

Quing Symposium: Reflections, Questions and Ongoing Challenges

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Firstly

- Importance of Quing including VAW as one of the content issues to be studied
 - BSA plenary that an arena where considerable development of sophistication in research and policy, but not ‘owned’ by any social science discipline and on the edge of equality politics
 - Who stitches it into equality politics and how
- EU making possible networks of feminist researchers across borders – of states, disciplines and feminisms
- Some general points and then what each presentation raised
 - Using the example of EVAW, a coalition across forms of VAW, the nations and regions of the UK, NGOs and academics, women’s groups, Amnesty and TUC

Recurring themes

- Definitions and Naming
 - Inclusions/exclusions of forms of VAW, of persons, of explanations
 - What work are they doing, for whom
 - DV as private, but not all is, especially post-separation
- What framing reveals/suggests
- What institutional analysis reveals/suggests
- Differences between countries/institutions where there is a longer/shorter history of responses
- VAW as a contested space which agencies and actors at many levels seek to 'occupy' – a feminist achievement and a challenge for feminist politics

Sylvia

- How to decide what the most productive route about legal basis in the EU for VAW
 - Rhetorical power and/or institutionalisation
 - Is HR so weak? Can be used strategically by feminists – CEDAW, ECHR – some decisions here are ground breaking EC v Bulgaria
- Issue of naming/definition begins here
 - Violence against women and minorities
 - ‘discriminatory violence’ (FSL)
- The question does criminalisation work raised
 - What does ‘work’ mean here, new norms versus implementation
- Framing – found very useful in institutional analysis – Yancey Martin – not individual attitudes but requirements of institutions
- Convergences of frames
 - EAW gender equality and HR – to bring gender analysis back in, and to bring HR ‘home’ (began in late 1990s)

EU competence

- Choose the space where
 - The explanatory framework which makes gender and power central is visible
 - All forms can be addressed ie sexual harassment in all contexts not just employment, internal not just cross border trafficking
 - Connections between forms– both conceptually (power and control) and in lived experience - can be analysed
 - That enhances ability of feminists at national level to gender/re-gender
- Agree gender equality potentially the most fruitful, but can there be strategic linking with fundamental rights or are we in a competition for 'ownership' and influence within the Commission?
- Dual/multiple strategic engagements? Which pathways can be pursued simultaneously

Andrea

- Sense of lack/loss of gender perspective is a settled matter – but northern EU countries complex stories of presence, loss and then new more recent contestations
 - How framings change over time
 - Who stitches VAW into wider gender equality agendas and debates , who unpicks, why and how?
 - Example: EAW and EHRC
- Mainstreaming and co-option
 - Main issue now marketisation, both are the outcome of creating new forms of provision/spaces, claiming women’s right to ‘quality’
- Why DV has been the most ‘acceptable’ form for states? Puzzling since it problematises the private, but is easier to de-gender
 - Definition in prevalence studies: what are we measuring? Any incident versus pattern of coercive control – link back to explanations (abusive household gender regime)
 - If all forms of VAW are addressed together – in definitions and policy - impossible to frame through family, becomes one of several conducive contexts
 - Much of the account reminded me of debates about csa in 1980s – to subject incest to feminist analysis but not be trapped in ‘the family’, possibility of locating women as mothers, not ‘rights holders’

Lise

- Daphne as outcome of feminist politicians trying to get VAW on agenda and to get some of resources of EU to feminist organisations
- Public health strategic framing/location – what was possible
- Interesting that no separate category of ‘sexual violence’, so few Daphne projects on, reflecting wider neglect
 - Worth reflecting on why this might be, and that is present to some extent in Quing
- Contestation must surely be a recognition that feminist politics has been to some extent effective?
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Raluca

