. Peace Studies is about learning how to promote peace and prevent war. Peace Studies scholars assert that while human conflict is inevitable, a systematic inquiry into the nature of conflict will guide us to a better understanding of how to solve conflict without resorting to violence. Although this dissertation explores only a small issue in the grand scheme of peace (the reintegration experience of ex-combatants following civil war) I believe these personal stories have the real potential to enlighten us all.

Thirdly, this inquiry into the reintegration experience of ex-combatants will offer the reader an example of research from a social constructionist perspective. Traditionally, the study of macro human conflict has taken a realist or liberalist approach (Nye, 2007, p. 7), focussing on the struggle (implicitly violent) over scarce resources or power (Avruch, 1998, p. 24). However, more recent constructionist approaches have challenged these traditional perspectives for failing to consider how identity, culture and meaning are inextricably linked to constructing conflict, and explicitly involved in the resolution or transformation as well. Moreover, international conflict analysis over the past 20 years has embraced the importance of peace building following the termination of violent conflicts (Wallensteen, 2007), which naturally lends itself to a constructionist perspective of building understanding and dialogue. Conflict is the construction of a special type of reality. Most of the time we assume and take for granted that we share a single reality with others, but we do not (Augsberger, 1992, p. 17). Therefore, my hope is two-fold: to build on the constructionist literature within the discipline of Peace Studies, and to offer social constructionist researchers an example of how grounded theory can be applied in the context of peace research.

In keeping with the commitment to situate this research project in the socio-political and historical context in which the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte came to be, I will briefly discuss my lived experience in the cooperative of Nuevo Horizonte, the historical background of the Guatemalan Civil War, the Peace Process, and the transition experience of the Guatemalan ex-combatants to present day, providing the reader with a deeper understanding of the macro forces undergirding the Guatemalan ex-combatant experience, and prepare the reader to consider the next three sections of this introduction: Definition of the Issue, Purpose of the Research Project, and specific Research Question.

My Lived Experience in Nuevo Horizonte

From September to December 2007, I lived in the community of Nuevo Horizonte along with my wife and two sons, aged 10 and 12. My wife, Mary Ann Morris, had previously established a relationship with this community, as a nursing instructor who had accompanied senior undergraduate nursing students to Guatemala to learn about the social and economic determinants of health in an international context. Nuevo Horizonte had established relationships with a number of North American post-secondary institutions and routinely hosted students who came to learn about Guatemala in general, and about their post-conflict journey specifically.

After having made annual visits for several years, Mary Ann formally asked the community if she and her family could live in their community for one year, as an opportunity to learn more about their history. I was excited to engage in this experience as an opportunity to combine a lived experience with former combatants while studying theory about peace and conflict. The community executive (Junta Directiva) agreed to our request. They provided us with a rent-free house in exchange for our helping out in the community in mutually agreed-upon ways.

Our rent-free house was an adventure in itself. All the houses in the community were virtually identical, as they had been built collectively and at the same time 10 years earlier. Although many now had small additions or other modifications, they all consisted of partial concrete block walls (with large open spaces to the outside) concrete and dirt floors, wooden shutters or clear plastic coverings for windows, and one outside tap. Our house had been abandoned for a period of time and needed some repairs when we arrived, which we completed with the help of community members in about 3 weeks.

Our two sons attended the locally run school while continuing with their English curriculum from home. Mary Ann spent her time helping out with some local projects while I engaged in my full-time course work in Peace Studies, which I completed through a distance program from the United States. Internet access was unreliable in Nuevo Horizonte, so I normally commuted daily by bus to the nearest city, about 45 minutes away.

The community of Nuevo Horizonte is situated on the major highway that connects the northern Guatemala to the capital city. The bus ride from Guatemala City takes 8 to 10 hours. The road is modern and in good repair, but often congested with streams of transport trucks. The surrounding countryside consists of rolling hills and

green pastures, scrub and forests. Much of the original tropical forests have been replaced by large scale ranching.

Nuevo Horizonte is unique as a Guatemalan village. Its streets have been arranged in an orderly fashion and comprise about four city blocks by four city blocks, which are lined with identical looking houses, giving the village a unified and organized ambience. The village is surrounded by 900 hectares of common land, which host fields for cattle, private garden patches, a cultivated pine forest (to be harvested in a generation) and a natural tropical forest that is home to two kinds of monkeys and the occasional jaguar and tiger (caught on film by night cameras), deer, armadillos, and a host of birds, insects and flora. A 45-minute walk from the village (but within the 900 hectares) brings one to a lagoon, which hosts a tilapia fish farm project and, according to all the locals, alligators that only come out at night.

Nuevo Horizonte has two community stores–one of which is run by the women's collective. In addition there are probably half a dozen smaller shops that operate privately out of people's houses. All the other businesses (a hostel, a restaurant, a wood shop) are community owned and operated.

In spite of being situated in a rural and sparsely populated area, I recall Nuevo Horizonte being very noisy at night. I usually fell asleep to the grunting and growling of the howler monkeys, whose calls, it seemed, echoed for miles. In addition, every household had at least several roosters who insisted in alerting us all to any night time activity. By 6 am, the entire community was awakened by the sunrise and by the loud grinding of the two gas-powered corn mills, which ground families' corn for their day's tortillas.

Unfortunately, our stay in Nuevo Horizonte was cut short due to my failing health. The harsh conditions (humidity, heat, insects, and dietary changes) exacerbated a pre-existing chronic health condition. Our anticipated one-year stay ended after only 4 months when we relocated to an urban setting in the temperate highlands about 8 hours away. Our relationship with Nuevo Horizonte continued from a distance as we occasionally returned to visit and hosted members in our home who were travelling to the city.

Through my 4-month experience, I learned a great deal about the community of Nuevo Horizonte. I came to know the men, women and children of this community as individuals and as friends. I also came to know some men and women on a personal level, some to whom I would later return to formally interview for this study.

I came to understand not only their idealized and heroic visions and aspirations, but also their realities–shortcomings and challenges that face all communities and societies throughout the world. As we lived together, the people of Nuevo Horizonte became more real to me than could have ever happened only through the typical interactions of formal research, such as interviews and short visits.

Background Information

Guatemala is a nation of contrasts. Its natural beauty and wealth, which includes rich agricultural land and natural mineral resources, are immediately visible. However, Guatemala's riches are contrasted with its poverty rates that are among the highest in the western hemisphere. Guatemala's poor, which includes a disproportionate number of the country's majority indigenous population, is further juxtaposed against a minority wealthy class that has remained essentially intact and entrenched throughout Guatemala's past 5 centuries of post-colonial history. In fact, disparity in wealth between Guatemala's rich and poor remains one of the highest in the world (Jonas, 2000).

As Guatemala's agricultural industry continued to prosper and grow in the last century, its political and economic power became consolidated in the hands of a minority wealthy elite (Jonas, 2000). The large plantations of export crops, such as sugar and coffee, were worked and harvested in near slave-like conditions, mostly by the indigenous subsistence farmers, whose own meagre plots of land were not sustainable in providing enough of a livelihood to support their families. Attempts at agrarian reform were violently repressed with the assistance of the United States, who had major economic interests in Guatemala's export agriculture industry (Jonas, 2000, p. 19).

However, conditions changed dramatically in the 1940s, with Guatemala's first freely elected president, Juan Arevalo, who along with his democratically elected successor, Jacobo Arbenz, ushered in a period of land reform and peasant rights. This "Guatemalan Spring" was short-lived. In 1954, a CIA-backed coup toppled the government of President Jacobo Arbenz, and marked the beginning of over 3 decades of right-wing military rule. Democracy returned in the 1980s in a nominal sense, with the advent of elections that met minimal international democratic election standards, but were distinguished by the dominance of ultra-conservative parties, repression and intimidation, and very poor voter turnout (Jonas, 2000).

In common with other recent civil wars in Central America, the Guatemalan experience was characterized as a "proxy war" of the Cold War between the United

States and the Soviet Union (Mamdani, 2005, p. 11). The rebels were labelled as Marxist, and American support, couched in moral and religious terminology (Mamdani, 2005, p. 111) was delivered under the rubric of saving its southern neighbours and allies from the evils of communism. The United States' major economic interests in Guatemala, which dated back to the 19th century, were seriously threatened by any hint of political and economic reform.

It was during this epoch of repressive military domination that in 1960, an insurgent movement began through the efforts of disgruntled members of the military, urban intellectuals and students (Jonas, 2000). The Cuban revolution had just occurred, and members of this newly formed movement looked upon Cuba as a model for bringing land reform, political, social and economic rights to all the citizens of Guatemala.

The armed insurgence was not the only response to the worsening social and economic conditions in Guatemala. During the 70s and 80s, the Catholic Church in Guatemala, largely in response to Vatican II and a renewed orientation to preferential treatment for the poor, reoriented its mandate and pastoral work to focus on the people of the poverty-stricken western highlands, the majority of whom were indigenous (Falla, 1992). The Church began to purchase land and organize agricultural cooperatives, which provided many communities with the ability to become self-sufficient for the first time since the Spanish conquest 500 years previous. This, however, had the effect of drying up the cheap labour force for the country's large estates that produced cash crops for export. In light of the Cold War rhetoric of this time, these cooperatives, and the Catholic leaders who organized them, were labelled subversive and communist by the Guatemalan military and economic elite. The results were tragic. In the name of fighting communism, the Guatemalan Army responded with untold brutality. At the height of the military repression in the early 1980s, more than 600 massacres were carried out (many of which consisted of destroying entire villages including torturing and killing all the men, women and children) in the military's official "Scorched Earth" policy (Falla, 1992, p. vii).

Two national leaders stand out in the history of Guatemala's repression: General Fernando Lucas Garcia and General Efrain Rios Montt. Both came to power as military rulers and their legacy, considered the most brutal in Guatemala's history, lasted from 1978 to 1983. Lucas Garcia has since died while living in exile in Venezuela, while Rios Montt is alive and well, and was recently re-elected in the fall of 2007 as a member of the Guatemalan National Congress.

As a result of the extreme and violent repression of the early 80s, tens of thousands of rural indigenous subsistence farmers (campesinos) fled their villages to Mexico to seek refuge. Hundreds of thousands more became internally displaced within Guatemala. Most of these people had experienced untold trauma losing family members to torture, disappearance and death, losing their land, animals and crops. It is out of this population that the Guatemalan insurgence, now called the URNG, received a new wave of support. Some of these campesinos, who had lost their families and livelihood and who had witnessed the systematic repression of non-violent organizations such as the Catholic Church, the Mutual Support Group (known by its Spanish acronym of GAM for Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo), Union of Campesinos (known by its Spanish acronym of CUC for El Comite de Unidad Campesina) among many others, determined that armed struggle was their only alternative. This is the story of the members of Nuevo Horizonte–subsistence farmers, many of whom had gained more than a decade of experience in the cooperative movement of the 70s, now reluctantly taking up a violent struggle against a brutal military regime.

It must be noted, however, that throughout the history of the URNG, the numbers and actual military prowess were fairly insignificant; at the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, there were only approximately 3600 combatants (Hauge & Thoresen, 2007). According to the United Nations-sponsored Truth Commission (known by its Spanish Acronym of CEH for Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico) which was published in 1999, the Guatemalan military and its allied forces were deemed responsible for 93% of the war crimes and human rights abuses, while the insurgent forces of the URNG were held accountable for only 3%. This wide disparity in responsibility is a testament to the excessive use of force by the Guatemalan army (supported militarily at various points by the United States and Israel) to counter an insurgency that was never very powerful. The blame for the massacres, officially labelled as genocide by the United Nations report, rested almost entirely at the feet of the government forces and its allies.

By the early 90s, however, global forces, such as the end of the Cold War and a widening global search for additional stable economic markets, brought external pressure to end the Civil War. Negotiations culminated on December 28, 1996, when the Guatemalan government and the URNG signed the final of 12 Peace Accords, which ushered in a much-anticipated official cease-fire. The Guatemalan Peace Accords were a testament to the tireless efforts of the representatives of both sides of the struggle, plus the negotiating and mediating skills of third parties, including representatives from Norway, Mexico, the United States, Venezuela, Colombia and Spain. The peace process began in 1986 and spanned 10 years.

Perhaps the success in sustaining the cease-fire was the agreement, or at least the promise, of the Guatemalan government to address a number of key issues that spoke to the very core of the causes underpinning the Civil War. These issues included recognition of the human rights of the Indigenous Peoples, agrarian and socio-economic development, the creation of a civil society built on the foundations of a culture of peace, and the establishment of a truth commission (Secretaria de la Paz, 2008). In other words, far beyond the agreement of a cease-fire (negative peace) the accords prescribed the steps agreed upon that would foster Guatemala's transition to a country of "positive peace," a nation built on the principles of social justice. The specifics of the documents were impressive and included the operationalization, complete with timelines, of the dissolution of the Military Police, the reduction of the size of the Guatemalan Army by 33%, the reorganization of military training from offensive counterinsurgency to peace keeping, and processes for the inclusion of poorly represented groups, such as women and the Indigenous majority, in decision-making (Secretaria de la Paz, 2008). The Guatemalan Peace Accords constituted a truly negotiated settlement (Jonas, 2000, p. 33), rather than a victor's imposition of terms upon the defeated, and included major concessions from both sides. However, upon reflection, it is unfortunately obvious that the reforms promised remain overwhelmingly unfulfilled (Crandall, 2004).

The Peace Accords also set the terms for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the ex-combatants, commonly referred to as DDR, increasingly a crucial element in the drafting of peace accords throughout the globe. The URNG, the former rebel organization, was given legal status as a political party according to Accord Number Ten, further attesting to the commitment of the accords to open the way for the journey from military to civil society (Secretaria de la Paz, 2008).

The process of their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) received a great deal of assistance from outside agencies such as the United States, the European Union and the United Nations (Hauge & Thoresen, 2007, p. 23) and included, among other things, training in a trade such as agriculture, construction or small business. The URNG members were divided into two groups: those who had families, land or some form of livelihood to which to return and those who had neither family nor assets within civilian society. The latter group amounted to a significant minority and represented people whose family members had been massacred and in many cases, whose entire villages had been completely destroyed. Of these, a large majority wished to re-integrate into Guatemalan society collectively. Borrowing from their experience of forming Catholic-based cooperatives in rural Guatemala in the 1970s and 1980s, they envisioned and subsequently actively negotiated the terms of their reintegration to include the

purchase of collectively-held land and the establishment of legally recognized cooperatives where they would have the opportunity to create a social, political and economic model of life based on the principles of equality. This dream was realized by many when three separate collectives were established throughout the country. However, due to many factors, two have disbanded and only one remains (T. Figueroa, personal communication, December 12, 2007). The remaining cooperative of Nuevo Horizonte (New Horizon) has approximately 400 residents and although it is struggling under the burden of a nearly $1,000,000 mortgage (no funds were made available to the ex-combatants to purchase their land), they continue to steadfastly journey to enact their vision of social, political and economic equality set within Guatemalan civilian society, 14 years after putting down their weapons.

The cooperative began as an abandoned estate of 900 hectares with no permanent housing or infrastructure. According to founding members, the first few years were extremely difficult, as people had no money or other resources to transform the tropical pastureland and forest into a viable agricultural operation. Long days of hard labour produced very little in terms of short term rewards and promises of government support went largely unfulfilled. However, 14 years later, the results of their-long term vision and hard labour, coupled with financial backing from international governmental and non-governmental organizations, are readily visible. I witnessed the results personally when I lived in Nuevo Horizonte. Just a few examples of the cooperative's successes include the following: local potable water system, an eco-tourism project that attracts international visitors, a restaurant and hostel, a fish farm, livestock, fruit and vegetable production, a chicken and egg project, a reforestation project, a community health centre, library, woodworking shop, daycare and their own independent high school. While individual wealth, in the form of personal material possessions, is not readily visible, their collective wealth is. The people of Nuevo Horizonte are very proud of their collective accomplishments.

Nuevo Horizonte, however, is a paradoxical microcosm of the current larger Guatemalan society. In spite of its social and economic progress, the same cannot be said so readily for the country as a whole. The social, political and economic disparity, which formed the basis for the Civil War in the first place, seems to have only been consolidated in the post-conflict period (Paris, 2004).

Within the context of Guatemala, the cultural gap or relational distance that exists between the indigenous and non-indigenous or "Ladino" subcultures is significant. The underlying variable, to which all discussions of power and poverty in Guatemala ultimately lead, is the alleged iron fisted oligarchy, or economic hegemony of

Guatemala's ruling elite that is undergirded by racism (Arzu, 1992, p. 14). It is widely contended that the country is ruled and controlled by an elite consisting of approximately 150 families (Briscoe, 2007). Although the Civil War has ended, this oligarchy continues unabated, so firmly entrenched that democratic initiatives to date have not altered it (Arzu, 1992, p. 14). Although the Civil War adversely impacted the nation's poor, indigenous, and in some cases, even members of the middle class through counterinsurgent state terror, the ruling class remained essentially untouched. Therefore, while the peace accords have brought some relief from human rights violations and minimally improved social conditions related to poverty and discrimination to the majority, it did not do so at the expense of the ruling minority.

The following table provides an overview of historical events in Guatemala leading up to the creation of the cooperative Nuevo Horizonte (information for this table was gathered from community presentations and participant interviews, as well as from historical accounts of Guatemala).

Table 1.1: A Brief Outline of Guatemala's History, as it Relates to Nuevo Horizonte

1954	CIA-backed coup occurs in Guatemala, ending a 10-year period of democracy and land reform, and ushering in a 40-year period of political repression characterized by military rule.
1960	Civil war begins. Insurgent forces largely comprised of disgruntled military, urban intelligentsia.
1960s and 1970s	Cooperative movement starts in the Guatemalan highlands bringing self-sufficiency to many of the subsistence farmers of the western highlands.
1980s	Height of military repression. Over 600 massacres, primarily concentrated in the western highlands, occur. Tens of thousands flee to Mexico as refugees. Cooperatives are particularly targeted, as are local Catholic priests and lay leaders. Insurgent forces (URNG) are now joined by many indigenous farmers from the western highlands whose families were either killed or who fled, and whose farms and cooperatives were destroyed.
1985-1996	The URNG and government forces engage in the Peace Process, producing 12 separate accords, culminating in the cease-fire (Final Accord), on December 29, 1996, which ended the Civil War.
January 1997 to February 1998	United Nations Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) carries out formal disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process for Guatemalan insurgent forces members.
February 1998	Nuevo Horizonte Cooperative is established in the northern province of El Peten, consisting of 400 ex-combatants, including their children (130 families). The land is purchased collectively, and consists of an abandoned estate of 900 hectares. The members of this cooperative crossed ethnic divisions and includes people of Mam, Quiche, Kek'che and Ladino (mixed indigenous and European) ancestry.
1998-2010	Nuevo Horizonte is transformed from an abandoned savannah to a working cooperative. Infrastructure

	includes day care, primary and high schools, eco-tourism projects, restaurant, hostel, poultry and egg production, fish farm, tree farm, cattle ranching and intensive market garden vegetable farming.

Sources: Gurriaran, 2010; United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, 2004; Figueroa-Acetuna, 2009, and participant interviews.

Definition of the Issue

In the previous section, I provided a general overview of the history of the Guatemalan Civil War, its antecedent factors, and the subsequent peace process. From this broad picture, I then focussed on the specific legacy of the insurgent ex-combatants who collectively re-integrated into Guatemalan civilian life through the cooperative of Nuevo Horizonte. This background story brings us to the main issue of this study: How do ex-combatants make the transition from being a soldier/guerrilla to a civilian?

There is little in the literature that comes directly from the lived experiences of ex-combatants, particularly in their voice as they define successes and challenges. My review of the literature has led me to the conclusion that almost all of the literature is written from the perspective of First World experts (for example, see Boas & Hatloy, 2008; Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007; Metsola, 2006). We know that the challenges are many, but we know little about how ex-combatants face those challenges, and what they do to address or overcome them. As there is growing attention from international and non-governmental peace building organizations on ex-combatant reintegration, it is necessary to build the research literature on this important topic. In addition, considering that Guatemala represents only one of many nations that is struggling to achieve positive peace following a violent conflict, lessons to be learned from the Guatemalan experience have global implications.

While an analysis of a post-conflict society such as Guatemala could be undertaken from a number of different perspectives, I am particularly interested in an inquiry into the challenges of the journey of Guatemala's people to re-build their nation, through the lens of the ex-combatants. I posit that their worldviews, shaped by their unique role in Guatemala's history, have not been adequately understood, and that a scholarly inquiry into their narrative may offer a potentially important perspective to the current literature on post-conflict societies and the reintegration process for ex-combatants around the world.

Recent history gives many examples of post-conflict societies addressing the question of ex-combatants following civil war. Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (referred to as DDR) of ex-combatants following armed civil conflict has become an increasingly common strategy, and in recent years, the United Nations has adopted official guidelines for the implementation of DDR (United Nations, 2000). While the mechanisms for Demobilization and Disarmament of troops are fairly finite and straightforward, the reintegration of ex-combatants is much more difficult (Hamber, 2007). The research literature on this topic is growing, and attests to the many challenges and failures that ex-combatants and those facilitating their reintegration have experienced in various countries which have recently ended civil conflict. In light of a fairly extensive body of negative literature regarding the process and enactment of DDR, the positive reintegration of the ex-combatants of Guatemala's insurgent forces (the URNG) in the cooperative of Nuevo Horizonte is unique and has been deemed a success by many in the international community, and by the ex-combatants themselves (United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, 2004). It is my hope that lessons can be learned from their story and from their journey.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to elicit thoughts and ideas from the ex-combatants who are living in Nuevo Horizonte, Guatemala, about how they as ex-combatants have made the transition back into civil society. My hope is that by using a grounded theory approach, a mid-range theory can be generated that may offer greater understanding about the core phenomenon (the ex-combatants' reintegration), causal factors, strategies and consequences. Though generalizability of the results to other post-conflict contexts is not directly possible, nonetheless, my hope is that the methodology used and the understanding gained will be transferrable and useful with other similar groups of people.

Research Question

My research inquiry is broken down into the following two questions:

1. How did you make the transition back into civilian life?
2. What advice do you want to give to other ex-combatants in other countries who are in the process of reintegration?

My goal is to elicit rich, substantial and relevant information by asking these two basic questions to a selected group of Guatemalan ex-combatants who live in the Nuevo Horizonte Cooperative.

Summary

In this introductory chapter, I have explained my own interest and connection to the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte, Guatemala, and subsequently briefly described the historical context in which these guerrillas engaged in an armed struggle and subsequently agreed to a cease-fire. Following this, I explained the purpose of this inquiry, its significance, and finally, put forward two interrelated research questions.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

I begin the literature review with a description of the context in which it was written. Prior to beginning my formal literature search, I drew my understanding about the reintegration of ex-combatants from the following: having lived in Nuevo Horizonte for 4 months with a group of Guatemalan ex-combatants, and having familiarity with the literature on the reintegration of ex-combatants in Guatemala. Although incomplete, it provided the impetus to learn more. However, I was faced with a disconnect between seemingly opposing thoughts on the nature and the success of the reintegration of the ex-combatants who now live in Nuevo Horizonte. While some researchers referred to Guatemala as a success story of reintegration (United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, 2004) others emphasized the challenges and failures (Hauge & Thoresen, 2007).

I believe it is important to address the question of whose standards are utilized for measuring the success or failure of a reintegration program. Economic standards (often used as a marker for success) vary greatly throughout the world and perspectives between local ex-combatants and foreign researchers may be divergent. For example, from a foreigner's perspective, the community of Nuevo Horizonte appears to be, by northern standards, poor. Housing is crowded, vulnerable to insects, rain and flooding, cold and heat. Although most houses have electricity, many families struggle to pay the bill. Floors are often dirt, and running water is available for only 6 hours per day, via one outdoor tap per household. This raises two issues: perhaps the story of Nuevo Horizonte is somehow different from other stories of ex-combatants around the world, and perhaps evaluations of reintegration programs and strategies are not measuring success with precise tools. My hope is that this review of the literature will address these preliminary questions, as well as provide a knowledge foundation for the methodology and analysis used in this study.

My purpose in this chapter is to review the relevant literature in order to gain a better understanding of reintegration strategies and outcomes from around the world. By critically examining what knowledge and ideas have already been established in the field of reintegration of ex-combatants, I hope to direct this study in a way to address any gaps and inconsistencies in this knowledge. I hope to synthesize various theoretical concepts, identify possible gaps, and determine how they bear relevance to the research question; and finally, demonstrate that there is a

limitation to the current understanding, and therefore it is necessary to pursue this research topic.

Although some grounded theorists advocate delaying a review of the research literature until data collection and analysis are completed (in order to not be driven by existing ideas and constructs) (Charmaz, 2006, p. 6), others acknowledge the value in calling attention to gaps or bias in existing knowledge and thus providing a rationale for the study purpose (May, 1986, p. 149). I have decided to conduct a thorough review of the literature prior to my data collection, in order to direct this current study in a manner that will render it as relevant as possible. As Gergen (2009) states, learning about existing knowledge can potentially open new and exciting vistas of possibility, rather than limit us to the constraints of the existing scientific "cultural constructs" (p. 58).

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the discipline of Peace Studies and how this study fits into this broader academic discipline. Considering the axiological assumptions of this inquiry, a discussion on how this topic relates to Peace Studies will help to contextualize the purpose as well as the discussion and conclusion. Following this, I divide the review of the literature into five sections. In the first section, Peace Building and Reintegration of Former Combatants: The Current Global Context, I examine the literature on recent and current global trends, including the changing nature of war and peace building (along with an analysis of current discourse on various models of justice), and the theoretical challenges which post-conflict societies (and therefore ex-combatants) face during the post-conflict phase. In the second section entitled: What Does Successful Reintegration Look Like, I review how DDR research and evaluation describe success. This section exposes the difficulties in measuring a concept (such as reintegration) that may initially appear straightforward. In the third section, Reintegration and Rational Reconciliation (a title based on categories developed by Stovel, 2008), I examine the reintegration process from a quantitative, or a rational or materialist paradigm. Under this heading, I examine the literature that focuses on measurable indicators, such as reintegration in terms of economic performance and the re-occurrence of civil war. In the fourth section, entitled Reintegration and Sentient Reconciliation (from Stovel, 2008), I discuss the concepts of reintegration that move beyond the material perspective of reintegration and examine theoretical issues such as social psychological reintegration, identity formation and transformation (both from the perspective of the ex-combatant and from external perspectives), and the processes of forgiveness and reconciliation. And in the final section, I summarize the major issues of the literature review and put forward some related unanswered questions

and conclude by offering a justification for the current content and process of this study.

Peace Studies: A Foundation for Studying Reintegration of Ex-Combatants

Peace Studies is a relatively new discipline, normative and trans-disciplinary in nature, integrating broad perspectives ranging from psychology and sociology to political science and religious studies. Our understanding of war and peace has shifted over the past 50 years. We now view peace as something more than the mere absence of military combat (negative peace); we include the concept of positive peace; that is, eradicating structural violence (attaining social justice for all) as articulated by Galtung (1969). Thus, peace research has also evolved from a study on the prevention of war and arms control to include a study on how to transform oppressive systems which cause widespread poverty and suffering (Jeong, 2000, p. 42). Thus, the goal of peace research is much broader than merely trying to prevent or stop military conflicts. Understanding the reintegration process of former combatants is part of the new interpretive analysis, which is predicated upon consideration of the context of wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes (Jeong, 2000, p. 45).

Understanding the complex nature of interpersonal conflict is essential to working towards peace and justice. A materialist approach emphasises conflict as a matter of competition over scarce resources (Avruch, 1998). Coupled with the realist paradigm that dominated international conflict analysis during the Cold War, theorists essentially ignored cultural and social-psychological underpinnings of conflict. Avruch, however, posits that conflict, even at the international level, has social and cognitive components that require what he refers to as a cultural approach. Lederach (1995) adds to this by saying: "The psychological and even cultural features often drive and sustain the conflict more than the substantive issues" (p. 13). Understanding the connection between conflict and culture is not merely a question of sensitivity or of awareness, but a far more profound adventure of discovery of the accumulated shared knowledge that is common to a group of people (Lederach, p. 10). Lederach's discussion leads us to a social constructionist paradigm, which explains how shared culture and meaning play a pivotal role in constructing conflict. Accordingly, construction of social meaning lies at the heart of how human conflict is created.

> A constructionist view suggests that people act on the basis of the meaning things have for them. Meaning is created through shared and accumulated knowledge. People from different cultural settings have developed many ways

> of creating and expressing as well as interpreting and handling conflict. Understanding conflict and developing appropriate models of handling it will necessarily be rooted in, and must respect and draw from, the cultural knowledge of a people. (Lederach, p. 10)

By emphasizing social constructionism as a foundational assumption of this inquiry, I justify why an understanding of the ex-combatants' reintegration process necessitates hearing their perspective.

Peace Studies is a normative discipline, that is, one that moves beyond describing how things are to suggesting how things should be. However, articulating and theorizing how things should be is in itself a socially constructed enterprise. Who decides what the ideal is? Since Peace Studies began as a formal discipline in a Western, European model of social sciences (Jeong, 2000), it is subject to criticism of being Eurocentric (Berkowitz, 2002). Gergen (2009) acknowledges that scientific theory does not spring solely from observation, but from the scientist's social group (p. 23), and that scientific thought and research therefore is constructed in a manner in which the proponents benefit (p. 14). Peace Studies literature in general and research on DDR specifically, needs to be scrutinized in terms of who is determining the research agendas and in particular, who is establishing the goals and objectives of DDR programming. It is therefore necessary to note that none of the literature from which this review is drawn, was written by an individual or group of ex-combatants. On the contrary, the literature is dominated by scholars and professionals from so-called advanced Western nations.

Peace Building and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants: The Current Global Context

The reintegration of the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte, and indeed all ex-combatants, operates on both the individual and group level. Hence, the factors that influence this transition range from the intrapersonal to the group and beyond. Because the reintegration of ex-combatants in general is managed by foreign and international organizations, global and international forces and trends potentially have a significant impact on the way in which reintegration programs are operationalized. Hedstrom and Swedberg (1998) ask the important question: how do macro level events affect the individual? The following section reviews the literature on recent trends in large scale conflict (and particularly the post-conflict phase) and how these trends may impact the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Although popular perception may suggest otherwise, the last few decades of human history have seen a dramatic decline in almost all forms of armed conflict, including civil war (Human Security Report, 2005, p. 146; Wallensteen, 2007). The reasons for this decline have been attributed to the end of the Cold War and post-colonial independence struggles (Nye, 2007), decreased ethnic discrimination, more democracy, and less poverty (Human Security Report, 2005, p. 146). In addition, armed conflicts currently have far fewer deaths than those in previous decades, although it is important to stress that casualties have largely shifted from those of combatant deaths to civilian deaths (Human Security Report, p. 2).

Perhaps a much more significant trend, however, is the way in which our global collective attitude and understanding of armed conflict has changed. It is noteworthy that intergroup conflicts today are rarely resolved through achieving victory via the unconditional surrender by one side in the conflict (Maoz & Eidelson, 2007, p. 1476). With the development of international organizations such as the United Nations, there has been a much greater emphasis on diplomacy and prevention (Evans, 2009; Human Security Report, 2005; Wallensteen, 2007). Furthermore, the role of United Nations and other bodies has transitioned from one initially concerned with monitoring and maintaining cease-fires to one concerned with reconstruction and even reconciliation (Evans, 2009, p. 191), and focusing more practically on the causes of armed conflict, such as poverty (Evans, 2009, p. 199). Reintegration of ex-combatants has grown out of this shift in orientation. Kofi Annan, a former United Nations Secretary General, stated that the aim of peace building is to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace in war-torn societies (United Nations, 2000) so that a peace would endure long after the departure of the peace builders themselves, and contended that peace is more complex than the absence of armed conflict.

The demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of the former members of the URNG have been a critical component of the peace accords and follow international peacebuilding efforts over the last 20 years. Formal DDR operations of the United Nations began in 1989, and have since figured prominently in post-conflict rebuilding in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Balkans (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007, p. 532). While the United Nations proclaim that DDR programs have had remarkable success, as measured by the associated political stability, prevention of a recurrence of armed conflict (United Nations, 2000, p. 1) and improved economic outcomes (Pugel, 2007), others challenge these assertions by arguing that there is little empirical evidence to support the premise that internationally funded programs facilitate reintegration (Humphries & Weinstein, 2007). Regardless of the diversity of opinion surrounding the efficacy of DDR

programs, they have grown in both popularity and magnitude. By 2005, over 1,000,000 former combatants had participated in DDR programs in approximately 20 countries worldwide (Theidon, 2009). A testimony perhaps to the recent global shift in commitment to lasting peace and a more comprehensive rebuilding of post-conflict societies has been our current collective willingness to pay for such programs for the financial cost has been significant. For example, costs to enrol an ex-combatant in a DDR program are 4.7 times the average income of his/her respective country. This sobering figure may also attest to the level of stark poverty found in the majority of countries where DDR programs have been offered to date (Theidon, 2009, p. 2).

In the next section I present a detailed analysis of the benefits and challenges of DDR programs; however, it is necessary to first review the larger context in which DDR programs are implemented. As stated already, a growing global culture of collaboration and conflict prevention has formed the foundation for DDR programs. This, no doubt, is a positive trend for reasons already discussed. However, some researchers query the underlying political ideology behind DDR programs and question how these fit into larger geo-political and economic forces. To begin with, some scholars assert that DDR programs are part of overall strategies to improve democratic processes in post-conflict societies. Paris (2004) challenges this assertion and suggests that the peacebuilding activities of the United Nations and the development wings of wealthy Western nations ultimately serve to foster conditions amenable to the goals of neo-liberalism and related economic and political aspirations, thus ultimately supporting the vested interests of these same donor nations.

Paris labels this new peacemaking formula the Liberal Peace Thesis. The premise of the Liberal Peace Thesis is that liberal democracies tend to be more peaceful, both domestically and internationally. Stated more simply, liberal democracies do not go to war with one another. This assertion has been corroborated by others (Rosato, 2003) and perhaps satirically illustrated by Klein (2007), who contends that no two countries with McDonalds franchises have ever engaged in armed conflict with each other. According to the thesis, transformation of post-conflict societies into liberal democracies leads to the creation of new market economies, that subsequently ensure lasting peace, the commonly sought goal of all parties following a civil war. Democracy therefore goes hand-in-hand with market liberalization by reducing trade barriers, downsizing government intrusion into the economy, and maximizing freedom for private investors (Paris, 2004, p. 21).

Paris discounts this particular orientation to peacemaking by examining the progression of 14 recent post-conflict societies from around the world (including Guatemala), where he concludes that there is very little evidence to support the Liberal Peace Thesis. Reasons are complex, but include some fundamental issues, such as the fact that liberalization increases competition in societies which can be ultimately conflict inducing in post-war states dealing with longstanding erosion of infrastructure, laws, and civil institutions (p. 45). A quick shift from autocracy to democracy is often accompanied by increased, not decreased, civil violence (Fearon & Laitin, 2003), and an attendant exacerbation of the disparity between rich and poor. Paris (2004) notes that peacebuilding efforts in Guatemala have helped only a very small portion of the population (p. 113) and furthermore, have reproduced the very conditions that led to the conflict in the first place, namely social and economic disparity (p. 114). Jonas (2000) concurs with this position by concluding that post-conflict economic trends in Guatemala have actually undermined democracy rather than supported it (p. 219). Garibay (2006) convincingly confirms these concerns in his analysis of post-conflict El Salvador, where neo-liberal economic policies (reduction of government intervention, decreasing trade barriers and increasing natural competition) have led to a deepening of disparity (p. 478).

One is left with the question of how the Liberal Peace Thesis, of which neo-liberalism is the cornerstone, has impacted the development and implementation of DDR programs throughout the world. The literature does not address this question directly. However, there is ample evidence that the peacemaking programs promulgated by the United Nations and Western nations have directed the international post-conflict rebuilding efforts for the past 20 years (Paris, 2004) and that DDR programs have become an integral component of this work. The concerns are as follows: the inherent challenges of DDR programs may be related to the underlying and overarching ideology upon which they are based, and the challenges of reintegration for ex-combatants may be exacerbated by limited choice regarding participation in programs whose ideology they do not share.

In the discussion thus far, I have argued that the context in which DDR programs are conducted is greatly influenced by global economic and political forces, and significantly shaped by the Liberal Peace Doctrine. In addition to these influences are a variety of issues that specifically challenge the post-conflict society's journey from violence to sustainable peace. Brewer (2003) has determined a number of these challenges, such as the tension between seeking peace and seeking justice, as well as the tension between seeking truth and seeking reconciliation. An additional challenge for post-conflict societies is the legacy of violence which stems from the

brutality of the armed conflict and subsequently manifests in different forms in the post-conflict phase that include criminal violence (Goldstein, 2007; Morales-Alvarado, 2008) and domestic violence (Alston, 2007; Briscoe, 2007; Rehn & Sirleaf, 2002, p. 11)

The transition from a conflict to post-conflict period is fluid and permeable. Although direct combat may have ceased, there is a period of time in which the language of the people remains determined by the conflict (Bucaille, 2006) and a collective memory of the events of the conflict dominate. It has proven to be a major challenge to eradicate violence despite a resolution of the outstanding conflict, for ample evidence suggests that post-conflict societies are often burdened with simply a new form of violence. For example, 12 years after the end of the Civil War, violence within Guatemala shifted substantially. In some ways the nation has changed dramatically, and in other ways, it is disturbingly similar. Today there is no longer an armed conflict being waged by the guerrillas, army, paramilitary forces or government dictated civil defence patrols. However, in its place there is rampant fear of random criminal violence. Guatemala's chief Human Rights Officer summarizes Guatemala's current reality by saying that although the civil war is over, the country now faces a more difficult, undeclared war (Morales-Alvarado, 2008). Political violence has been replaced by criminal violence, whereby Guatemala currently has the third highest murder rate in the western hemisphere (Cereser 2007), unprecedented violence of all forms against women (Frenkiel, 2006), gang violence and rising drug related violence. One might conclude that the source of fear has simply been replaced from fear of the army and/or guerrillas to fear of criminals. Goldstein (2007) chronicles a common shift in focus from "communists to criminals" throughout Latin America since the end of the Cold War. A recent human rights opinion poll determined that almost two thirds of Guatemalans listed security related to crime as the nation's number one priority while less than 1% listed political human rights (Masilla-Wever, Office of the Procurador of Human Rights, Guatemala City, personal communication, May 12, 2008). The shift from political human rights to security can be seen in the sometimes violent reactions of ordinary citizens to criminals, in response to the perceived inaction of the state to protect them. Horrific acts of violence, including lynchings, burning persons alive and other forms of gross violations of human rights are brought upon petty criminals in Guatemala as vigilante justice. Even Guatemala's network of human rights offices, located in each of the 22 departments, is receiving more complaints related to gangs and delinquency than to the political human rights abuses that were rampant just over a decade ago (A. Socoy, personal communication, May 15, 2008).

Some suggest that this anomalous upsurge in violence is directly related to the failed reintegration of ex-combatants (Bougarel, 2006, p. 486). This may be linked to learned patterns of aggression that are being imported into domestic relationships (Bougarel, 2006, p. 486) and the lack of economic opportunities for ex-combatants, which in turns leads them to resort to violent criminal activity for their livelihood (Knight & Ozerdem, 2004, p. 502). This sobering perspective was echoed by a former member of the Guatemalan army when he poignantly stated that peace will not be achieved until all those who participated in the atrocities have died (L. Contreras, personal communication, January 15, 2008).

However, Garibay (2006) disputes this notion when asserting that most of the criminal activity in El Salvador is carried out by a generation that was too young to have participated in the armed conflict in that country. Along with Theidon (2009), he posits that today's social violence and civilian breakdown (p. 17) stems from globalization and the dominant neo-liberal economic order, which has led to the migration of millions of young people north in search of work. According to Garibay, illegal status, overwhelming numbers, lack of employment and English language fluency or lack of work skills leads to involvement with criminal gangs in poor neighbourhoods of North American cities (p. 478) and subsequent seeding of gangs and related illegal activities and violence throughout Central America and Colombia when they are deported.

Jeong (2000) notes that many would argue that the global dominance of neo-liberal capitalism has shifted real power from nation state to multinational corporations. The result is that even well-intentioned democratically elected governments in Guatemala will struggle (p. 91), perhaps with increasing futility, to carry out their mandates of gender equity, education and health reform, and economic development.

The concept of peace is closely related to justice and equality (Galtung, 1969; Jeong, 2000, p. 29). The term justice has many nuances, especially in the context of building peace in the post-conflict society. As described previously, the out-dated notion of victor and loser was born out of a retributive justice ideology, one in which defeating the enemy was the surest way to justice. Retributive justice is built upon constructing the other as adversary, and is synonymous with revenge (Lambourne, 2001, p. 313). Retribution as a form of justice inevitably focuses only on one's own grievance, and necessitates a solid defeat of the enemy in order to prevent further retaliation and retribution. The limitations of this paradigm are readily apparent when viewed from today's vantage point of the lessons of wars past.

Restorative justice, on the other hand, refers to a much more holistic approach, where the emphasis is placed on restoring relationships and addressing the underlying injustices which led to the original conflict (Lambourne, 2001, p. 313). Restorative justice is based on the belief in the innate humanity in both the victim and the perpetrator (Clark, 2009). Social and economic justice are often described as separate forms of justice, but ultimately, both the social and economic underpinnings of any conflict need to be considered when working from the perspective of restorative justice.

Reconciliation is another concept closely related to justice, restorative justice in particular. In reconciliation there is an emphasis on promoting healing broken relationships (Larson, 2009, p. 54) and it is a process that engages victim, offender and community in dialogue. Lambourne (2004) acknowledges that the relationship between two conflict groups, especially after traumatic events such as genocide, can never return to the past and that injustices may never be forgotten. However, reconciliation can allow a relationship to be transformed in a profound process of psychological and spiritual healing. Stovel (2008) considers DDR programs to be a form of reconciliation. However, she criticizes conventional DDR programs as only addressing what she labels *rational reconciliation*, those measurable impacts such as signing peace agreements, and demobilizing ex-combatants back into their communities of origin. The second form, called *sentient reconciliation* (Stovel, 2008), though much more difficult to measure, fosters greater transformation as it encompasses issues of trust, feelings, emotions and healing.

Kriesberg (2007) has identified several basic dimensions of reconciliation, such as apology, forgiveness and acknowledgement, but concludes that many post-conflict societies engage in only a small realm of reconciliation. In Guatemala for example, both the URNG and the Guatemalan Army officially apologized for their crimes against the civilian population (Jonas, 2000), and a Truth Commission was conducted (Comision Esclaramiento Historico, 1999). However, the country has fared poorly in some of the other dimensions of reconciliation put forward by Kriesberg including reduction of inequities and development of cross-cutting ties among culturally and economically diverse sectors. Viewed from this angle of inquiry, Guatemala ranks last or near last on reconciliation indicators such as income disparity, life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy and poverty (Government of United States, 2008), when compared with its Central American neighbours.

In summary, this section outlined the greater context in which ex-combatants must engage in the reintegration process. From global socio-political and economic forces to the psychological tensions which all post-conflict societies face, it is evident

that there is a myriad of contextual factors that undergird the reintegration process and profoundly impact its outcome.

What Does Successful Reintegration Look Like?

In this next section, I review the literature to determine a comprehensive definition of successful reintegration. What does successful reintegration look like? It is not an easy question to answer, let alone draw generalizations, as all conflicts are unique (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007).

Although the DDR process has been studied in academic circles (Doyle & Sambanis, 2000) and scrutinized by evaluations (Theidon, 2009, p. 3), Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) contend that there still is little information on the factors that explain which individuals reintegrate successfully (p. 562). The DDR literature instead focuses on details of program design and implementation, with information that has tended to be technocratic and simply quantifying the number of participants and number of weapons collected (Theidon, 2009, p. 3). Part of this lack of understanding can be attributed to the difficulty in evaluating such programs, as they do not take place in isolation, but rather are usually complemented by an array of social and economic interventions. Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) conclude that far from being able to determine that DDR programs are successful, there are too few cases and far too many confounding variables to identify what contribution DDR programs have made to the reintegration of ex-combatants (p. 533).

In spite of the complexities in measuring the success of DDR programs, one factor that was widely acknowledged was the ability for ex-combatants to find employment following program participation (Garibay, 2006, p. 467; Humphries & Weinstein, 2007, p. 549). In addition to finding employment, Humphries and Weinstein (2007) constructed three other criteria in their study of reintegration of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone: acceptance by family and community, improved confidence in the state's ability to operate (from the ex-combatant's perspective), and disintegration of the ties among the ex-combatants. This last criterion is worth noting, considering the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte explicitly requested to re-integrate collectively, ostensibly bringing into question the validity of this fourth criterion. Ozerdem (2002) suggests an additional criterion to measure successful reintegration: the sustainability of the negotiated peace processes (p. 91). Considering that peace requires breaking the command and control structures operating over rebel fighters (Spear, 2002, p. 141) in order to prevent them to return to organized rebellion, it seems the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte have fallen outside the constructed notion of successful reintegration.

It is worth noting that criteria for successful reintegration were universally set out or defined by external bodies (such as researchers or program evaluators). There is little information provided in the literature to determine how much input the ex-combatants had in drafting these criteria. Rather, ex-combatant input tended to focus on how well these programs (designed by others) fared (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007; Stovel, 2008). Intuitively, it seems obvious that economic reintegration or employment would be considered legitimate by any ex-combatant. However, considering that the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte measured the success of their reintegration by remaining in close connection with their combatant colleagues (in contrast to the fourth criterion discussed by Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007) raises the question of how the criteria in general were established.

Humphreys and Weinstein found that one dimension of success (i.e., employment) was not a good predictor of another dimension (e.g., acceptance by their community). They conclude that although it would provide simple and clear information for policy and analysis, it is not possible to generate a single measure of reintegration success. "Distinct processes may underlie each of these measures of reintegration success" (p. 543). Therefore, an identified gap is to determine what these processes are.

A growing body of DDR literature has focused on the unique reintegration needs of female ex-combatants (Bouta, 2005; Edloe, 2007). Special challenges for women included addressing their reintegration into a broader society that often devalued the role of women (Stovel, 2008, p. 317). Many female ex-combatants reported that their time in combat was characterized by equality and unprecedented respect by their male colleagues (Hauge & Thoresen, 2007; Theidon, 2009), but upon return, the larger cultural values seemed to honour only the male ex-combatants, while treating the females as "dirty" (Hauge & Thoresen, 2007; Theidon, 2009). However, Theidon challenges the preoccupation with traditional gender discourse in evaluating DDR programs. She argues that in order to evaluate DDR programs, our concept of masculinity itself needs to be deconstructed in order to separate male identity from violence militarism and armed combat (Theidon, 2009).

Methodological approaches to studying conflict can be differentiated into two different strategies. One strategy is based on an analyst-centred, objective viewpoint, which Avruch (1998) refers to as an *etic* approach. The hallmark of the etic approach, according to Avruch, is the identification of categories or discrete variables that are amenable to statistical manipulations, and are able to reduce tremendous diverse information into a few manageable dimensions (p. 68). A second strategy is the *emic* approach, which Avruch describes as "thick

description" (p. 68) and brings with it all the benefits of ethnography, including attention to context and detail and closer attention to the lived experience of those being studied.

What follows next is a more detailed analysis of the literature on the outcomes of reintegration programs from around the world. In this first section, I review the literature in which an etic or objective perspective has been provided.

Reintegration and Rational Reconciliation

Humphreys and Weinstein's (2007) research on the reintegration of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone has questioned the efficacy of DDR programs, contending that little is known about the factors that account for successful reintegration at the micro level (p. 531). In response to this identified gap, Humphreys and Weinstein undertook a quantitative analysis of surveys conducted with over 1000 ex-combatants. The authors constructed four variables, based on the accumulated research and evaluation of DDR programming, to measure successful reintegration: dissolving the ex-combatant networks, improved income earning opportunities, increased confidence in democratic process and reconciliation with family and community. The authors assert that their study does not demonstrate that the DDR process in Sierra Leone assisted the process of reintegration, even after controlling for factors such as spill over (positive benefits from concurrent peace building programs in the country), and selection biases or sampling issues.

Economic reintegration was the most prominent component of reintegration programs for ex-combatants, as evidenced by the literature. The primary challenge, however, is not difficult to anticipate, considering that most reintegration programs have occurred in countries where poverty is a major issue. Often, it is poverty that has led to the civil war in the first place, as is the case for Guatemala, and often it is poverty that draws young disenfranchised men into the combatant role (Jonas, 2000). Therefore, to implement programs to economically re-integrate ex-combatants into a society mired by poverty and a lack of economic opportunities seems to be a difficult, if not futile task, as evidenced by Garibay's (2006) research in El Salvador, Paris' (2004) analysis of post-conflict Nicaragua, and Hamber's (2007) research in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Hamber adds that in Northern Ireland, which unlike the previous examples, boasts a highly developed economy, unemployment among ex-combatants after DDR was still six times higher than the national average (2007, p. 5). Metsola (2006) explains that in Namibia, greater success was achieved with economic integration through a unique program where ex-combatants were given coveted civil service jobs. This practice fulfilled an additional achievement by

measurably improving the former rebels' loyalty and confidence in the state (p. 1126). Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) acknowledge the inherent challenges in economically rehabilitating ex-combatants, but assert that in relative terms, participation in a DDR program offered ex-combatants more economic opportunities than those who did not (p. 549). Understanding the variables that improved the individual's success remained inconclusive, however, as age and gender were not consistent predictors of their four variables of reintegration (p. 546). Interestingly, socio-economic status and education were associated with worse success at reintegrating (p. 546), as measured by finding employment.

Acceptance of ex-combatants by their former communities was also an important factor in evaluations of reintegration programs. Although more difficult to measure, the degree of acceptance of former combatants following their demobilization has been studied by Humphreys and Weinstein (2007). Understandably, individuals who did not participate in war crimes found acceptance easier in Sierra Leone. This may have been the result of the psychosocial impact of the conflict or may have reflected the unwillingness of host community members to accept the ex-combatants who may have committed violent abuses against them or their families (p. 548).

Weapons for Cash programs, designed to both disarm ex-combatants and offer direct economic opportunity, were initially an important part of DDR programs, but have since been determined to have negligible effect and often have had the unintended consequence of creating illegal arms markets, and creating an influx of weapons into fragile nations (Berdal, 1996, p. 34).

This review on the materialist, or objective and measurable outcomes of DDR programs has focused primarily on the economic opportunities on which they ostensibly have provided. While there is some evidence that economic opportunities do improve after participation, the literature is mixed, and acknowledges the complicating large-scale influences, such as societal poverty. Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) propose further quantitative randomized research be designed to further understand the real measurable benefits of DDR programs (p. 561).

Reintegration and Sentient Reconciliation

The rational construction of DDR focuses on outcomes as defined by outsiders, such as economic opportunity, and unbroken peace accords. Knight and Ozerdem (2004, p. 502) summarize these etic understandings with the macro-insecurity framework, where economic opportunities not only benefit the individual ex-

combatant, but on a societal level, also prevent former combatants from either re-engaging in combat, or engaging in criminal activity. However, intrinsic to this outsider perspective has come a certain distrust or labelling, resulting in the construction of negative labels for ex-combatants, such as "spoilers" (Stedman, 1997), "belligerents" (Krampe, 2009), and "obstacles" (Hauge & Thoresen, 2007). In Liberia, ex-combatants were generally viewed as "uprooted urban youth with a history of unemployment, underemployment, and idleness (Boas & Hatloy, 2008, p. 33), prone to criminal behaviour (Abdullah, 1998) in spite of contrary evidence gathered from the ex-combatants themselves (Boas & Hatloy, 2008, p. 33). Stovel (2008), too, expresses concern that rebel groups are portrayed as terrorists (p. 310). Metsola (2006) suggests the reasons why ex-combatants are viewed with a great deal of suspicion rather than with potential is that of fear that their organizational capacity, strategic knowledge and military skills might be used against the ruling class, and extends to the international community and donor countries. Collier's (2007) appraisal of the moral character of insurgents is particularly negative, and he contends that these groups comprise a major stumbling block to economic development in the world's poorest countries. He paints insurgents with broad strokes, insisting that their motives are dubious and their tactics are anything but noble, and uses examples from Sierra Leone (rebels were recruited from "teenage drug addicts, easily controlled and not excessively inhibited by moral scruples" [p. 25]), and their supposed demands for social justice are quickly appeased with simplistic materialistic achievements such as expensive wristwatches (p. 20), thus placing them on a moral level of a petty street gang. While these situations do exist, they do not represent the entire range of ex-combatants. Collier (2007) draws upon the work of Oyefusi, whose research focuses on the decision-making processes of Nigerian youth who joined rebel organizations. Oyefusi determined that perceived grievance was not a predictor of participation. Rather, being young, uneducated and without dependents were more accurate predictors for joining rebel organizations. Collier infers that "it is difficult to reconcile these characteristics of recruitment with an image of a vanguard of fighters for social justice" (2007, p. 31). However, this argument neglects the evidence that social movements of the last century, ranging from women's rights to gay rights to anti-war movements, tended to attract young and unattached activists. What is concerning about Collier's analysis is that he (as a former executive with the World Bank and best-selling author) maintains powerful influence with global policy-makers involved in post-conflict rebuilding. I believe that ex-combatants, due to these pervasive negative images, may potentially, as Gergen (2009) states, become "morally condemned by the research" (p. 59).

The image of the morally corrupt and violent and dangerous rebel fits in with our global dominant culture construct that terror and violence comes to our world primarily at the hands of rebels, guerrillas and insurgents (Sluka, 2000). The statistics firmly contradict this widely held belief; the majority of terrorist acts (defined as direct or indirect violence aimed at a civilian population for a political cause, with the purpose of instilling fear and terror into a society) are carried out not by rebel groups, but by so-called legitimate state governments (some of them liberal democracies) and their actors–armies, secret police and paramilitary forces (Sluka, 2000, p. 2).

My own experience living with the ex-combatants in Nuevo Horizonte has given me a contradictory understanding of this constructed identity of ex-combatants. As Avruch (1998) states, immersing oneself in the lives and stories of a group of people inevitably leads to a deep or emic level of understanding. Outsider observers, in their guise of objectivity, appear to have depicted the ex-combatant as a potential threat to their nation's future security and peace. This may not be totally unfounded; however, my experience suggests to me that this perspective is quite different from the way in which ex-combatants view themselves. Stovel (2008), for example, exposes how the international peace brokers touted the reconciliation process in Sierra Leone as successful, while her in-depth interviews with the ex-combatants themselves revealed a contradictory view (p. 307). I explore this apparent disparity in constructed identity further in this next section with a review of the literature which focuses on the psychosocial aspects of reintegration, moving beyond the quantifiable and material dimensions of DDR programs.

The initial transformation from civilian to combatant is a profound process, one in which one's identity is significantly affected. This newly formed identity is manifested both individually and collectively, and may internally embody the heroic images of the warrior fighting for a just cause, while externally embodying a threatening and fearful image (Stovel, 2008). This identity formation is sometimes a simple process, such as the case of men and women who take up arms for a cause which they strongly believe to be just (Bougarel, 2006; Garibay, 2006). However, in the case of abducted child soldiers in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the participation in extreme forms of abuse and violence has led to identity confusion and breakdown. For example, the children who were forced to commit acts of violence against their own villages and families, not only faced rejection during DDR, but were also forced to confront their own contradictory identities (child, son, daughter and murderer) that were constructed during their combat time (Veale & Stavrou, 2007). Regardless, Kelman (2007) argues that identity is a basic human need and is strongly tied to our fundamental psychological need for a sense of belonging– but one that is often

overlooked in conventional DDR programs (Stovel, 2008; Theidon, 2009). The larger society may think it is essential to keep such a group under control due to their potentially destabilization abilities (Bucaille, 2006, p. 426). These deeply entrenched, yet opposing internal and external identities are resistant to change (Bar-Tal, 2007). Bar-Tal asserts that constructing the identity of the ex-combatant fulfills fundamental social psychological needs for both the combatant and those in the larger society. The collective identity is maintained and strengthened in protracted conflicts, but ultimately must be deconstructed and reconciled in order for reintegration to be successful (Fisher, 2001, p. 25). Levy (1992) suggests this process is further challenged by the Observation of Prospect Theorists, who hypothesize ex-combatants would tend to be risk-acceptant to avoid losses (that is, clinging to entrenched conflict-based identities) and risk-averse to achieve gain (that is, rejecting new civilian identities, in spite of potential rewards).

Interviews of ex-combatants in El Salvador exemplify the fundamental need of belonging: "I knew that my life was about to change, as if all of a sudden I was to become an orphan: the army had been my father and the Acahuapa battalion my mother. I couldn't imagine being turned into a jobless civilian overnight" (Castellanos-Moya, 2001, p. 12). Theidon (2009) goes further in exploring how the identity of the ex-combatant is tied to cultural norms of masculinity. One ex-combatant from Colombia expresses his identity crisis after the disarmament process by describing himself as "one more unemployed, unskilled young man" (p. 16), because conventional symbols of masculinity (such as income, education, decent housing and car) were now inaccessible. The only symbol of masculinity that was accessible to the ex-combatants was in organized crime and gang activity, where prowess with a weapon and combat experience was recognized (Theidon, p. 18).

As mentioned previously, the reintegration experience of female ex-combatants has become a particular area of focus in the literature, which according to Theidon, has been restricted by traditional iterations of sensitivity, which simply call for adding a gender dimension to evaluation frameworks. This dimension is important, as the unique challenges that women face during reintegration have been largely ignored. However, Theidon (2009) argues that this sidesteps a more important issue of male identity, masculinity and the military (p. 4). She examines the question of how violent forms of masculinity are "forged and sustained" (p. 5) and how DDR programs might effectively "disarm masculinity" or re-shape it in the reintegration phase. Theidon questions whether DDR should deconstruct and then reconstruct what it means to be a man in a post-conflict society, because DDR may be seen as a betrayal, as men may join an armed group in hopes of achieving social mobility. Yet

that sense of status may be stripped during reintegration (p. 23). Since peace building programs have not significantly addressed the pervasive post-conflict challenge of subsequent domestic violence, Theidon strongly suggests that DDR programs need to incorporate strategies to assist former male combatants in how to forge a "new masculinity" (p. 29) that incorporates and honours the role and identity of a loving, nurturing husband and father in a new civil society.

The ex-combatants who live in Nuevo Horizonte all constructed new identities upon entering the armed conflict, evidenced in the very concrete act of adopting new first and last names. The rationale for adopting pseudonyms was to protect their close relatives from violent reprisals if they were ever captured and interrogated by the Guatemalan armed forces. It is interesting to note that the ex-combatants retained these pseudonyms during and after the reintegration programs, and maintain their "rebel" names even today, ostensibly long after the threat of capture and reprisal is gone. This is perhaps a small yet significant example of how one's individual identity is maintained long after DDR programs have been completed. Although DDR programs appear to be oriented to the ex-combatant who is identified as a potential threat, based on traditional military and security objectives (Theidon, 2009), my review of the literature did not provide any examples of ex-combatants who identified themselves in this manner, attesting to a potentially significant discrepancy in identity construction between the ex-combatants and those who manage their reintegration.

While much of the literature has been devoted to exploring the ex-combatant's identity as perpetrator, little has focussed on the identity as victim. Perhaps the only time ex-combatants' victimization has been explored is in the context of the child-soldier, but even in this context, child ex-combatants are labelled as both victims and perpetrators. In spite of the fact that the literature is focused on issues such as loss of identity and lack of economic opportunity, the use of a language of victimhood is absent. It would therefore be interesting to see whether ex-combatants view themselves as victims.

Reintegration, therefore, is a much larger transition and cannot be captured solely by quantifiable variables such as gainful employment or whether or not combatants re-engage in violent warfare. In fact, the demobilization phase of DDR explicitly attempts to break down the connections and allegiances that were forged during combat. The goal is to deconstruct them so that the reintegration process is done individually. In a sense, this breaks up their collective identity as combatants, but the literature does not provide any backing that this collective identity is a detriment (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007) other than the fear of re-mobilizing. No

literature was found which suggested that this collective identity could actually assist in the reintegration process. This question is important for this study, considering the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte explicitly chose to reintegrate collectively (negotiating as a unified body that is based on their guerrilla past), explicitly countering the objectives of the DDR process in Guatemala.

I have reviewed the literature on how identity is considered a component in the psychosocial reintegration of ex-combatants. In discussing how the identity of combatants is constructed (often as perpetrator and in generally negative terms) and how the identity is transformed, I believe that the literature is limited in that the perspective of the ex-combatant is under-represented. Our Western paradigm of cultural sensitivity is nonetheless limited in research by the power relationships (in which the researcher is the expert), and our own cultural biases (in which Western ways of knowing are considered superior) (Potts & Brown, 2005). As DDR processes are usually implemented and controlled by outsiders, there is the potential for lack of sensitivity for cultural nuances, power imbalances and other biases. Sometimes, in the effort to embrace cultural sensitivity, foreigners mistakenly concentrate on traditional and perhaps romantic notions of reconciliation, which, in reality, may mask underlying problems. Stovel (2008) states that in the case of Sierra Leone, Western DDR leaders embraced the notion of a traditional slogan: There's no bad bush to throw away a bad child (referring to the inherent reconciliatory nature of African culture). Her qualitative interviews with ex-combatants however, often contradicted this romantic ideal, and instead raised significant concerns about their concerns about justice and equality. She argues that DDR processes controlled by cultural outsiders may actually reinforce the very tensions and power structures that contributed to the war in the first place (p. 306).

A final concept in the social/psychological aspects of reintegration is forgiveness. If reintegration can be construed as a form of reconciliation, or restorative justice, then the concept of forgiveness is important to investigate. The paradox of forgiveness is that, according to Tavuchus (1991) "an apology, no matter how sincere or effective, does not and cannot undo what has been done. And yet, in a mysterious way and according to its own logic, this is precisely what it manages to do" (p. 5).

Forgiveness is a component of Stovel's sentient reconciliation (discussed earlier), and as such, has often eluded conventional DDR programs. Forgiveness in the context of ex-combatants also requires a revisiting of the discussion of whether ex-combatants identify themselves as victims (thereby needing to accept calls for forgiveness from government counter-insurgent forces, for example) or perpetrators

(thereby needing to offer forgiveness to the victims of their violence). However, the literature specific to DDR addresses only the latter, while avoiding the perspective of how ex-combatants may see themselves as victims. In her analysis of post-conflict reconciliation in Sierra Leone, Stovel (2008) examines how forgiveness transpires between the former rebels and the communities that were victimized by their violent insurgence. Stovel criticizes the process, asserting that communities were pressured into forgiving the former rebels in order to expedite reconciliation. "Many statements of forgiveness, then reflect no real forgiveness but rather helplessness" (p. 314).

