

VIOLENCE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

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VIOLENCE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

POWER, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

Dr Aliraza Javaid

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I dedicate this book to all the people who suffer various forms of violence in their everyday life. You are my strength, my hope, and saviour that we can come out at the other side as victors. This is for you.

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INTRODUCTION

In the past few decades, both in traditional disciplines and in gender and sexuality studies, queer and feminist writers have made us increasingly aware of the importance of sexualities and masculinities in shaping social life. Both gender and sexuality organise social life, joining other identity markers, such as race, ethnicity, class, age, and so on, to gain an understanding of our own everyday lives. These identity markers are unstable, shifting across time, place, and context; they are useful for understanding how they intersect with violence. That said, in this book, I synthesise the themes of gender, sexuality, and violence, bringing together literatures and research works that have been produced in these fields to offer a coherent framework for understanding the interrelationship between these concepts. I attempt to theorise the relationship between gender, sexuality, and violence. I draw on hegemonic masculinity throughout the book to make sense of the different forms of violence that I closely examine. The way that I am defining and conceptualising 'hegemonic masculinity' is that it refers to a form of masculinity that legitimates unequal gender relations between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities. At the three levels, local, regional, and global, I consider the ways in which hegemonic masculinities are reproduced through violence. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) state that:

Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men. (p. 832)

The constructing of gender through men's violence against other men is well established (Messerschmidt, 2018a). By doing violence, men can legitimate unequal gender relations between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2018b). At the local level, meaning face-to-face interactions and relations, masculinities are being created. Men can claim hegemonic masculinity through violence (but violence is not the only route to hegemony). For example, sexual violence against men or women legitimates an unequal gender relationship by constructing the perpetrator as masculine and the survivor as feminine. In this book, drawing on Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) and Messerschmidt (2018b), I distinguish when masculinities exclusively are either dominant, dominating, or hegemonic in relation to violence. I also seek to distinguish when masculinities are exclusively subordinate, marginalised, complicit, as well as recognising protest masculinities (see Connell, 1987), when men and women carry out violence. Of course, violence is not the only way that hegemonic configurations of masculinity can be created since 'hegemony' is a concept referring mainly to non-violent ways of establishing and reproducing privilege, such as through culture, civil society, religion, and ideology. For example, hegemony can be attained through non-violent means through the gender labour in the home, the workplace, the education system, where there is a clear binary between men and women, between masculinity and femininity. Women are still the primary caregivers in the home context, whereby they engage in unpaid home labour, looking after the children, supporting the emotional welfare of their male partner, cooking, and cleaning.

Other masculinities are also important in understanding violence. For example, in the context of homophobic violence, gay victims are usually positioned in subordinate masculinities as they are oppressed and not regarded to be equal, so legitimating unequal gender relations (see Tomsen, 2009). A hierarchy of masculinities had formed out of gay men's experiences with prejudice and violence from heterosexual men. For hegemonic masculinities to be enacted, consent and legitimation are required, and they are produced relationally. Therefore, in

relation to gay men, straight men can legitimate unequal gender and power relations through the perpetration of homophobic violence, given that it ensures the victims are momentarily positioned in subordinate masculinities and are feminised because they are constructed as lesser than or deviant from hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 2005). In other words, they represent less symbolic and cultural power. Heterosexuality and homophobia are the bedrock of hegemonic masculinity. I attempt to provide some understanding of power relations between and among men as we cannot fully understand gender without understanding power. Some men hold power over other men, such as straight men holding power over gav men at certain contexts, times, and places, so it is important to make sense of the power relations within homophobic violence contexts (which is the focus of Chapter 4). Sexuality is a main theme throughout the book in relation to various forms of violence. As Messerschmidt (2018b) comments, sexuality 'involves all erotic and nonerotic aspects of social life and social being that relate to bodily attraction or intimate bodily contact between individuals, such as arousal, desire, practice, discourse, interaction, relationship, and identity' (p. 114). For Weeks (1985):

