



**SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL WORK**
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Madrid, Spain

Global Special Studies

Alma Worthy, MSW Candidate 2015

University of Michigan School of Social Work



Location

Madrid is the capital of Spain. This European city is home to almost 3.2 million people. It is the third largest city in the European Union. The city is made up of medieval, Renaissance and modern architecture. Spanish is the main language spoken. Madrid is a cultural hub, where you can find MANY museums, art centers, churches, historical sites, and restaurants.

If you're ever able to visit, make sure to get some Paella!!! ☺



My Special Study

Pre-departure, you really must do your research about whatever topic you'll be studying while abroad. Mine was IPV. Through pre-trip research, I learned that death rates by IPV are 6 times higher in the states than in Spain.

The purpose of my trip??

To gain knowledge about 1) how accurate this statistic is and 2) learn how Spain has managed to keep their IPV death rate relatively low, compared to the states. Through meet-ups, interviews, and observations with several organizations, I sought out to gain the most comprehensive view of IPV in Spain.

Skills Used and Developed

Aside from Improving my Spanish, I was about to develop and improve many skills that cross over into the social work profession, including

- Maintaining Professional Identity
- Decision making based in values and ethics
- Engagement of diversity and differences in practice
- Engaging in research-informed practice
- Engagement, assessment, and evaluation

Agency & Community Partners

Since my project was a Global Special Study, I had to make my own connections and community partnerships. I was able to work with the following groups in Spain:

International Academy of Madrid (IAM)

The International Academy of Madrid is a school I was able to observe second graders' social exchanges during recess for a series of days. The purpose of my observation was to observe gender roles and norms.

The Madrid City Council

To learn more about how policy and government approaches IPV in Madrid, I was able to meet with an intern for the Madrid City Council.

Asociación para la convivencia (ASPACIA)

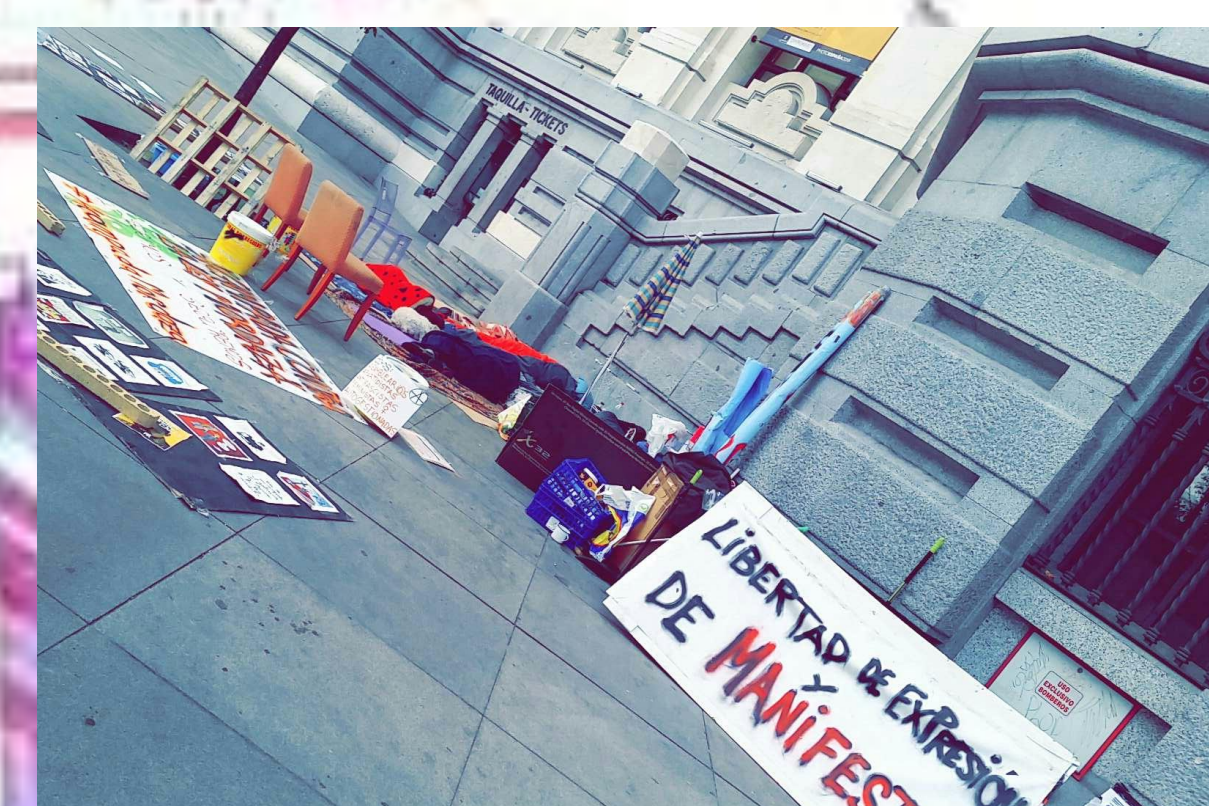
ASPACIA was where I spent the bulk of my time in Madrid. ASPACIA is a non-profit organization that aims to eliminate violence of all forms, protect victims, and promote equality in relationships. The purpose of this was to gain perspective from those "on the ground level" and who actually deal with IPV cases on a day-to-day basis.