In Guatemala, for example, The URNG (of which the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte were members) were determined to be responsible for 3% of the human rights abuses during the civil war (CEH, 1999) while the government forces were responsible for 93% (CEH, 1999). This overwhelming imbalance implies that the ex-combatants could be identified as victims. They may further view themselves as victims by focussing on their economic and political reasons for becoming guerrillas. Although both sides asked for forgiveness in the years immediately following the Peace Accords (Jonas, 2000, p. 157), it is questionable whether apologies without addressing the inherent long-standing power imbalances can lead to true reconciliation. According to Corntassel and Holder (2008), official states' apologies can go only so far so as not to disrupt political and legal stability, and implicitly, economic status quo. The victims of state abuses (in Guatemala's case, the victims of the longstanding economic and political hegemony) are being asked to become reconciled with loss (p. 467). Stovel (2008) warns, however, that social conformity does not equal equality and justice (p. 318). Taiaiake's (2005) condemnation of state apologies (without a restitution component) are strong: "The logic of reconciliation as justice is clear: without massive restitution, including land, financial transfers and other forms of assistance to compensate for past harms and continuing injustices committed against our peoples, reconciliation would permanently enshrine colonial injustices and is itself a further injustice" (p. 152).

In an analysis of the shooting of five Amish schoolgirls in 2006 in Pennsylvania, Kraybill, Nolt and Weaver-Zercher (2007) conclude that the community was able to offer complete forgiveness to the perpetrator due to their Christian faith, their history of martyrdom and communal culture built upon non-violence. Their strong Christian faith freed them to leave questions of life and death in God's hands (Kraybill et al., 2007). However, unlike Rwandan survivors of genocide, one could argue that the Amish had access to a formal justice system that was ready and willing to offer them retributive justice (i.e., punishment for the perpetrator), so their forgiveness was not constrained by outside pressures, but was offered freely. If

forgiveness is to be a component of DDR programs, it must also be offered and requested freely, as part of a reconciliation program that includes restitution for all those who have been harmed.

Summary

From a social constructionist perspective, a review of the current literature is necessary to understand the forces that shape dominant thought and research priorities. This exploration is not the ending, but rather a beginning. That is, this exploration invites us to ask: How did we come to hold these views? Why do they seem so very obvious? What are the reasons to explore alternatives? (Gergen, 2009, p. 32).

The reintegration of ex-combatants has become an integral component of post-conflict peacekeeping programs throughout the world in the past 20 years. This process, however, has proven to be challenging to implement and difficult to evaluate. Through an examination of the literature, I have argued that influential global trends such as neo-liberal political and economic policies have predisposed the outcomes of DDR programs as well as the way in which we have evaluated their successes and challenges. The research has been varied, as has been the contexts in which DDR programs have been implemented. Reviews from Latin America have tended to construct ex-combatants as ideological fighters for social justice, while reviews from Africa have tended to view ex-combatants more as political or economic opportunists. In almost all reviews, however, the ex-combatant is viewed with some suspicion by the greater society, by those in charge of DDR programs, and even by the researchers and evaluators. The methods used to measure the success (or lack thereof) of DDR programs have ranged from the quantifiable, objective approaches to ethnographic inquiries seeking understanding into identity transformation and the complex process of reconciliation. In all cases, however, the researchers and authors were not ex-combatants, and in most cases did not reside in the country in which the conflict had taken place. This is indicative, perhaps, of our current geopolitical context, where most civil wars are taking place in countries ravaged by long-standing poverty, lack of education and an absence of the first-person voice in the dominant literature. This Eurocentric perspective has been clearly documented in the larger context of Peace Studies literature.

In the definitive pursuit of seeking understanding of the reintegration process of the Guatemalan ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte, this review of the literature, in my opinion, has left some important issues unaddressed. The ex-combatants from Nuevo Horizonte had entered into a transformational process, an armed struggle to

politically and economically revolutionize their communities and their country. While the Peace Accords offered them an end to the fear of being killed, they offered only minimal economic security. What the Peace Accords have failed to offer to them, or to the majority of the people of Guatemala, was political and economic social justice, the vision for which they took up a violent struggle in the first place. They have essentially been requested to re-integrate into the status quo. While the Guatemalan experience in not very unique in this perspective, the literature did not provide sufficient insight into how ex-combatants dealt with this lack of change in a process that is deemed to be transformative. Stated more plainly, the ex-combatants were expected to transform, while the larger society was allowed to remain unchanged.

Furthermore, the literature is scant on the potential benefits of re-integrating in a collective manner, attesting to the dominant perspective that splitting up insurgent groups is best for the overall security of the society. Additionally, this review has left us with insufficient insight into the conditions which foster positive reintegration on the individual or community level.

My hope, therefore, is to seek greater understanding and clarity on how the ex-combatants in Nuevo Horizonte were able to reintegrate so successfully. Perhaps their story will stand apart from the existing literature, because they have viewed their journey as a positive one. We may be able to learn valuable lessons from their unique perspective.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

To introduce the methodology section, I would like to reiterate the goal of this study, the purpose and the significance. The goal of this study is to elicit thoughts and ideas from the ex-combatants who are living in Nuevo Horizonte, Guatemala, on how ex-combatants make the transition back into civilian life after an armed conflict. This study is important because the understanding it may generate corresponds with our transforming global priorities of rebuilding, reconstruction and reconciliation. This study is relevant because DDR programs are now present throughout the world, and current research and evaluation strategies have focused upon outcomes and criteria defined primarily by non-combatants, and we have not completely understood when or if this process is successful.

In this section, I outline the methods I used to seek understanding and answers to the research questions, as articulated in the introduction, and repeated here:

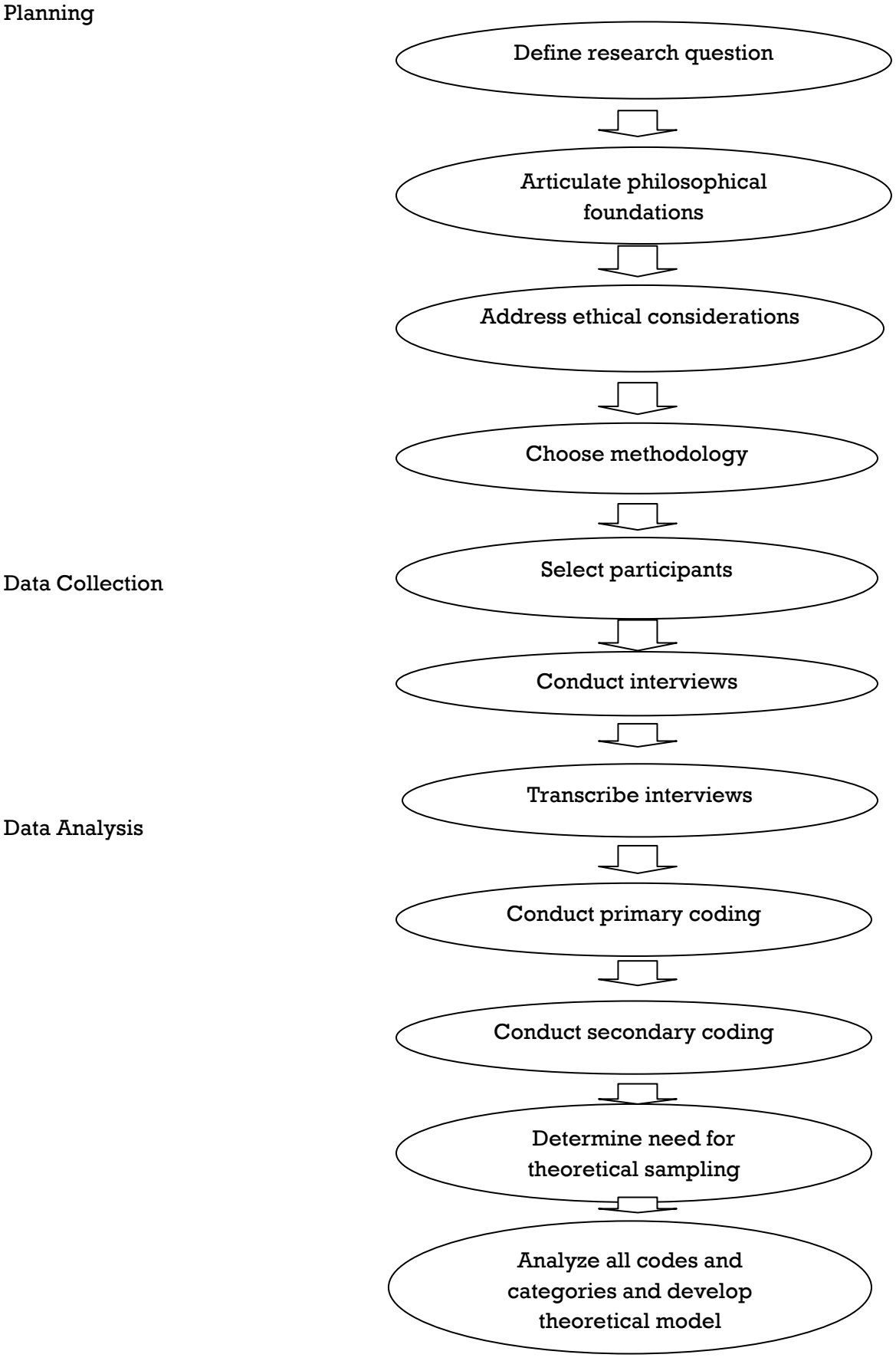
1. How did you make the transition back into civilian life?
2. What advice do you want to give to other ex-combatants in other countries who are in the process of reintegration?

The process of defining the research question is directly connected to defining the core phenomenon. The core phenomenon is the primary process or action which I seek to understand, and is based on the research question. The core phenomenon in this study is the reintegration of ex-combatants.

The methodology chapter is divided into six sections. In the first section, Philosophical Foundations of Methodology, I discuss the ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions of this inquiry as well as ethical considerations in conducting the research. In the second section, Establishing Trustworthiness and Authenticity, I describe how the methodology meets qualitative research methodological rigour. In the third section, I discuss the anticipated ethical issues. In the fourth section, Description of Methodology, I justify why I have chosen grounded theory as a methodological approach, describe my role as researcher, and describe the sources of data. In the fifth section, Data Collection Procedures, I detail how I selected participants and how I conducted the interviews. In the sixth section, Data Analysis Procedures, I describe the process of transcribing, coding, and interpreting the interview data.

Figure 3.1, on the following page, displays the methodology process in graphic form, and outlines the process in terms of planning, data collection and data analysis. This figure offers a clear visual representation of the methodological processes. However, its linear presentation is limited in conveying the dynamic process of overlapping the collection and analysis of the data, which characterizes this and most grounded theory research.

Figure 3.1: Methodology Outline



Philosophical Foundations of Methodology

Ontological Assumptions

Ontological assumptions refer to the foundational suppositions one makes about the nature of reality. Creswell (2007) asserts that in an ontological inquiry, the researcher asks the question of when something is considered real (p. 248). Strega (2005) adds that ontology is a theory about what the world is like, or more simply, ontology is a worldview (p. 201). The history of Western inquiry has been dominated by a realist or modernist ontology, whose supporters assume that reality is separate and distinct from humans (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 176). Realist researchers, therefore, aim at discovering the truth, using rigorous scientific methodology.

My inquiry, however, is grounded in social constructionism, and as such is based on the ontological assumption that reality is socially constructed, and therefore cannot be viewed as independent from those who have constructed it (Creswell, 2007, p. 248). Charmaz (2006) asserts that a social constructionist approach explicitly assumes that any conclusions or theoretical development offers an interpretation of the studied world, not an exact picture of it (p. 10). The goal, therefore, of this project is to gain understanding, rather than discovering the positivistic conceptualization of "truth." Charmaz (2006) adds that "neither data nor theories are discovered. Rather, we are part of the world we study and the data we collect" (p. 10).

Social constructionists acknowledge that the research process emerges from interaction (Charmaz, 2008, p. 402); in this case, the interaction between the members of the Nuevo Horizonte cooperative and myself. In other words, the researcher and participants co-construct the data–the data are not the observed objects. From this, Gergen (2009) posits that scientific knowledge, therefore, is a by-product of a social process. The process by which a scientific inquiry is chosen, is carried out and is ultimately disseminated is highly influenced by social interactions that often create the belief that scientific discourse is in essence a "natural, taken-for-granted reality" (p. 23). New paradigms or worldviews occasionally challenge collectively held and firmly entrenched beliefs. However, these shifts do not necessarily bring us closer to a reality that is fixed and unchanging. Instead scientific revolution shifts horizontally, not progressively, as we adopt a new paradigm (p. 24).

Epistemological Assumptions

An epistemological assumption addresses the question of what counts as knowledge (Strega, 2005, p. 201). How one views the world is influenced by what knowledge one possesses, and what knowledge one is capable of possessing is influenced deeply by one's worldview (or ontology). Schwandt (2000) suggests that researchers do not find or discover knowledge so much as they interpret and construct it, through models, frameworks and schemes (p. 197). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) concur, by stating that research findings are created, not discovered (p. 168). Our knowledge, therefore, offers a means of explaining our world, thus influencing our world view (ontology). Concurrently, our world view directs the knowledge we seek. Ontology and epistemology are therefore inextricably interconnected according to the social constructionist paradigm.

I can claim with certainty that, as someone who has been educated within the dominant culture of North America, I have become accustomed to an educational system dominated by a Eurocentric epistemology or "way of knowing." Modernism sprang out of the European Enlightenment view of reality, and is characterized by the idea that reality can be understood and discovered through a rational, objective, scientific method, which is neutral and value-free. Those who operate from this view hold that knowledge is impartial and neutrally discovered. Implicit in this understanding is that non-traditional methods of inquiry are inferior. "Information gathered by other methods and by researchers who socially and politically locate themselves fails to attain the status accorded to knowledge" (Strega, 2005, p. 204). The enlightenment also led to a type of knowledge colonization, in which Western thought was argued to be at the top of the epistemological hierarchy.

It is difficult, and perhaps unwise, for me to attempt to evaluate the epistemological assumptions of the ex-combatants in Nuevo Horizonte. Considering our differences in education, language and culture, it is prudent to assume that their assumptions may be disparate from my own. However, after having lived in Guatemala and in their community, I would like to offer the following observations. Based on my children's experience of participating in the Guatemalan school system (including a time in the community of Nuevo Horizonte), I believe that in general, the dominant Guatemalan society has embraced the modernist, Western epistemology in much the same way as our dominant North American culture has. This belief is further backed by encouragement of the community members, individually and formally (as a cooperative), of their children to pursue formal education in the modern and conventional paths (i.e., high school and university). However, I occasionally witnessed examples in which this Western modernist epistemology was challenged by other ways of knowing. One example occurred when Jose, an ex-combatant from the community, was assisting us in renovating our house. We

required a palm-thatched roof to cover a portion of our living space that did not have a roof. When we were about to set off into the forest to harvest palm leaves at a time that had been negotiated the day before, Jose cautioned me that maybe this was not the best time to build this roof. His rationale was that, according to the elders, it would be necessary to wait until after the full moon to harvest palm branches. Breaching this requirement would probably lead to a leaky roof in the future. Jose seemed not entirely convinced about this elder advice, and asked me what my opinion was. I replied that I would respect whatever he believed, but that in all honesty, I did not believe that the full moon had any bearing on the future permeability of our roof. His face lit up and he quickly responded that he did not believe it either, and that we should be on our way with our day's work. It is interesting to note that a few months after the roof was complete, it did end up leaking. Explanations offered by visiting community members ranged from poor workmanship (a modernist paradigm) to not adhering to lunar cycles (a traditional paradigm).

What counts as legitimate knowledge is an important question to ask in preparing for a research inquiry. Potter (1996) considers how a certain way of knowing is socially made to appear stable, factual, neutral and independent of the speaker, often at the expense of an alternative perspective. "Like money on the international markets, truth can be treated as a commodity which is worked up, can fluctuate, and can be strengthened or weakened by various procedures of representation" (p. 5).

Ladson-Billings (2000) argues that one's worldview can potentially be both liberating and hegemonic. Nonetheless, it is necessary to acknowledge that my own way of knowing may differ in many ways from the participants, who represent a separate ethnic, cultural and linguistic group that is underrepresented in the research literature of the dominant culture. The challenge faced by many minority writers, is whether to find legitimacy within the dominant paradigm, or whether to seek alternative epistemologies to describe their experiences (Ladson-Billings, p. 260). My challenge in writing this dissertation, therefore, is to continually question my own "way of knowing" and to seek alternative and/or complementary worldviews regarding the reintegration of ex-combatants.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), epistemology, ontology and methodology are all interconnected. The researcher approaches the world based on his or her situatedness (e.g., nationality, culture, education), which formulates a set of ideas or a world view (ontology), that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that is then examined is a specific manner (methodology). The net that contains all these connected parts is one's paradigm (p. 18), which in this paper,

is social constructionism. In addition, the research is guided by the values and ethics (or axiological assumptions) of one's distinct interpretive community, which in this paper, is the discipline of Peace Studies. In the next section, I further explore my axiological assumptions and how they are connected with the social constructionist paradigm.

Axiological Assumptions

Axiology refers to methodological assumptions based on our ethics and values. Lincoln and Guba (2000) assert that one's axiological assumptions, namely one's values and ethics, influence the research process in fundamental ways. Values and ethics influence the choice and focus of one's research, the framing of the research question and the selection of a theoretical framework and methodology (p. 169). I acknowledge that all research is value laden, and therefore it is necessary to explicate what values I will bring to my research design, implementation and analysis.

As a researcher in the discipline of Peace Studies, I believe that an inquiry such as this one needs to be placed in a framework of how can we further our understanding of working through conflict without resorting to violence, or as Jeong (2000) states, motivations behind theoretical analysis must be associated with a commitment to change (p. 46). As such, I view this inquiry as fitting into this characteristic of peace research in which I seek understanding of the reintegration of ex-combatants with this understanding forming the potential catalyst for positive change. As Charmaz (2006) states: "Grounded theorists' background assumptions and disciplinary perspectives alert them to look for certain possibilities and process in their data" (p. 16). I believe, as an individual, that I can still enact the results of this inquiry as a form of activism.

In the meantime, that is, before I am able to disseminate an understanding of the reintegration of these Guatemalan ex-combatants, I can demonstrate my commitment to activism in other ways. Concurrent to the researching and writing of this paper, I am working with the people of Nuevo Horizonte by supporting a community based library project. In conjunction with several other activist partners, we have collaboratively sponsored an education scholarship (a monthly stipend for a young person attending university to coordinate the community library) for Nuevo Horizonte.

Peace studies, as a normative discipline, explicitly calls for research and inquiry to work towards a common goal of social justice. This means process is attentive to

fairness, equality and hierarchy. As Charmaz (2005) states, "it signifies thinking about being human and about creating good societies and a better world. . .it means exploring tensions between complicity and consciousness, choice and constraint, indifference and compassion, inclusion and exclusion, poverty and privilege, and barriers and opportunities (p. 510). In specific terms, what does this mean for the people of Nuevo Horizonte? When formally approached about seeking permission to conduct this study, the president of the cooperative agreed to the community's participation, but requested that this study be actively shared in order to raise the profile of the cooperative, and share their story with others. In addition to the conventional ways in which dissertations are shared (i.e., academic journals and conferences), I hope to produce a summary article in Spanish, so that the members of the cooperative can promote the findings among themselves and within the own networks.

Considering that I am a male of European descent, living in a globally dominant society (Canada), it is necessary to consider how this impacts my relationship with the men and women who will be participating. Adherents to an anti-oppressive perspective (Potts & Brown, 2005) acknowledge the unbalanced nature between researcher and participants in all situations, and stress how this relationship is further skewed by differing socio-economic and cultural backgrounds (Potts & Brown, 2005). Anti-oppressive researchers also acknowledge the tendency to objectify participants, such as defining them by their poverty, or by labels such as ex-combatants, which, as evidenced by the review of the literature, comes with potential negative connotations. Adherents to an anti-oppressive perspective acknowledge that the research participants are first and foremost human beings with a multitude of identities and strengths.

Along with the relationship between researcher and participants, the ethical issue of lending one's voice to others must also be considered. Hertz (as cited in Gergen & Gergen, 2000, p. 1027) emphasizes that a researcher brings his or her own history and perspective, but one's primary obligation is to tell the stories of the people one is studying (p. 1027). Lincoln and Guba (2000) suggest that a social constructionist paradigm lends itself to the researcher assuming a role of "passionate participant" (p. 166) with the aim of seeking understanding. However, Lincoln and Guba do not go so far as to suggest that social constructionism lends itself to advocacy and activism. Instead, they place these aims under a different paradigm, that of critical theory. Perhaps the embedded relativism in the social construction paradigm paralyzes the researcher into inaction. If we lack any criteria for deciding what knowledge or what voice is better (Schwandt, 2000, p. 200), how do we advocate or engage in activism? Denzin and Giardina (2008) are clear: there is a critical role for

qualitative research in the pursuit of human rights, social justice, and the need to redress past injustices (p. 12). I personally believe that seeking understanding in itself is an authentic form of advocacy, and ties into Potts and Brown's (2005) anti-oppressive orientation to research. In the same way, giving voice to those who are underrepresented in mainstream discourse is an important example of advocacy. In close relation with the discipline of Peace Studies, anti-oppressive research is inherently linked to activism; the researcher is continuously aware of how this activism is consciously influenced by his/her values (Charmaz, 2006, p. 15).

Establishing Trustworthiness and Authenticity

In constructionist inquiry, the traditional positivist criteria of internal and external validity are replaced by what Lincoln and Guba (2000, p. 180) refer to as trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness is a process to assure the credibility of the rigor of the methodology process (Rodwell, 1998, p. 96). To ensure trustworthiness of the data and the process, I kept a journal during the research process. The purpose of this journal was to record all data collection events and their context. This helped to verify the chronology, accuracy and interpretation of the process. I ensured confirmability by video recording all of the interviews, so that a verbatim copy of the data was readily available for reference. I addressed dependability by working closely with a dissertation committee–specifically Dr. Sally St. George, who is the dissertation supervisor. Credibility was addressed by asking participants to review the video recordings and the interview transcripts to confirm that their thoughts were validly reflected.

To further address authenticity, I presented a two-page written summary (See Appendix D: Summary for Member Checking) of the theoretical framework to each of the participants for their feedback. Their endorsement of this summary ensured me that I utilized the grounded theory process to arrive at a mutually shared understanding. Additionally, excerpts of my primary coding were reviewed by an independent expert (a Guatemalan human rights activist) to ensure that my codes accurately reflected the participants' words, and did not miss any important themes. Finally, at the end of the process, I conducted a final review of the codes and memos to ensure that no major themes had been missed.

Authenticity has five dimensions (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). I addressed the first dimension, fairness, by working closely with the cooperative's leadership to ensure that those participants who were chosen reflected the overall voice of the community. The nature of the interviews ensured a safe and fair space so that honest and diverse perspectives were respected. I addressed the second dimension,

ontological authenticity, by ensuring that the participants understood how their answers fit into the larger context of knowledge of the reintegration of ex-combatants. The third dimension, catalytic authenticity, refers to creating a foundation for potential for change. I believe this was (and will be) addressed by improving participant awareness of the global importance of understanding the DDR process; the participants will become stakeholders in sharing knowledge and wisdom. The participants will have the opportunity to tell their story to a wider audience. Through this process I will also address the fourth dimension, tactical authenticity, which refers to empowerment. The fifth dimension, educative authenticity, I believe will be evident in the final outcome of this study. As a beginning researcher, collaborating with the ex-combatants to elicit their stories will facilitate my understanding of the study question from multiple perspectives.

I would also like to add that I believe my authenticity and trustworthiness as a researcher in a cross-cultural setting has been enhanced by my taking up residence in the cooperative for 4 months in 2007. Establishing rapport with the participants (Charmaz, 2006, p. 19) allowed me as the primary researcher to enter into the participants' world and to gain richer understanding. Learning about their views, their lives and their perspectives allowed me to reflect on "what our research participants take for granted or do not state as well as what they say and do" (p. 19). After having lived in the community for 4 months, and after having heard educational presentations, watched community plays produced by the youth and read historical material, it was evident to me that there was a strong collective understanding and memory regarding the community's recent history.

Anticipated Ethical Issues

Prior to engaging in the interview process, I discussed the ethical issues of this study with both the community representatives and with the participants themselves. In addition to the priority goal of eliciting input, the purpose of these meetings was to facilitate a sense of community involvement and to ensure that this research project was as collaborative as possible. Colonizing discourse (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000, p. 108) is the historical tendency to separate out the researcher from the subject. Bringing in the community leaders to address ethical issues may have assisted to break down that separation.

Firstly, I met with the community's Junta Directiva (community council made up of a president, vice president and several other elected officials). Upon reviewing the study, the Junta Directiva recommended that the following issues be addressed: Firstly, they requested that any adult member of the community could be

approached to participate, but that youth within the community should not be recruited. Secondly, they requested that the community receive a written summary of this dissertation (in Spanish) so that the knowledge and understanding gained could not only be shared with the community, but also remain as co-property of the community. Thirdly, they acknowledged the importance of some form of community compensation, in return for the appropriation of the community's time and knowledge. To this end, a library project had already been proposed and initiated at this point by myself and activist colleagues, with the purpose of hiring young people who were attending either high school or university. The wages were to be a source of well-needed income to support secondary and post-secondary education which often was cost-prohibitive in the community.

Next, I approached all potential participants with a written consent form (see Appendix A) which listed the potential ethical issues (e.g., a community member read the consent form to one participant who could not read). Among other issues, the participants and I discussed the potential harm of participation, the absence of any personal compensation, and confidentiality. Upon completion of these individual discussions, all potential participants understood how the material was going to be used. Participants were given the choice of having their names attached to the study. In addition, participants were given the choice to have a DVD copy of their interview placed in the new community library as an archive of their experience of reintegration. Also, each participant was given a DVD copy of his/her interview for his/her personal use.

In light of the power imbalance between myself (a foreign researcher) and members of the community, I acknowledge that there is the potential imbalance, as well in the benefits, of the research process. Although not articulated in these terms, the Junta Directiva aptly addressed this issue through their requests to ensure that the community had something to gain from the process. As an additional response to this issue, I have collaborated with the community (along with other Canadian activists) to establish a fund to be used by community and youth to access secondary and post-secondary education opportunities. This was established before the study had begun, and the first recipient was able to come to Canada to study English at a post-secondary institution. This endeavour was considered a priority for the community's effort to expand their eco- and solidarity tourism projects, as no members of the cooperative had previously been able to speak English.

In lieu of an Institutional Review Board, my dissertation supervisor acted as an ethics monitor throughout the research process. Although this process was more informal than a review board, I believe it had more integrity, because my supervisor

had more intimate knowledge of the context of the research than an institutional review board, and our relationship lasted for the entire length of the research process.

Description of Methodology

The purpose of this study is to gain a deep understanding of the reintegration experience of a group of ex-combatants. An inquiry such as this lends itself to in-depth interviews, due to the personal and experiential nature of the subject. Although information from interviews can be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively (Patton, 2002), a qualitative inquiry facilitated the understanding of an inherently personal transition from combatant to member of civil society.

Grounded Theory

I have utilized grounded theory as my methodology. Grounded theory is a set of "systematic yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 2). Grounded theory has appealed to many qualitative researchers because it allows the inquiry to move beyond description to generate a theory (Creswell, 2007). It consists of developing increasingly abstract ideas about the meaning of the participants' reflections and ideas and finding data to refine emerging conceptual frameworks (Charmaz, 2005, p. 508).

There are a number of iterations of grounded theory. However, I have adhered most closely to that of Charmaz (2006), because her social constructionist perspective fits with the epistemological assumptions of this inquiry.

I believe grounded theory is best suited for this study for several reasons. Firstly, as stated above, grounded theory provides a process to move the inquiry beyond description to potentially offer a theoretical framework. In this instance, grounded theory has provided a better understanding of the core phenomenon of reintegration, by understanding at a conceptual level what conditions, processes and forces influenced successful reintegration of the ex-combatants, and what conditions may have challenged reintegration. The process of coding has provided a coherent and dynamic process through which the data could be analyzed to move from simple definitions and categories, to a complex framework. The coding process has helped me as the researcher to remain attuned to the participants' views of their realities (Charmaz, 2000, p. 515). Ultimately, I believe this process has offered the ex-combatants further insight into their own experience.

Secondly, grounded theory has provided a process in which the voices and views of the ex-combatants are given validity and legitimacy. The steps and procedures of this methodology that I used helped me prevent any pre-existing or extraneous concept (or voice) from creeping into the analysis (Glaser as cited in Charmaz, 2000, p. 511). Thirdly, grounded theory, as a qualitative methodology, calls for the simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2006, p. 5), and therefore is sufficiently flexible to allow the researcher to use the data to influence and reshape the collection process, yet rigid enough to prevent process derailment. "The rigor of grounded theory approaches offers qualitative researchers a set of clear guidelines from which to build explanatory frameworks that specify relationships among concepts" (Charmaz, 2000, p. 510). This flexible process allowed for more input from the ex-combatant participants. For example, participants provided feedback on preliminary analyses. Grounded theory has allowed for changes and revisions in the methodology (such as asking additional questions or expanding the number of participants) based on the input of the participants.

Fourthly, because this is an inductive form of inquiry, the grounded theorist does not start from a place of logically deduced pre-conceived hypotheses (Charmaz, 2006, p. 5), but rather is open to an authentic unfolding of understanding. Charmaz (2000) explains that grounded theory helps researchers to gain authentic understanding by utilizing strategies that are neither rigid nor prescriptive, by focusing on meaning to further (rather than limit) interpretive understanding, and by embracing the relativistic paradigm of social constructionism (p. 510). In addition, the inductive nature of grounded theory allows the researcher to remain open: "Unlike quantitative research that requires data to fit into preconceived standardized codes, the researcher's interpretations of data shape his or her emergent codes in grounded theory" (2000, p. 515). Put more simply, my pre-conceived understandings of the participants' reintegration experience were not centralized in the data collection or analysis.

Role of Researcher

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 19), the role of the researcher is to record one's own observation while also uncovering the meaning or voice of the participants he or she is studying. This speaks to the idea that the researcher is an instrument or tool to disseminate someone else's message. The role of the researcher, therefore, is shrouded with responsibility. It is necessary to share control to the point of allowing participants' voices to dominate (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 173). These questions cannot be ignored, considering that I, as principal

researcher, have determined the salient questions, how data would be collected, and how it would be disseminated. Considering the declared ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions of this inquiry, it was necessary for me to engage in the process of reflexivity, which necessitated the acknowledgement of how my role and myself have influenced the voices of those I have attempted to represent (p. 183).

I, as principal researcher, personally conducted the interviews. I was also responsible for negotiating permission from the community to conduct the research, and to disseminate any relevant findings from the study. I guided my role of researcher according to the grounded theory researcher characteristics which Strauss and Corbin (1998) articulate: the ability to step back and critically analyze situations, the ability to recognize the tendency towards bias, and sensitivity to the words and actions of participants (p. 7).

Sources of Data

The primary source of data was the videotaped interviews of members of the Nuevo Horizonte Cooperative. The interviews were a particularly well-suited form of data collection to study people's understandings, and to document their personal experiences and perspectives (Kvale, 1996, p. 105). Interviews were video recorded in order to provide additional contextual information (such as facial expression, body language and other nonverbal cues) that audio recording alone could not provide (Kvale, 1996, p. 161).

In analyzing the data, I referred to two informal conversations that took place in the Fall of 2007, when I lived in the community. I took notes during these conversations and kept them among my preliminary notes and was able to refer back to them during my analysis of the interviews. These two conversations were with community members who agreed to be participants in this study.

While I lived in Nuevo Horizonte, from September to December 2007, I read some community documents, attended community presentations and watched a play performed by the local youth group on the history of their community. While I do not refer directly to these data sources, they indirectly acted upon this inquiry as influencing my lived experience in the community of Nuevo Horizonte. In addition to the two conversations to which I refer in the above paragraph, there were countless conversations over coffee and during mealtimes with community members. I do not refer to any of these directly, but nonetheless, they formed a foundation upon which I developed my own values and interests. They undoubtedly

influenced my perspectives on how and why I chose to pursue this study, and therefore, need to be acknowledged.

Data Collection Procedures

The formal data collection process took place over a period of several weeks, from December 13 to December 30, 2009. During this time, I traveled to Nuevo Horizonte from Canada and resided in the community for most of this period. Prior to arriving in Guatemala, I had received approval in principle to conduct the interviews from the Junta Directiva. Upon arrival in Nuevo Horizonte, I met with the Junta Directiva in person and received their formal approval after agreeing to several conditions (discussed in Ethical Issues section).

Prior to the formal data collection, I conducted some informal preliminary interviews in the Fall of 2007 when I lived in Nuevo Horizonte. This exercise allowed me to evaluate issues such as trust, community interest in the topic, willingness of people to participate, appropriateness of interview format and style (including nature of questions), and my ability to conduct this process in Spanish. On all accounts, I felt sufficiently satisfied that this project had community endorsement, and that there was the potential to collaborate successfully.

In keeping with grounded theory process, I was open during the data collection process to questions that arose during the research that allowed for the construction of new data gathering methods and for the revision of earlier ones (Charmaz, 2006, p. 15). During the analysis, however, I was satisfied that the data collection procedures that I utilized were sufficient.

Selection of Participants

The process for selecting participants began before I travelled to Nuevo Horizonte. I established a relationship with a university student from Nuevo Horizonte, Arnulfo, (the son of two ex-combatants) to assist in this process. It was necessary for me to coordinate this process with a local contact, due to my geographic distance from the community, and due to the short period of time that I was able to be in Nuevo Horizonte. I selected Arnulfo to help me because I knew him well, because of his interest in the topic, and because of his young age, he was excluded from being chosen as a participant. Prior to my arrival, Arnulfo began formulating a list of potential participants, based on the agreed-upon criteria (discussed below). Upon my arrival, I met with Arnulfo, who had agreed to help me arrange the interviews. Together, we reviewed the list and added several more.

We then began the process of visiting potential participants by going to their homes, presenting them with the consent form (which explained the nature of the study in detail) and answering any questions. The consent form was left with the person and a mutually convenient time was arranged for the interview.

This process was flexible. Of the preliminary list of 10 participants, we were unable to contact three people, due to their schedules or absences. There was one other person we were able to contact, and although she wanted to participate, she was unable to due to her work schedule and holiday plans. Arnulfo and I added new names. This process of finding available participants lasted for most of my time in the community. In the end, 10 community members agreed to be interviewed and agreed to a time to be interviewed. Ultimately, two of these people did not participate. A family issue came up for one person, and she was unable to make the interview time. Because this interview was set up for the last day of my time in the community, it was not possible to reschedule. The second person had agreed to the interview upon our first encounter. However, when I returned to conduct the interview he had changed his mind. He stated that after having read the consent form, he felt needed more time to think about the issues and did not feel prepared. He told me that if I were to return at a later date (as his interview was also on the last day of my stay) he would be willing to be interviewed then.

Selection criteria for including participants included: a) current members of Nuevo Horizonte cooperative and b) participated as combatants in the guerrilla forces (URNG) during the Guatemalan Civil War. A cross-section of men and women was sought, as was a representation of various ages. In the end, five were men and three were women. The ages ranged from the 40s to the 70s.

I planned for a sample size of 8-10 participants. I justify this number for two reasons: firstly, using a grounded theory qualitative approach, I was not seeking generalizability from the interviews (Kvale, 1996) and secondly, I acknowledge that the nature of grounded theory methodology is dynamic, and therefore, I had a contingency plan to expand the number of interviews, if saturation of information was not initially attained. As Kvale states: "The interviews bring forth new and unexpected aspects" (p. 102); therefore, this number was a starting point, and theoretical sampling would have been employed (described later) if required. Sampling was conducted to the point of saturation, that is, when no new information was elicited (Kvale, 1996, p. 102).

In evaluating whether quality or sufficiency of data has been attained from the interviews, I reflected on the following questions (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 18-19):

- Have I collected enough background data about persons, processes and settings to have ready recall and to understand the context of a participant's story?
- Have I gained descriptions from a range of participants' views?
- Does the data move beyond the superficial?
- Have I gathered data to develop analytic categories?
- What kinds of comparisons can I make with the data? How do these comparisons generate and inform ideas?

Pre-Interview Preparation

I anticipated initiating the interview process with an orientation meeting for all participants, for the purposes of (a) creating an opportunity to seek mutual clarification of the goals of the study, (b) presenting them with the global scope of reintegration of ex-combatants, and (c) eliciting from them ideas on what successful reintegration looks like. However, this orientation session did not occur. This was mainly due to the fact that my contact, Arnulfo, did not think it was necessary and that attendance would probably have been poor. However, I believe these three goals were accomplished by raising them individually with each participant at the beginning of each interview.

Description of the Interviews

According to Loflund and Loflund (1995), an interview provides an avenue for in-depth exploration of a particular experience, and was therefore appropriate to elicit information regarding a journey of reintegration for ex-combatants. The researcher's questions allow the participants to reflect upon experiences in ways that seldom occur in everyday life, and rarely present an opportunity through normal informal conversation (Charmaz, 2006, p. 25). The two specific research questions were broad, open-ended questions, and were intended to focus the interview while inviting detailed discussions on the topic (Charmaz, p. 26).

From a social constructionist perspective, I acknowledge that the interview participants were actively constructing knowledge around questions and responses (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). The actual interviews were a combination of structured and unstructured formats. The structured nature was based on the fact that each participant was asked two specific questions, as outlined in the introduction of this chapter. These questions were given to each participant prior to the interview. The rationale for this was to elicit thoughtful, rational responses to the research questions (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 650), and to provide some consistency in responses that

may facilitate comparisons. In addition, the interview also had unstructured characteristics, as evidenced by their allotted length (up to one hour to allow time for participants to own the direction of conversation). The purpose of this was to allow and encourage the emotional dimension of the participants' responses (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 650).

The actual interviews were structured as follows (Kvale, 1996):

a) Pre-interview:

I conducted an equipment check for audio and video function. I also secured the selected interview location for appropriateness with regards to privacy, sound and comfort. The interview locations varied as they were chosen by the participants themselves based on what was convenient. They ranged from people's living rooms to porches, to offices and work sites.

b) Introduction:

The participant and I reviewed the purpose of study and the purpose of the interview. This was accomplished primarily by reviewing the written consent form. Because the consent form was given to the participants prior to the interview, they had the opportunity to formulate any questions or comments. After this discussion, I obtained written informed consent from each participant.

c) Body of Interview:

The interviews were semi-structured, but consistently began with the primary research question: What was your experience of reintegration like? Towards the end of the interview, I asked each participant the same question: What advice do you have for other ex-combatants who are re-integrating back into society? Throughout the interviews, I utilized a variety of open ended-questions and a range of appropriate listening responses (Adler, Rosenfeld, Proctor & Winder, 2009), from silent listening (to facilitate the voice of participant and leave him/her in control), questioning (to elicit clarification, keep on topic, ask for further information), paraphrasing (to affirm my interest in the participant's message, and to clarify my understanding of what was said) and supporting (to offer solidarity with the participant).

d) Summary:

At the end of each interview, I allowed one more opportunity to raise any issue, thought or opinion that had not yet been covered. I also thanked each participant prior to ending the taping.

Data Analysis Procedures

The following data analysis procedures are based on a grounded theory approach, which, according to Charmaz (2006), relies entirely on interpretation of the data, and not from preconceived logically deduced hypotheses (p. 5). Because the grounded theory process does not set rigid boundaries between methodology and analysis, I provide only a brief description here of how data analysis unfolded. I describe this process more fully in the following chapter.

Part 1: Transcribing Conversation from Video Discs

A transcriptionist who is fluent in both Spanish and English transcribed all the dialogue from the interviews in their entirety. The videotaped conversations were therefore transformed into an electronic written format from which I conducted the analysis. The interviews were not translated during this process, but remained entirely in Spanish. Several of the recorded interviews contained small sections (typically less than a sentence in length) which the transcriptionist could not understand. The transcriptionist has noted all these sections.

Once the discs were transcribed, I utilized the paper copies of the interviews during the methodology and analysis processes. Prior to the transcription, however, I watched all of the videos and made approximately 30 pages of rough notes in my memo binder. These notes included summaries, thoughts and questions. I reviewed these notes and memos and made a secondary set of notes that made preliminary linkages among the thoughts and ideas of the participants and my preliminary analyses. I completed this process while still in Guatemala.

Part 2: Primary Coding

Coding is a grounded theory process in which one defines what is happening in the data and in which one begins to grapple with what it means (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46). Coding also identifies gaps in the data (p. 48) and coding is done in progressive stages. The beginning coding has been referred to as initial coding (Charmaz, 2006) or open coding (Creswell, 2007). For the purposes of this study, I refer to the initial stage of coding as primary coding, and the second stage as secondary coding, to avoid the confusion of the various names, and to describe more clearly the order in which the various stages were completed.

I began primary coding with a detailed analysis of the data, in this case interview transcripts, and broke the data into small discrete chunks of information. For the purposes of this study, I employed thought-by-thought coding, which works well with issues and with information collected from interviews and gives the reader a clear picture of the ideas (assumptions, meanings, significance of what was said). It also offers a sufficiently detailed approach to safeguard against the superimposition of preconceived notions (Charmaz, 2006). Thought-by-thought primary coding identifies categories and processes in a way to allow comparison of the data among the various interviews. Charmaz exemplifies this flexibility by asserting that if a category or process is identified in a later interview, the researcher can then go back to previous interviews to see if that category or process can be used to explain those as well (p. 53).

Charmaz offers advice to the researcher regarding the challenge of forcing the coding into pre-conceived codes and categories. In following her advice, I have achieved intimate familiarity with the phenomenon, I have defined what is happening in the data first (that is, keeping an open mind during the initial coding phase) and during the primary coding phase, and I reflected on the following:

- How does my coding reflect the incident or described experience?
- Do my analytic constructions begin from this point?
- Have I created clear, evident connections between the data and my codes?
- Have I guarded against re-writing and therefore recasting the studied experience into a lifeless language that better fits *our* academic and bureaucratic worlds than those or our participants? (2006, p. 69).

The ultimate result of the primary coding was the preliminary analysis of the core phenomenon, which in this study was Reintegration.

Part 3: Secondary Coding: Creating Categories Around Core Phenomenon

In order to begin the process of conceptualizing categories, I coded information based on the following categories (as they relate to the core phenomenon of reintegration), based on Strauss and Corbin (1998):

- Conditions (what factors preceded reintegration?)
- Strategies (what actions were taken in response to reintegration?)
- Consequences (what were the outcomes of reintegration?)

- Lessons Learned (what advice can we discern from the experience of reintegration?)

I utilized these categories for my initial analysis for the following reasons: firstly, reintegration is a dynamic process, with a specific beginning and an endpoint. My preliminary notes and memos supported the idea that the participants reflected on their experience in the same way–as a dynamic and chronological process. Secondly, these categories were sufficiently broad and general to capture the concrete stories and occurrences from the interviews, as well as the conceptual reflections and analyses.

Secondary coding takes the analysis of the data to a higher level. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), primary coding breaks apart data and secondary coding is a strategy to bring the data back together to form a coherent message, and can be organized to address the above questions. Secondary coding brings the thought-by-thought coding together into broader concepts.

During the process of coding, Charmaz (2006) contends that memo writing assists in the analysis of the material and supports its trustworthiness (p. 72). These memos act as the mode for making comparisons among all the data. I adhered to these guidelines in writing memos: each memo had a specific title according to its analytical properties, memos were structured to chart observed and predicted relationships among the data and to identify gaps in the analyses (Charmaz, pp. 80-82). Memos were also questions aimed at framing further inquiries or summaries when the same theme was found in more than one interview.

When I travelled to Nuevo Horizonte to conduct the interviews, I wrote memos in a notebook. I tended to write memos at certain times: immediately after each interview, in the evening upon reflecting on the day's events, and also whenever a certain thought came to mind. The memos written after the interviews tended to be summarizing in nature, describing how the process unfolded and what my immediate thoughts were about the content of the interview. As the number of completed interviews grew, I wrote additional memos that highlighted emerging themes, similarities or contradictions among the interview. Many memos were written in point form and were the basis for discussion items in Chapter 5 of this paper.

Examples of memos written during interview collection are provided here:

- Initial thoughts–concentrated a lot on the conflict, had a macro analysis, not micro (December 17, 2009

- I was struck on my way back to my room, as I passed little children playing in the playground–their complete sense of peace and freedom (December 18, 2009).

Examples of memos written during coding are provided here:

- Talks about label of communists and how the labeling is used against them (January 29, 2010).
- Identity–they did not actually change their identity, they had a strong positive collective identity that did not change with reintegration–the people around them needed to change, and they did (February 4, 2010).

These four memos offer examples of memos written as personal reflections, as interpretations of how I perceived the interviews, and as analysis of interview content.

I continued to write memos during the analysis phase, after the interviews had been transcribed. My memos became the method for me to continue to make linkages between interview commonalities, and linkages between related topics. Memos allowed me to elicit questions from a certain interview, which would send me back to a different interview for comparison. I used memos to reflect on the authenticity of my interpretations.

After the secondary coding, I further framed the codes using two different dimensions or two layers. The decision to perform this was based on my analysis of the primary codes. More specifically, the process of primary coding revealed more information regarding the participants' thoughts on strategies used during reintegration, and their ideas on how they thought reintegration was successful (or not).

The two dimensions refer to the process of taking the codes and framing them in two separate ways. In the first dimension I analyzed the codes by developing a set of themes that lent an understanding to the strategies used during reintegration. In the second dimension I analyzed the codes by addressing the question of whether reintegration (the core phenomenon) was deemed to be successful or not.

Part 4: Theoretical Sampling

Prior to conducting the interviews, I identified some criteria that I would use to determine whether I would need to arrange for additional interviews. If elaboration or refinement were necessary in order for the information to be more robust, I would have performed what Charmaz (2006) calls "theoretical sampling." How this would actually be accomplished would have depended on what data categories and themes may have emerged. For example, if there was a theme based on the issue of gender, I would have worked with the community to select members from the cooperative who may have had important contributions to make. Because the pool of potential participants was limited, and because all participants were well known to each other, this process may have been conducted quite informally.

After the data analysis was completed, I decided that further interviewing was not necessary. I provide a more detailed rationale for this decision in the next chapter.

Part 5: Developing a Theoretical Model

The final step of data analysis is to move the data reporting beyond mere description to the development of a theoretical model. In keeping with the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this inquiry, theory will emphasize understanding of the phenomenon, rather than the more positivist aims of explanation and prediction (Charmaz, 2006, p. 126). In order to conceptualize the phenomenon in abstract terms:

- Coding the data provides the opportunity to establish connections between the core phenomenon and causal conditions, strategies, intervening conditions and consequences.
- By this stage, core phenomenon will be identified.
- Data will be saturated, as verified through further interviews determined by theoretical sampling.

Other categories and concepts were identified, and relationships among the concepts were documented and explored based on memo writing.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) identify several criteria to assist in generating a grounded theory:

- Are concepts systematically related?
- Are there many conceptual linkages, and are the categories well developed?
- Is much variation built into the theory?

In order to make the analytical transition from secondary coding to the development of a theoretical framework, an additional level of coding can be utilized. Charmaz (2006) refers to this process as theoretical coding, a sophisticated analysis that conceptualizes how the codes may relate to each other as propositions or hypotheses to be integrated into a theory (p. 63). "In short, theoretical codes specify possible relationships between categories you have developed in your focused coding" (p. 63).

In the next chapter, I demonstrate how I re-analyzed the secondary codes to form relationships that moved the analysis beyond the descriptive to a coherent conceptualization of the process of reintegration. From a thorough analysis during primary and secondary coding I created themes and connections that moved beyond the linear framework (conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned) that I had developed before the analysis began. As new information was incorporated, this preliminary framework of categories seemed insufficient to incorporate all relevant connections. Although I did not anticipate incorporating this third stage of coding during my initial methodology outline, the need to more fully develop categories arose during the analysis phase of the research process. I provide a more detailed discussion on the reasons for this additional level of coding, and for developing a framework that moved beyond the categories I had originally thought would be encompassing enough in the next chapter (found in Part 5: Developing a Theoretical Model, A) Developing Themes, p. 127).

Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed description of the process of inquiry that I used to investigate how Guatemalan ex-combatants have made the transition into civilian life. I have described the stages that I utilized from the starting point of articulating one's philosophical foundations to collecting and progressively analysing data to arrive at a theoretical framework to understand the process of reintegration. In this chapter, I have justified the utilization of the various techniques and methodologies by referring to established grounded theory practitioners and authors, particularly Charmaz (2006). In the next chapter, I provide a more detailed analysis of this process and its outcomes.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the stages of data exploration and analysis, beginning from note taking and memo writing to constructing a conceptual framework, and finally, to developing a theoretical framework. Before initiating the description of the initial coding phase, I believe it is necessary to define a few of the terms used in this chapter.

The term, *core phenomenon*, refers to the main or foundational issue on which this analysis is based. As such, the core phenomenon (the process of reintegration) was established or defined in the preliminary phase of developing the research question. The core phenomenon in this study is the reintegration of ex-combatants.

The term, *code*, refers to the short summaries of the thoughts and reflections of the participant interviews. Coding is the process by which I summarized and interpreted the interview transcripts. During the analysis, I initially employed two stages of coding, which I refer to as primary and secondary coding. I describe these processes in greater detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

The term, *category*, is used to define how the codes have been organized, based on the core phenomenon, reintegration. During the secondary coding phase, the following four categories were used to flesh out the core phenomenon of reintegration: conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned. These categories provide a preliminary organizational framework, somewhat linear and concrete, from which I then derive a more conceptual or theoretical framework.

The term, *two-dimensional framework*, describes the next stage of analysis: After the secondary coding, I further framed the codes using two different dimensions or two layers. The two dimensions refer to the process of taking the codes and framing them in two separate ways. In the first dimension I analyze the codes by developing a set of themes that lend an understanding to the strategies used during reintegration. In the second dimension I analyze the codes by addressing the question of whether reintegration (the core phenomenon) was deemed to be successful or not.

The term, *theory*, is used in the context of grounded theory, as articulated by Charmaz (2006). At the end of this chapter, I arrive at a theory, that is, a conceptualization of the phenomenon of reintegration, and how I have understood the participants' phenomenon in abstract terms.

I have used the terms *themes* and *strategies,* though distinct in many contexts, interchangeably in this chapter. In describing the five emerging themes, I also call them strategies. In my understanding both terms are correct, as the five of them (e.g., being united) are a collection of recurring ideas and patterns (themes) and at the same time represent coherent actions (strategies) that were utilized in order to achieve an articulated goal (successful reintegration). Therefore, both these terms seem appropriate and interrelated.

Analysis

Part 1: Informal Review of Videos Prior to Transcription

As Charmaz (2006) contends, data collection and analysis occur simultaneously and influence each other. After the eight interviews were conducted and recorded, I left the community of Nuevo Horizonte to reflect on the process to that point. I had planned on conducting two more interviews after this break, but as mentioned in the previous chapter, these two follow-up interviews did not occur.

During this break, I reviewed all of the video recordings and made notes. These notes represented my thoughts, interpretations and understandings of the participants' responses. Many notes took the forms of questions: How did one particular reflection relate to another? How did one opinion relate to my pre-conceived notions, or to theory, or to my review of the literature? Many of these preliminary notes represented the memo writing process as described by Charmaz (2006, p. 72), as they prompted many connections between various expressed views and thoughts and conceptual framing. In summary, these notes and memos highlighted the participants' sense that being united was a major factor in their process of reintegration.

I continued memo writing throughout the analysis process. I kept these handwritten memos and notes in a notebook, and this documentation served as an ongoing diary to which I was able to refer throughout the analysis.

After having completed the coding and the development of the theoretical framework, I once again reviewed the notes and memos to ascertain whether there was a consistency between the two. I concluded after my review that the theoretical framework authentically represented my preliminary notes and memos. I concluded that there were no important themes or issues that were omitted or misrepresented throughout the analysis and in the culmination of the theoretical

framework. After this initial review, the interviews were transcribed. I conducted the subsequent analysis from the written transcriptions.

Part 2: Primary Coding

After the taped interviews were transcribed, I reviewed each interview thoroughly, in its written form, and wrote codes in a margin on the left hand side of the page. I completed this process twice. During the first phase, most of my codes were descriptive summaries; however, some codes moved beyond mere description to interpretation. This process lasted several months; I completed the coding of each transcribed interview once I received it from the transcriptionist. They came to me usually one per week.

After having written primary codes for all of the interviews, I reviewed the coding process thus far with my dissertation supervisor. Upon her advice, I approached them for a second time, attempting to develop codes that were more strictly descriptive and less interpretive, in order to remain as authentic to the participants' voices as possible. This second phase of primary coding took less than a week, and occurred approximately after a 6-week interlude after the first session was completed. I believe this break in between repeating the coding process allowed for a fresh and clear second approach, and at the same time, allowed a chance to review the process when I had much more comfort and familiarity with the data. After these two thorough reviews, I believed I had a good grasp of the content, to the point where I could recognize the authorship of many quotes that I had previously pulled out from the interviews.

During this second phase of primary coding, I developed a total of 438 codes from the interviews (see Appendix B). The structure of the codes was fairly loose; some codes were only several words while some codes were complete sentences.

Part 3: Secondary Coding: Creating Categories Around a Core Phenomenon

The 438 primary codes were printed on coloured paper (a different color for each interview to keep track from which participant each code came) and cut up into pieces of paper and arranged according to themes. I undertook this step in order to track the distribution of various themes among the interviewees once the codes were consolidated into broader categories. Appendix B demonstrates this distribution of codes according to interview.

I organized the primary codes using the headings (categories) of conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned, which I adapted from the work of

Strauss and Corbin (1998). These categories were based on the core phenomenon: reintegration. I utilized these categories for my initial analysis for the following reasons: firstly, reintegration is a dynamic process, with a specific beginning and an endpoint. My preliminary notes and memos supported the idea that the participants reflected on their experience in the same way–as a dynamic and chronological process. Secondly, these categories were sufficiently broad and general to capture the concrete stories and occurrences from the interviews, as well as the conceptual reflections and analyses. To align a code under one of the four categories, I asked the following questions during sorting:

- What were the conditions that influenced reintegration?
- What were the strategies used to reintegrate?
- What were the consequences of reintegration?
- What were the lessons learned?

The table below displays how I sorted the 438 primary codes according to the four categories and their corresponding question listed above. Of the 438 codes, 63 did not neatly fall into the four categories and were therefore categorized as miscellaneous. The reason these codes did not fit was mainly because they were from conversation about events that did not relate to reintegration. Most commonly, these codes represented summaries of conversations about the Civil War, were about the current political situation, or were in other ways unrelated to the study topic. These 63 codes were eliminated from the subsequent analysis.

The table below also lists the 50 secondary codes, and displays how many primary codes were collapsed into each secondary code. For example, under the category of Conditions, the 76 primary codes were analyzed during the secondary coding phase, and grouped and collapsed into 12 codes. Appendix B breaks down this secondary coding by participant as well.

Table 4.1: Secondary Codes

Category	Number of Primary codes	Number of secondary codes	Secondary Codes*
Conditions	76	12	Hope (2) We were organized (1) No skills for civil life (16) Fear/uncertainty/mistrust (13) Had nothing (10) Inadequate formal process (10) Poor leadership/representation (9) Feeling vulnerable (6) Feeling forgotten/abandoned (2) Feeling judged (2) Difficult conditions (4) In touch with our history (1)
Strategies	70	11	Working with people from other countries (5) Being organized/working together (16) Building community infrastructure (5) Positive attitude (1) Took charge (3) Hard work (9)

			Non-violence (2) Learning a skill (3) Reached out to neighbours (16) Used our knowledge from the war (1) Ideological framework (9)
Consequences	153	16	Life is good (7) Received a lot of outside help and recognition (2) Re-integrated with our neighbours (7) Employment still a problem (5) The repression has stopped (12) We're in charge of our future (5) Still engaged in political struggle (15) Building community infrastructure (10) Feel betrayed, let down (26) Violence continues, just a different type (5) We remain united (18) Don't rely on the state for anything (13) A cynical analysis of the world (11) Recent positive government changes (3)

			There was some success (4) Debt (10)
Lessons Learned	76	11	We didn't negotiate well (8) Stay united (14) Need to be in charge of the process (9) Work with other ex-combatants (3) Need to know what you're getting into (12) Integrate with the locals (4) Need strong mechanisms to implement peace accords (8) Struggle through nonviolence (6) Hard Work is necessary (2) Apathy, cynicism (3) Need to have a good analysis of the causes of war and conflict (7)
Miscellaneous	63		
Total	438	50	

*The number after each of the secondary codes represents the number of primary codes that were grouped or collapsed into the secondary code

In the following analysis, I demonstrate further how the codes and categories fit together by sharing quotes from the interviews. I translate each quote into English and place them next to each other in the body of this paper. I believe that placing the Spanish excerpts directly into this paper allows the participants' voices to be directly visible to the reader, even if he or she is unable to read Spanish.

A) What Were the Conditions that Influenced Reintegration?

The 12 secondary codes in this category attest to the vulnerability of the ex-combatants as they entered the reintegration process. While the secondary codes represent an array of sentiments, including ideas such as hope, being organized and being in touch with our history, the majority attest to the difficult condition in which they were placed. They had nothing, they did not have the experience to engage in negotiating their process, and they felt judged, forgotten and abandoned. In addition, they had no jobs, financial resources or practical skills. I believe the most appropriate way to summarize their conditions was to say that they were vulnerable.

The following comments attest to their vulnerability:

> "El salir de la selva, el dejar el equipo militar, uno siente como salir desnudo y sin protección." (interview #1)
>
> Leaving the jungle (where we lived as combatants), leaving your weapons, one feels like one is coming out naked and without any protection.
>
> "Y digo que es una cuestión duda porque uno viene con ese miedo, con ese temor de que ¿Qué nos ira a pasar, no?" (interview #1)
>
> I say that it is a question full of doubt because one comes with this fear: what is going to happen to us?
>
> "Bastante duro. Bastante duro en el sentido de cuando nos integramos a la vida civil nuevamente era como empezar de Nuevo, como empezar de cero." (interview #5)
>
> Really tough. Really tough in the sense that when we integrated ourselves back into civilian life it was like beginning all over again, like beginning from zero.
>
> "Creíamos que iba a ser una maniobra política y que iba a ser una cuestión de que después nos iban a reprimir e iban a matarnos otra vez a nosotros." (interview #7)
>
> We believed that it (the peace process) was going to be a political manoeuvre, and that it was going to be a question of afterwards they were going to repress us and were going to start killing us again.

"... el ejercito guatemalteco ha sido el mas sanguinario de la historia de Latinoamérica. Entonces, firmar la paz...crea cierta incertidumbre o inseguridad. Entonces eso traducido a lo personal de alguna manera te deja como en una situación así de vulnerabilidad." (interview #8)

The Guatemalan army has been the most bloody army in the history of Latin America. Therefore, signing the peace accords creates a kind of uncertainty or insecurity. This then translates, at a personal level, in a way that leaves you in a situation of vulnerability.

B) What Strategies Were Used to Reintegrate?

The 11 secondary codes in this category attested to the participants' working hard, building a community, connecting with neighbours seeking relationships with international organizations and partners, working collectively, taking charge and continuing with the ideological struggle.

The following quotes attest to this composite of strategies:

"Y de ahí nos trasladaron para acá donde estamos. A seguir trabajando hombres y mujeres. . .la pobre gente daba lastima porque aquí no había ni un palo. Todo era sabana. Para poder hacer las casas y el agua en lo principal. . .haciendo zanjas para zanjeo del agua." (interview # 4)

And from there we relocated ourselves to where we are now (Nuevo Horizonte). We continued working, men and women...the poor people–it was very hard because here there was nothing, not even one tree. Everything was open savannah. In order to be able to build the houses at the beginning. . .making ditches for drainage.

"O sea que fue bastante difícil en ese sentido la integración porque todo el mundo lo miraba, todo mundo lo miraba mal. . .pero nos propusimos que media vez tenga uno voluntad puede hacer muchos cambios uno dentro de la sociedad. . .porque nosotros a través de nuestro comportamiento, a través de nuestra organización, les fuimos demostrando como tanto. .

.principalmente como a nosotros como personas." (interview #5)

Reintegration was pretty difficult because everyone looked upon us as bad. . .but we decided to be willing to be able to make many changes within our society. . .because we, through our exemplary behaviour, through our ability to organize ourselves, we were demonstrating so much to them…more than anything, that we were human beings.

"El día que desmovilice, lo primero que fui…es hacer parte de una asamblea de desarrollo comunitario en otra comunidad. Lo primero que fui. . .que me puse a participar con la gente. Me ofrecí con la gente a trabajar en bien de la comunidad. Y esa es una cosa importante. No los aislamos. Al contrario, hay que unirte a esa comunidad. Hay que unirte a la población. No hay que alejarte". (interview #7)

On the first day of the demobilization, I went to take part in an assembly on community development in another village. The first thing I did. . .I immersed myself by participating with the people. I offered to work with the people of the community. This is a very important thing. We cannot isolate ourselves. On the contrary, we need to unite with the surrounding community. You need to unite yourself with the people. You cannot move away from them.

These quotes and the secondary codes which they represent, describe a sense of seeking control over the phenomenon of reintegration. I will discuss this in more depth in the next chapter.

C) What Were the Consequences of Reintegration?

More primary codes fell under the category of *Consequences* than any other of the categories (153 of the 438). These 153 primary codes were collapsed into 16 secondary codes (see Table 4.1). Through this consolidation, I was able to further organize and synthesize the large amounts of data into a more workable and coherent organization. In simple terms, one could simply ask: based on the consequences of the core phenomenon, was reintegration successful or not? Of the 16 secondary codes, 10 are easily categorized as positive, while the remaining 6 are

easily categorized as negative, offering a dichotomy. This is discussed more thoroughly below in the section called success.