[M]eaning is constructed through languages, through the relation of terms to each other. 'Men' and 'women', 'normal' and 'abnormal', 'heterosexual' and 'homosexual', all key terms in the sexological vocabulary, each derives its meaning from the existence of the other. Sexuality is relational; it exists through its relation to other concepts (the non-sexual). It is a linguistic unity. Language, of course, does not determine reality, or create the erotic simply by its existence. Meaning never floats free: it is anchored in particular sets of statements, institutions and social practices which shape human activity through the social relations of power ... Sex and sexuality are social phenomena shaped in a particular history. (pp. 177–8)

When I am referring to identity construction, I am referring to social symbolic identities – from post-structural and symbolic interactionism frameworks – to mean that identities are unstable, fluid, dynamic, and

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susceptible to ongoing change within a web of power relations. Identities become symbolically meaningful in relation to others. Identities can even be made without the physical presence of others because we have a social awareness of others, even when those others might not be in close proximity to us. Sexual identities, according to Weeks (1985), fit this approach of mine, in that nothing is a sexual identity until it has been given meaning as one. Drawing on heteronormativity - that is, heterosexuality is constructed as the only norm through societies, institutions, and everyday discourse, in that marital and sexual relations are most (or only) fitting between people of opposite sex - I attempt to understand, for example, intimate partner violence in terms of offending, victimisation, and policing (which is the focus of Chapter 5). When I refer to 'heteronormativity', I am referring to heterosexuality as being constructed as a 'normal' and a normative form of heterosexuality, in comparison to other non-heterosexualities that are constructed as 'abnormal' and 'deviant' through social relations, social institutions, and social practices. I closely unravel how violence unfolds in heterosexual and gay relationships, drawing on heteronormativity to make sense of the relationship between violence and love (again, see Chapter 5). 'Doing' sex, gender, and sexuality intersect here, as well as throughout the book (e.g. the construction of heteromasculine and heterofeminine identities during violence). This book, then, highlights the ways in which constructs of gender and sexuality interlink with different forms of violence, such as intimate partner violence, homophobic violence, and more, to make sense of how gender and sexuality are being reproduced through violence. The following questions will form the basis for this book:

- How do concepts around gender and sexuality interlink with violence?
- What are the social and cultural implications of violence?
- What are the offending, victimisation, and policing patterns associated with sexual violence, murder, homophobic violence, intimate partner violence, and transphobic violence?
- In what ways are hegemonic masculinities and heteronormativity constructed during episodes of global violence?

- How can we use hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity to help us make sense of violence?
- In what ways can autoethnography help one to understand one's own experiences of violence?

I see this book as serving to enhance students' knowledge and experience of their courses and to enhance their understanding through providing insights into the concept of violence. Moreover, the book will, through its eclectic mix of issues associated with violence, disseminate knowledge not only to students, but also to researchers. Therefore, the pedagogical usefulness of the book is to be found in the insights the book will provide on the different concepts used in evaluating the subject of violence, as well as the connections that can be made between gender, sexuality, and violence in different contexts. I hope this will help scholars and students to become more aware of, and prepared to undertake, their own research plans relating to the social and cultural constructions of gender, sexuality, and violence. To this end, at the end of each chapter, I have provided some questions for students, practitioners, and scholars (as well as the general lay reader) to ponder over and to contemplate. For students, the questions can be addressed in seminars and lectures after the students have engaged with the book and wider reading. They will also help to trigger the reader's memory on the issues covered in each chapter. In addition, I draw on case studies, such as cases reported in the media of real-life cases of violence; I attempt to apply theory to such case studies to elucidate and make sense of them. Students, as well as the general lay reader, can grapple with the issues that emerge from the case studies, provoking critical debate. I hope that the insights I offer about violence will be able to poetically and soulfully connect with readers. After all, humans have suffered violence since *Homo sapiens* entered this earth realm.

