Negotiating triple roles as activists, managers and researchers in Vietnam's LGBT movement
Hoang, T.A.; Oosterhoff, P.P.J.

Published in:
Gender, Sexuality and Social Justice: What's Law Got to Do with It?

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
Negotiating Triple Roles as Activists, Managers and Researchers in Vietnam’s LGBT Movement

Tu-Anh Hoang and Pauline Oosterhoff

The Viet Pride movement and the campaign to legalise same-sex marriage in the last four years has made Vietnam a phenomenon in the global movement for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights. Though same-sex marriage was not approved in the amended Law on Marriage and Family, rapid development of the movement in only a few years in the current political regime is significant and meaningful not only for the LGBT rights movement but also for the civil society movement in Vietnam in general. Though Vietnam has changed significantly after Doi Moi, the economic reform process that began in 1986, the current political regime is still reluctant to acknowledge the existence or support the development of civil society organisations (CSOs). It is in this complex context that the Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) conducted a study to understand how LGBT CSOs can affect legal and social change with regards to the laws that regulate sexual norms and unions in Vietnam. The study, conducted in 2013 and 2014, followed the two examples of collective action: (1) Viet Pride and (2) the mobilisation for same-sex marriage in the revised Law on Marriage and Family.

The study was undertaken by one researcher from IDS and two researchers from CCIHP. The members of the research team were not only researchers with significant knowledge of sexuality research in the country, they were also long-time activists for gender equity and sexual and reproductive health rights in general and LGBT rights in particular, especially the two Vietnamese researchers. This combined knowledge and experience was an advantage. It helped the team quickly get a snapshot of the movement while being able to acknowledge the complex interactions of key actors in the LGBT movement. However, this insider-outsider dual role presented challenges as the researchers were exposed to criticism as both activists and as researchers, and yet were restricted in choice of words in the report that they could write. The wording had to be vague sometimes as certain terms are seen to alert people to sensitive issues and if they emerge in public documents it might cause conflicts. Knowing how to avoid conflicts is important in Vietnam for research organisations in order to be politically sustainable. Moreover, the two Vietnamese researchers are managers in their organisation with responsibilities to staff. In the context of state concern around CSOs, this type of research could bring great risk to the organisation.

This paper discusses the challenges that the researchers faced while trying to balance their commitment to this research (as researchers) alongside their solidarity with other CSOs (as activists and as managers). For example, the heterogeneous nature of the LGBT movement, with possible stigma and discrimination among the very different groups under this umbrella term, presented a challenge to solidarity.

“Vietnam’s current political regime is still reluctant to acknowledge the existence or support the development of civil society organisations.”

Tu-Anh Hoang (MD) is both founding member and Director of the Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP), Hanoi City. She works in a number of research, training and intervention programmes on gender, sexuality and HIV. She has extensive experience of working with disadvantaged groups such as adolescents, gender-based violence survivors and perpetrators, people living with HIV and sexual minorities using participatory and rights-based approaches. Tu-Anh is the chair of the Vietnam Sexual Rights Alliance, a faculty member of the Southeast Asia Consortium on Gender, Sexuality and Health, and Programme Advisory Committee member of the Asia-Pacific Research and Resource Center for Women.

Pauline Oosterhoff is a Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) with over 25 years’ international experience in public health, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and HIV programme management, research, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and training. She holds a PhD in Medical Anthropology and master’s degrees in Political Science and Public Health. Pauline is an expert in mixed methods, participatory methodologies and in developing M&E systems for evidence-based planning and research. Her research examines intersections between health, human rights and gender. In addition, she has conceptualised, managed and edited documentary films, installations, soundscapes and performances in over a dozen countries.
While same-sex marriage was high on the agenda of young gay men and lesbian women, it was not similarly prioritised by poor transgender people. A member of a transgender group explained the importance of understanding the unique and very different struggles facing different people who are too often described very generally as ‘LGBT’. They said,

We are not interested in legalising same-sex marriage… Our primary concerns are jobs and sex change. We cannot get good jobs because we dress and appear differently from the information on our identity card. Every day, some of us are dying because of sex-change procedures. However, no one cares about these needs.