The following four comments exemplify ways in which outcomes of the reintegration process have been regarded as successful: rebuilding a community, reintegrating in society and remaining united/true to their roots:

> "Ningún desperfecto por lo menos de cosas malas. Eso es lo que a mí me honora. Porque se oigan hablar que aquí sólo malos hay. Pero por la gracia de Dios hasta el momento no ha habido ninguna cosa mala. . .Pero por la gracia de Dios todo ha ido saliendo bien." (interview #4)

> There were no damages due to bad things. This is what I appreciate, because you hear people say that there are a lot of bad things here. But, thanks to God, until now, there have not been any bad things here. . but because of God's grace everything has been working out well.

> "Porque aquí hemos tenido logros, hemos tenido éxitos de poco a poco irnos superando en lo que es la vida social-económica, aunque nos ha costado mucho. Pero sí hemos ido aprovechando los proyectos que hemos logrado conseguir para la comunidad." (interview #6)

> But here we have had successes, we had had victories, little by little we move forward, surpassing in terms of socio-economic life, even though it has been very difficult. But we have been profiting from the community projects that we have managed to construct.

> "Bueno, ahorita la situación ha cambiado. Ya después de 12 años la situación ha cambiado y la mayor parte de la gente ya nos ve bien a nosotros. Todavía guardamos mucho respeto… la gente nos aprecia. Y es poca la gente que nos ve con mucha diferencia." (interview #6)

> Well, now the situation has changed. After 12 years, the situation has changed and the majority of the people now look at us positively. Now we maintain a lot of respect. . .the people appreciate us. Only a few people still view us differently.

"Ahora otro de los beneficios sería el que quedamos aquí agrupados, en un grupo bastante grande, y que siempre hemos tratado en que tenemos errores porque somos humanos y cometemos errores. Hemos tratado de mantenernos siempre en colectivo, de resolver ciertos problemas de la comunidad en colectivo, y trabajamos individual entre mi colectivo comunal y en grupitos y el colectivo en general, o sea, entre formas. Y gracias a nuestro trabajo como lo hemos traído hasta hoy día." (interview #1)

Now another one of the benefits would be that we have remained here together, in a substantial group, and that we have always worked hard, in the sense that we are still human beings and make mistakes. We have tried to maintain our collective lifestyle, to resolve our community problems collectively, and we work individually but within a common collective and in little groups, etc. And thankfully we have worked in this style up until today.

However, there is another side to the consequences, as exemplified in the following comments. The most pervasive negative consequence is the debt on their land, which probably has been the largest obstacle facing the community since its establishment. Also, many comments reflected the disappointment with the lack of change, economically and socially, within the larger Guatemalan society:

"Ahora nosotros los guerrilleros nos quedamos endeudados ahorita con 6 millones ahorita en Horizonte, aquí en Horizonte, para pagar la tierra. Y del día que nos desmovilizamos, el año 1996, entramos en deuda con el Estado." (interview #7)

Now, we, the guerrillas are stuck with a debt of 6,000,000 quetzales (nearly 1,000,000 USD) now in Nuevo Horizonte, because of our land purchase. The very day that we demobilized in 1996, we went into debt with the state.

"En cuanto al combate de la pobreza, otro asunto. El principal origen de la lucha armada fue la inequidad entre los pobres y los ricos en Guatemala. No había equidad. Los ricos siendo ricos y los pobres siendo más pobres y muriéndose de hambre. Se firmaron los acuerdos de paz–el Estado asumió

> compromisos de invertir en los bienes públicos con el interés de crear oportunidades y disminuir un poco la pobreza. Por el contrario. Si antes había pobreza, hoy hay extrema pobreza. Ha incrementado el número de gente más pobre. Ha incrementado el número de gente que se muere de desnutrición crónica. Y eso es no cumplir con los acuerdos de paz." (interview #8)
>
> In the case of combating poverty, that's another subject. The main reason for the armed struggle in the first place was the inequality between the rich and the poor in Guatemala. There was not equity. The rich were rich and the poor were poor and dying of hunger. The peace accords were signed–the state assumed commitments to invest in the public goods with the intent of creating opportunities and reducing poverty. But on the contrary, sure there was poverty before, but now there is extreme poverty. The number of people living in poverty has increased. The number of people suffering from chronic malnutrition has increased. This is not accomplishing what was set out in the peace accords.

D) What Were the Lessons Learned?

Each participant was asked directly what advice they would give other ex-combatants who were going through DDR. Their feedback was organized under the category called "lessons learned."

Overall, their advice offers wise reflections from people who according to one participant, feel, if only we knew then what we know now.

> "Aquí en la comunidad también hemos adquirido mucha experiencia. Aunque en realidad pudimos haber llegado a este lugar en otras condiciones tal vez de una forma mas organizada. . .que nos ha hecho falta mucha organización. Y sin embargo, con la poca experiencia que teníamos de reinserción a la sociedad civil, hemos logrado ir escalando poco a poco." (interview #6)
>
> Here in the community also, we have acquired a lot of experience. Even though in reality we could have arrived at

> this place in better conditions, perhaps more organized, because we lacked a lot of organization. But nonetheless, with the little experience we had on reintegrating into civil society, we have succeeded in furthering ourselves little by little.

Some of their analysis is not surprising and fits in with information found in other categories (see Appendix B), namely make relations with your neighbours, be organized, stay united. Their advice apparently grows out of their disappointment and frustration with the peace accords process. Specifically, there was resentment articulated about the promises that were not delivered:

> "Pero de eso, pues, se decía que a cada excombatiente se le iba a dar tierra adonde trabajar, su casa digna, proyectos para empezar a trabajar, y de eso no dieron nada. Porque lo que tenemos, pues, nos ha costado y ayuda de alguna otra gente." (interview #1)

> Well, we were told that each ex-combatant was going to receive a piece of arable land, a proper house, employment, and they did not give us any of this. Because what we have, well, came from our own hard work, and from the help of other people.

> "Bueno yo no le entiendo mucho a la política. . .pero así a nivel político, yo creo que los gobiernos que han estado de turno, ninguno de ellos se ha cumplido con lo que le prometió al pueblo para lo de la firma de la paz. Ni al pueblo, ni a los excombatientes." (interview #1)

> Well, I don't know a lot about politics, but on a political level, I believe that each successive government in Guatemala, none of them has carried through on those things that were promised to the people by the signing of the peace accords. Neither to the people, nor to the ex-combatants.

> "Que ya estábamos a punto desmovilizando, yo cargaba mi seguridad. Y todo estaba muy bien. Luego, media vez nosotros entregamos las armas, se fueron olvidando los acuerdos que existían. Se fueron olvidando." (interview #2)

At the time that we were demobilizing, I was in charge of my own well-being, my own security. And all was well. Later, while we were handing in our arms, they forgot that the peace accords even existed. The accords were forgotten.

"Pero en ese momento no teníamos la experiencia. Entonces yo pienso que tenemos que tener mucho cuidado como cuando se hacen las firmas de algo. . bueno, cuando decimos se firmó la firma de la paz." (interview #5)

But at this point, we didn't have the experience. Therefore, I think that we need to have a lot of diligence when we sign anything, for instance, when peace accords are signed.

"El objetivo que tenía el Estado de Guatemala e incluso las mismas Naciones Unidas. . .el único objetivo que tenía era ponerle un silencio a las armas que URNG tenía."(interview #2)

The objective of the Guatemalan government and also of the United Nations. . .the only objective they had was to silence the guns of the URNG.

"Lo único que les interesa es el silencio de las armas y no importa en qué condiciones quedes. O sea no hay garantía de que esos acuerdos sean reales. Y la verdad es que los acuerdos de paz de Guatemala son letras muertas en papeles que no son institucionales." (interview # 3)

The only interest they had was silencing the guns and it didn't matter what other conditions remained after that. There was no guarantee that these peace accords would be realized. And the reality is that the Guatemalan Peace Accords are "dead letters" on paper that have not been operationalized.

"Los acuerdos de paz le quedaron sólo al Estado o a los gobiernos. Pero no hubieron comisiones de la guerrilla o de otros sectores que verificaran el cumplimiento de eso."(interview #6)

The Peace Accords remained in the hands of the government. But there were not commissions made up of members of the guerrillas or other sectors that verified the completion of the accords.

"Si antes había pobreza, hoy hay extrema pobreza. Ha incrementado el número de gente más pobre. Ha incrementado el número de gente que se muere de desnutrición crónica. Y eso es no cumplir con los acuerdos de paz." (interview #8)

Sure there was poverty before, but now there is extreme poverty. The number of people living in poverty has increased. The number of people suffering from chronic malnutrition has increased. This is not accomplishing what was set out in the peace accords.

Based on this disappointment, the advice focused on making sure parties are held accountable, making sure people are bargaining in good faith, and making sure the process is transparent.

"Y entonces, como tú me decías que es como cuestión de consejo, eso diría yo a otros compañeros que están en lucha y que estarán dialogando la paz: que sí lo piensen bien y que sí dejen bien firmado los papeles con el gobierno de que si van a firmar algo, que lo cumpla el gobierno. Que no les pasa lo que pasó en Guatemala. Que en Guatemala todo lo que se firmó quedó en papel. En la práctica no hay nada. Y que estos dirigentes de estos compañeros combatientes, que si les van a prometer–Vamos a hablar por ustedes para que tengan casa y tengan tierra–que se los cumpla, para que no queden como estamos nosotros con una gran deuda." (interview #2)

So, then, like you said to me regarding the question of advice, this is what I would say to other compañeros (comrades) who are part of the struggle, or who will be negotiating peace accords: think long and hard when you sign peace accords with a government, think long and hard about how the accords will be actualized. Because this did not happen in Guatemala. In Guatemala, all that was agreed upon remained only on

paper. In practice, there is nothing. Also, our own guerrilla leaders, they are going to make promises–we will speak on your behalf and make sure you get your house and your land–think about how they will be completed, so that you don't end up like us with a big debt on our land.

"Y como decía principalmente eso. . .la organización tenemos que tenerla, tenemos que estar siempre juntos para ver de lograr todo. Y lo que tenemos que tener en mente siempre es que lo que queremos es vivir en paz." (interview #5)

Like I said to you at the beginning. . .we need to be organized, we have to be always together in order to succeed at all this. And that what we need to have in mind always is what we want, to live in peace.

"Entonces para que a otras personas, de excombatientes, no les pase eso. . .que sólo lo dejen en manos del gobierno que está, sino que hay que formar comisiones que sí verifiquen que eso se está cumpliendo. Porque aquí en Guatemala se firmó un montón de acuerdos y no se cumplen." (interview #6)

Therefore, for other people, other ex-combatants, don't let this happen, that it is left in the hands of the government. Rather, form commissions that will verify that promises are being completed. Because here in Guatemala, a mountain of accords were signed, but they were not completed.

"Mi consejo principal sería de que todas las organizaciones de izquierda que estén en este proceso de reincorporación, primero de que establezcan. . .bueno, que tenga una buena organización en la reincorporación… y luego de que se formen muy buenas comisiones que verifiquen el funcionamiento de las comisiones que los van atender a ellos."(interview #6)

My main advice would be that all the organizations on the Left would be part of the reintegration process, so that we have a good organization for reintegration. . .and then, that very

effective commissions will verify the function of these commissions.

"... y como consejo a otros pueblos que quieran también cambiar por la experiencia de nosotros. . .de hacer un trabajo más amplio en sus masas, en sus pueblos, en sus organizaciones, para que puedan tener mejores resultados de los acuerdos de paz." (interview #7)

How I would advise other people who could learn from our experience. . .make the negotiations more open or transparent, in the organizing bodies, among the people, among their organizations, so that the peace accords can have better results.

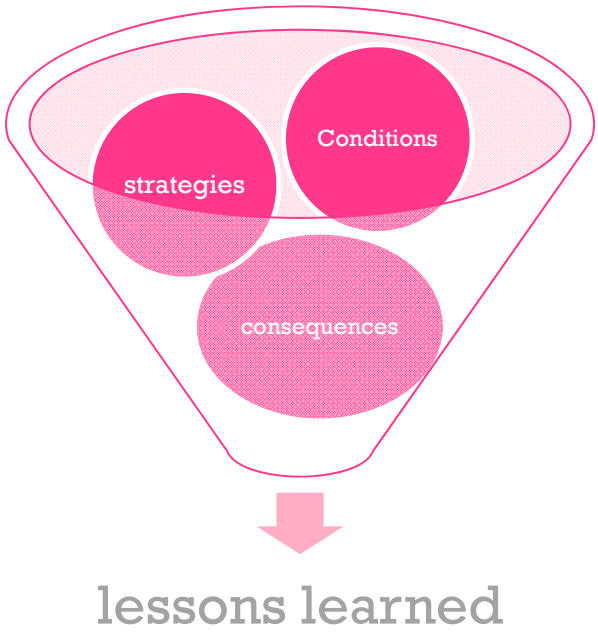
It was not that the accords did not include all the aspects that the combatants were hoping to achieve, the issue was that the accords were not being operationalized.

"Luego, media vez nosotros entregamos las armas, se fueron olvidando los acuerdos que existían. Se fueron olvidando." (interview #2)

Later, while we were handing in our arms, they forgot that the peace accords even existed. The accords were forgotten.

Based on the analysis thus far, I have chosen to illustrate the relationship of the categories as follows:

Figure 4.1: Reintegration, Viewed as a Linear Process:



Part 4: Theoretical Sampling

Upon deciding that no further interviews were needed, I considered the following factors. First of all, the themes and sentiments expressed in the eight interviews were very similar. I suspect that their collective lifestyle has influenced them to develop a type of collective response. It is not surprising that their thoughts on many issues were quite similar, as living together in a collective manner would naturally lead to a strong consensus on important issues. In addition, their unified responses may reflect what Babbitt, Pomerance-Steiner, Asaqla, Chomsky-Porat and Kirschner (2009, p. 171) refer to as the collectively constructed hopes and dreams of groups that share a sense of oppression from a dominant culture. Secondly, the theoretical framework that emerged did not have any missing pieces, or unanswered questions. The analysis did not raise any significant new questions that could not be answered by the existing data. Thirdly, due to practical reasons, such as distance and time, it was necessary to limit travel to one trip to Guatemala.

Part 5: Developing a Theoretical Model

The 50 secondary codes were developed based on the above four categories: conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned. However, there were themes emerging that transcended these headings. For example, being united was coded as a condition of reintegration, as a strategy to reintegrate, as a consequence of reintegration, and, finally, under lessons learned. Therefore, I engaged in another more sophisticated level of analysis of the 50 secondary codes.

This process, which Charmaz refers to as theoretical coding (2006, p. 63) allowed me to move the analysis beyond a descriptive, linear representation of the core phenomenon. At this point in the analytical process, I believed the utilization of the four categories did not push the understanding far enough. For example, the theme of unity was prevalent throughout the four categories and all of the eight interviews, but was not reflected strongly enough in this framework that I selected prior to my analysis. I believed this strong and pervasive presence of the theme of being united warranted a central place in any theoretical framework. My acknowledgement of the importance of being united led to a third round of coding and a reconfiguring of the categories. This opened up the relationships between categories to something bigger than a linear or chronological framework offered by the initial four categories.

Through the process of theoretical coding, I moved the understanding from a linear concrete process (conditions to lessons learned) to a conceptual framework, by removing the secondary codes from the four linear categories and by re-grouping them into five interrelated themes. These themes, more conceptual in nature than the four categories (conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned), emerged directly from the data. As Glaser attests (as cited in Charmaz, 2006, p. 64), they "earned their way" into the conceptual framework by authentically (and conceptually) representing the actions and strategies utilized by the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte during their reintegration.

The five themes are called themes because they represent a distinct, recurring and unifying quality or idea. Unity is a theme in that it recurs throughout, as a condition, as a strategy, as a consequence and as part of the lessons learned. The five themes also could be classified as strategies. For example, being united was a conscious tactic used to facilitate their reintegration. In a sense, these five new categories represent a conceptualization of the process (themes) and simultaneously represent a concrete description of the process (strategies).

The framework presented here has two dimensions: the first dimension highlights the five emerging themes or strategies, and the second dimension integrates the concept of success within these themes.

A) Developing Themes

The 50 secondary codes were organized into 5 themes (see Appendix C). These themes were:

- Being united
- Being autonomous (taking charge of the reintegration process)
- Being connected (establishing connections with their neighbours and international partners)
- Being visionary (maintaining an ideology of social and economic justice for Guatemala)
- Being a role model (working hard to build a community, exemplifying good citizenship)

The first theme, being united, is the foundational theme, as it enabled and strengthened the other four themes. This is what Chenitz and Swanson (1986) refer to as a core category in grounded theory, one that solves or processes the issue or phenomenon (reintegration). Glaser refers to this as a core variable (1978), as it is a category that recurs frequently in the data and one that is central to the theory. According to Glaser, a core category can be a cause, condition or consequence (1978) or in this case, a strategy. Being united is the core category, core variable, also called a core theme and a core strategy.

The four points below demonstrate this hierarchical arrangement, that is, how the subsequent four themes, being in charge of their reintegration process (being autonomous), establishing connections with their neighbours (being connected), continuing their struggle for social justice (being visionary) and building an entire community from nothing (being a role model), were made possible through the core theme of being united:

- Being united, as a theme, was mentioned in each of the four categories: conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned.
- Being united was mentioned by all 8 interviewees.
- Being united was described as having its roots in the war (interview #3) and even before the war (interview #2).
- The following excepts demonstrate how their being united, or organized, was the foundation for the other 4 themes.

Being united helped them to be in charge of the reintegration process, and to be in control of their lives:

> "Aquí lo que está, lo hemos conquistado nosotros. De una o de otra forma. La Cooperativa de Nuevo Horizonte tiene muchos privilegios. Porque hoy por hoy, si nuestros hijos no estudien, es porque no quieren. Nuestros primeros niños estudiaron al

> pie de los árboles. Ahora tenemos una guardería infantil, tenemos escuela de párvulos, tenemos escuela de primaria, tenemos básico, tenemos academia de mecanografía, academia de computación, y para usos especiales tenemos el Internet. Esos son privilegios.'' (interview #2)
>
> What we have here, we have done ourselves. In one form or another, the Cooperative of Nuevo Horizonte has many privileges. Because, day by day, if our children do not go to school, it is because they don't want to. The first children here studied under the trees. Now we have a daycare, kindergarten, primary and junior high, a typing academy, a computer academy, and for special uses, we have internet. These are privileges.
>
> ''Siempre hay que estar unidos. Siempre hay que estar juntos para hacer los planes de organización y hacer la lucha. Y entonces hacer la lucha sobre todo eso para que no se desintegre uno.'' (interview #5)
>
> It is always necessary to be united. It is always necessary to be together in order to make organizational plans and in order to further the struggle. Therefore, to further the struggle above all is so the individual does not get lost.

Being united helped them to be connected and to forge relationships with neighbours and international partners:

> ''Tenemos una comunidad a un kilómetro de aquí que tiene más de sesenta años de ser comunidad. Esa comunidad nunca ha tenido agua. Nunca. Hasta que nosotros decidimos donarle el agua.'' interview #2)
>
> There is a community one kilometre away from here that has been around for more than 60 years. This community has never had running water. Until we decided to help them with a water system.

Being united helped them to maintain their vision for working towards social and economic justice:

"Entonces teníamos que organizarnos para hacerle frente al sistema. Creímos que solamente organizados nosotros podíamos darle una continuidad al proceso de lucha." (interview #6)

Therefore, we needed to organize ourselves in order to confront the system. We believed that only if we were organized would we be able to continue with the struggle.

"Bueno, yo, como otro consejo que diría es que también el vivir en colectivo ayuda a resolver muchas necesidades. Y desde que anduvimos en un movimiento revolucionario… anduvimos juntos." (interview #1)

Well, as another piece of advice, I would also say that to live collectively helps find solutions to many necessities. Ever since we were together during the revolution, we moved together.

Being united helped them to build their community, which acts as a role model for all Guatemalans:

"Y el hecho de vivir colectivos nos ha ayudado a resolver, como te decía, parte de la educación. Porque si no hubiéramos estado en colectivo, hubiera costado que no hubieran hecho la escuela, que esa sí la hizo el gobierno. Tenemos una guardería, que ese es un beneficio. Las otras: va la guardería, la escuela para primaria." (interview #1)

And the act of living collectively has helped us resolve, like I was telling you, the education piece. Because, if we hadn't have been organized collectively, it would have been hard– we would not have built the school, that the government built. We have a daycare, which is a benefit. The others: the daycare, the primary school.

"Ahora, tomemos esa lucha. O sea, unámonos para esto, y listo. Es la educación. Unámonos para la educación. Es la salud. Unámonos para la salud. Es para la vivienda. Unámonos para la viviendo. Unámonos para lo que sea necesario." (interview #3)

> Now, take the struggle. We unite for this, and there you have it. Education, we unite ourselves for education. And health, we unite ourselves for health. And for housing, we unite ourselves for housing. We unite ourselves for whatever is necessary.
>
> "Entonces todo eso lo hemos logrado a través de la organización, a través de que siempre estamos juntos ahí."(interview #5)
>
> Therefore, all of this we accomplished through organization, by always being together.

B) The Concept of *Success*

The secondary codes from Part Three were organized under the categories of conditions, strategies, consequences and lessons learned. Of the 50 secondary codes, 16 fell under the category of Consequences. The category of consequences captured those thoughts and reflections on how the reintegration process (core phenomenon) went overall. I further analyzed these 16 codes in terms of whether they supported the idea that the reintegration process was a success or was not a success. Interestingly the tone or sentiment of all 16 secondary codes was easily categorized into viewing the reintegration as either positive (successful) or negative (not successful). Ten codes described the consequences of reintegration as positive and six described consequences of reintegration as negative.

In addition, the concept of success was also linked to the foundational theme, being united. Being united was seen as the theme that had a significant impact on the outcome of the reintegration process. The following quotes demonstrate this relationship:

> "Cómo es. . .seguir trabajando unidamente para así mismo logras proyectos, logras las ayudas, porque si nos dividimos, no se logra nada. Sí. Eso es. Porque sí dieron la vida varios compañeros y compañeras. . .se quedaron en la montaña." (interview #4)
>
> This is how it is. . .continue working in a united fashion in order to complete projects, this helps us, because if we divide

ourselves, we will not succeed in anything. That's the way it is. Many comrades gave their lives. . .they remain in the mountains.

"Entonces aquí lo que nos ha valido mucho es la organización, y creo que eso nos mantiene vivos, nos mantiene en pie de lucha siempre como ya ve, y nos hace que estemos aquí todavía viviendo en esta finca porque eso se nos ha creado muchas dificultades." (interview #5)

Therefore, here, being organized has been a tremendous value for us, and I believe that it has kept us alive, it has allowed us to keep struggling, and it has brought us here today, living in this community, in spite of all the difficulties.

"Claro que es un éxito para nosotros haber más de 100 compañeros juntos. Y efectivamente la táctica de divide y vencerás en cualquier lugar del mundo, cualquier ejército, cualquier gente lo aplica. En Guatemala, particularmente en Nuevo Horizonte, entendía desde un principio que llegar a eso era prácticamente cavar nuestra propia tumba." (interview #8)

It's clear that it is a victory for us that we are more than 100 comrades here together. Because really, the tactic is to divide and conquer us, no matter where in the world, no matter what insurgent forces or whomever it applies to. In Guatemala, particularly in Nuevo Horizonte, we understood from the beginning that to be divided would have practically been like digging our own grave.

In other words, the ex-combatants believed their success was dependent upon being united. In fact, not only was being united seen as a significant factor in their success, but being united was also seen as an indicator of success:

"En Guatemala o los países del tercer mundo, la gente es pobre pero tiene paz, tiene cariño, tiene hermandad, hay solidaridad, hay todo." (interview #8)

> In Guatemala, like other third world countries, the people are poor but they have peace, they have love, they have brotherhood, they have solidarity, they have everything.

Unity was the cause of their success, and unity was also an outcome of their success.

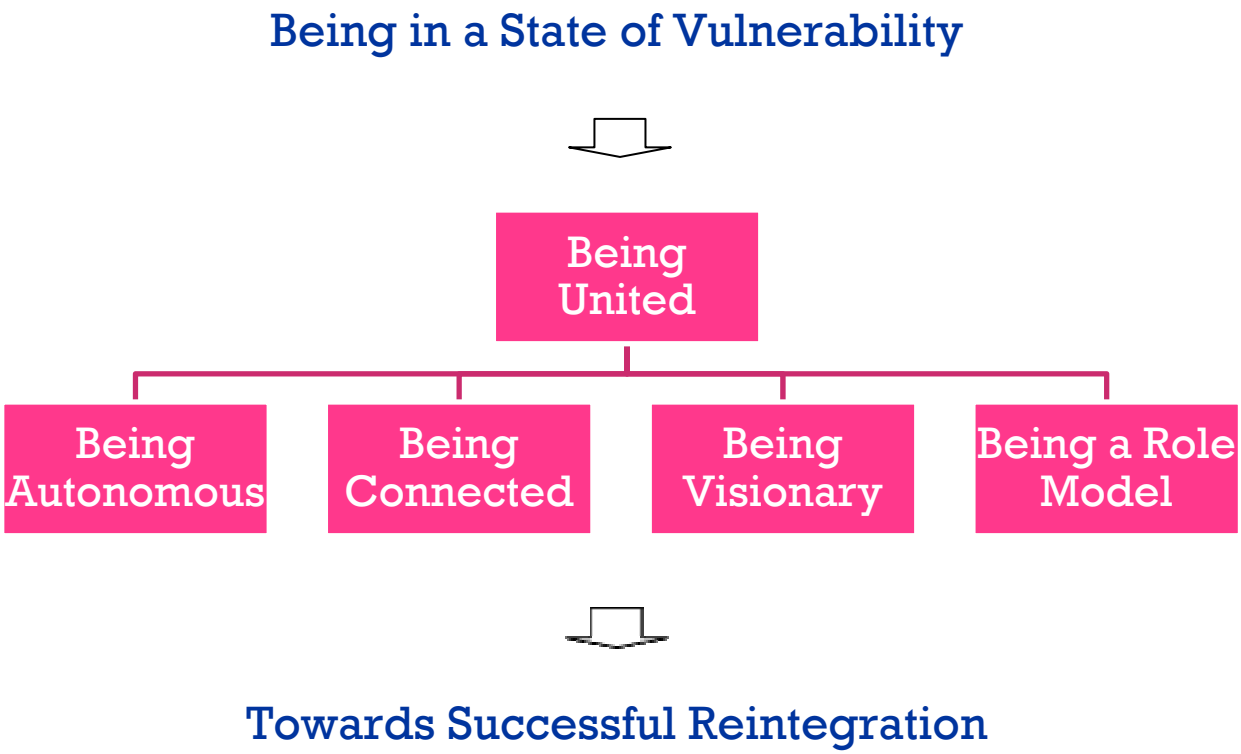
Those six secondary codes (in the category of Consequences) that reflected negatively on the success of their reintegration, have been attributed to their lack of control of the process, as evidenced by the following quote:

> "Aunque en realidad pudimos haber llegado a este lugar en otras condiciones tal vez de una forma más organizada. . .que nos ha hecho falta mucha organización." (interview #6)

> Even though in reality, we could have arrived at this point in perhaps in better shape, perhaps a bit better organized. . .we lacked a high level of organization.

The above quote points to the idea that being organized and being in control allowed for many successes for the reintegration of the ex-combatants, but not on all issues. The six codes that alluded to poor success (see Appendix C), dealt with issues that were beyond the control of the ex-combatants, such as their debt (which they attribute to not being in charge of that negotiation) and their inability to socially and economically transform Guatemala (beyond their control).

Figure 4.2: Reintegration: The Five Themes/Strategies



C) A Theoretical Model

Developing a theory is to conceptualize the phenomenon of the study (reintegration) in order to understand it in abstract terms (Charmaz, 2006, p. 127), and offer an interpretation. From the epistemology adopted for this study, this is the best understanding I can achieve, as an outsider who is trying to represent the voice of these people. "Generative theory describes and explains in a way that challenges the taken-for-granted conventions of understanding, and simultaneously invites us into new worlds of meaning and action. . .one of the major routes to social change is through audacious theorizing" (Gergen, 2009, p. 81). The following paragraph represents a written summary of the theoretical framework.

At the beginning of the reintegration process, the Guatemalan ex-combatants were particularly vulnerable. The strategies they used to re-integrate were tied to their unique vision of reintegrating collectively rather than individually. Five themes emerged from their reflection on the process of reintegration: being united, being

autonomous, being connected with the world around them, being visionary, and being a role model. Being united was their foundational theme, which facilitated their ability to take charge of their reintegration process (being autonomous), reintegrate with their neighbours (being connected), continue to struggle for social justice (being visionary) and build a community from nothing (being a role model). These themes have guided their lives for the past 13 years, and have led to significant, but not complete success. These five strategies enabled them to be much more successful than they would have been as individuals, but were not able to transform those concerns (such as macro social and economic justice) which were beyond their sphere of collective influence.

Summary

In this chapter, I described the stages of data exploration and analysis, beginning from note taking and memo writing, and ending with constructing a theoretical framework. Through this systematic grounded theory analysis, I explored the data through two stages of coding. In an initial analysis, I arranged the data using pre-determined categories suggested by Strauss and Corbin (conditions, strategies, consequences, lessons learned) to approach the core phenomenon of reintegration. This initial analysis evolved into a generation of a set of themes or strategies: being united, being autonomous, being connected, being visionary, and being a role model. This initial analysis also generated a second dimension, which provided a deeper understanding of the concept of success in reintegration. Finally, this analysis was completed with an exploration of the concept of vulnerability and how it related to the above five themes or strategies. I ended this chapter by composing a theoretical framework, combining all of these interrelated concepts to provide a coherent understanding of the reintegration experience for the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented my analysis of the participant interviews, culminating in a theoretical framework, in order to better understand the phenomenon of reintegration of Guatemalan ex-combatants. In the framework, I explained how the ex-combatants strove to succeed in their reintegration process by consciously utilizing a set of strategies. They recognized their initial vulnerability and called upon familiar tactics or strategies that had served them well (some stated this more strongly: these strategies kept them alive) during their armed struggle. The participants attributed their relative success to these five strategies.

In this chapter, I discuss the importance and relevance of this theoretical framework. I reinforce my main points by utilizing more quotes from the participant interviews. I believe that revisiting the interviews after having formulated the theoretical framework has assisted me in consolidating my emerging understanding. I also reinforce my points by referring to new literature sources, which I reviewed in a second but smaller post-analysis literature review. In keeping with Charmaz' (2006) tenets of grounded theory, I have combined methodology and analysis throughout the inquiry as a way of being open to a deeper level of understanding.

In this chapter, I offer a response to the questions: So what? or, Why is this relevant? What does it add to the existing understanding on the issue? and How does it extend the literature? I break this response down into the following sections: social construction of the ex-combatant, social construction of reintegration, relevance to the existing literature on DDR, and study limitations and suggestions for future research. In the first two sections, I revisit the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this inquiry and further reflect on the theoretical framework from a social constructionist perspective. In the third section, I apply these reflections to the existing literature, and demonstrate how this inquiry corroborates, challenges and extends the current thought on DDR. In this section, I also revisit the axiological assumptions of this inquiry and suggest specific ways in which this understanding of reintegration can be utilized to further the goals of Peace Studies.

