

Editorial: Men, Masculinities, and Violence

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The link between masculinities and violence is not unexplored. Many social science scholars, particularly in the last 25 years, have focused on studying and exposing the connections between masculinities and different forms of violence. Why, then, did we choose ‘Men, Masculinities, and Violence’ as the theme for this issue? The answer is simple: because we don’t live in a post-patriarchal world yet. Men’s violence, whether directed at women, people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, or other men, is inextricably linked to hegemonic and toxic masculinity. It is with the intention of contributing to the existing body of academic knowledge on masculinities and violence, especially by younger and early-career scholars, that we had issued our call for papers and artwork on this subject.

Addressing gender and gender-based violence is structural work wherein focussing on one aspect of the structure would not help if the other aspects were left unattended. It is important to recognise and address all different dimensions of the structure for interventions to be comprehensive and sustainable. Working with men, masculinities and violence is therefore not a substitute for working with women on preventing violence, but complementary. For too long work on gender-based violence has been initiated by women working with other women on recognising and addressing violence through a variety of strategies. It is important therefore to recognise the multi-faceted nature of working on gender and gender-based violence by also focusing on men, their roles, their own and society’s ideas of masculinity, the relationships they share with themselves and others including other men.

In the development sector there is a growing interest in working with men, which has manifested in the form of campaigns such as the ‘He for She’ campaign initiated by UN Women for solidarity on gender equality issues. On one hand there



is a growing acknowledgement of the need to get more men involved in working on gender equality; while on the other hand, there is also a growing body of criticism of such efforts, for example diverting limited funds for these campaigns especially when the women's rights sector is already under-funded, and the effectiveness of such campaigns towards the difficult work of reducing gender inequalities and addressing structural basis of oppression. Against such a background, it becomes increasingly important to examine some of the concepts around work on men, masculinities and violence.

This thematic issue is an attempt to contribute to a nuanced and critical understanding of the interconnectedness of men, masculinities and violence, especially by younger and early-career scholars. We are glad and excited to present this collection of eight peer-reviewed academic papers, one invited article, one creative writing piece, and two photo essays. We are also proud of the geographic and sociocultural diversity reflected in the papers and artworks in this issue; scholars and artists represented in this collection are based in seven countries, and their contributions relate to a wide variety of geographic regions and social contexts.

We open the issue with an invited article by Michael Flood, who is a renowned scholar and activist in the field of masculinities and gender-based violence. In this piece, Flood explores the need for involving men in ending violence against women. He highlights the intrinsic ways in which men's violence against women is linked to gender inequalities and posits gender equality as a solution, and emphasises the need to focus on structural inequalities as integral to meaningfully addressing violence against women.

Peretz discusses the idea of studying men and masculinities as a process of 'studying up,' and as a form of resistance. Although he acknowledges the implicit ways in which men are part of all knowledge production except those labelled explicitly feminist, he argues for the need to study men and masculinities because men as superordinate categories often go unmarked; and emphasises the need to study men, as they form a definite part of the gender relational structure, in order to be truly inclusive and intersectional, and to dispute the naturalness and hierarchy of these social structures. Peretz further mentions that social structures that stall gender equality have more to do with masculinity than femininity, and thus the study of men and masculinities is an important one for feminist projects.

Eriksson explores the experience and ethics of doing research on violence fo-

cusing on the affective relationship between the researcher and the research material, the ethical implications of such research and the politics of reading; and the methodology of writing. This is especially interesting as men and masculinity has also been associated with the lack of emotion or affect and this article makes an important contribution in looking at a researcher's own experience of doing work on masculinity and violence, and using 'emotional data' and 'text as felt' as part of the research experience.

Burrell focuses on violence against women, and discusses that although there are clear victims, there is a distinct invisibility of men's practices, as violence against women is usually viewed as a problem of women, a problem without perpetrators or context, almost as a gender-neutral and agentless problem with diffusion of responsibility, and a problem of 'the other'. He does this by examining the policy approaches of the UK and Finland governments vis-à-vis men's violence against women. This study is also interesting as it talks about two regions diverse in contexts and with different histories in women's movement building.