The book makes an important contribution to debates around violence, sexualities, and masculinities. The book provides a platform on which to elucidate and make sense of the different ways in which these concepts are socially and culturally constructed, notably in the lives of victims and offenders, as well as the agencies that respond to violence, while drawing on social theory to increase the original value, nuances, and contributions of this book. Not much British work is available about the specific interconnections between gender, sexuality, and violence; the book encourages further research to be conducted. Providing knowledge and understanding about violence, masculinities, and sexualities will allow readers to understand the interconnections between these concepts, which prior British research has often overlooked.

The employment of hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity and linking this to different forms of violence contributes to current debates in gender and sexuality studies, adding to current understandings of the different ways in which these theoretical concepts can be used to understand different violences. They offer explanations of why men and women may engage in these violences. Identifying the links between these theoretical concepts and the violences that I select has largely been absent in gender and sexuality studies. For example, there is a lack of work that applies hegemonic masculinity to murder. The current book makes these links to recognise and understand the different ways in which men navigate through different masculinities and sexualities when they perpetrate violence (such as murder, trans violence, and so on), how they perpetuate or contest certain masculinities and sexualities when committing such violences, and how they are positioned in particular masculinities and sexualities at certain contexts, times, and places. For example, when I write about homophobic violence, I demonstrate how male offenders can legitimate unequal gender relations among men; the victims of homophobic violence become emasculated and feminised (see Chapter 4). I show, therefore, how homophobic violence legitimates an unequal relationship between men by constructing the perpetrator as masculine and the victim as feminine, drawing on case studies of homophobic violence in the media, such as the case of the Orlando massacre, whereby 49 people were killed when gunman Omar Mateen opened fire on crowds at Pulse nightclub in Florida on Sunday 12 June, sparking an outpouring of public grief as the world came to terms with one of the worst instances of homophobic violence on the LGBT community in history. I show, then, how hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity can shed light on this homophobic violence against the LGBT community, and how those 49 victims became feminised and powerless, while the attacker momentarily became superior and powerful through the legitimation of an unequal gender relationship between the attacker as masculine and the victims as feminine.

The book will therefore extend existing debates within gender and sexuality studies. Readers will be able to appreciate the diversity that hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity have in terms of being able to apply them to different forms of violence. Scholars and writers will be able to apply the theoretical concepts to other forms of violence that I might not have touched upon in the book to a large extent, such as racist violence, violence against and by lesbians, and terrorism. Different audiences will also take something personal from the book. For instance, with regard to Chapter 8, as I am drawing on autoethnography to theorise the personal, in which I discuss my own experiences of a death threat, homophobic violence, sexual violence, family violence and abuse, and racist discursive and symbolic violence, I hope that the reader will be able to connect with this chapter. When I refer to symbolic violence, I am referring to what Ken Plummer (2019) acknowledges as violence that works 'to silence and shame, discriminate and displace, stigmatize and scapegoat' (p. 68). Symbolic violence is usually followed by actual violence, including face-to-face violence or violence that is institutional or collective, such as military, carceral, corporate, state-enabled, and structural.

I focus on sexual violence against men and women, murder, anti-gay violence, intimate partner violence, trans violence, and global violence because I have either experienced these violences myself, because I know of someone who has experienced these, and/or because the media consistently highlight these violences as current issues. These violences regularly and frequently occur around the world; they are everyday issues. Thus, these are contemporary and current issues affecting real people. This will add not only an up-to-date feel to the book, but also (I hope) will 'speak' to and connect with many readers as they may have either suffered these violences themselves or know of someone who has, or they are aware of these violences through the media and the news. I will be taking a global perspective throughout the book as a whole, drawing on case studies,

facts, and figures not only from the UK, but also from outside of the UK context. I will also be drawing on material and literature from outside of the UK. The current book is different to my recent two books, in that the current book focuses on a vast array of violence. In my previous two books, such as *Male Rape, Masculinities, and Sexualities* (Javaid, 2018b), I focus upon male rape and male sexual assault; and in *Masculinities, Sexualities and Love* (Javaid, 2018a), I do not talk about violence in much depth. Rather, the book centres on how gay men construct (romantic) love and how love is constructed through film.

What Is to Come?

In Chapter 1, I carefully review not only literature on masculinities and sexualities from the UK, but also literature on these areas from outside of the UK. This, in turn, will add a global and international dimension to the book by critically evaluating and providing a nuanced analysis of the global literature in such areas. In this chapter, I seek to examine the historical, social, and cultural perspectives of gender and sexuality, so the book will provide some history about the constructions of gender and sexuality to set the context early on. Giving a historical and sociological analysis of gender and sexuality will allow the reader to make sense of similarities, dissimilarities, and continuities of gender and sexuality across different time periods and cultures. In short, this chapter will begin with a broad overview of gender and sexuality historically and cross-culturally.

Chapter 2 critically reviews and interprets the existing literature surrounding sexual violence against men and women. Reviewing the background literature in relation to sexual violence will allow me to apply my theoretical frameworks, hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity, to theorise and understand sexual violence against adult men and women. Regarding sexual violence, particular focus will be given to the patterns of offending, victimisation, and policing of sexual violence. Questions that I will consider include the following: What is the nature and extent of the perpetration of sexual violence? How is sexual violence policed? Who are the victims of sexual violence? How do gender and sexuality intersect with sexual violence at different social and cultural contexts?

Men in the UK kill two women per week. The men include boyfriends, husbands, or male dating partners; hence, nine out of ten murders get cleared up (or solved). Often the male killers tend to ring the police themselves, confessing that they have killed their female lover. Men kill women as a form of misogyny, construing masculinity in the killing process. That said, Chapter 3 critically reviews the issue of murder from a gender and sexuality perspective, attempting to understand how men 'do' gender in cases of murder. There is a gap in gender and sexuality studies, in that murder is rarely included in discussions with the use of hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity. This chapter makes links between murder - the killing of another - and concepts of gender and sexuality. Theorising murder using hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity can add nuanced understandings to the phenomena of serial killing and murder. I also evaluate case studies in this chapter, such as Jeffrey Dahmer and the 'Grindr killer' cases, to discuss and make sense of how sexuality and gender are being expressed and constructed during murder. I also explain some issues in the policing of murder cases.

Within Chapter 4, I examine how masculinities and sexualities are being reproduced through homophobic violence. I provide some contextual, theoretical, and empirical context to the nature and extent of homophobia and homophobic hate crime. In other words, the impacts, causes, and responses regarding homophobic violence will be focused upon. Who are the victims and offenders? Why do perpetrators commit anti-gay violence? I also provide a real-life case study of homophobic violence – the Pulse shooting.

Intimate partner violence is considered in depth in Chapter 5. Examining violence in heterosexual and gay relationships, I apply the theoretical framework of heteronormativity to elucidate and make sense of the social relations between the offender and victim. I describe and explain - while also evaluating - offending and victimisation patterns in such relationships. I also examine the policing of violence in such relationships. The way in which localised hegemonic masculinities are constructed and contested in this context is also explored.

Violence against trans people is considered in Chapter 6. I examine the nature and extent of violence against trans persons. The relationship between offender and trans victim is considered, examining single events as well as group events in which there are multiple offenders. The theoretical frameworks of hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity are considered when discussing violence against trans persons.

For Chapter 7, I offer a critical discussion on global violence. Here, I include studies on violence in the Global South – such as sexual violence, murder, homophobic violence, intimate partner violence, and transphobic violence in Global South countries – and also studies on, for example, femicide, genital mutilation, and dowry death in the Global South. I also examine violence against civilians during war, human trafficking, violence in the workplace, corporate violence, and school violence.

In Chapter 8, I use autoethnography to theorise my personal social life in which I experienced violence. I talk openly about my own experiences of violence, such as homophobic violence and my father's violence against me, linking these experiences to hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity. These aspects are exactly what are needed in the conceptually dominated literature of violence, and so I offer some important and nuanced insights regarding autoethnography and violence.

The conclusion will sum up the main arguments of the book. It will also sum up the chapters collectively. To conclude, I sum up how constructs of gender and sexuality are being 'made' during violence. I reflect on the book as a whole and the journey of writing it.