The Social Construction of the Ex-Combatant

As I discussed earlier in Chapter Three (Methodology), a social constructionist perspective suggests that reality is constructed through social interaction, and is

therefore relative. Individuals and groups develop subjective meaning to the world around them and these meanings are varied, multiple and complex (Patton, 2002, p. 96). Perception, which is widely varied, becomes one's reality. What is defined or perceived by people as real is therefore real in its consequences (Thomas & Thomas, 1928, quoted in Patton, 2002 p. 96) regardless of whether another group adheres to a significantly different perception.

I utilize the five strategies or themes of the theoretical framework as an outline for discussing the social construction of the ex-combatant. However, I begin with a more foundational analysis of how identity is constructed.

Identity Construction

We know that the reintegration process was profound for the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte on many different levels. The testimonies of the participants attest to the life of the guerrilla–one characterized by fear, danger, fatigue, hunger and hardship. In order to cope and survive, it was necessary to form relationships and bonds (or consolidate existing ones) that created a unity to confront these challenging conditions. Therefore, an end to their combatant lifestyle would have inevitably led to a significant transition involving virtually all aspects of one's life, from basic daily activities, to defining one's purpose. The following quote exemplifies this monumental shift:

> "Bastante duro. Bastante duro en el sentido de cuando nos integramos a la vida civil nuevamente era como empezar de nuevo, como empezar de cero, en toda escala. . .como tanto en mi persona, como tanto a nivel social, como en lo económico, en todo." (interview #5)

> Really tough. Really tough in the sense that when we integrated ourselves back into civilian life it was like beginning all over again, like beginning from zero, on every level, personally, socially, economically, everything.

The testimonies of the participants attest to the hope of positive change. But even though there was hope for a future without violence and personal danger, the path that lay ahead was an unknown one, which carried its own uncertainty and fear.

> "La experiencia que tuvimos. . .que es un cambio, podríamos decirle brusco ¿no? . . .porque estábamos acostumbrados a una situación militar y de ahí a pasar a otra nueva vida. Y digo

> que es una cuestión duda porque uno viene con ese miedo, con ese temor de que ¿qué nos irá a pasar, no?'' (interview #1)
>
> The experience we had was a change–how would you say, abrupt, no? Because we were accustomed to our combatant life and now to pass to another new life–we had a lot of doubt and fear, one asks: ''what will happen to us,'' no?

The following quote characterizes their life as combatants as being significantly difficult:

> ''Claro entendíamos muy bien lo que es el hambre, lo que es la miseria, lo que es la pobreza, y entendíamos muy bien también en manos de quién estaban las riquezas.'' (interview #3).
>
> Clearly we understood very well what hunger was, what misery was, what poverty was, and we also understood very well in whose hands lies the wealth.

The following quote offers a retrospective perception that there were many negative aspects of the combatant life that the peace accords were able to ameliorate:

> ''Bueno, la experiencia sobre el proceso de lo que es la firma de la paz y todo eso ha sido una experiencia muy buena porque se ha vivido una vida más diferente a la problemática que teníamos antes… Entonces yo pienso que ha sido por un lado bonito porque se dejó atrás aquella tensión que uno tenía. . .'' (interview #5)
>
> The peace process experience and all that was associated with it has been a very good experience because we have lived a very different life since–without the problems we had before. . .Therefore, I think that it has been on one hand very nice because the tension that we lived through has been left behind.

In contrast, the following quote provides a more nostalgic remembrance of the life during the Civil War, where physical hardships were overshadowed by a sense of purpose and unity:

"Que sí sufrimos. Sí sufrimos. Allí la gente andaba descalza en el tiempo. . .en el principio. Todos descalzos y sin ropa… porque de tanto andar para arriba y para bajo, y ya entonces hasta sin camisa se quedó la pobre gente. Pero allá andábamos. Todos contentos. Allí no había sal, allí no había azúcar, allí no había jabón para bañarse. Pero andábamos contentos. Sí, por ver si defendíamos la vida. Y por la gracia de Dios alcanzamos a defenderla." (interview #4)

Sure, we suffered a lot. We definitely suffered. Back then the people walked barefoot, in the beginning. Everyone barefoot and without proper clothing. . .we walked and marched a great deal, up and down, and have remained poor people since then, without shirts. But that's how we wandered. Everyone happy. Back then, there was no salt, no sugar, no soap to wash with. But we were happy. Because we were defending our very lives. And by the grace of God we were able to defend our lives.

These thoughts and reflections bring to mind some formal conversations I had with community members a year prior to the interviews. In one conversation, an ex-combatant insisted that nothing changed during the reintegration process. His rationale for this assertion was that he, among many others, never identified themselves as combatants, as guerrillas or as people fighting in a war. On the contrary, his firmly entrenched identity was that of a community leader, a visionary, and a Catholic organizer. As such, the peace process simply allowed for the transition back into a role and identity from which he never truly left, that the taking up of arms was a necessary, but uncharacteristic detour in the journey to attain the same goals to which he aspired as a community leader and visionary.

During a different conversation, another ex-combatant presented an alternative perspective. This man considered his combatant life an integral and inseparable component of his identity. He attributed this partly to the fact that his father was also a combatant (a man who died during combat and a man whom he held in very high regard) and also to the fact that he joined the guerrilla movement as a young teenager. For him, the disarmament procedure was particularly traumatic. He recounted to me how he broke down sobbing (something he had no recollection of doing since his early childhood) when he handed his gun to the disarmament official. His weapon had become such an integral part of his identity, since it never left his side whether awake or asleep, for as long as he could remember.

These quotes offer a window into an experience of a significant personal transition, one that may have profound impact on one's identity. In one sense the two perspectives seem to contradict each other–one ex-combatant speaks of an identity that remained intact through reintegration, and the other of an identity that was traumatically terminated. However, these two perspectives also have an underlying commonality. Both ex-combatants emphasize how important their sense of identity was to them. I believe these reflections raise the question about how the process of DDR may affect, positively or negatively, the process of re-constructing one's personal and group identity, and ultimately, one's reintegration into civilian life.

Several previous discussions have already demonstrated how DDR programs construct the identity of ex-combatants in a negative way by using terms such as belligerents, spoilers and overall as latent agents of violence who need to be contained to prevent a recurrence of war. Evidence from interview excerpts, however, has demonstrated that the ex-combatants constructed a much different identity. In the following section, I discuss how the disparity between the two identity constructions may inhibit the reintegration of ex-combatants. In this discussion I focus on the following topics: collective identity versus individual identity, identity of capacity versus identity of deficit, identity of peacemakers versus identity of potential violence.

Social identity theory (Hogg, 2006, p. 112) describes how groups define themselves cognitively, in terms of shared attributes. In other words, the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte have developed a collective identity based on their shared goals, values and beliefs. A number of excerpts have been shared which demonstrate that the ex-combatants considered themselves in fairly positive terms (visionary, hardworking and peaceful). Their reflections also justify that these attributes were present during their time as combatants, and were intentionally maintained and strengthened during the phase of reintegration. In other words, at a fundamental level, their collective identity of themselves did not shift dramatically during reintegration, in spite of this transformational process. The concept of identity also takes into account the way in which people prefer to define themselves, that is, they are motivated to use terms that allude to achieving an ideal identity (Charmaz, 2006, p. 170).

> "Yo lo sentí, en mi experiencia, totalmente grande. ¿Por qué? Porque en la lucha guerrillera, nosotros teníamos que conformar una organización integral. Es decir, en la guerrilla nosotros resolvíamos de forma colectiva toda la cuestión

económica, la cuestión de. . .alimentación, toda la cuestión de conducción política. . .cómo nos dirigíamos, cómo nos proyectamos hacia el futuro políticamente. Y al desmovilizarnos se rompe todo eso. Y cómo te vas a insertar fue mi gran enigma. . .mi gran situación difícil.'' (interview #7)

I felt that, in my experience, it (reintegration) was totally great. Why? Because in the guerrilla struggle, we had to conform to organizational rules. That is to say, in the guerrilla movement we would solve our problems collectively, food, political conduct. . .like they would direct us, how we projected ourselves towards the political future. And the process of demobilization ripped all of this apart. So how are you going to integrate was to me the great enigma. . my difficult situation.

The following quotes attest to their desire to not only maintain their positive self-identity, but also to highlight their attributes and good character to gain the confidence of those who were suspicious of them.

''Porque nosotros a través de nuestro comportamiento, a través de nuestra organización, les fuimos demostrando como tanto. . .principalmente como a nosotros como personas.'' (interview #5)

Because we, through our exemplary behaviour, and through our organized behaviour, were really demonstrating to them, (villages surrounding Nuevo Horizonte) basically that we were human beings.

''Entonces aquí se organizaban jugadas de fútbol de los muchachos. . .entre vecinos y hasta con las mismas autoridades. . .en ese tiempo también la policía se convirtió en policía nacional civil, entonces eso nos ayudó mucho a hacer acercamiento. Y también las muchachas, las jóvenes, también jugaban con equipos de otras comunidades, entonces por eso nos fuimos dando a conocer con la gente.''(interview #5)

Then soccer games were organized here among the guys, between neighbouring villages and from the authorities. . .in

> this time (following the terms of the peace accords) also the military police were converted into a civil police force, and they helped us a lot to get together. And also the women, the youth, they also were playing on teams with other communities, therefore, because of this, we were getting to know the people.
>
> "Si, nosotros avanzamos más y cuando teníamos mejores conocimientos lo que hicimos fue insertarnos. Que la gente después no lo creía que nosotros fuimos guerrilleros. Porque nosotros tuvimos lo que se llama las iniciativas de participar, en opinar, en proponer en beneficio de nuestras comunidades. Y como nosotros, vamos siendo. . .sin necesidad de meternos. . .vamos siendo aceptado por la misma población. Y vamos haciendo también un ejemplo en medio de aquella gente que no te quieren." (interview #7)
>
> Yes, we pushed ourselves more and when we were better known, we became integrated. That way the people would later think that we were never guerrillas. Because we had the initiative to participate, to offer our thoughts, to look at ways of improving our communities. And we are going to be accepted by these people, and we are going to make an example to the people who didn't like us.

Instead, their task was to maintain their positive identity in the face of the entrenched negative attitudes of the civilians among whom they were going to live.

These quotes suggest that in their quest to achieve recognition and value, and to dispel the myth of the violent guerrilla, the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte utilized what Dumont and van Lill (2010) refer to as a strategy to attempt to diminish intergroup distances (p. 432). The process to achieve value and recognition was done collectively, which, according to Ellemers (2002, p. 242) allows non-dominant groups to achieve positive identity by the dominant group. Ellemers adds that often the non-dominant group (in this case, the reintegrating ex-combatants) need to adopt the traits or identities of the dominant group (the larger society) in order to gain acceptance (p. 257). It seems in this case, however, the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte did not need to adopt new identity traits, but rather needed to showcase and promote their long-held identity which they never gave up, thus refusing to participate in what Gergen (2009) refers to as their own subjugation. In

other words, by celebrating their positive identity, and by integrating with their neighbours with the assumption of a commonly shared positive identity, the ex-combatants acted against the negatively constructed identities that were perpetrated by a process that focussed on their potential for harm. Gergen expands on the subjugation of negative identity (constructed by outsiders) by contending that this process often inhibits a group's capacity to depict one's own identity (p. 51). It seems at some level, the ex-combatants intuitively addressed this, as evidenced by the following:

> "Lo primero que fui. . .que me puse a participar con la gente. Y no que la gente llegara conmigo, sino llegar con la gente. Me ofrecí con la gente a trabajar en bien de la comunidad. Y esa es una cosa importante. No los aislamos. Al contrario, hay que unirte a esa comunidad. Hay que unirte a la población. No hay que alejarte." (interview #7).
>
> The first thing I did was engage with the people and participate. I didn't wait for the people to come and get me, on the contrary, I went to them. I offered myself to work for the community. And this is a very important thing. Don't isolate ourselves. On the contrary, you need to unite yourself with the larger community. You need to unite yourself with the people. Don't distance yourselves.

Further in this section of the chapter, I re-visit the discussion of how the ex-combatants intentionally utilized the strategy of being autonomous. However, it is worth noting at this point that one's identity, as Gergen asserts, is a site of struggle, a contest between self-control versus being controlled by others (pp. 51-52).

The Vulnerable Ex-Combatant

My analysis of the existing literature has documented, in my opinion, a well-intentioned, but somewhat incomplete portrayal of ex-combatants. Much of the focus of the DDR literature is from a macro-insecurity framework (Knight & Ozerdem 2004), where the aims of DDR are to protect not only the fragile peace of a country (by somehow discouraging the ex-combatants to return to violence through rehabilitation and rewards) but also to protect the general public from people (mainly men) who know of little else besides violence, and know few forms of economic livelihood that do not translate into petty thievery (Abdullah, 1998; Boas & Hatloy, 2008; Darby & MacGinty, 2000; Hauge & Thoresen, 2007; Krampe, 2009;

Stedman, 1997). Through this inquiry into the reintegration experience in Guatemala, I have challenged this perspective in several ways.

First of all, I believe that the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte, not surprisingly, viewed themselves in the preliminary stages of reintegration, as being vulnerable. In Chapter 2 (Review of the Literature), I give examples of how other ex-combatant groups are described by their vulnerability, but it seems to be put in the context of either economic vulnerability (which is corroborated by the interviews from this inquiry) or vulnerability as fragility or instability with regards to the urge to return to violence if their needs are not addressed.

I believe the vulnerability that the participants of Nuevo Horizonte talked about is different. Their vulnerability consisted of being subjected to a process over which they had little control and in which they had no experience, and a consequential sense of fear and lack of trust. Their vulnerability reflected their limited literacy skills and economic capacity. Therefore I suggest that a systematic understanding of how to work with people who are vulnerable can add to how DDR programs are being run. This adds to the literature by offering a deeper understanding of the psychological and social needs of the ex-combatants in the preliminary stages of DDR. It also adds to the literature by conveying an alternative portrait of the ex-combatant–not one of a potential force to be bridled, but rather as a potential. The emphasis on the ex-combatants' self-identified positive attributes and skilful strategies to reintegrate offers an important expansion to our understanding.

Being United

I have argued previously that DDR programming is constructed in an individualist paradigm, which, as contended earlier in light of Paris' (2005) analysis, falls into the larger neo-liberal individualist paradigm that characterizes First World development work. According to Kagitcibasi (1997), individualism has been the hallmark of European history and intellectual thought coming out of the Enlightenment, and individualism still holds great influence to this day over programs such as DDR. Hofstede (1980) informs us on the challenges of working with groups whose background differs from our own. DDR programs emphasize demobilization (relying on one's self) and employment (personal responsibility and independence). These are not negative attributes or goals, and some may argue that these aspirations are shared by many ex-combatants around the world. Nonetheless, these attributes differ from the collectivist background of those Guatemalan ex-combatants who live in Nuevo Horizonte. As already demonstrated, their collectivist culture had its beginnings in agricultural cooperatives long before

they joined the armed resistance movement, and was solidified during their combat time, during which collectivism was seen as necessary to survive. Therefore, their core strategy (being united) was not accidental. Perhaps there are other ex-combatants elsewhere who would benefit from the unity and the collective ability of their former combat groups. This idea challenges one of the major tenets of DDR, which is to disband groups of combatants as a means to reduce the threat of resurgence of the violence. It aims to deal with the post-conflict security problem that results from ex-combatants being left without livelihoods or support networks, other than their former comrades, during the critical transition period from conflict to peace and development (Knight, 2008, p. 6).

The constructed identity of the ex-combatants may also be viewed by DDR program leaders as a psychological barrier to integration. "Whenever there are tendencies toward unity, cohesion, brotherhood, commitment, solidarity, or community, so is alienation under production" (Gergen, 2009, p. 114). In other words, the unity or solidarity of the ex-combatants may inhibit their acceptance of the civilians among whom they will have to live, just as those civilians may feel alienated from a group with a strong and unified (and different from their own) identity. We define who we are by how we are different. However, the experience of the participants from Nuevo Horizonte does not seem to support this. For the participants, it seemed that their unity gave them the power, or the collective wisdom instead to break down barriers, rather than reinforce them.

Being Autonomous

In spite of this sense of vulnerability, (or perhaps because of it) the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte nonetheless mobilized themselves and took matters into their own hands. Their vulnerability, therefore, did not seem to invoke a plea for charity or takeover, but rather invoked a request for assistance so that they could build their own capacity for determining their future, to foster their own independence and autonomy.

> "No se le tiene que imponer lo que la gente deba hacer. Y le decía yo, tiene la razón. No hay que imponer. Hay que facilitar los procesos, y no imponer. . .Porque la perspectiva de occidente con la perspectiva de Latinoamérica o de los países del tercer mundo es diferente." (interview #8)
>
> One does not have to impose on someone what they ought to do. Like I was saying, you're right. It is not necessary to

> impose. It is necessary to facilitate the process, not impose it. . .because the perspective of the West is different than the perspective of Latin America or the Third World countries.

This theme or strategy of being autonomous exposes another disparity in the self and other-constructed identity of the ex-combatant. To begin with, in the following quote, one of the participants highlights how his collective sense of seeking autonomy clashed with outsiders. These opposing constructions revealed themselves most when the community forged economic ties with organizations offering development aid.

> "Yo pienso que el tema de la cooperación, llamémoslo así, es un tema delicado. Porque la cooperación, dependiendo cómo la manejes, cómo la recibas, o cómo la aceptes, te puede movilizar o te puede desmovilizar. No quiero criticar, sino que sólo quiero analizar. Para mí, la cooperación ha desempeñado papeles no muy gratos en Guatemala. Y no porque la cooperación sea mala, sino porque no se han creado condiciones para abordar esa cooperación. Y en este papel yo pienso que las ONGs locales principalmente han desempeñado papeles no muy positivos. Que en vez de crear organización, en vez de crear condiciones, han venido a crear dependencia y han creado mucho paternalismo." (interview # 3)

> I believe the topic of cooperation is a touchy subject. Because cooperation, depending on who is in the driver's seat, and who is on the receiving end, it can bring capacity or take away capacity. I don't want to criticize, I only want to analyze. For me, cooperation has brought about unpleasing results in Guatemala. And it's not because cooperation is bad, on the contrary, it's because the proper conditions haven't been created. And in this context, I think that the local NGO's have brought about results that aren't very positive. Instead of creating organization, instead of creating proper conditions, they have come to create dependence and have created a lot of paternalism.

I believe this disparity of understanding is explained succinctly through Farmer's (2005) framework for development aid. Farmer describes three different constructions of cooperation: charity, development and social justice.

Inherent in the charity model is that those whom we are helping (i.e., ex-combatants), or those who are the target of charitable actions are, as Farmer states, intrinsically inferior (p. 153). While it is understandable how ex-combatants may be viewed as needing help because of historical events and economic forces, a charity model would go beyond this and view them as being *intrinsically* inferior. Further, the charity model does not question why those needing assistance are in their position, and it in fact often ignores the factors that have led up to the situation, in this case the socio-economic disparities that initiated the civil war. Borrowing from Freire (1986) "in order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity,' their oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well" (1986, p. 29). I believe that DDR programming rests in a higher evolutionary construction than charity, although Farmer argues that charity still commonly drives many formal relationships and aid programs between wealthy global organizations and the poor people whom they are attempting to help. However, I believe the literature provides growing evidence that the trend in DDR programming is to incorporate an analysis of the underlying or pre-existing conditions, therefore challenging the shortcomings of the charity model.

Farmer's (2005) second construction is the development model. Development is based on a "liberal" view of poverty (p. 155). Development still leaves the foreigner in charge, especially in terms of financial resources and project management, but views the target group's inadequacies as something to be fixed through education and skill development. It is clear to me that much of DDR falls under the rubric of Farmer's development model. According to Farmer, the development model, like neo-liberalism, "places the problem with the poor themselves: these people are backward and reject the technological fruits of modernity. With assistance from others, they too will, after a while, reach a higher level of development" (p. 155). Employment and training programs fit into the development construction of cooperation and assistance. As echoed by Paris' economic analysis (2005), the development model tends to view the ex-combatants as a commodity, emphasizing outcomes and outputs, costs and cost savings, and economic indicators (Doane & Varcoe, 2005, p. 188), and in an attempt to improve economic and social indicators for the target group, may inadvertently strip them of their capacity (McKnight, 1995).

Farmer's (2005) third construction is the social justice model in which the cooperative relationship between giver and receiver necessitates the blurring of distinguishing lines and identities. Autonomy is a key of the social justice construct, and the relationships are based on "the struggle to construct a just and fraternal society, where persons can live with dignity and be the agents of their own destiny" (Gutierrez, 1973, p. xiv). I believe the following quote supports the idea that the people of Nuevo Horizonte sought a social justice framework for their relationships with their neighbours and with the organizations that assisted them with their reintegration.

> "Y a partir de ahí lo que aprendimos, no, tenemos que cambiar. Tenemos que deshacernos de este tipo de cooperación. Porque en vez de darte ventajas te da desventajas. Entonces para mí yo creo que Horizonte ha trabajado mucho y la verdad es que la cooperación sí puede aportar, pero si respeta las estructuras. Y claro, también el pueblo tiene que tener organización. Si ellos no tienen esa organización entonces es imposible. Aunque la cooperación se desborde en plata, no va a resolver el problema. Porque para mí el problema no es tanto la plata, sino que es crear las condiciones para que cuando llegue plata esa plata pueda florecer de manera positiva dentro de la sociedad. Y entonces es muy importante la creación de liderazgo." (interview #3)
>
> From here what we have learned is that we have to change. We have to undo this type of cooperation. Because instead of giving you advantages, it gives you disadvantages. Therefore, for me I believe that Nuevo Horizonte has worked a lot and the truth is that the cooperation can contribute, but only if it respects the existing structure. And, true, also the people need to be organized. If they are not organized, it is not possible. Even though cooperation (aid) may come with a lot of money, it doesn't resolve the problem. Because for me the money isn't the issue, but rather the need to create the conditions so when the aid money does come, this money can allow the entire society to flourish. And then it is very important to have good leadership.

The disparity is evident. DDR programs appear to be implemented from a development framework, while the people of Nuevo Horizonte, perhaps like many

targets and recipients of foreign-run projects, are committed to a framework based on the principles of social justice. Berryman (1987) summarizes this relationship sharply: "Liberation entails a break with the present order in which Latin American countries could establish sufficient autonomy to reshape their economies to serve the needs of that poor majority. The term 'liberation' is understood in contradistinction to 'development'" (p. 91).

McKnight's (1995) discourse on community capacity summarizes the disparity between a development and social justice model as the difference between viewing a group or individual through a lens of capacity or deficit.

> Community associations are built upon the recognition of the fullness of each member because it is the sum of his or her capacities that represents the power of the group. The social policy mapmakers, on the other hand, build a world based upon the emptiness of each of us–a model based upon deficiency and need. Communities depend upon capacities. Systems commodify deficiencies. (p. 170)

Without having access to academic discourse on how relationships are constructed in the context of cooperation and assistance, the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte appear to have a clear understanding of the pitfalls. Their own thoughts accurately reflect the sentiments of Farmer (2005) and McKnight (1995).

At this point in this discussion I believe it is important to revisit the distinction between vulnerability as a deficiency, or a flaw that needs fixing, and a vulnerability that needs to be understood, and addressed by the existing capacities of the group. Note how this sense of capacity comes out of the following quote:

> "Hemos tratado de mantenernos siempre en colectivo, de resolver ciertos problemas de la comunidad en colectivo, y trabajamos individual entre mi colectivo comunal y en grupitos y el colectivo en general, o sea, entre formas. Y gracias a nuestro trabajo como lo hemos traído hasta hoy día, mucha gente extranjera nos ha visto de que estamos bien y que nos han apoyado en muchas cosas. Y el hecho de vivir colectivos nos ha ayudado a resolver, como te decía, parte de la educación. Porque si no hubiéramos estado en colectivo, hubiera costado que no hubieran hecho la escuela." (interview #1)

> We have tried to always remain as a collective, to resolve our community issues collectively, and we work among the collectives and in little groups. . .and thanks to our collective work up to now, many foreigners have come to see us and have assisted us with many things. And the result of our working collectively has helped us to find solutions to things like our education. Because if we had not worked collectively, we would not have got our school.

This sense of capacity did not preclude outside help. On the contrary, outside assistance was actively sought, but the difference was that the community was still in control of who was invited in to assist. Who is in control is what ultimately matters, as echoed by McKnight's (1995) concern that those who offer assistance may inadvertently remove local capacity.

> The community, a social space where citizens turn to solve problems, may be displaced by the intervention of human service professionals acting as an alternative method of problem solving. Human service professionals with special expertise, techniques and technology push out the problem-solving knowledge and action of friend, neighbour, citizen, and association. (pp. 105-106)

Can groups ever be satisfied with what a government will do for them? Consider the following quote:

> "Todos esos dinerales que donaron algunos países para lo de la firma de la paz quedaron en manos de saber qué autoridades. Y a uno, pues, no le llegó nada. Entonces, como repito, así a nivel general en el país, los gobiernos de turno no hacen nada por el pueblo." (interview #1)
>
> All those fortunes that various countries donated for the peace process remained in the hands of the authorities. Nothing made it to the people. Therefore, I repeat, in general, the succeeding governments of Guatemala have not done a thing for the people.

This theme of discontentment can be found throughout the literature (Jennings, 2007; Stovel, 2008; Theidon, 2009) in which ex-combatants were asked their opinions

of the outcomes of the DDR process. These results must be disappointing to those who implement and evaluate DDR programming, considering the level of human and financial resources dedicated to the DDR of these men and women. I believe that dissatisfaction is much more likely to be present when people are not allowed to be part of the decision-making. I believe that authentic partnership is a better predictor of satisfaction than specific economic gains, which will inevitably fall short of expectations.

In the interviews that I conducted, the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte did not ever use the term victim. Although they spoke of hardships and being vulnerable, the language of victimhood did not appear. This is contrasted to the study referred to earlier by Jennings (2007, p. 211) in which Liberian ex-combatants identified themselves as victims of the civil war, and victims of the reintegration process. Jennings asserts that this victim paradigm is constructed by the DDR process itself and acts as a hindrance to the process of reintegration, in which being a victim becomes a self-fulfillment, or a "cultural performance" (Gergen, 2009, p. 53). I suggest that this lack of victim identity in Nuevo Horizonte may be related to the five strategies of the framework.

Being Connected

The authors presented in the literature review articulate many times how ex-combatants pose a threat to newly formed democracies during the post-conflict phase. And I have, in previous sections, argued that this view is not supported by the participants. More likely, their views align with those of Paris (2004), who sees macro-economic global policies as more likely a threat to peace than they are.

The voice of the participants is clear: They are not a problem to be fixed.

A number of the participants refer to the way that the civilians viewed them during the initial phase of reintegration–with fear (may be violent) and disdain (murderers, thieves, prostitutes). They attributed this in part to an intentional campaign during the war, when government forces utilized popular media to construct a negative image of the guerrillas. This process mirrors Waller's (2007) description of how dominant social groups engage in the social construction of the "other." While Waller's analysis is generally concerned with grave issues such as genocide and mass killings, the concept applies here as well. The ex-combatants, at the beginning of reintegration, were confronted with an "us and them" schema, but seemed to have responded by breaking down this barrier, by re-constructing how others thought of them. Waller describes how two groups' construction of the

"other" can escalate, especially when complicated by social and economic insecurity. These patterns of widening relational distance may be a pre-curser to formal social exclusion (Waller, 2007, p. 201). It appears the efforts of the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte, as represented by one of their five themes or strategies (being connected), were successful.

> "Pero también uno tenía que poner de su parte… tenemos que poner de nuestra parte también para que la gente nos conozca." (interview #5)
>
> But also, one has to do their part, we have to do our part as well so that the people get to know us.

We know that ex-combatants are faced with the challenge of reintegrating with the civilians following an armed conflict. We also know that the ex-combatants from Nuevo Horizonte made a collective conscious effort to connect with the surrounding villages during their reintegration. I have also argued, in the theoretical framework, that this theme of connection drew from their core theme of being united. The question that comes to mind is whether being united would assist or hinder other ex-combatants in integrating back into civilian life. The literature does not offer a clear answer. In Liberia, ex-combatants were widely perceived as troublemakers not only from outsiders, but also the ex-combatants themselves. Interviewed ex-combatants often labeled their former comrades using similar negative language (Jennings, 2007). In fact, the ex-combatants often distanced themselves from the rest by constructing the other ex-combatants as troublemakers, while holding their own character in high esteem. Perhaps this suggests that the ex-combatants in Nuevo Horizonte are unique. It may also support the contention that being united is a contributing strategy for successful reintegration into civilian life.

I have used the phrase "being connected" thus far in a fairly tangible and concrete sense, but the sense of being connected can be much more profound. Being connected is a basic human need, a need that may well be heightened during a period of vulnerability. Luckily the unity among the members of Nuevo Horizonte fulfilled this need in a way that no formal DDR program ever could. "For those whose 'emptiness' cannot be filled with human services, the most obvious 'need' is the opportunity to express and share their gifts, skills, capacities, and abilities with friends, neighbours, and fellow citizens in their community" (McKnight, 1995, p. 104).

<u>Being Visionary</u>

The theoretical framework provides a description for how the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte viewed themselves in terms of being visionary. They believed they had a purpose that transcended the transition from guerrilla to member of civil society. Their ideological goal of social justice for all Guatemalans became a non-violent struggle, which was made possible by the newly opened political space, and manifested through legal political parties and social organizations. This transformation occurred on a national scale, and was frequently mentioned by the participants as one of the successes of the reintegration process.

The following quotes reiterate the participants' sentiments that their taking up an armed struggle was not a matter of choice, but a necessity for a number of reasons, including hope for a more just future.

> ". . .convencidos de tal manera que el único camino que nos quedaba para la construcción de la democracia real, funcional y participativa en nuestro país, era la lucha armada." (interview #2)
>
> . . .convinced in such a way that the only path that remained for us to create real, functional and participatory democracy in Guatemala was through armed struggle.
>
> ". . Este uso de armas no necesariamente fue porque fuéramos un pueblo violento o porque fuéramos un pueblo que nos gusta ver correr la sangre, sino que fue como un único recurso después que se nos cierran todo tipo de posibilidad a través de la vía pacifica." (interview #3)
>
> Our taking up arms was not because we were violent people or because it pleased us to see blood. On the contrary, it was because it was the only path left, since the door had been closed to all peaceful means.
>
> "Nos fuimos a la montaña. Porque si nos quedábamos en las casas el ejército nos mataba. Tuvimos muchos ejemplos. Que todo que no salió de su casa, de su aldea, aldeas enteras quemaron. Los mataron." (interview #4)
>
> We went to the mountains. Because if we stayed in our houses, the Guatemalan army would kill us. We had many examples, where those who did not leave their house, their village–entire

villages were burned. The inhabitants were killed by the army.

"No hallamos otro camino más que tomar las armas. Y las tomamos, eso sí, como un medio de lucha." (interview #7)

We could not find an alternative to taking up arms. So we took up arms as our means to struggle.