- Contestation explicit here
- Policy tendency to move to 'kitchen sink' definitions – including everyone (women, men and children) can be a way to undermine gender analysis or more laudable strategic motives – eg including children as a step to equal protection
 - Often not through alliances/coalitions, so becomes contestation
- Welcome move away from UN declaration definition to the general recommendation : the first too specific and conflates forms and contexts; 'disproportionality' been very useful
- Interesting Netherlands wanting inclusive gender based violence naming but not to gender DV
- Is some of the contestation here that the structural gender equality analysis was implicit or that it was too explicit? Possibly both at different points.
- Need nimble thinking in such negotiations whilst holding onto link to explanations
- Criminalisation v prohibition? Possibility of more sophistication in how law is/has been mobilised
- Integrated policies across all forms of VAW offer new routes for feminist analysis and engagement

Mieke

- What conceptual frameworks can we use that enable us to analyse the complexity of social formations across time and space?
 - Intersections at the structural level
- The many ways in which economy is linked to domestic violence
 - What about other forms of VAWG?
 - Workplaces as conducive contexts for some forms, and some forms of employment more 'dangerous'
 - Violence having short and long term consequences for women's achievement/employment
 - Inequalities narrowing women's opportunities to re-build lives

Sofia

- Careful readings that reveal complexities within documents and processes – hidden, both/ands
- That need new forms of analysis and ways of reading – sometimes language moves on in policy and practice very fast, and for complex reasons
 - Minority women’s NGOs wanting FGM, forced marriage, HBV mainstreamed into VAW
- 2005 DV plan – a slight of hand by government to not have to create an integrated VAW strategy
- WAFE/EVAW – a bit more complex, need for campaigning organisation which not compromised through fragility of funding for services AND to shift focus to VAW not just DV AND across four nations (WAFE is England only)
- Intersectional visibility and GE project – some unfortunate outcomes
 - Equality grounds and how organisations are ‘coded’
 - EHRC not funding ‘single strand’ and women’s organisations are this unless they are BME/lesbian etc, which disguises that many have worked ‘cross strand’ for decades
 - Example of the Sexual Offences Act consultations/expert groups

Magdalena

- Trade offs/patriarchal bargains – improving women’s lives now against maintaining explicit gender analysis
- Using strategically to ‘add women in’ OR engagements to gender de-gendered approaches – ‘re-framing’
- *Children/family centred frame*
 - Are there ways in which this can be used which sits underneath women centred, or is it always in tension? Intersections of gender and generation
 - Children living with DV – ‘abusive household gender regime’ (Morris, 2009/10)
 - ‘Family violence’ always in tension with feminist/gendered approaches – Dobashes 1970s
 - Link to the CTS/prevalence methodology
- *Alcohol frame*
 - Can be mobilised in other contexts by those linked to misuse of alcohol policies, often involves de-gendering
 - Empirical questions: Is there co-occurrence in many cases? Links with higher injury? Women who drink more likely dual arrests?
 - Young people alcohol as explanation UK/Switzerland – alcohol cultures
 - Rape, young women and ‘binge drinking’ – also has implicit class dimension – ‘making themselves vulnerable’ or ‘predatory men targeting’ (re-framing)

Zelia

- Solidification of trafficking discourses in some places
 - interests of key players
 - USA – TIP as an arm of foreign policy
 - IOM – simple story has resulted in huge resources
- In other places is still a contested category
 - Extent to which is linked/de-linked to prostitution
 - Feminist debates
 - Trafficking in human beings
 - De-gendered/gendered
 - Internal trafficking
- Continuum migration/smuggling/trafficking
 - ‘identification’

Some final thoughts

- Methodological unease
 - Laws and policies seldom ‘pure’ texts, but being analysed for logic and coherence
 - COE Convention showed the process by which words are won or lost – need more of these ‘policy in process’ case studies
- Integration/fragmentation – forms of VAW in different places, disconnections between causes, protection, provision, prevention
- Empowerment? Need new concepts
 - ‘space for action’ – violence narrows/denies it, interventions should widen/restore