The heterogeneous nature of the LGBT movement can also be seen in the different priorities placed on HIV treatment and prevention. For example, one LGBT activist described a concern about linking HIV to the LGBT ‘community’, and the ‘negative influence’ this might have. They said,

We understand the strength of MSM [men who have sex with men] groups working on HIV. However, we are scared of their image. They are related to HIV, which can have a negative influence on the activities of the community. These social activities are about human rights. We do not want them to be influenced by the image of HIV, although I know that the right to health is also important. When they join our activities, they do not wear the HIV hat but the LGBT hat. I do not see a strong connection between the activities of MSM groups and LGBT rights.

Reflecting and respecting these different perspectives in the report and facilitating a calm and constructive discussion in the meeting room was not easy. Another challenge relates to communicating the views of leaders of registered non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and non-registered groups. The two Vietnamese researchers had been working for a long time with most of the leaders of registered NGOs who participated in the research. Discussing the findings of research was seen, by some, as an opportunity for peers to criticise one another, claiming that ‘other’ NGO groups did ‘not know the truth’ and were ‘not careful in making those statements’. Thus, it is important to make sure that research participants understand the nature of social science research (e.g. the differences between research and an investigation or an audit) and therewith their expectations about what the research team can and cannot do.

The triple roles of the researchers in this project were challenging but also contributed significantly to gain insights and complete the research successfully. In hindsight these experiences suggest that such challenges should be discussed among the research team in advance to help them respond more strategically and consistently in the situation. However, the possibility of combining the roles of researcher, activist and organisational manager is also new in Vietnam and therefore the issues that came up could not have been anticipated.

“...It is important to make sure that research participants understand the nature of social science research ... and therewith their expectations about what the research team can and cannot do.”
Describing her early life at a time of war and subsequent cultural and political turbulence in her hometown of Zagreb, Croatia, Ivana Radačić reflected on having learnt ‘how to build bridges between the different communities instead of burning them, as there was already a lot of fire’. A glance at any discussion about public policy and sexuality in any country also reveals a lot of fire with predictable arguments about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights, abortion, sex work and pornography, etc. continually being shot back and forth between opposing camps. Truces or territorial gains in this ‘war’ make news. We notice when a church begins to marry same-sex couples, when a human rights organisation supports sex workers’ rights claims or when a government extends citizenship to transgendered people.

These campaigns and the battle for hearts and minds that they entail (apologies for the military references here) are consuming and tiring for activists, scholars and policymakers alike. Raging conflict about fundamental sexual rights saps resources and energy, frightens and polarises and continually tests the solidarity and connectedness.
to each other of those on the receiving end of destructive law and policy on human sexuality and gender. It also creates a headache for public health and development agencies who have to navigate this murky, obstacle-littered terrain to do their work. And by compelling constant action and reaction, conflict stifles more nuanced collective thinking about sexuality and gender.

By momentarily stepping away from those larger polarised debates and into ‘our’ world of sexuality and gender knowledge and action we encounter very different and much more interesting tensions and ambiguities than those being fought out in public. We also encounter risk, as new ideas and alliances emerge amid the raining of sometimes unpredictable voices. Gains in gender, sexuality and sexual and reproductive rights might feel well entrenched, and sexual minorities’ rights demands have gained some traction, but previous experience illustrates their precarity. The benefits have not reached far enough in any direction and there is always potential for them to be very rapidly eroded, for example, by an unfavourable US election result.

I am excited by this Collection, the symposium that began it and the work of IDS Sexuality, Law and Poverty generally because by retreating temporarily

Cheryl Overs is a founder of Australian sex worker rights organisations and the Global Network of Sex Worker Projects (NSWP). She has worked on health and human rights programming in more than 20 countries and written extensively about sex work, HIV and the law. As a researcher with the Michael Kirby Centre for Public Health and Human Rights at Monash University, Australia and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), she has conducted studies in Cambodia, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and Malaysia and developed resources that address social, legal and economic inequalities that affect sex workers.
from the perpetual frontline (I promise that’s the last of the military metaphors) the dangerous ideas that precede change that is substantial and worthwhile can come forward.

1 Bridging the law gap

The first section of the Collection explores exactly what law might achieve in terms of social and economic justice in the contexts of gender and sexuality. Answers span economic and social inclusion, freedom from violence and discrimination, access to services, citizenship, suffrage, self-determination and other aspirations that philosophers pack together as components of a ‘good life’. This necessarily involves asking if law and legal processes administered by nation states can deliver good lives that include counter-normative sexuality and gender; given the state’s primary functions of ensuring that life is orderly, that institutions operate smoothly and that remedies are available to redress harms to individuals.

This in turn raises questions about how much energy should be expended on biopolitics, the powers that organise life. Some see law as a primary tool for resisting social or economic exclusion and violence, by both individuals and the state. As well as the interesting theoretical issues that this question raises, it reflects a dilemma that many activists and organisations grapple with in practice – should scarce resources be put into campaigning for reform of legislation and to gaining access to legal processes through which justice, however formulated, might be achieved? Tensions around this central question are thematic. Working out how to use law to effect social change begins with recognising its paradoxical limitations as a tool of both emancipation and oppression.

Iñaki Regueiro De Giacomi commented:

law gives us resources to translate social claims into structures, into an order that has already a defined structure. Law functions at the same time as a tool to maintain the status quo of a community — which is what it is often used for — but there are also some exceptional and wonderful cases where law proves to be the opposite, a tool for social change.

That is the law that I am interested in.

In the search for when and where law is ‘interesting’ in this way, the varying determinants of how law affects lived experience are worthy of interrogation. That there are two sides to the coin of legal justice is clear, but less clear is when and how to resist its oppressive function while harbouring that which is protective and emancipative.

Religion, geopolitical and macroeconomic factors, gender inequality and culture are all considered in the search for buttons that can be pushed at different times in different places, by those seeking to tap into the ‘interesting’ and emancipatory aspect of law. HIV and public health has been an acceptable vehicle for dialogue about gender and sexuality policy, which has been especially important where religion has disproportionate influence. In this Collection, El Fekri and Rehman describe this as unrolling sexuality in the ‘white coat of public health’. Campaigns around violence against women in India and elsewhere have tackled victim blaming and in the process have illuminated and defended women’s sexual rights so that anti-rape movements are now bound up with the culture of ‘Slutwalk’ that asserts the right to a sexual autonomy alongside freedom from violence.

In a related but occasionally controversial vein, human rights and more recently macroeconomics and global development goals have been leveraged by international and national movements (see, for example, Badgett, 2014). Moreover, art, social enterprise, social media and traditional protest all play important roles as the building blocks of social movements and communities that can destabilise problematic discourses even in the most politically and socially repressive settings. The photo essay from Chouf in this Collection demonstrates this use of art and social media to challenge and destabilise controlled and patriarchal legal and media regimes. Thus the avenues for interesting, challenging and destabilising interactions with law are varied and widespread; the contributions to this Edited Collection include numerous examples of these types of engagements.

At the same time as hopeful ventures into law, there are dangers. Demands for individual justice through more vigorous use of criminal law to combat hate crime and violence against women run up against the problem of the state. Reliance on HIV funding to organise for legal and human rights means accepting external conceptualisations of common identities and/or shared interests.

Among all these rich pickings, the question of the engagement with law in the context of poverty, sexuality and gender, activists inevitably find themselves staring into gaps, and in some cases bottomless pits. Key theoretical questions emerge about whether patriarchal, capitalist states that enforce norms should be pushed out of, or invited into, norm-defying lives and bodies. As various enmeshments of state and the ‘queer body’ are advancing in different ways in different places the questions of who does the inviting, who gets invited and on what terms, become primary, particularly
since each opportunity for positive change also carries a risk of harm to individuals and to collective interests, especially on the part of the less powerful. For example, arguments advanced for law and policy that facilitates LGBT economic inclusion on the grounds of productivity may be useful to same-sex-attracted men whose health, age and ethnic status render them productive, but unhelpful and damaging to those in less productive categories. Similarly, advances to gender or sexual autonomy linked to the right to privacy and citizenship mean far less for those who cannot afford privacy or whose migration status renders them non-citizens.

Another crucial gap is between ‘law on the books and law on the street’, that is, between lived experience and the hope of justice. In contexts where the positive impact of legal mechanisms for protecting anybody’s rights is flimsy or non-existent, it isn’t surprising that campaigns for legalisation of homosexuality, abortion and sex work or litigation that reduces discrimination and human rights violations are questioned from several sides. Even where constitutions and statutes contain fine words they can contrast sharply to the reality of criminalisation of gender or sexual transgression and add fuel to the violence and discrimination from which law should protect people.

There are debates about whether the existing international human rights legal framework can extend economic and social rights at all, let alone into sexual counter-normative lives. Some authors embrace human rights and illustrate pathways for better use of them. In her interview Alice N’Kom recalls heading to meetings with politicians literally armed with copies of international law to support her argument that legalisation of homosexuality is more consistent with Cameroonian law than criminalisation because the hierarchically superior Cameroonian Constitution is legally linked to international treaties. Certainly LGBT communities can point to the Yogyakarta Principles in support of the idea that human rights can be transformative. However, it feels as if the most interesting tensions are at the limitations of human rights law and extend to the potential for the existing conceptual and legal architecture of human rights to be a part of the problem.

The human rights framework has been much critiqued in the global South and in Africa in particular. Holding states accountable and binding them to action and enactment of policy is clearly useful, but the capacity of human rights to protect people from poverty and inequity is in doubt and the focus tends to be upon individual civil and political rights rather than on bringing down the barriers to social and economic rights.5 ‘You can’t eat human rights’ is familiar shorthand for this dilemma. Concerns extend to calling into question the ahistorical and decontextualised nature of the dominant human rights discourse which expresses a universal morality that some authors have argued convincingly ‘furthers a neo-colonial imposition of Western ideals and norms onto non-Western cultures’ (Muzyamba, Broaddus and Campbell 2015: 26).

Further developing this argument, Tatenda Muranda draus attention to the heteronormative nature of human rights law suggesting that it candolittletochallengeheteronormativitybecause of [its] internal normative biases. Problems of formulation also mean that human rights cannot adapt to the changeability and volatility of sexual orientation and gender identities and therefore have the unwanted effect of limiting variance in ways that facilitate erasure.

It is clear then that, even at its most ‘interesting’, law can only be part of the answer to the question of sexuality and gender justice.

2 Representation and resources

The second theme of the Collection is an insight into the value and architecture of solidarity and the representation of the various individuals and communities that need to fight back against oppression. Critiqued from various perspectives these also reveal interesting tensions around the nature of solidarity and action for social justice in a context in which resources are often scarce, contested and politicised.

Several authors describe and interrogate the ways in which language and resource allocations enable, constrain or influence action on sexuality and gender.6 There is a rich layer of stories and histories about the dynamics of international support for programming and policy advocacy around LGBT, men who have sex with men, people living with HIV, women struggling for sexual and reproductive health rights, sex workers and transgender people. Development, human rights and public health agencies have privileged international NGOs and organisations in the global North but many of them are well into the process of expanding their work to the global South in ways that are legitimately described as enabling.7 However, these positive developments must be placed against a background of colonialism and patriarchy. In such a context, it is never far from mind that resources remain concentrated in the North and with them,
the power to determine priorities and strategies (see Wall 2015).