Policía Municipal Madrid

While in Madrid, I was encouraged by the members of ASPACIA to interview police officers, and members of a specialized police taskforce, called Grupo Luna. The purpose of this was to gain information on how police handle IPV calls and gain a 'first responder' perspective on IPV in Madrid.

Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE)

I came across this agency while in Madrid. They were visiting with ASPACIA, so I was able to interview a representative from their agency. WAVE is a non-profit, working throughout Europe to combat violence against women and children.



Outcomes

I learned SO much about travelling, global interactions, and IPV that I never in a million years would have learned, had I not gone to Spain. Friends, family, and even Google could not have given me the wealth of unexpected knowledge I gained.

Here are some key outcomes of my trip, in regards to IPV:

Definition of IPV

The Spanish government defines IPV as (1) violence only expressed from a man to a woman, and (2) between a man and a woman who have been or currently is in a relationship. However, many advocacy groups and allies define IPV more similarly to the US; violent or aggressive behavior in any form towards a household member, involving abuse, power and control.

Spanish culture and IPV

Spain has come a very long way through history, like many other places. Gender roles and norms are similar to the US, however older generations are more likely to abide by 'traditional' gender roles and norms. Similar to the US, our grandparents and great grandparents are more likely to be homophobic, look like a 'traditional' family, be abused, and overall be more at risk for IPV.

Spanish Policies and Innovations

I was able to learn about innovations that work for Spain, that I think would be interesting to try in the states.

1. A IPV emergency number, similar to the US's '911'. Spain has a '911' equivalent, how additionally has '112', which is solely for IPV emergencies.
2. A new pilot program within the Madrid government that focuses specifically on IPV. If it goes well, it will be rolled out in all of Spain and eventually all of Europe. The major missions are to help with policy making and creating less vague policies, while bridging the gap between the definition of IPV in government and IPV community groups.
3. Recently, policies have changed so that children involved in IPV situations are considered, by law, direct victims of IPV. This means they also get free counselling, however it is the choice of the parent/child. Additionally, batterers MUST go through a required year of weekly, group counselling through ASPACIA, if convicted of any crime associated with IPV.

Classroom Connections

SW 648: Issues in Global Social Work

This course better prepared me for a global social work experience, helping me understand how social problems are globally identified, understood and addressed. I strongly suggest it if you plan to do a global special study, as it can be very overwhelming.

SW 691: Advanced Field Instruction

Field helped me balance professional identity, while being involved in sensitive and confidential issues.

SW 708: Special Issues in Interpersonal Violence

This course helped me to understand IPV, beyond the physical. It heightened my awareness to IPV across racial, ethnic, gender, sexuality, SES, religious domains.

Lessons Learned

1. Setting goals is great, but plan to be flexible as well.
2. When outside of my home country, I am at the mercy of that country..
3. I may be using the same words as someone, but we might have different meanings.
4. Community first: Ask, Listen, Learn
5. I represent more than myself when I travel abroad.
6. I am not an expert.

Advice

DO YOUR RESEARCH!!!! This can be stressful. Talk to those around you, read blogs, download apps, and use the SSW Office of Global Activities (OGA).

Acknowledgements

1. EVERYONE at the OGA, especially Katie Lopez, Lawrence Root and Brandon Patterson, for supporting me through my entire journey.
2. The Board of Governors for funding me
3. Beth Glover Reed for supporting me as my Global Advisor and overall mentor.
4. My SW648 class for blogging and being great
5. The International Academy of Madrid, the Madrid City Council, ASPACIA, Policía Municipal Madrid, Grupo Luna, and WAVE.