The sentiment of taking up arms only as a last resort was prevalent among the participants. Did their vision for social and economic equity justify their taking up an armed struggle? Or conversely, did self-defence justify it? More broadly, did the means justify the ends? The longstanding debate on whether there exists a "just war" is perhaps relevant here, considering this discussion is occurring in the broader context of Peace Studies. Just War Theory has two parts: Jus ad bellum (justice of a war) and jus in bello (justice in a war) (Jeong, 2000). It is hard to imagine that any group, army or nation that takes up arms does so without believing their cause is morally right and sometimes even sanctioned by a higher power. Perhaps then, the sentiments of these participants are no nobler than any other groups who have taken up arms. According to Just War Theory, wars can be conducted in self-defence, and to restore or create a just order. Perhaps, however, a social constructionist perspective aptly challenges the theory of a just war, because opposing sides construct differing realities and interpretations of the reasons for armed conflict. Ultimately, they may construct any justification as well. Rarely do two sides in an armed conflict share a common understanding of the issues prior to war, and this disparity becomes acutely polarized once violence commences. Therefore, if war separates our reality even greater, then, from a social constructionist perspective, can war ever attain peace without crushing the opposing constructed reality of social justice? This relevant debate brings us beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless, from a social constructionist perspective, any shared ideological vision warrants scrutiny and dialogue.

The second component of the Just War Theory, Jus in bello, refers to justice within a war, such as keeping the number of civilian casualties to a minimum. In this sense, the URNG seems to have managed much better than the government forces. As mentioned previously, the United Nations Truth Commission demonstrated that the guerrillas carried out 3% of the documented atrocities, while the government forces carried out 93% (Comision Esclaramiento Historico, 1999).

Recent history indicates that the criteria for the moral justification of war (in and of) have not been applied to most wars (Jeong, 2000, p. 64). Rather the criteria of ideology and retribution seem much more common. In any case, granting political space to former combatants seems to work in re-directing violence. One could also argue, though, that the political space opened in Guatemala is symbolic only, as stated elsewhere, the ones in power in Guatemala are the corporations, and the political space afforded to them does not touch this form of power.

Jennings' (2005) premise in her article on ex-combatant reintegration in Liberia emphasizes the importance of *client satisfaction* (the client of the DDR programs is the ex-combatant). However, the participants from Nuevo Horizonte emphasize the need to look beyond themselves: you have to satisfy the needs of all Guatemalans. This vision has not been expressed anywhere in the literature that I have found.

The literature and the official enactment of DDR programming seem to support the idea of allowing political space for those who have been disarmed (Knight, 2008). The people of Nuevo Horizonte have expressed their acknowledgement that this was an important step. Knight (2008, p. 13), who writes on behalf of the United Nations, also recommends that the insurgent organization be part of the negotiations, and this, in fact, was enacted in Guatemala. However, according to the participants in this inquiry, their interests were not represented well by those in charge of the URNG.

> "Y yo te digo, algunos de los errores de nosotros fue que nos creímos de nuestras mismas organizaciones de nosotros. Nos creímos. Y pensamos nosotros de que nuestras organizaciones, que nos representaban a nosotros, internas en Guatemala, iban a hacer estrategia para podernos a nosotros conducir a un desarrollo mejor, pensamos."(interview #1)
>
> I say to you, some of our errors were because we believed our very own organizations. We believed in them. And we thought that these organizations, that represented our own interests, made up of Guatemalans, were going to make a strategy in order to enable us to forge a better development. That's what we thought.
>
> "Pero nosotros también por la poca experiencia en el desarrollo del tema de desarrollo socioeconómico para nosotros, no planteamos ante el Estado, antes los gobiernos,

las necesidades que podíamos tener al futuro. Nos creímos más de nuestras organizaciones a que nos representaron este caso. . .a nosotros los representó la Fundación Guillermo Toriello que era integrado por todos los dirigentes de la URNG en general. Se hizo una fundación. Y pensamos que ahí le respondes por nosotros. Pensamos. Los creímos. Fuimos muy. . .poco visionarios. Fuimos también muy miopes políticamente y no nos pusimos más avorazados, no nos pusimos más con iniciativa para lograr un proceso de inserción mejor así a nosotros. Pero eso es interno de nosotros." (interview #7)

But we also, due to our lack of experience in socio-economic development, we did not present before the state or the government, the list of things we needed for the future. Instead we had faith in our own organizations that supposedly represented our case, such as the Guillermo Toriello Foundation, which was connected to the heads of the URNG. And we thought that they would respond to our needs. We thought. We believed. We didn't see the whole picture. We were short-sighted politically and did not look after our own interests, we did not push for a better reintegration process for ourselves. But this is an internal matter.

"Eso pienso yo que fue un error de nuestros máximos dirigentes de la guerrilla. Porque cuando las negociaciones. . .voy a regresar un poco atrás. . .cuando las negociaciones… supuestamente la URNG y los gobiernos estaban dialogando muchas cosas hacia los excombatientes. . .muchos temas ¿no? Pero al final, como te decía anteriormente, supuestamente que nosotros. . .la firma de la paz, que nos iban a dar casa, que nos iban a dar tierra y todo lo necesario para empezar a trabajar. Bueno, yo no sé si fue un descuido de nuestros máximos dirigentes o se dejaron meter el gol. . .no sé. Porque la tierra se suponía que nos la iban a regalar. . .que el gobierno lo iba a pagar que para eso muchos países estaban donando dinero para que se nos facilitara eso. Bueno, al final de cuentas, lo que nos quedamos fue con una gran deuda." (interview #1)

I think it was an error of our highest leaders of the guerrilla movement. Because when the negotiations. . .supposedly the

> URNG and the government were discussing many things regarding the ex-combatants. . .many topics, no? But in the end, just like I told you before, supposedly we. . .the peace accords were supposed to give us housing, land and all the necessities to begin working. Fine, I don't know if it was carelessness on the part of our URNG leaders. Because the land that they were supposed to give us, that which the government was to pay for. . .that the government was going to pay for on account of many countries were donating money and the government was going to facilitate this. Well, in the end, we are stuck with a huge debt.

It is unclear whether the involvement by the URNG in the negotiations was more symbolic than real, as the retrospective opinion of the participants is quite united in its criticism of their leadership.

Being a Role Model

As discussed previously, the literature is full of examples of the perspectives of outsiders, who perceive ex-combatants as threats. It is therefore significant that the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte did not perceive themselves as the threat to lasting peace. On the contrary, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, they saw themselves as catalysts for lasting peace. This peace is one that will bring economic and social justice to all of Guatemala. Unlike any literature reviewed thus far, these ex-combatants would say that the real threat to lasting peace is, in fact, the Guatemalan government and the global political and economic forces that restrain any meaningful attempts to create change.

It is also noteworthy to highlight another distinction between the DDR literature and the thoughts of this inquiry's participants. The focus of DDR programming has grown to include a wide range of services for ex-combatants, and is larger than simply keeping a cease-fire. Nonetheless, measurements of DDR in themselves focus on outcomes for only the ex-combatants. What resonated among the participants' interviews was a hope for the amelioration of the social and economic conditions for all of Guatemala. Their criteria for success went far beyond their own needs, or perhaps more accurately, reflected a realization that their own needs are inextricably interdependent with all of their Guatemalan compatriots. To me, this sense of success is far more visionary than has been reported in any of the literature.

"Pero siempre tratamos de mantener eso. Y muchos padres tratamos de meterles eso a los jóvenes porque algún día nosotros vamos a desaparecer, ¿no? Y entonces ojalá que la juventud que hay ahorita y los que vienen naciendo que siempre sigan con esto de estar unidos. Porque hoy en día en Guatemala, o tal vez en otros países, si cada quien lucha por sí mismo, no puede, no lo escuchan. Debe uno de estar unido. Entonces eso, y yo siento que ha sido un beneficio que nos ha ayudado a traer muchos beneficios." (interview #1)

But we also try to keep this (our unity). And many parents try to pass this on to the youth because one day we are going to be gone, no? Therefore, God willing, the youth that are around today, plus those who are not yet even born, will always follow in this path–being united. Because one day in Guatemala, or perhaps in other countries, if everyone just struggles for justice individually, you can't. No one will hear you. We need to be united. Therefore, this, and I feel that it has been a benefit that has helped us to bring many benefits.

Those involved in implementing the DDR process may be curious about or uncomfortable with the idea that ex-combatants would consider themselves role models. I believe that the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte have been able to seize opportunities to do so as role models in reintegrating, role models in economic development and role models in struggling for social justice. The following quote exemplifies this support for a non-violent role model identity:

"Entonces la experiencia más importante que hay, que no sólo a través de las armas se puede llevar una lucha. Se puede llevar a través de diálogo, a través de otras formas de lucha. Entonces no es necesario cuándo hay voluntad de ambas partes. . .no llevas sólo ese proceso de armas en la mano ni nada de eso. Se pueden hacer diferentes luchas para que se siga luchando por un ideal que uno pueda tener." (interview #5)

Therefore, the most important experience is, that armed struggle is not the only way to fight or advance a cause. You can use dialogue, and other forms of struggle. . .therefore, it is not necessary when both parties are willing, you don't have to

> resort to arms and violence. It is possible to engage in other forms of resistance to continue struggling for an ideal that you want to attain.

In summary, I have argued that the identity of the ex-combatant has been constructed differently by various stakeholders. I believe the participants' positive self-identity is directly related to their unique reintegration experience, as outlined in the theoretical framework in the last chapter. Their strategies to remain united and autonomous (among others) enabled the development and nurturing of a robust and positively constructed collective identity, which they were able to promote to their neighbours during reintegration. On the contrary, the tendency for others to construct an identity based on fear or based on deficit rather than capacity highlights the need for further understanding of how the DDR process may negatively impact the reintegration of ex-combatants more generally.

The Social Construction of Reintegration

Evaluation and monitoring of DDR has become a serious and well-researched endeavour. DDR evaluation modules and manuals are readily found, produced by highly regarded agencies such as the United Nations, the United States Government (United Nations, 2008; United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2000, US State Department, 2006). There is significant interest, effort and set of resources dedicated to learning from past challenges, and to making the DDR process as effective as possible.

However, I would like to raise several issues regarding the underlying epistemology, ontology and axiology of current DDR programming, including the monitoring and evaluation components. The first point I raise is what constitutes knowledge (epistemology) and how authoritative understanding of DDR is constructed. The second point I raise is how we disseminate that knowledge and what our purpose is (axiology).

The following participant quote offers an excellent perspective on knowledge and reality.

> "Verdades. Tú puedes creer que lo que tu piensas es absolutamente lo único, lo ideal, pero tu forma de valorar las cosas contra las mías es diferente. Muy diferente. Entonces lo importante es tener esa capacidad, esa facilidad, o esa humildad tal vez de permitirle a la otra persona expresar su

> forma de ver las cosas y tal vez en función de eso construir colectivamente los procesos." (interview #8)
>
> Realities. You may believe that what you think is absolutely the only way, the ideal, but your method of appraising things compared to mine is different. Very different. Therefore, what is important is to have the capacity, the knack or the humility perhaps, to allow for the other person to express their way of seeing things, and perhaps through this, to construct collectively the processes.

This quote exemplifies the social constructionist premise that realities are not necessarily shared by groups. It also speaks to the tendency for power to dictate whose knowledge is accepted as legitimate. We have said that social constructionists contend that there are many realities, and what may sometimes seem as the only reality may simply, in fact, be the reality of the majority, or in the case of DDR, the reality of those who write about it, measure it and control it. Thus far, I have considered some of these dominant constructs to include: ex-combatants are potential threats, the goal of DDR is security, the DDR process as tied to neo-liberal ideology, and constructed on a Development Model. By now it is clear that the participants' perspective differs from these tenets of the international community, thus exemplifying the multiple perspectives of a reality or interpretation of a phenomenon such as reintegration. To be clear, the purpose of this discourse is not to say that the perspective of the Guatemalan ex-combatants supersedes or is superior to the inadequate perspectives of the dominant viewpoints. As Gergen (2009) states: "To recognize that a favoured reality is constructed is no reason for its abandonment" (p. 165).

It would be unfair to say that United Nations (UN) arbiters of DDR do not have the best interest of ex-combatants in their minds when their programs are planned, implemented and evaluated. However, diverse realities and understanding inevitably lead to divergent goals and understanding of what success would look like. Kuhn describes this process by arguing that tightly organized communities of specialists, in this case, United Nations DDR program leaders, are the central forces in developing a particular dominant reality. Rather than seeing inquiry as progressing steadily closer to the one truth, Kuhn (as cited in Patton, 2002, p. 99) suggests that inquiry and knowledge on a subject are best seen as a series of power struggles between adherents of differing worldviews. Therefore, it is important to continuously be vigilant to listen to other perspectives of the phenomenon of

reintegration, and realize that the positivistic and rationalist approach of Western programming has its limitations.

I have argued thus far that the foreign-run DDR programs are constructed in a neo-liberal, individualist framework, which differs from the perspective of the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte. I emphasize that the central lesson from the theoretical framework is that DDR is best understood from the perspective of the ex-combatants themselves. Their constructed reality has been documented here (although by an outsider) and the knowledge gained from their experience is worthy of dissemination. The inherent challenges of DDR programs may be due to the underlying and overarching ideology on which they are based, and the challenges of reintegration for ex-combatants are exacerbated by their participation in programs whose ideology they do not share.

The second point I wish to raise is the sharing of knowledge. Conventional methods of knowledge dissemination are dominated and controlled by academics and technocrats who live and work in wealthy Western nations. This study is no exception. Therefore, those of us who are charged with the privilege to study and evaluate DDR programs are commissioned with the responsibility to showcase the voices of those who do not access conventional avenues of knowledge dissemination. We need to share those views of the ex-combatants themselves.

> "Sabemos tantitito. Pero lo importante es que ese tantitito que sabemos lo socialicemos y agarremos de los demás hermanas y hermanos y podamos hacer algo muy grande entre todos. Porque es posible crear las condiciones a pesar de los bloqueos, a pesar del sistema capitalista se pueden crear alternativas que favorezcan a la sociedad". (interview #3)

> We know so little. But what is important is that the little we do know, we share and therefore we add to that which others know, and we can accomplish something very big among all of us. Because it is possible to create change in spite of the obstacles, in spite of the capitalism, it is possible to create alternatives that benefit all of society.

Therefore, the participants' call for autonomy has a lot to do with a call for an acknowledgement of their reality, their lived experience. Their perceived lack of experience, their perceived threat to peace, may be all about their wish to simply share their reality, or their truth. If the research of DDR and the language and

construction of its goals, its outcomes or evaluative criteria speaks only to UN officials, then those outside this sphere cannot enter into the dialogue.

As Gergen (2009) states: The challenge for DDR research, therefore, is not to seek the one truth, but to seek the truth within a given community. This often means giving a voice to those whose reality is not part of the dominant world view.

Relevance to the Existing Literature

In this section, I highlight the ways in which this study corroborates, challenges and extends the current literature on DDR. I offer a discussion on the relation of the theoretical framework to the existing knowledge and the implications for future research, practice and activism.

To begin with, how does this study corroborate or support the existing literature? I would like to highlight three issues. Firstly, the participants' stories support some of the concerns uncovered by authors such as Jennings (2007). Jennings' critical analysis of DDR in Liberia raises the concern that we need to not only question whether ex-combatants are reintegrating, but more appropriately, what are they reintegrating into? Guatemala's post-conflict journey is not unique in its challenges of widening poverty, growing violence and unchecked impunity. Therefore, the question of successful reintegration raises significant questions about how DDR can successfully address longstanding and wide-reaching societal problems. Similarly, the participants of this study determined that their success in reintegrating was hampered by powerful external forces over which they had no control, and which actually exacerbated conditions (such as poverty, violence and impunity) which they fought to eradicate. Jennings (2007) states: "Asking 'reintegration into what' seems a first step rarely taken, with the exception of market analyses commissioned to determine how many mechanics and seamstresses a post-conflict society can absorb. The remedy is prescribed before diagnosis" (pp. 213-214).

Secondly, the participants' stories support Stovel's (2008) concept of sentient reconciliation. The ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte stressed that while economic viability is necessary for successful reintegration, it is not sufficient. Attaining a sense of belonging and acceptance was crucial, and accounted for the strategies they implemented during their reintegration phase. Sentient reconciliation also includes less tangible qualities such as forgiveness and healing (Lambourne, 2001) which are more difficult to measure than economic indicators. Because DDR evaluations tend to be focussed on concrete outcomes and deliverables, it is not

surprising evaluators and researchers have often avoided tackling these more elusive outcomes.

Thirdly, the participants of this study confirm what has been reported in many other countries, that promises of job training and economic incentives have in reality fallen significantly short of promises and expectations. In spite of significant resources utilized by DDR programs, there are no literature examples of ex-combatants who stated they were satisfied with their economic prospects post-reintegration. The reasons for this are no doubt complex, and cannot be separated from the previously discussed challenge of widespread poverty in the affected countries, but I believe this dissatisfaction is exacerbated by the perceived lack of participation and input by the ex-combatants, which may manifest itself in various forms of disillusionment. In addition, these participants blame this shortfall on systemic corruption, as do others (Jennings 2007; Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007).

The next question I raise is in what ways did this study challenge the existing literature? Firstly, I believe the theoretical framework clearly describes the ex-combatants in terms of their capacity instead of their deficits. The framework is based closely on the reflections of the men and women of Nuevo Horizonte who experienced the reintegration process and remember it vividly in terms of their own strengths and resources. This orientation is not represented in the literature, which generally reflects a perspective that ex-combatants are in a position of needing help, and the solutions to their problems are found externally. This issue warrants some attention. Reframing ex-combatants in a more positive and capable frame of reference may seem straightforward on an intellectual level, but in practice, it is more difficult. DDR brokers and managers tend to be well-educated and have an array of education and practical skills, while the ex-combatants often have no formal education or skills that are overtly applicable to re-enter civilian life. It may seem unavoidable in practice for these two groups to adopt roles of expert and incapacitated. Nonetheless, according to the reflections of the participants of this study, a big part of their success relied upon being able to use their capacities and skills they already had.

Secondly, the positive collective identity that the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte have constructed directly challenges the negative stereotypes that are found in the literature. Ex-combatants were seldom if ever portrayed as problem-solvers, visionaries or as other positive contributors. At best, they were portrayed in neutral terms, or more likely, as victims. I believe this challenge of the identity of the ex-combatant is one of the most significant contributions that this study has to offer.

I now wish to highlight several ways in which I believe this study extends the literature on the reintegration of ex-combatants. Ultimately, the purpose of this inquiry has been to seek advice from experienced ex-combatants for those who are currently in the DDR process, either as experts or as participants. I believe this aspect is important to emphasize. The current literature is filled with many evaluative surveys asking ex-combatants about how the process went, but I am not aware of one example where these participants were asked the question, how would you improve it? I believe this shortfall is reflected in McKnight's (1995) belief that frequently, expertise and wisdom is held by those with power, and the expertise and wisdom of participants is overlooked. "As you are the problem, the assumption is that I, the professional services, am the answer. You are not the answer. Your peers are not the answer" (p. 46).

If we look back to the secondary codes under the category of Lessons Learned (see Appendix B), the following seven themes can be extrapolated from the advice of the ex-combatants:

1. Be united
2. Have a transparent process
3. Take charge of the process
4. Install mechanisms to ensure the completion of the terms of the peace accords
5. Build relationships with other ex-combatants
6. Integrate with the population
7. Do not wait for the government (or other groups) to fix things–take charge of your future

This advice does not come as a surprise at this point of this paper. These themes have been discussed frequently, and are integrated into the framework presented in the previous chapter. I would like to add one other piece of advice that is woven throughout their reflections, that is, struggling for justice is paramount, but violence is not the preferred means. Use dialogue instead.

Another way in which this study extends the literature is its time frame. This study captures the reflections of a group of ex-combatants 13 years after the peace accords were signed. To my knowledge, this is unique; most evaluations tend to occur during or immediately after the DDR process has been implemented.

Limitations

As highlighted in the previous section, the ultimate purpose of this inquiry was to elicit the thoughts of experienced ex-combatants to formulate advice for others in the same situation. In spite of best efforts to ensure authenticity and trustworthiness, and to conduct this inquiry with an anti-oppressive orientation, the fact remains that the participants' voices and their stories are still being transmitted and interpreted by an outsider from the globally dominant society. The challenge that DDR programs are organized and controlled by outsiders from the globally dominant society can be used as a critique to this inquiry as well.

As a qualitative grounded theory study, the results can be seen as understanding a unique story and the results are not necessarily readily transferrable to other DDR contexts. Additionally, while I believe that the views and perspectives of the participants generally represent those of the entire community of Nuevo Horizonte, ultimately, they were elicited from 8 ex-combatants. Nonetheless, there are important things to learn. Additionally, in spite of the title of this dissertation, this inquiry is based on the people who chose to live in Nuevo Horizonte, and does not represent the story of all the ex-combatants of Guatemala.

I must add as well, that while the aim is to offer advice to others in similar situations, it is easy to realize that each society, culture, country, group of ex-combatants, and conflict is unique. As Jennings (2007, p. 204) states, DDR programming must be more sensitive to local contexts and capacities, therefore,

conclusions drawn from here cannot be used as generalized recommendations for other countries and conflicts.

Suggestions for Future Research

As a qualitative inquirer embedded in the paradigm of social constructionism, I believe in the value of expanding the quest for deeper understanding. Therefore, my suggestions for future research do not focus so much on specific topics, geopolitical priorities or specific post-conflict challenges, but rather focus on processes that further elicit the voice of those who do not belong in our dominant discourse of reintegration. I believe one innovative focus for further inquiry is on how ex-combatants can be better heard and how their voices can be further disseminated. Listening that is intentional and drawn from a perspective of social justice can reduce the disparity between the program goals of international development organizations and those of the people whose lives and predicaments they are trying to ameliorate (Rural Southern Voices for Peace, 2011).

Additionally, I suggest that we expand our inquiry into longer-term retrospective studies in different parts of the globe. For example, how are the ex-combatants on the African continent managing 10 years after their reintegration programs have been dismantled? And lastly, I believe that further research (and perhaps even DDR implementation) needs to view ex-combatants through a lens of capacity, and needs to be open to the strategy and theme of unity during reintegration.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided a discussion on why this study is relevant and how it may corroborate, challenge or extend the current literature on DDR. I referred back to the ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions to frame this discussion, and also discussed the limitations of this inquiry, and some suggestions for future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this study, I offered a theoretical framework to better understand how a group of Guatemalan ex-combatants reintegrated back into Guatemalan civilian society after the end of the longest civil war in the western hemisphere. I utilized a qualitative methodology, grounded theory, to guide the process; I proclaimed social constructionism as the paradigm to guide the ontological and epistemological assumptions. I aligned myself with the values and goals of Peace Studies, that is, to seek ways to work towards non-violence, and to strive to create communities, global and local, that exist not only in a state of absence of war, but also in a state of social justice for all.

In the end, after corroborating my results with the participants, I am excited that the story of these ex-combatants is relevant and timely, to the participants themselves and more importantly, to those involved in implementing DDR programs and to those involved as participants around the world. The theoretical framework from this study rests upon the foundational theme of being united. Challenging conventional views of how DDR programs are implemented, this framework helps me explain how the solidarity among the former guerrillas assisted them in significant ways. Being united assisted the ex-combatants to be in charge of the reintegration process, and in control of their lives. Being united helped them be connected, forging relationships with neighbours and international partners. Being united helped the former combatants to maintain their vision for working towards social and economic justice. Being united helped them to build their community, a role model for all Guatemalans. The other themes or strategies flowed from this core concept: being autonomous, being connected, being a role model, and being visionary.

I believe this study adds to the existing literature about the reintegration of ex-combatants. Some pervasive themes are corroborated while others are challenged.

I would like to reiterate two important aspects of this study that challenge the dominant themes of the existing DDR literature. Firstly, the emerging theory challenges the pervasive orientation of DDR programs, a theme that I refer to as the development model, based on the work of Farmer (2007). The theoretical framework presented here demonstrates that instead, a social justice model is necessary to draw upon the capacity of those women and men for whom the DDR programs are developed. Because advocates of the social justice model explicitly acknowledge the existing capacity of the ex-combatants, and critically examine the social and structural inequities between poor ex-combatants and powerful DDR

brokers, it allows for the strategies of unity, autonomy and connectedness to drive the vision of the ex-combatants themselves.

Secondly, through the development of the emerging theory, I challenge the constructing of a negative identity of the ex-combatant, an identity defined by their potential for violence, and threat to national security and peace. In this study, I highlight the ex-combatants' notion of their own identity, one characterized by the highest ideals of unity, hard work, being a role model and holding a vision of social justice.

I would also like to reiterate two important aspects of this study which corroborate the general findings of other studies of ex-combatant reintegration. Firstly, through the framework I have shown support for the idea that sentient reconciliation is paramount to successful reintegration. Supporting the works of Stovel (2008), Hamber (2007) and Lambourne (2001, 2004), the people of Nuevo Horizonte spoke clearly of their need to achieve reconciliation, in the form of acceptance, with their Guatemalan civilian neighbours.

Secondly, through this emerging theory, I support the idea that reintegration is significantly challenged by the external social and economic pressures and influences over which DDR programs have little control. Supporting the works of Specker (2008), Crandall (2004) and Garibay (2006), the people of Nuevo Horizonte spoke clearly that the overall success of their reintegration process was limited by the continued and unaddressed social and economic disparity in the larger Guatemalan society. Reintegration cannot be conducted in isolation; their individual and collective vision of success was directly tied to their vision of a more just Guatemala.

Finally, I would like to reiterate several important aspects of this study that did not receive significant attention in the existing literature. Firstly, through the emerging theory, I provide an understanding of the complex nature of the vulnerability of the ex-combatants as they were initiated into the reintegration process. This vulnerability is not related to the common concepts of victimhood or deficiency, but is rather more closely aligned with the concept of being in a place with little power. This vulnerability is more akin to a situation of being subject to powerful brokers who are making life-changing decisions on one's behalf, in spite of one's strong ideals and capacities. It is akin to the situation of having no resources to better one's economic situation, in spite of having a clear vision.

Secondly, through the emerging theory, I remind us of the discourse on whether there is such a concept as a "just war." I do not enter into this dialectic directly in this study, but rather contend that the participants teach us that violence needs to be prevented at all costs. The struggle for the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte was not tied to violence. On the contrary, their struggle was based on a vision of social justice for all Guatemalans, and for them, the DDR process provided them with the opportunity to continue with their vision through non-violent means. While many authors of the DDR literature discuss the goal of non-violence, fewer recognize the importance of creating opportunities for legitimate non-violent means to further the ideals, which were the antecedents of the armed conflict.

Through their participation in this study, the people of Nuevo Horizonte offer another important contribution to the DDR literature. Considering this inquiry was conducted 13 years after the DDR process was implemented, and 5 years after the final United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala report was released, the opinions and reflections are unique in their temporal distance from the reintegration experience. A retrospective inquiry such as this would likely produce different opinions than one conducted immediately following the termination of a reintegration program (which is when evaluations tend to be piloted). To my knowledge, there is no other such inquiry in the DDR literature.

Lastly, through this study, I offer the opportunity for those who have experienced the reintegration process a chance to offer advice to others. The DDR literature is often about what the experts bring to the table. Through this inquiry, I provide an idea of what a group of ex-combatants can bring to the table: capacity and skills that they learned as guerrillas, a vision for social justice, strength in numbers and advice for other ex-combatants who are transitioning. Their message is simple and profound: stay united and organized, have a clear vision, ensure the process is transparent, and work hard to re-integrate among your neighbours.

These ex-combatants have a message, and it is important that we listen. I am committed to follow up by pursuing opportunities to disseminate their story. It is important that their voice is heard by those who seek to do as good a job as possible in other contexts of DDR. It is also important that other ex-combatants benefit from the wisdom and understanding that has been acquired by those who have gone before them. This experience offers a wisdom that cannot be gained any other way.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

(English and Spanish Versions)

Consent to participate in Study

Name of Participant_____

You are invited to take part in this research study. This form tells you why this research study is being done, what will happen in the research study. If there is anything you do not understand, please ask questions. Then you can decide if you want to join this study or not.

Name of the Study

From War to Peace: The Transition Experience of Guatemalan Ex-Combatants: A Grounded Theory Inquiry

Principle investigator: Randy Janzen

Institution: Department of Social Sciences, Tilburg University

Purpose of the Study

Currently programs to demobilize, disarm and reintegrate ex-combatants have become an integral part of United Nations Peacekeeping operations around the world. As many as one million ex-combatants have participated in these programs in countries in Central and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. The evaluations of these programs has been mixed, and have often focused on the failures or shortcomings, and the criteria for success (or failure) have mostly been set by United Nations personnel, academics and other Western experts, with limited input from the ex-combatants themselves.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to learn from the ex-combatants of Nuevo Horizonte directly, to seek advice from them to share with DDR experts, and with other ex-combatants.

The Nature of Your Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary.

If you choose to participate, you will participate in an hour-long interview which will take place between December 15 and December 22, 2009. The purpose of the interview is to share your thoughts on the following questions:

-What are your personal feelings around the process of reintegration?

-What has helped in this transition, what has been a challenge?

-What advice do you have for others (in other countries) who are re-entering civilian life after a civil war?

In general terms, the intention is to gain a better understanding of: your transition from guerrilla to member of civil society; your understanding of peace and justice and the tension between these two concepts; your understanding of the challenges and the successes you have encountered personally and collectively as a member of the larger Guatemalan society, on your post-conflict journey from cease-fire to building a society on the principles of social justice; and lastly, your perspective of the formal peace process in Guatemala.

Confidentiality

This interview will be video recorded. The actual recording will be used by the investigator (Randy Janzen). The dialogue will be trans-scribed onto paper by a trans-scriber, but otherwise will not be seen by anyone without your written permission.

You may choose to have your name on the study as a participant. Or, if you choose, all information gathered from your interview will remain strictly confidential.

A written copy of the interview will be given to you for review to ensure it accurately reflects your thoughts and opinions. At this time, you may choose to delete any part of the interview so that it will not be used in the study.

If you choose, you may keep a DVD copy of your interview, and with your permission a DVD copy can be given to the N.H. Library as an archive of your thoughts on this topic.

Benefits and Risks of Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary and there is no compensation for your participation. However, as an appreciation for your commitment to helping other ex-combatants with your advice, a library project has been initiated in N.H. This project includes funds to help young people to work as paid library coordinators, in order for them to be able to return to high school or university to complete advanced studies.

Participating in this study will require you to reflect on the process of re-integrating back into Guatemalan society in Nuevo Horizonte. Sometimes this reflection on the past can bring

out painful memories. You may wish to not participate if talking about your transition experience will be too difficult. If you choose to participate and later find that it was too difficult, you are encouraged to contact the investigator.

What Will Be Done With the Information

The transcribed content of the interview will be used to complete a PhD thesis with the above title. The information may also be used for writing articles for publication in academic journals, or for presentation at conferences. Written segments of the interview may be included in any of these forms. However, the content or your interview will not be associated with your name in any way without your consent.

By signing my name below, I confirm the following:

- I have read (or had read to me) this entire consent document. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
- The study's purpose, procedures, benefits and possible risks have been explained to me.
- I agree to let the investigator use and share the information gathered for this study as outlined above.
- I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. I agree to follow the study procedures as directed. I have been told that I can stop at any time.

IMPORTANT: You will receive a signed and dated copy of this consent form. Please keep it where you can find it easily. It will help you remember what we discussed today.

Participant's Name (print)	Participant's signature	Date
Witness name	Witness signature	Date

Consentimiento Para Participar en la investigación

Nombre de Participante_____

Le invito a participar en esta investigación. Este formulario explica por que llevo a cabo esta investigación, y que va a pasar durante la investigación. Si hay algo que no entiende, por favor, pregunte, para que se puede decidir a participar o no.