Although the dilemma of resource allocations and development policy made in the global North overshadowing social movements for sexuality and gender justice is most obvious in relation to large powerful organisations such as the UN, World Bank or EU whose potential to overpower, depoliticise and bureaucratise is clear, it is not limited to them. Similar questions to those raised by engagement with the state and with international organisations to achieve economic and social justice are found in relation to non-state actors. That many of these are well-intentioned allies is ironic. If there were not so much at stake Wanja Muguongo’s and Adrian Jjuuko’s images of themselves tripping over small crowds of ‘allies’ enthusiastic to join campaigns against criminalisation of homosexuality in Uganda and Kenya would be amusing. They describe valuable engagement that is conducted within close strategic relationships with local activists alongside support that comes from the North, on the helpers’ terms rather than theirs. But at the same time, for the majority of groups, financial support and attention is scarce, so they are more likely to face the problem of how to access any resources, let alone become the ‘cause du jour’. It is paradoxical that activists can replicate the very colonial and sexist imperatives that drive the violence and oppression that are being contested – but why wouldn’t we? Unlearning and unravelling the habits of a lifetime must be a priority and there is a sense that better ways of doing that are urgently needed.

The paradox is not limited to international versus local agendas. Decisions about allocations of scarce resources are complicated by the reality that most of the organisations that address poverty, law, gender and sexuality in the context of international development depend on international donors. They must comply with donors’ identifications of communities and populations, their understandings of issues and their procedures, policies and technical guidance. Juggling advocacy with caseloads of community health or social support is difficult, but the authority to represent is frequently derived from the fact that one occupies a service provision role. To simultaneously advance, benefit from and disrupt the business of human rights and development is a tall order.
The structure of development and human rights funding also means that the knowledge that drives programming is mediated through specific institutions including governments. This Collection, which itself comes out of an IDS programme funded by the UK Department for International Development, is exactly that – knowledge and evidence produced to inform development policy. The importance of getting that right can’t be overstated. But nor can the role of resources in determining what knowledge counts. I have recently seen this struggle played out in the heavily contested terrain of sex work and sex trafficking. At first, knowledge produced by senior academics in elite US universities who urged that sex work be abolished by introducing harsher law dominated the debate in both academic and popular publications.9 By contrast sex workers argued for decriminalisation on social media accounts with small numbers of followers and at meetings to which they had to be invited.10 Over time that dynamic changed with the intervention of some small donors,11 UN agencies and scholars, such as Svati Shah, whose various contributions made high-quality policy analysis and research possible and, crucially, enabled it to be communicated more effectively. Although something of a success story it was nevertheless overdue and arbitrary, and it was certainly controlled from the global North.

No matter how we answer questions about what solidarity and social justice is and whether it fits into the economic policy, development and public health paradigms through which resources and policy flow, ultimately there is no choice but to engage with them all. Nor is there any getting away from the fact pointed out by Jjuuko that the world is an increasingly interconnected place. The matters at hand, then, are not if it is worth engaging with law but what that engagement should look like, who should do it and pay for it and how the sexuality and gender focus can be sustained and advanced in concert with parallel struggles.

The ‘interesting’ tensions about power imbalance are at their most painful when we discuss solutions to the North and South problem, which takes place in the inescapable fact that development is neocolonial. Calls for more support for research and collaborations within the global South can be heard throughout this collection with practical suggestions about relocating knowledge production, better listening and collaboration, and more flexible grant-making. But while they are all good ideas, the question of root and branch reform of the language and institutions of development hangs in the air. On this analysis it is necessary but not sufficient to simply push for ‘localisation’ in development which, at its simplest, is shifting money and decision-making from the global North to the South, without necessarily reforming or addressing deep-seated structural problems.

Although significant progress has been made and important opportunities to continue are on the horizon, for example through the Sustainable Development Goals,12 the task of ‘queering development’ still lies ahead. Whether social movements for gender and sexuality rights and justice can configure and position themselves within existing development policy and programmes while agitating for change is a pressing question. Addressing this question, Kate Bedford sees sustainable solidarity as generating, circulating, valuing, sharing and exchanging resources differentely and points out that this doesn’t need to be built from the ground up but is well underway.13 Bisi Alimi describes his role in that process:

Shifting gear from being an activist to being an advocate means no longer going to policymakers and shouting ‘I want, I want, I want!’ Instead, as an advocate, we need to establish a baseline of where we are now and assess the institutions and mechanisms that keep the status quo in place. We need to look, too, at where we stand along the spectrum of potential actions in order to develop a strategy to get to where we want to go.

The ‘spectrum of potential actions’ is not endless, but as Kate Bedford suggests, there is much scope for joint working to improve upon already existing possibilities.

3 Contestations and compromises in the quest for joint work on sexual and gender justice

From the beginning, the unruly conversation was about the tensions occurring as various strands of action and thought about sexuality and gender spin together, what thread they are creating, and how it can be improved. Thus, just as an investigation of the architecture of solidarity and social justice opens up important questions about resources, it also demands that we fully explore joint working for sexuality and gender justice, the key tensions, common discourses and the most fertile grounds upon which social justice might be advanced.

Some of the clearest and most interesting tensions come in the wake of equal marriage. Alongside global support for the campaigns for same-sex marriage, disquiet grew about it being bound up with state-sanctioned heteronormative and neoliberal agendas. In this Collection voices on equal marriage, ‘pink washing’14 and other ostensibly neoliberal developments were raised by theorist observers as well as by those who feel passed over by the marriage equality wave. In Shah’s view same-sex
Pathways out of poverty for specific groups of people are entwined around discords.

Discourses that prioritise sexual pleasure, equality and freedom and focus on counter-normative identities and behaviours generate a ‘woman problem’ within sexuality activism. While women who have sex with women (WSW) and trans women (for better or worse) lie within, or are claimed by, the LGBT framework, women’s sexuality issues generally are primarily recognised through the lenses of violence against women and sexual and reproductive health. How much contemporary feminism has to offer is debatable. Its most spectacular floundering and deepest chasms have been about sexuality as illustrated by deep and ongoing feminist schisms over pornography or sex work with their attendant battles about consent, power, bodily autonomy and exploitation. On the other hand, some of feminism’s greatest achievements have been challenging the laws and attitudes that ensure that women’s sexuality is controlled and directed within patriarchy. This is the hand of interest to gender and sexuality activists.

Faith is perhaps the most well trodden of the traditional battlegrounds. It is fascinating to hear the question being asked, ‘are there other ways of imagining and negotiating this encounter?’ El Feki and Rehman and others have argued powerfully that there are. They cite both secular and religious texts to support those arguments and point to significant accords and new spaces for same-sex-attracted people to practise their faith. But again, in view of the extent to which damaging policy on sexuality, gender and human rights has been driven by faith and faith-based institutions, we are gazing into large chasms. As a woman and sex work activist I find it difficult to ignore the US’s Global Gag Rule against abortion and the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) initiative that bound dependent NGOs to promote faithfulness and abstinence and took funding away from rights-based programming and reallocated it to faith-based organisations. At local level it’s often even worse. During a conversation about the positive developments with faith leaders in some countries an African LGBT activist waved it away saying ‘too soon, too soon’. The direct damage caused to him and his community by the Church and faith groups is too recent and raw for him to be very interested in such negotiations, on new or old terms. This is clearly an area where some very new thinking is needed to crack a tough nut, so I was fascinated to read that people are thinking about ways other than trying to convince faith leaders to be more tolerant. Initiatives such as the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement in the UK and countless other gay Christian associations, the Inner Circle in Cape Town and the new ‘gay-friendly’ mosque in Paris exemplify such alternatives.
poverty for specific groups of people are entwined around discords. It is right that there are definitional arguments and even conflict in the confusion of trying to navigate shifting forces, identifying and addressing sources of oppression, finding allies and avoiding complicity borne of frustration, exhaustion and material necessity. This is a risky process, deciding who ‘we’ are and questioning how much the identities that form that ‘we’ matter anyway. It certainly carries the risk of subsuming the question of gender and sexuality to the neoliberal framework of identity politics and the single-issue struggles by competing ‘populations’ however they are defined, configured and financed.

De Giacomi discusses a swing towards a stronger coalitional politics: that is, inclusion in a struggle for universal human rights that casts ‘emancipation as one single phenomenon’ that will not have been achieved while any group is left behind or forgotten. From this, a new language of solidarity emerges – one grounded not just in mutual cooperation but in actual indivisibility that leads to alliances that are joined up and powerful enough to make significant changes to existing paradigms. To do this involves harbouring ‘the possibilities of an actual politics of intersectionality and cross-movement engagement, the recognition of the hierarchies within and between Queer communities’ (Khanna 2014). On the other hand, the movement must creatively refashion itself beyond the law and enter the more difficult and diffuse social, economic and political realms. By intersecting with other structures of oppression, marginalisation and exclusion ‘the Queer body’ enters ‘into assemblages with other bodies and political objects’ (ibid). The unruly conversations found in this Collection perhaps provide a point of departure for entry into these assemblages and for the messy, challenging and multifaceted action that follows.

Endnotes

1 Unless stated otherwise, all references are to articles in this Collection.

2 The idea of a good life, human happiness or flourishing within a state is not new: see Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics.

3 For more on the Slutwalk movement including discussion of the frictions that arose when this local Canadian feminist movement was transnationalised see Herriot (2015).

4 HIV epidemiology determines how people are grouped into categories and how those categories of people interact with each other, access resources and where and when they speak.


6 See Alimi, Muranda, Ruzindana, Tapia, O’Connell, Shah, Tangente in this Collection. Jjuuko also discusses resources in the wider context of activism and legal action around the anti-homosexuality bill in Uganda.

7 Examples of this can be found in the work of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, (ILGA) http://ilga.org, Women Deliver uuww.womendeliver.org and the Global Network of Sex Work Projects www.nswp.org.

8 Muguongo cited in the main introduction by Mills et al, this Collection; Jjuuko in this Collection.

9 See for example the publications of Melissa Farley at http://prostitutionresearch.com/pub_author/melissa-farley/.

10 ‘Criminalise/decriminalise’ is an oversimplification of the complex debate about the conflation of sex work and sex trafficking made here for convenience. It is discussed in detail by Svati Shah in this Collection.

11 Including The Open Society Foundation, Mama Cash and the Robert Carr Foundation.

12 The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015. The SDGs are a set of universal goals ‘to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030’. See UNDP Sustainable Development Goals at www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda.html.

13 Bedford discusses this in her contribution to this Collection with specific reference to the work of the International Social and Economic Rights Project (see www.northeastern.edu/laaw/academics/institutes/phrge/projects/serp.html). She also highlights the work of several other contributors in this regard, including Gatete TK, Bisi Alimi, Nisha Ayub, Naome Ruzindana, Tatenda Muranda, Ifaki Requeiro De Giacomi and Svati Shah.

14 Pink washing is generally understood as the use and exploitation, usually by a state, of ‘LGBT friendly’ policies as a marker of modernity and a strategy for masking human rights violations or injustices in other areas. See Puar (2013).


16 The Inner Circle http://theinnercircle.org.za/about.

References


Muzyamba, Choolwe; Broaddus, Elena and Campbell, Catherine (2015) ‘“You Cannot Eat Rights”: A Qualitative Study of Views by Zambian HIV-Vulnerable Women, Youth and MSM on Human Rights as Public Health Tools’, BMC International Health and Human Rights 15.1