1 | CONTEXTUALISING AND UNDERSTANDING MASCULINITIES AND SEXUALITIES

Introduction

We are living in a constant state of fear and uncertainty. The perils and fragilities of everyday social life are what keep us locked in a paralysis of fear. Our lives are shaped by fear; that crippling entity is what controls what we do, say, or how we behave. Being afraid is derived from the unpredictability of social life. We are unsure about how socially appropriate we are doing gender and sexuality. Are we masculine enough? Are we sexual enough? Am I the right sexuality? We worry that if we do not eat and look the right way, present ourselves in the right way, construct gender and sexuality in the right way, and so on, we are susceptible to threats of violence and exclusion. In memory of him, Victor Seidler (2018) pays homage to the late Zygmunt Bauman, who died on 9 January 2017. Seidler describes Bauman's words in his last ever interview before he passed away, and just days after the Brexit vote in the UK. Bauman had declared that we are:

living in a state of continuous uncertainty, which makes us afraid ... We are walking ... as if on a minefield. We are aware that the field is full of explosives, but we can't tell where there will be an explosion and when. (Seidler, 2018: 46)

Bauman draws on this metaphor of 'walking' to signify the everyday routines, practices, and rituals that we are accustomed to – we are always on the go – in order to get by. We lose sight of what is important to us, so much so that the fear that engulfs us, stemming from the unknown in everyday social life, keeps us trapped in these everyday routines that restrain us while the insidious threat of uncertainty lurks in the background.

Uncertainty grows and grows, growing, getting larger. We live our lives in the confines of fear. We do not know when violence will attack us, either culturally, symbolically, or physically. We are unaware of the fragilities in our lives, we know life is fragile and never guaranteed, but we are made to casually walk through public life while 'landmines' are omnipresent. Explosions can surface at any moment, without any sort of predictability. Gender and sexuality norms and values form part of our existence that should we deviate from these norms in a given culture, these landmines will go off. Bang! Even though they are constructs, any deviation from these norms will set you apart as the 'other', the abnormal, the deviant, inducing social and cultural exclusion – symbolic violence at its best. Violence may be unleashed against you to put those norms back in place.

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the context of gender and sexuality to provide some understanding of their roots, how they actively become constructed and enacted, even in the confines of fear, so that you can understand how 'doing' violence enables gender and sexual norms and values to be reproduced and reinforced. The execution of violence allows for gender and sexuality to be formed at the local, regional, and global levels. At all three levels, either discursively, symbolically, metaphorically, or materially, masculinities and sexualities become configured. The uncertainty of social life and the unknowns that govern us gives rise to fears about what I call 'gender appropriation' or 'sexuality appropriation' to mean whether we are, in a given social culture, enacting gender and sexuality in an appropriate manner towards others. For example, throughout my writing career and my life as a gay person, I have been trying to understand why gay men are positioned in relation to straight people so problematically. Why are effeminate and camp gay men positioned in relation to 'straight-acting' and more masculine gay men so problematically? The positioning aspect of everyday life intrigues me as we cannot divorce ourselves from social and power relations. Although, as Messerschmidt and Tomsen (2011) demonstrate, boys and men as perpetrators perpetrate the great majority of violence, women and girls can also engage in violence, though to a lesser extent. Thus, it is important to touch not only on masculinities, but also female masculinities and femininities, in this chapter. It must be remembered that boys and men can navigate through femininities or be positioned in them by others. For example, male attackers feminise other men as a way to reinforce their own hegemonic masculinity as it offers the legitimation of non-equal gender relations between men. Hegemonic masculinity cannot function without feminising and subordinating others. I believe we need to closely explore femininities by men and boys and masculinities by women and girls, and how they intersect with violence. The book will consider all of this, as well as the importance of hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical capsule. Reference to Messerschmidt (2019) reveals that hegemonic masculinity is still as popular as ever in masculinity and sexuality writings, because it captures the manners in which unequal gender relations are legitimated.

Having set the context early on for the book, so that I can attempt to make strong links between gender, sexuality, and violence throughout, this chapter will emphasise that masculinities, femininities, and sexualities are tied into a web of power and social relations, and manifest within a system of gender relations. To evidence this, I offer some historical context to understanding the evolution of gender and sexuality; here, I briefly go back to antiquity and then up to the present day, tracing the historical constructions of gender and sexuality. I examine the tensions between the so-called 'sex role' theory and the social constructionist ideology of gender and sexuality. Thereafter, I explore multiple formations of gender to illustrate the relationships and processes via which social bodies produce masculinities and femininities. When I discuss multiple masculinities, my intention is not to name fixed character types, but rather configurations of practice that are formed during certain social contexts within an altering structure of gendered relationships. Then, I apply the social constructionist argument to sexualities, whereby I argue that sexuality is located in a place of sexual and social relations, and one of hierarchy, observing sexuality as a structure of social practice.

Historicising Gender and Sexuality: Where Do We Come From?

History is important. It reminds us where we have come from. It can help us trace certain aspects of ourselves. In the midst of everyday

individualism and always being 'on the go', we sometimes lose sight of the significance of history even though it surrounds us all like a hall of sparkling clean mirrors. We cannot escape history even though we might choose to avoid it. When 'doing' history, we are reminded how far we have come yet how far we have left to go. I want to provide some historical context, then, to understanding gender and sexuality. Tracing their histories can allow us to see how they have become historically constructed. The history of gender and sexuality shapes the futures of these important identity markers; we cannot function without them as social creatures. Our social bodies are historical formations. For example, James Messerschmidt (2018a) writes:

From antiquity to the beginning of the seventeenth century, male and female bodies were seen as having the same body parts, even in terms of genitalia, with the vagina regarded as an interior penis, the vulva as foreskin, the uterus as scrotum, and the ovaries as testicles. (p. 4)

Therefore, what we would now call 'women' were regarded as the same as what we would now call 'men'. The 'men' and 'women' labels are precisely historically and socially constructed. 'Sex' is socially constructed. During this historical time period, women had the exact same body as men; the only difference was that the positioning of the body parts was dissimilar. Women were historically constructed as 'lesser than' in relation to men. Prior to the seventeenth century, sex was socially constructed. Among many people today, we are led to believe that sex was a pregiven category: you were either male or female, rather than taking the view that the labels 'male', 'female', 'masculinity', and 'femininity' are all socially and historically constructed, not ontological, categories.

After the Enlightenment period, a sex divide emerged whereby one had to be either 'male' or 'female'. There was to be no 'middle ground', what we would now call the intersexed. For Foucault (1980):

everybody was to have one and only one sex. Everybody was to have his or her primary, profound, determined, and determining sexual identity; as far as the elements of the other sex that might appear, they could only be accidental, superficial or illusory. (p. vii)

After the Enlightenment period, then, the dichotomy between male and female, or the male sex and the female sex, was seen to be very real, in that both could be distinguished according to their body, soul, physicality, and moral aspect (Connell, [2005] 2016; Messerschmidt, 2018a). A hierarchy in the representation of man and woman emerged, in which women were positioned as inferior in relation to men. This binary between men and women persisted after the Enlightenment. There was now this conceptualisation that shaped how both were to be viewed in the political, cultural, and economic spheres of everyday social life. Women were now 'naturally' born to be passive, subordinate, and vulnerable in contrast to men; men were 'naturally' assumed to be aggressive, invulnerable, and in control. After the Enlightenment period, criminologists Albert Cohen (1955) and Edwin Sutherland ([1942] 1956) heavily drew on what was known as 'sex role' theory to explain violence and crime, particularly the link between gender and violence. They naturalised the gender roles of women and men without considering differences between men and women and among men. They maintained the view that an essentialist dichotomy occurred between men and women. The sex role theory during this time determined the types and amounts of violence that boys, girls, men, and women perpetrate (Messerschmidt and Tomsen, 2011). However, according to Connell (2005), there is actually very little difference between what we now call 'men' and 'women'. They are exactly the same social creatures, but the labels we attach to them have different symbolic meanings and connotations. Though sex role theorists introduced the link between gender and violence, it took modern feminists to dismantle the common-sense view of gender and violence that was popular then.

As the biological positivistic ideology grew during the post-Enlightenment period, heterosexuality became 'natural' and a pregiven entity. The opposite sexes, male and female, included the view that they were 'made for each other': 'the heteronormative assumption that women and men are "made for each other" is sustained through the commonsense definition of vaginal penetration by the penis as "the sex act"' (Jackson, 2006: 113). Since the Enlightenment, it was now considered normal and 'natural' for men to flourish in the public sphere of society while women were to stay in the private arena of the home. Biology took the lead. Heterosexuality became the forefront of all other identity markers. Rapidly, heterosexuality became fused with notions of sex categories. A heterosexual man was regarded as a 'real' man. A heterosexual woman was considered as a 'real' woman. A notion that only manifested since the late 1800s, heterosexuality quickly became normalised in the early 1900s. Non-heterosexualities were deemed an anomaly and a deviation from normality, as insults to biology. In the nineteenth century, sexual diversity became a sign of perversion that was institutionalised, pathologised, and regulated through legal, medical, and psychiatric discourses at the time (Foucault, 1978). With perverse forms of sexualities, such as the hysterical woman, the female who is sexually promiscuous, and the homosexual, sexualities became recast as the normal or the pathological (i.e. something that needed to be cured or treated). That initiated a rise of medical treatments for hysteria, electric shock treatment for homosexuality, discussion of the evils of homosexuality, desensitisation of an assumed phobia of the opposite sex, hypnosis, psychodrama, and abreaction. In fact, this policing of sexualities in the nineteenth century led to an explosion of talk about sexualities, an incitement to talk about sexualities, in what Foucault (1978) called the 'repressive hypothesis'. It led to an organisation of sexualities; for example, think about the schools that still exist in London where, in the very architecture, boys and girls are divided out, where people tell you what is normal sex and what is abnormal sex. Think also about particular religious establishments in which girls and women and boys and men would be separated in prayer rooms, in which people, again, tell you what is superior or inferior according to genitalia: the penis symbolises power while the vagina personifies submissiveness. In short, Foucault (1978) wants to argue that sex was being talked about at every occasion during the nineteenth century.

Homosexuality was indeed historically constructed as abnormal and somehow pathological. Heterosexuals feared that homosexuality would challenge gender and family norms and the nuclear family structure, whereby men and women were 'made for each other'. In the nineteenth century, Cesare Lombroso advocated the biological positivism ideology,

which argued that crime was a natural phenomenon stemming from people's physical compositions, proposing that physical features reflected internal moral states. Lombroso argued that homosexuals were like criminals and were 'insane' perverts that needed treated in asylums, not prisons. Marked by inferior pathology, he believed that gay men were a formation of 'insane criminals'. Founded on mannerisms, arguing that gay men were innately feminine, physical attributes, and clothing that deviated from gender norms, Lombroso ([1876] 2006) identified what he called 'pederasts'. Pederasts, according to Lombroso, were seen as strange and odd. Later in the nineteenth century, arguing that homosexuality was a sexual inversion, he believed that homosexuals were a stigmatised social group that were a distinct class of criminals (Lombroso, [1889] 2006). During the nineteenth century, homosexuals were seen as not only criminals, but also as needing treatment, and so castration and hypnotherapy (male patients were urged to think of women in sexual acts) were used to 'cure' gay men. However, Jeremy Bentham argued that homosexuality was an 'imaginary offence'. Bentham did not classify gay acts as unnatural, describing them merely as irregularities of all sorts in the venereal appetite. Creating controversial views at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he advocated for the decriminalisation of gay conduct. Bentham regarded homosexuals as what we would now call 'bisexuals', constructing them as able to marry, instead of as adult men who loved or desired other adult men (Crompton, 1978).

Plummer (1984) highlights a really important point – that is, there are multiple versions of homosexuality, so there is diversity in how gay is understood and constructed. It might be best to speak of homosexuality in the plural. There is considerable diversity in how gayness is enacted and lived out, given that, as Gagnon (1977) states, 'the kind of sexuality that members of a culture believe helps to create the kind of sexuality they get' (p. 34). For example, Plummer (1984) gives the example of how, in Sambia culture, male—male fellatio was regarded as a sign of strength and masculinity. It was an act that prepared men for later-life heterosexual marriage and intercourse in Sambia culture. In contrast, within Western culture, such an act would be seen as a gay act that is linked to weakness,

effeminacy, and stigma. The heterosexual community, on the whole, constructs male-male fellatio as distasteful. Another cultural and historical example, given by Foucault (1978), includes male Ancient Greeks who had sex with men and women, including slaves. For them, it was not whom you had sex with that was important, but whether you were active or passive in that sexual relationship. You had to be active to be a free man, controlling your desires, moderating them and mastering your own sexual instincts, a way that made it possible to show others how one could govern others. For example, if you could control your own instincts, you could control others. Foucault (1978) shows us that our modern concern with whom you have sex with is precisely that, a modern concern, which has not always been a historical concern. These examples exemplify that sexualities are historically constructed. In modern times, our practices often define our identities, whereas at the time Foucault (1978) was writing this was not always the case; so, in pre-modern times, one could have different types of sex, some of which might be seen as distasteful, but it would not tarnish one's self identity, because you had an identity as a noble person. You could engage in gay sex and it would be seen as 'normal' as long as it did not damage the hierarchy and the Church.

The Gay Liberation Front (GLF) in the UK challenged binary categories and shaped the idea that sexuality is fluid and contextual. The GLF in the UK was formed in 1970 in London during October as a response to gay men being forced into rigid sex roles that they did not want or need. Jeffrey Weeks (2018) writes that the GLF offered three central principles:

a sense of the absolute validity of homosexuality as a sexual way of life and identity ... a belief in the vital importance of being open about one's homosexuality ... and an emphasis on the importance of collective endeavour, self activity and self-help. (p. 308)

The GLF marked an important milestone in gay men's lives as it raised a homosexual consciousness. It attempted to reform masculinity and gender norms by introducing a gay masculinity, a possibility to live a gay life and to form patterns of a gay lifestyle. The GLF in the 1970s, although it was short-lived (collapsed in London by 1972), offered gay men a personal and

collective identity. It attempted to contest the gender order of men and to challenge the biological positivistic ideologies of gender and sexuality that largely came to prominence since 1800. In the UK, homosexuality was partly decriminalised in 1967; the law made gay sex in private legal if the consenting partners were over 21.

Although gay men were still seen as 'morally suspect' and not 'real' men, the reformation in the law and, to a larger extent, the GLF introduced a gay masculinity that attempted to disrupt traditional and heterosexuality-driven masculinities. Not only that, but also, and for the first time historically, the GLF paved the way for a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) identity that could be publicly embodied and enacted through social relations and visibly lived out. Ken Plummer (1995) writes that during the GLF historical time period, fresh sexual stories were being created that enabled gay men and non-heterosexual men to produce self-chosen masculinities and sexualities, imagining and reimagining what they once were and what they wanted to become in the future. They had agency. New possibilities became a reality. However, Weeks (2018) argues that although a new lease of life was being cultivated during this historical period, direct verbal abuse and violence were on the rise, with prejudice surfacing as gay masculinity was on public display.

On balance, the argument I take in this book is that gender and sexuality are historical, social, and cultural constructs. In other words, I do not support the view that gender and sexuality are pregiven biological entities or are predetermined in any sort of way. I reject the biological positivism ideology advocated by Lombroso and other supporters. It ignores social change, in that gender and sexuality are fluid concepts shaped by external social forces. It also overlooks that they are unstable entities. For example, a male person might identify as homosexual at one particular context because the label 'gay' serves a specific purpose for that individual at that time and space, whereas at another context he might go on to self-identify as either bisexual or heterosexual because, again, those labels offer a set of meanings that are important to that same male individual at a different context and time. However, the biological positivism ideology disregards context and social environments when