Nombre de la Investigación

Desde La Guerra Hasta la Paz: La Experiencia de la Transición de los Ex-Combatientes Guatemaltecos.

El Objetivo de la Investigación

Actualmente, programas de Desarme, Desmovilización y Reintegración (DDR) están usados como un componente integral de las Fuerzas de Paz de las Naciones Unidas. Casi un millón de excombatientes han participado en programas oficiales de DDR en países de Centro y Sur América, Europa, Asia y África. Los resultados de las evaluaciones de los proyectos están mixtos, y muchas veces se enfocan en las limitaciones y fracasos. Además, los criterios para el éxito (o fracaso) han sido construidos por el personal de las Naciones Unidas, no por los excombatientes.

El objetivo de esta investigación, entonces, es para aprender directamente de los excombatientes de Nuevo Horizonte, para recoger su consejo para compartir con el personal DDR y con los demás excombatientes, y con el publico general.

Su Participación

La participación en esta investigación es voluntaria.

Si opta por participar, Usted participara en una entrevista, de una hora de duración, que esta programada entre el 15 y 22 de Diciembre, 2009, en Nuevo Horizonte. El objetivo de la entrevista es de compartir sus pensamientos sobre los siguientes temas:

¿Cuál es su experiencia personal sobre el proceso de reintegración?

¿Cuales han sido los beneficios de esta reintegración?

¿Cuales han sido los retos u obstáculos que han afrontado *durante este proceso?*

¿Que consejo tienen para los demás (en otro países) quienes están en el proceso de reintegración?

La esperanza es obtener una comprensión mas amplia sobre: su transición desde guerrillero a socio de sociedad civil; su comprensión de la paz y justicia y la tensión entre estos dos conceptos, su comprensión de los retos y logros que usted ha encontrado personal y colectivamente (como miembro de la sociedad Guatemalteca); su camino personal desde los Acuerdos de Paz; y finalmente, su perspectiva sobre el Proceso de Paz en Guatemala.

Confidencialidad

La entrevista será grabada por video cámara, para el uso exclusivo del investigador (Randy Janzen) y su asesora académica (Sally St. George). La entrevista será transcrita por una traductora profesional, y no será mirado por nadie más sin su permiso.

Usted puede elegir entre escribir su nombre en el documento final (como participante), o también puede elegir no escribir su nombre en el documento final.

Una copia escrita de la entrevista le será presentada para revisarla, para asegurar que sus palabras reflejan sus pensamientos y opiniones correctamente.

Si Usted quisiera, puede tener una copia (DVD) de la entrevista, y con su permiso, una copia será colocada en la biblioteca de Nuevo Horizonte como un archivo.

Beneficios y Riesgos de Participación

Su participación en esta investigación es voluntaria y no hay remuneración. Sin embargo, en agradecimiento por su participación (que ayudara a otro ex-combatientes en otros partes del mundo) un proyecto de biblioteca ha sido implementado en Nuevo Horizonte. Este proyecto incluye fondos para ayudar a jóvenes con un sueldo para dar la posibilidad de asistir al colegio, diversificado o a la universidad.

Su participación en esta investigación necesita su reflexión en el proceso de reintegración en la sociedad civil guatemalteca. A veces, esta reflexión en el pasado puede exponer memorias penosas. Podría ser que Usted decida no participar ni hablar sobre este tiempo difícil. Si elige participar y después descubre que es difícil, puede contactar a el investigador (Randy Janzen rjanzen@selkirk.ca) para ayuda.

¿Que va a pasar con la información?

Las entrevistas serán usadas para cumplir un Doctorado en Ciencias Sociales. La información podría ser usada también para artículos académicos, o para presentaciones a congresos académicos. Partes del escrito pueden ser incluidos en estos foros. Pero,, ni su identidad ni su nombre será usado sin previo permiso.

Yo estoy de acuerdo con lo siguiente:

1. Yo he leído este documento. Todas mis preguntas han sido contestadas.
2. El objetivo, los procedimientos, los beneficios y los riesgos me han sido explicados.
3. Yo estoy consiente que el investigador usa y comparte la información de mi entrevista en las maneras explicadas.
4. Yo estoy consiente participar en esta investigación. Yo estoy consiente colaborar con los procedimientos de la investigación. Yo entiendo que puedo parar mi participación en cualquier momento.

Usted recibirá una copia de este documento, firmado y fechado. Por favor, guárdelo en un lugar seguro y donde puede sacarlo fácilmente.

Nombre deParticipante	Firma deParticipante	Fecha
Nombre de Testigo	Firma deTestigo	Fecha

Appendix B: Primary and Secondary Coding

Below are the 438 primary or initial codes. These codes are organized using the categories of Conditions, Strategies, Consequences and Lessons learned.

Core phenomenon is: Reintegration

The secondary codes are represented by bold, underlines categories–50 in total. The 438 initial codes are grouped into the 50 secondary codes. After each secondary code are numbers. The first number represents how many initial codes were grouped under the secondary code. The numbers in the parentheses (ranging from 1 to 8) indicate from which interview the initial codes were taken. 50 secondary codes were developed

Conditions (76)

Hope- 2 (1 7)

After the peace accords, we were full of hope

Land re-distribution was built into the peace accords

We were organized 1 (8)

Luckily we had some experience, specifically in organization, community organization

No skills for civil life 16 (1 2 3 6 7 8)

Didn't know how to approach new situation

We joined guerrillas at a young age

The only knowledge we had was weapons

We were poor, marginalized indigenous, farmers

We were an illiterate people

We didn't have any advisement in legal matters regarding our rights

For example, didn't know how to build houses

How can I re-integrate as an individual

It was difficult to integrate economically

You need a good profession to have a good economic situation

We had no education

We had no skills

We learned to read and write at a basic level only

How could we re-integrate without a skill or profession?

We grew up as guerrillas

We did not know how to work in this situation

Fear/uncertainty/mistrust 13 (1 2 6 7 8)

Entered transition with fear

They tried to destroy us with obstacles

We came with a different vision, not having confidence with the system. This limited our ability to reintegrate

We believed they were only a political manoeuvre (the accords)

I didn't believe in the stories the government gave us

Still uncertain whether the government had the power to adopt the terms

We did not believe that the peace accords would become reality based on the recent history of repression

I didn't believe in the government

Concerned that the peace accords were going to be a trick to eventually destroy us

Reintegration was uncertain

You ask the question, is this risky? Certain? Will the state comply?

Signing the peace accords therefore created uncertainty and vulnerability

On a group level, there existed a sense of uncertainty as well

Had nothing 10 (1 2 3 4 5 6)

We had nothing to return to

Arrived at NH: What do we do now

People were desperate, it was difficult to find work outside the coop

We had to find a place to stay after demobilization was over

There was nothing here

Being divided into those who have somewhere to go to and those who don't

We were a people with no clothes or shoes

There was nothing here when we started

We started from zero

Economically we were very hard up, and had to rely on food for work projects

Inadequate formal process 10 (2 6 7 8)

They placed us in pig stall and chicken coops

Not enough time to learn a trade

Computer training was not helpful because equipment was out of date

We received no training

Our ID was not accepted all the time, it identified us as guerrillas, this was hard at the beginning

The process of documenting us was a problem

There were a lot of resources made available, but we did not get them

We were to receive training during reintegration process

We received help but it was inadequate

There was a lot of money available, but still things did not get accomplished

Poor leadership/representation 9 (1 2 3 5 6 7)

Our negotiators didn't negotiate our land situation well

Being disadvantaged by last minute poor tactics

The world just wanted the guns silenced, didn't really seek justice for us.

During the negotiation, URNG was not working on our behalf

We didn't know to negotiate directly–others negotiated on our behalf

The success of reintegration depends a great deal on the leadership. We might be in a better position right now if we had better leadership

In the final hour, our leadership committed a huge tactical error

Our negotiators trusted the government

Those who represented us did not serve us well

Feeling vulnerable 6 (1 3 5 6)

Feeling powerless

We were vulnerable

We are still vulnerable due to our lack of formal education and poverty

These forces, who brokered our peace deal, are in charge

We didn't have the experience therefore, be careful when signing peace accords

It was a brand new experience for everyone

Feeling forgotten/abandoned 2 (1 6)

We felt forgotten during the negotiations

We were abandoned

Feeling judged 2 (1 6)

Some people accepted us, others no

Being an ex-combatant was hard because not everyone wanted to give us food

Difficult conditions 4 (1 6 8)

It was difficult at the beginning

Upon arriving, very difficult. Men and women working as equals

We experience great hardships during reintegration–building our community

Reintegration on a personal level was not easy

In touch with our history 1 (6)

We are fully informed about the knowledge of our ancestors

Strategies (70)

Working with people from other countries 5 (2 3 5 8)

We have relations with other governments and bodies, in Canada, Italy etc. This network has brought us to where we are

Aid organizations can take the driver's seat

We have had many visitors who have helped us

UN helped us a lot

International aid has been an important benefit without this international cooperation, we would be much worse off

Being organized/working together 16 (1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8)

All our possessions were held collectively for the common good

describes how they came to learn to work collectively

We had to create our community dividing into work brigades

What is important to us is organization and to grow

We came to NH and continued to work together

We have accomplished all these successes through organization

Need organization

Sticking together

Solving our problems collectively

Need to be united

Through our behaviour, our organization, through our will, we re-integrated

We believe we had to stay organized. Those who had no connections decided to organize themselves facing a brand new situation in a collective manner. This was necessary to move ahead

Reintegration was profoundly difficult. During the war, we were very organized, and lived and worked collectively

We worked together trying to resolved these adversities

It is a tactic to divide and conquer. We knew that to lose our unity was to dig our own grave

It was more strict during the war

Building community infrastructure 5 (2)

Looking for land

Began constructing schools

Completed water project in September 1998

I helped construct the chicken barn in NH

Deciding on NH, arriving on February 28

Positive attitude 1 (8)

We faced these adversities in a positive manner

Took charge 3 (2 5 7)

We helped ourselves, not received help from the government

We had to do our part

We're not waiting for anyone, we will take it into our own hands

Hard work 9 (1 2 4 5 8)

We worked hard without pay

Peace was a result of our sacrifice and hard work

16 construction teams, others hauling water

Came about from our sacrifice

Men and women working equally in hard physical labour

In order to succeed you have to work hard. We lived it

Need to have a spirit of sacrifice and willingness

We made many sacrifices

We worked hard to improve our lives

Nonviolence 2 (5 8)

Leaving the violence behind

We need to adapt our struggle

Learning a skill 3 (2)

Many chose computers, because they thought it was easy

Studying construction

Choosing one's training

Reached out to neighbours 16 (1 2 3 5 6 7)

Need to be won over with actions, not words

Defeating the army at soccer

Example, neighbour community didn't have running water

UN showing up to organize a soccer game with army

Everyone has the responsibility to socialize. We have broken the silence. Break down the barriers

Collaborate with others

We re-integrated through organized activities such as soccer games

It was difficult but it was something we wanted to do–to reintegrate with our neighbours

We offered support in tangible ways, such as providing water to neighbouring Santa Ana

We made acts of friendship to others

We worked conscientiously to have people accept us

We won people over through our actions

We inserted ourselves and people accepted us

Working with the people

Need to maintain good relations with everyone

Need to show you're not just guerrillas

Used our knowledge from the war 1 (8)

We adapted our organization from the war to our current situation

Ideological framework 9 (1 2 3 7 8)

Set an example for the children and others in general

We want equality. Want an equal relationship in the world between people

One of the objectives of the peace accords was to be able to continue with this revolution

We can do this in spite of obstacles like capitalism

We only had principles, love, desire to triumph, respect for human rights

The peace accords were not an end to the struggle. The war continues

We were trying to negotiate for better conditions

Therefore we ensured the accords contained specific conditions to transform Guatemala

We have the responsibility to develop our populations

Consequences (153)

Life is good 7 (1 4 5 6)

Reintegration was a big change

Everything has worked out well here in NH

Life is good

We are here on behalf of those combatants who gave their lives

The peace process has been successful, because now we live a different life

More than anything, we are still here, present and still in the struggle

We are living and looking to the future

Received a lot of outside help and recognition 2 (1 8)

Have attracted international attention

We received a lot of international help with the peace accords

Re-integrated with our neighbours 7 (5 6 7 8)

When they got to know us they thought that maybe they were wrong about us

People now respect and appreciate us

We are integrating

Other groups did not reintegrate like we did

At the beginning, the civil society did not trust us but that has changed. We worked hard to change that

Reintegration: our neighbours have a lot of trust in us now. This is an example of our success at reintegrating

The locals are now coming to us, where before we would go to them and they would reject us.

Employment still a problem 5 (1 2 8)

Hard to make ends meet then and now

Studying construction paid off when we moved to NH

Hard to measure success by employment

Regarding employment, the ex-combatants are not employed to signify success

Level of employment is perhaps no worse than general population

The repression has stopped 12 (1 3 5 7 8)

Benefits: the conflict stopped

We are not at risk for being killed by the military

Success: we in NH have created a civil society

We have more peaceful life now

We left behind the tension of the conflict

We used to be persecuted, now it has changed

Benefit: an end to the political repression

Therefore, our uncertainty waned

We are no longer at risk from army repression, but there is now risk from gangs

There are problems, but we move forward, the repression is gone

The number one benefit on a personal level of the accords is that we are no longer in danger of dying

On a societal level, the benefit is the prevention of a lot more deaths

We're in charge of our future 5 (2 3)

These are privileges we have attained ourselves

We remain in the driver's seat

Instead of dependence

Creating community leadership

Leadership is very important

Still engaged in political struggle 15 (2 3 4 5 6 7)

There is political space, but we haven't taken full advantage of it

We have adapted this way of being to our lives now, after laying down our weapons

Signing the peace accords was not the end of our revolution

We are now pursuing change through dialogue, which is preferred

Capacity to debate, analyze

The struggle continues, but without weapons

The most important experience is being able to carry on with the struggle without arms

Opening political space was a success on our behalf

Political space

We ended the armed conflict when we signed the peace accords, but we did not end the struggle

It was a success because it opened political spaces

Need to continue to seek solutions

I went from guerrilla leader to community leader

Negotiate, this is our struggle

Continuing to work for change, continuing our social/economic struggle

Building community infrastructure 10 (1 2 3 4 5 6 8)

We have been able to construct daycare, schools, kindergarten

We have schools, kindergarten, day care

We unite ourselves for education, for health

Economic projects

Benefits: health centre, schools

We built houses and a water system

It is a success that we have this community and its people living and working together: schools, health centre, etc

In spite of our lack of experience, we have succeeded in moving ahead little by little

We have been improving our socio economic status, we have obtained various community projects

You can't hide what we've accomplished in NH

Feel betrayed, let down 26 (1 2 3 5 6 7 8)

It's sad, feel betrayed

Losing faith in the process

Promised work, housing, but did not happen

Have not received decent housing, work

Supposed to look for missing combatants, but never happened

Successive governments have not completed the terms of the peace accords

Not mobilizing support in Guatemala like they did in El Salvador

The government did not live up to their obligations

Peace accords did not touch the oligarchy

The peace process has not been completed. The peace process has not met expectations

Peace accords don't matter because the conditions have not changed

Peace accords did not bring peace, they brought silencing of the guns

Was not a success because nothing has changed. Power structures intact

The army still guards these powers

In certain instances, the peace accords did not deliver what they promised

There our houses are substandard

The reintegration program was inadequate

Plan for large changes, but in retrospect, the changes have been small

Accords are still are risk of being taken away by the political opponents

The accords were not institutionalized, and are subject to change by various influences

Instead of reducing poverty post accords, poverty and inequality has increased

Another example of not complying with the accords is the power and size of the Guatemalan army

We did not receive the promised or appropriate assistance

Compared to El Salvador, where there appears to have been real change

The state has not complied 100% with the terms of the accords–has not delivered on many things

Our trust has not improved in the past 12 years

Violence continues, just a different type 5 (1 3 8)

Social violence continued after the armed struggle

We don't have peace or security now due to the violence

The violence continues

Still insecurity, violence

Now we have organized gangs, the government uses the gangs to conceal their own acts

We remain united 18 (1 2 3 4 5 6 8)

We hope we don't lose this unity

We are together as a collective, organized group

Maintained a life based on mutuality, solidarity

We are here despite all the obstacles. Being organized was our way to overcome the obstacles

In spite of this we have remained together

We have not tried to suppress our collectivity

We continue with the struggle, united

We learned to be united

We continue to work on the project. We work collectively–if we don't, we won't succeed

We are here together

The most important benefit is being re-integrated with family

We are still united

Benefits: being with family, being united

We may be poor, but we have peace, solidarity

We depend on each other. We feel it when one of us falls/fails

A success for us was to remain united

We have not lost the essence. We do not want to lose this

It's more flexible now, but we still maintain our sense of collectivism

Don't rely on the state for anything 13 (1 2 3 7 8)

Governments haven't done anything for the people

We are a conservative country

Today, the obstacle is bureaucracy

Bureaucracy in Guatemala is putting obstacles to organizing

Success will be when we achieve our results for all

I don't expect much from the government

In comparison, the state has helped us very little

Governments are self-serving

In our case, the authorities did nothing to help us in NH

Most of us do not trust the state

Our government responds to the interests of the large economic powers

Our governments do not have long term development plans

Our tax system favors the wealthy

A cynical analysis of the world 11 (2 3 7 8)

Now is just another form of colonization

The source of our lives and land was in the hands of others

These international pressures are keeping Guatemala in a bad situation

Land has been passed to communities but then taken over by powerful external interests

Land being used for African Palm–taken away by force from communities. The land is not protected from these interests

Powerful players still controlling the land

Global inequality is growing

Third world debt is increasing

Currently we have the capacity to destroy our world

The state continues to represent powerful economic and political forces

These problems transcend Guatemala

Recent positive government changes 3 (1 6)

Have successfully negotiated to decrease the interest on the land, due to President Colom

But this current government is still way better than the others

This is the first government in which we have a bit of trust or confidence

There was some success 4 (2 4 5 6)

We were successful in negotiating a number of accords that benefitted all of Guatemala

The process was a success

We succeeded in all aspects

It was a success and a failure

Debt 10 (1 2 4 6 7 8)

Expressing fear of losing everything

Challenges: debt

We wanted houses and work and what we got was a huge debt

The end result: a huge mortgage for us

Result of our decreased ability to negotiate is our high interest rate on our land

I'm still afraid because the land is not paid for. Are they going to kick us out?

The land was not negotiated well. We were charged way too much and now we have a big debt. We didn't have the know-how to negotiate

For example, our housing and our land debt

We didn't receive a good deal, as evidenced by our houses and our land debt

An example is our land purchase and our debt

Lessons Learned (76)

We didn't negotiate well 8 (3 5 7)

Need to work for justice for all our people in Guatemala

Cooperation is tricky. It depends who is in the driver's seat

Need to work for all society, not just for those negotiating

As a result, we didn't get what we had thought we negotiated. Be careful of this

Don't blame the UN for these shortcomings

I don't blame the UN

We need to lay some blame on our own leaders, who negotiated poorly

We didn't represent ourselves and our demands well enough

Stay united 14 (1 2 3 4 6 7 8)

Have to have clear ideals and be clear on where you are going. Being organized kept us alive

You will accomplish more if you work together

Live collectively to solve you problems. We struggled together in the armed conflict, we continue to struggle now

Stay together to solve your problems

The enemy is powerful

Can't create conditions where we depend on only one or two people

The most important advice: stay united

Work together for the common good

We need to change this type of cooperation. Being organized will help

We need to teach our youth how to move forward

We would be more prepared and organized

Need to organize yourselves

We need the group power to solve the problems

It is difficult to challenge or compete with the powerful

Need to be in charge of the process 9 (2 7 8)

We have to help ourselves, no one else can do it for us

Need to solve our own problems

We need to solve our own problems

What I learned–don't wait for others to do things for you, or for others to get to know you

Need to understand that someone else may see things differently

No one has a monopoly on truth

There are different ways to view things

Outsiders have different perspectives than us

It's better when outsiders facilitate our future, rather than imposing it.

Work with other Ex-combatants 3 (2)

Seek alliances with others in the same boat

We could have collaborated with the Zapatistas and the FMLN in El Salvador

Can use other points of view from others in the same situation

Need to know what you're getting into 12 (5 6 7)

Hoping that others have say in how peace will be operationalized

Didn't have enough time to analyze the deal

You need a lot of tact. You need to be careful, as important things can fall through the cracks

This lack of knowledge may happen to other ex-combatants

Need to be very cautious

If only we knew then what we know now

Make sure your process is open and with a socio-economic vision, not just bandaid solutions

Make sure the peace process is open

Know where you want to go

Have a clear process and strategy

Before demobilizing, develop your strategy

Be clear on what you want to accomplish

Integrate with the locals 4 (7)

Need to get involved in local politics

Seek relations, seek friendship

Make the first move

Don't isolate yourself

Need strong mechanisms to implement peace accords 8 (1 2 6)

Need to negotiate well, perhaps get a few things accomplished before signing and handing in your weapons

Think very carefully before signing any peace accords. Need to make sure the government will come through with their promises

You don't win the war by signing the peace accords. You more likely lose, and giving up your arms makes you give up your power

The minute we handed in our arms, they forgot the accords

Their only aim was to silence the guerrillas

Need to form mechanisms to verify the completion of any accords

No mechanism to verify whether the accords were actualized

Need to build in mechanism to verify completion of accords. They signed a whole bunch of things but did not deliver. This happened because we did not have experience.

Struggle through nonviolence 6 (2 3 5)

People who fight back are not terrorists

Dialogue is preferred method

Revolution does not mean violence. To work towards developing society–giving power to the people

It's better to use dialogue and now we are able to do this

Seek dialogue over violence

There will always be conflict, it's part of being human, but hopefully we can avoid war

Hard Work is necessary 2 (2)

In order to move ahead you need to want to move ahead

Need to be prepared for the obstacles

Apathy, cynicism 3 (2 8)

People are afraid, they don't vote

There is no will from those in power to address the social violence

Our greed and hate will lead us to destruction

Need to have a good analysis of the causes of war and conflict 7 (2 3 8)

We don't want agreements that will disadvantage us. The US is very powerful. Problems arise when people's rights are not respected. People will fight back

The Guatemalan struggle begins with the stomach. The struggle begins with acquiring land

When you understand the causes, you can find the cure

When seeking peace, need to look at the structural causes of the conflict

Inequality is a common cause of conflict throughout the world

Without injustice and inequality, there would be no war

Miscellaneous (63)

Coding that does not relate to the research question

Majority were related to descriptions of the war, or were current political analysis

Appendix C: Developing a Two-Dimensional Framework

a) Developing themes

The 50 secondary codes have been categorized into the following 5 themes.

b) Consequences of Reintegration: Reflecting on the concept of success

Those secondary codes that came under the category of "Consequences" in Part Two (16 in total), are highlighted either red or green. These 16 codes reflect the interviewees' thoughts on how the process of reintegration turned out. The bolded codes (10) reflect the idea that the reintegration process was positive or "successful", while the italicized codes (6) reflect the idea that the reintegration process was negative or "not successful".

Being United

Being organized/working together

We were organized

We remain united

Stay united

Had nothing

Difficult conditions

Being Autonomous

Need strong mechanisms to implement peace accords

In touch with our history

Took charge

We're in charge of our future

Don't rely on the state for anything

We didn't negotiate well

Need to be in charge of the process

Need to know what you're getting into

Need to have a good analysis of the causes of war and conflict

Poor leadership/representation

Employment still a problem

Inadequate formal process

Feeling vulnerable

Feeling forgotten/abandoned

Feeling betrayed/let down

No skills for civil life

Debt

Being Connected

Work with other ex-combatants

Integrate with the locals

Received a lot of outside help and recognition

Reached out to neighbours

Working with people from other countries

Re-integrated with our neighbours

Feeling judged

Fear, uncertainty, mistrust

Being Visionary

Still engaged in political struggle

Used our knowledge from the war

Non-violence

Ideological framework

Hope

Struggle through nonviolence

Violence continues, just a different type

Recent positive government changes

The repression has stopped

Being a role model

Building community infrastructure (2)

Hard work

Hard work is necessary

Learning a skill

Positive attitude

Apathy, cynicism

A cynical analysis of the world

Life is good

There was some success

Appendix D: Summary for Member Checking

(English and Spanish versions)

Desde la Guerra Hasta la Paz: La Experiencia de la Transición de los ex-combatientes Guatemaltecos:

Summary of Interviews

Dear Participant:

Since the interviews in December, 2009, I have analyzed the thoughts and reflections and have made a collective summary of what was said. At this point, I request that you read this summary and provide me with feedback regarding whether you believe it accurately reflects your thought about the reintegration of the ex-combatants who live in NH.

Part 1: Themes

In analyzing the responses to what reintegration was like, five themes emerged.

Being united

Being autonomous (taking charge of the reintegration process)

Being connected (establishing connections with their neighbours and international partners)

Being visionary (maintaining an ideology of social and economic justice for Guatemala)

Being a role model (working hard to build a community, exemplifying good citizenship)

The first theme, being united, was the foundation which facilitated the other themes

Part 2: Success or no success?

According to my analysis, the reintegration process was partially successful and partially unsuccessful. Being united and working collectively made the process more successful than if combatants had have re-integrated individually. Success was characterized by open political space, the building of Nuevo Horizonte, (including the schools, health centre, projects, etc.), building relationships with neighbors, and the end of the war. Lack of success was characterized by no change in the social and economic reality of Guatemala, and the debt on the land.

Part 3: summary of the reintegration process

During the reintegration process, the Guatemalan ex-combatants were particularly vulnerable. The strategies they used to re-integrate were tied to their unique vision of reintegrating collectively rather than individually. Five themes emerged from their reflection on the process of reintegration: being united, being autonomous, being connected with the world around them, being visionary, and being a role model. Being united was their foundational theme which facilitated their ability to take charge of their reintegration process (being autonomous), reintegrate with their neighbours (being connected), continuing to struggle for social justice (being visionary) and building a community from nothing (being a role model). These themes have guided their lives for the past 13 years, and have led to significant, but not complete success. These five strategies enabled them to be much more successful than they would have been as individuals, but were not able to transform those concerns (such as macro social and economic justice) which were beyond their sphere of collective influence.

Part 4: advice for others in the DDR process:

The following is a summary of the advice that should be given to other ex-combatants entering the DDR process:

Make sure the process is transparent

Negotiate well

Make sure there is a mechanism to ensure the peace accords are completed

Make partnerships with others in the same boat

Desde la Guerra Hasta la Paz: La Experiencia de la Transición de los ex-combatientes Guatemaltecos:

Resumen de las Entrevistas

Estimado Participante:

Después de llevar a cabo las entrevistas en Diciembre, las he analizado y he hecho un resumen de los ideas y las reflexiones sobre el proceso colectivo de le reintegración de la gente de Nuevo Horizonte. Ahora, quisiera que pudieran leer este resumen y decirme si mi comprensión es justa.

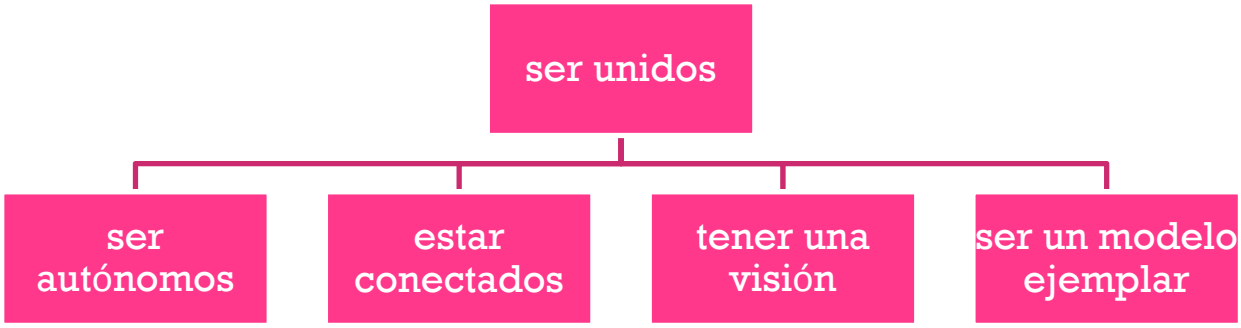
Parte 1: Los Temas

Durante mi análisis de las entrevistas, emergieron algunos temas del proceso de la reintegración. Los temas representan los estrategias que eran los mas importantes para los excombatientes:

1. Ser Unidos
2. Ser autónomos (estando a cargo del proceso de la reintegración)
3. Estar conectados (con los vecinos, organizaciones internacionales)
4. Tener una visión solidaria (siguiendo con la lucha)
5. Ser un modelo ejemplar (trabajando para construir una comunidad ejemplar social y económica)

El primer tema (Ser Unidos) fue fundamental, puesto que contribuyó al surgimiento de los otros temas.

Re-integración: los Temas/ las Estrategias



Parte 2: Fue exitoso o no?

Según mi análisis, el proceso de reintegración fue en parte un éxito, y el ser unidos y trabajar de una manera colectiva contribuyó al éxito de la reintegración. Ejemplos del éxito fueron obtener espacios políticos, la creación de la Cooperativa Nuevo Horizonte (con escuelas, centro de salud, guardería etcétera), establecer relaciones con los vecinos, y la terminación de la guerra y la violencia política. Por el contrario, la realidad social y económica Guatemalteca, la violencia social, y la deuda de la cooperativa fueron ejemplos que el proceso no fue completamente exitoso.

Parte 3: Resumen del Proceso de la Reintegración

Durante el proceso de la reintegración, los ex-combatientes guatemaltecos estaban en una posición de vulnerabilidad. Las estrategias para re-integrarse estaban relacionadas con su gran visión de reintegrarse de una manera colectiva, en vez de hacerlo individualmente. Cinco temas (o estrategias) surgieron de su reflexión: ser unidos, ser autónomos, estar conectados, tener una visión solidaria, y ser un modelo ejemplar. Ser unidos fue fundamental puesto que facilitó su capaz de estar a cargo del proceso de reintegración (ser autónomos) establecer relaciones con sus vecinos (estar conectados), seguir con la lucha socio-económica (tener una visión solidaria) y construir una comunidad exitosa desde cero (ser un modelo ejemplar).

Estos temas han guiado sus vidas por los últimos 13 anos, y han contribuido a muchos éxitos (pero no a todos). Sin embargo, estos temas (o estas estrategias) han contribuido mucho al proceso de la reintegración, y mucho mas por ser unidos. Sin embargo, estas estrategias no fueran suficientes para transformar los problemas (por ejemplo, la justicia económica nacional) que estuvo fuera de su alcance de su influencia.

Parte 4: Consejos para los otros ex-combatientes en el proceso de DDR

Los siguientes consejos son los mas importantes de los ex-combatientes de Nuevo Horizonte:

Ser unidos

Tener un proceso claro

Estar a cargo del proceso

Asegurar que haya mecanismos en los acuerdos para asegurarse que estos se cumplan

Relacionarse con otra excombatientes que viven la misma situación

Integrarse en la población

No esperanzarse en el gobierno o en cualquier otra organización– buscar su proprio futuro

Gracias

Randy Janzen

15 de Mayo, 2010