

In Plain Sight: Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

Panel Discussion and Book Launch

Monday 04 November 2019
18.00-20.00
Keynes Library, 43 Gordon Square
Birkbeck, University of London

On 19 June 2019, Minister of State for Human Rights and the Prime Minister's Special Representative on the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) Lord Tariq Ahmad announced that the international conference "Time For Justice: Putting Survivors First" will take place in London this fall. Being a result of growing public awareness of the phenomenon, the conference will hopefully lead to serious efforts to diminish this form of violence and to provide support to victims. But, as Tariq Ahmad said, there is still much to be done.

Today sexual violence is the subject of media coverage in a wide variety of scenarios. Still, the picture that emerges is characterized by ambiguity and omissions. There seems to be a particular reservation to deal with the question what actually happens when sexual violence is perpetrated. Who does what to whom? And how is it understood and reacted upon?

"In Plain Sight: Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict" is an attempt to get deeper insights into these questions. The book is the result of cooperation between researchers from various disciplines, with different regional and cultural backgrounds, who work in the "International Research Group 'Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict'" since 2008 (SVAC; www.warandgender.net). Dealing with war, power, violence, sexuality, gender and representation, it investigates fields in which sexual violence takes place and coins everyday life as well as military practices.

"In Plain Sight" comes out with Zubaan (New Delhi) – a publishing house that has focused on sexual violence in India, Kashmir, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, and recently published the book series "Sexual Violence and Impunity in South Asia".

Both publications, the SVAC book and the Zubaan series, offer the opportunity to compare empirical cases of sexual violence in different regions and cultures of the world. This allows us to recognize similarities in occurrence, understandings and reactions to this form of violence. At the same time, the output of such a comparative approach can serve to support the understanding and accepting of differences.

PROGRAMME

I. Welcome and Introduction to SHaME

Joanna Bourke (Birkbeck, University of London; PI of Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters, SHaME)

II. Welcome and Introduction by Editors

Gaby Zipfel (Social Science, Hamburg Foundation for the Advancement of Research and Culture)

Regina Mühlhäuser (History, Hamburg Foundation for the Advancement of Research and Culture)

Kirsten Campbell (Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London)

III. Short Talks

Dubravka Zarkov (Sociology, International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague)
Intersectionality - A Critical Review

Urvashi Butalia (Publisher and Writer, Director of Zubaan Books, New Delhi)
Impunity and Perpetration

Drinks Reception

Many thanks for support from:

