

BOOK REVIEW

Researching Gender Violence: Feminist Methodology in Action

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The relationship between those who experience gender violence and how to research this sensitive area appropriately has been one of the most recently researched issues/areas in sociology/criminology. It was the 1970's that witnessed the resurgence of feminism (collectively) in (both) the academic and policy arenas, especially in the United Kingdom where feminist theories concentrated primarily on highlighting/raising issues surrounding gender violence, namely domestic violence, prostitution, and more recently, mothers and babies in prison etc. As the title suggests, the content of the book looks at those who have experienced violence, although it is primarily from a female perspective. The authors fail to examine others who have experienced violence at the hands of same sexed partners. Perhaps by including this aspect the content of the book would produce a more even balanced approach to studying gender violence. Despite this (the) only criticism, the authors of the edited collection successfully address these issues by (cleverly) embedding their concerns and findings within their empirical research. However, above and beyond this, the book's authors also take into account the importance of more contemporary current concepts such as age, ethnicity and culture when considering gender violence, which have tended to be overlooked by theorists in this field. The contributors concentrate on these particular issues which affect the lives of females and young people's lives, drawing out themes for consideration both by academic and policy makers.

These themes include, amongst others, feminist quantitative methodology, women's voices in violent relationships and minority ethnic experiences of domestic violence. It is interesting to see how the authors approach the changes in the way these issues have been conceptualised over the years, alongside changes in policy.

The empirical material in this book is both topical and intelligent allowing recognition of the importance of grounded research. Subsequently, the range of current material makes the book a great resource for post-gradu-



ate students and professionals (in this area) searching for a comprehensive/theoretical and practical approach to the study of gender violence.

The book as a whole undoubtedly raises (and addresses) the controversial methodological problem within feminist research of not what should be studied but how it should be studied. With this in mind the authors successfully steer away from the traditional approach and instead focus more convincingly on how gender violence can be most accurately investigated. All chapters offer an illuminating account of their research; in particular the chapters focussing on Asian children's experiences of domestic violence and researching violent fathers provide a useful analysis. Both sets of authors make original and unique contributions to the (limited) understanding of gender violence and demonstrate how best to elicit a true narrative. In addition, the chapter which focuses on feminist quantitative methodology interestingly illuminates the importance of utilising quantitative data, in a climate much more focussed upon qualitative information.

This publication is both timely and innovative and effectively provides a wealth of contemporary qualitative data, found nowhere else in the literature, concerning gender violence and how best to research it. This book will be essential reading for anyone interested in researching gender violence epistemology and other gender related factors. The volume lives up to its title, providing understanding of what is clearly a complex problem.

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