Two papers in this collection highlight the different ways in which the idea of masculinity is constructed, and how it manifests in two different contexts in India. Kohli discusses the idea of the 'dominant', 'brave' and 'martial' Sikh masculine identity and explores how the historical construction of masculinity intersects with contemporary discourses on Sikh identity and masculinity within the diaspora in the UK. Kohli explores how the conceptualisation of the Sikh Khalsa identity has its origins during colonial times when the performance of the Sikh identity was in projecting an image as warriors in order to seek legitimacy from military in the war effort. Kohli discusses the complex ways in which not only the Sikh identity has been privileged in its representation as warriors over other communities during colonial times, but also that the Khalsa identity has been privileged as 'the Sikh' identity. Kohli problematises this by discussing the social construction of the Sikh identity by the British due to ideas of the 'ideal' soldier as loyal, obedient and therefore subservient. This paper is especially interesting as it juxtaposes the identities of being a military warrior and being obedient and loyal. In another paper, Krishnan discusses the idea of the 'loving conqueror' and the psychologisation of masculinity in contemporary Kerala. The author explores 'aadyarathri' or the 'first night' as a distinct vantage point when the masculinity of the male partner in a heterosexual marital context becomes a point of surveillance and is constitutive in

the making of a gendered male within the Indian context. This paper is an interesting contribution to how ideas and conceptualisations around masculinity within different sociocultural contexts manifest themselves.

Two papers within this issue explore counselling as a strategy to address men's violence against women in two disparate geographical and sociopolitical contexts. Loncarevic and Reisewitz focus on the psychosocial counselling of perpetrators and perpetrator treatment programs in Western Balkan countries including Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania. The authors discuss the culture of silence around violence of war and how that impacts men and their masculinities in different ways such as men being unable to regain positions as bread-winners and heads of families in post-war situations. They highlight the need for perpetrator programs in such scenarios to adopt a gender transformative approach and provide alternate forms of masculinity, focusing not only on their lived masculinity, but also paying attention to their vulnerabilities thus creating a space for a deeper understanding of masculinity. In another paper, Rousseau-Jemwa, Hendricks and Rehse explore counselling as an intervention strategy within the South African context. The authors work with the idea of violence as a manner in which a man responds when his masculinity is threatened or challenged and therefore originates from a place of 'frustrated expressions' with men struggling to deal with and manage their anger and frustrations. Ideas around masculinity act as a barrier to seek support thus increasing their isolation and inability to deal with their emotions. The author therefore argues for the need for counselling services with inculcating a context of trust, providing counselling to men as 'clients' and not as 'perpetrators', pushing men to accept responsibility for the violence and acknowledging the violence that emerges from conventional social constructions of masculinities.

Qambela presents an autoethnographic account of rape and discusses that it is not just women who are victims of violence, but also men who are raped and assaulted by other men. Qambela discusses men's dominance over other men in a post-conflict setting drawing upon his own experiences of fear and vulnerability.

In his creative writing piece, Pavlinich presents a narrative of the social construction of boys' masculinity through a number of markers, symbols and signs.

Besides the academic papers and personal narratives in this issue, we are very happy to present the two photo series by photographer Damien Schumann included in this issue. The first photo series, titled 'Man-Kind', reflects Schumann's

interest in social construction of masculinity, and explores the notion of 'alpha male' by studying men's performances to attain and sustain their idea of masculinity. The second photo series, 'Making Men', studies the relationship between fathers and sons and invites the readers to contemplate the influence fathers have as 'masculine role models' on their sons' lives.

We are grateful to several individuals who have helped and supported us in bringing out this issue. We are very thankful to all the peer-reviewers for their willingness to review papers for this issue and for their generous feedback to the authors. We are thankful to Dr. Michael Flood for giving us permission to include his keynote address from a recent conference, as an invited article in this issue. We would also like to thank Devon Endsley for letting us use her excellent photograph for the title cover of this issue. Finally, this issue would not have been possible without contributions and support from members of the GJSS editorial team, namely Nadia Hai, Michael En, and Boka En. A special word of thanks for Nadia Hai as this issue marks the end of her tenure as the GJSS copy editor; on behalf of the GJSS editorial team we thank Nadia for her contribution to the journal.

We hope you enjoy reading these papers and artwork as much as we enjoyed editing and putting together this issue. Happy reading!

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