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"[S]tructural inequalities and power relations are naturalised by our categories and conceptions of what violence really is" (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004b, p. 4), which is why it is of critical importance how violence is defined in Development Studies. According to McIlwaine (2014), most definitions of violence in the discipline "usually involve the use of physical force that causes hurt to others in order to impose a wish or desire" (p. 493). This essay challenges such understandings of violence, which are limited to discrete, physical acts of violence. Drawing on the work of Johan Galtung (1969), this essay shows that by not accounting for structural forms of violence, Development Studies overlook "too many other important dimensions of the phenomenon of violence" (Bufacchi, 2005, p. 197). Furthermore, Development Studies' minimalist conception prevents the discipline from uncovering the root causes of physical forms of violence (Evans, 2016), impeding its capacity to offer effective solutions.

This is demonstrated by examining heteronormative structural violence. Firstly, section one outlines Galtung's conceptualisation of structural violence and addresses critiques launched against it. It builds upon this definition by proposing that structures of violence should be understood as institutionalised power relations which embody social hierarchies. Section two shows how a narrow focus on physical violence results in a neglect of other manifestations of queer oppression. Section three argues that when the structural source of violence is not identified, the cause of violence is often incorrectly attributed to culture or to "differential degrees of evolutionary […] dysselectedness" (Wynter, 2003, p. 327). This feeds into Western homonationalism and exceptionalism (Puar, 2017). Section four illustrates how the structural violence approach reveals the role of colonisation in institutionalising heteronormative structural violence. The essay thus concludes that it is through Development Studies' critical engagement with interrelated forms of physical and structural violence that it will be best positioned to "transform structures pregnant with violence into less violent ones" (Galtung, 1985, p. 146).

Conceptualising Violence

The notion of structural violence rose to prominence as a result of Galtung's 1969 influential essay *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research* (Weigert, 2010). In this essay, Galtung distinguishes structural violence from personal or direct violence. While direct violence is characterised by a clear actor inflicting harm on another person, structural violence is indirect and invisible because it "is built into the structure" (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). According to Galtung, violence is committed when avoidable harm is not prevented, resulting in human beings' "actual somatic and mental realizations" being "below their potential realizations" (1969, p. 168). In other words, structural violence manifests "as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). Importantly for Development Studies, different types of structural violence can coincide so that, for instance, an individual can be simultaneously economically and educationally disadvantaged (Galtung, 1969). This has a compounding constraining effect on the victim's capacity to change their circumstances (Farmer, 2009). Such an approach rests on a broader reading of violence as a violation, as opposed to the more narrow framing of violence as force (Bufacchi, 2005), the latter of which is typically favoured in Development Studies.

It is on these grounds that Galtung's conceptualisation has been criticised the most. Firstly, both Keane (1996) and Parsons (2007) have argued that Galtung's definition of violence encompasses too wide a range of undesirable

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phenomena, rendering it unhelpfully non-specific and limiting its analytical value. However, the argument that a narrow definition is more useful for a complex analysis of violence does not take into account how it excludes "the most pervasive and destructive form of violence: structural or institutional violence" (Bufacchi, 2005, p. 198). A structural violence approach offers "a more comprehensive explanation of the prevalence of different forms of violence" "in wide-ranging global contexts" (True, 2010, p. 44). While there is merit to the argument that a narrow conception of violence allows clear boundaries between what does and does not count as violence (Audi, 1974), the cost of overlooking consequential, indirect acts of violence outweighs this advantage. Moreover, the claim that a broad definition treats all forms of violence as equivalent (Thomas, 2011) ignores Galtung's assertion of the incommensurability of different types of violence: personal and structural violence "are *both* of such an order of magnitude that comparisons appear meaningless" (1969, 185). Furthermore, while it is fair for critics to contend that "Galtung's thought is very heavily normative" (Boulding, 1977, p. 77), this could likewise be said of all theories of violence due to the "general cultural valence of negativity" which the concept evokes (Weigert, 2010, p. 132). In turn, while there are legitimate issues with more expansive definitions of violence, this essay concurs with Karl-Dieter Opp that "only wide definitions can lead to theories with high explanatory power" as they have the potential to "explain a large class of very specific explananda" (2009, pp. 38 & 44). It is on this basis that Development Studies should favour a broader conceptualisation of violence, which includes structural violence.

However, Development Studies can ameliorate this definition even further if it integrates feminist and queer theoretical insights. For instance, Confortini asserts that gender categories, norms, and customs are "key to the production and reproduction of violence at all levels" (2006, p. 333). Given that power relations and social structures are gendered, the differential impact of structural violence on gendered and sexed bodies is of major consequence (Alexander, 2018). Relatedly, sexuality likewise plays a constitutive role in social, political, and economic structures (Gore, 2022). Both gender and sexuality serve as two of the interlocking "multiple axes of oppression" (Gore, 2022, p. 299) for those subjected to queer structural violence. By foregrounding such social inequalities, structural violence thus becomes conceived of as "institutionalized relations of power which are supported by, and support [...] social hierarchies" (Alexander, 2018, p. 37). It is this conceptualisation that should be given primacy by Development Studies. This would rectify the fact that Galtung did not consider structures to be relations of power, which consequently restricted the contexts in which he could analyse the role which power plays. To demonstrate the utility of this approach, this essay will now turn to one of the many social axes of structural violence (Farmer, 2009) – that of heteronormativity.

Reductionistic Understandings of Queer Oppression

Despite advances in discursive recognition of LGBT+ rights (Mason, 2018), "the near totality of development praxis" (Weerawardhana, 2018, p. 120) and development theory continue to be underpinned by heteronormativity (Moreau & Currier, 2018). Here, heteronormativity refers to the institutionalisation of heterosexuality "both explicitly (by excluding LGBT people from the analysis) and implicitly (by assuming that all people are heterosexual)" (Lind & Share, 2003, p. 57 cited in Drucker, 2018). Indeed, it is widely assumed that individuals in 'developing countries' are heterosexual, which effectively effaces the existence and rights of queer people in Development analyses (Cornwall et al., 2008). For example, due to a lack of engagement with "indigenous knowledge or traditions about sexual practices", development policies have exacerbated the disadvantaged position of single women and lesbians in many countries by assigning them "heterosexist gender roles" (Gosine, 2005, p. 61). Where consideration of sex and sexuality does emerge, it is generally "limited [to a] HIV/AIDS framework" or to the "management of heterosexual sex" (Gosine, 2005, pp. 59-60). In turn, this reductionistic understanding of queer violence has led to the privileging of HIV/AIDS campaigns "at the expense of other priorities and concerns" in contexts such as Ghana (Gore, 2022, p. 305). This includes access to mental health services, acceptable living standards, work opportunities, and protection from violence (Gore, 2022). This essay argues that this preoccupation with HIV/AIDS as the principal manifestation of violence towards queer people goes hand-in-hand with a narrow definition of physical violence. It is only by acknowledging the impact of structural violence that the harm caused by heteronormativity can become visible and can be tackled by Development Studies.

As a result of the hierarchical organisation of the society along heteronormative lines, "anything existing outside of this structure is situated to exist in relationship to it by way of its oppression" (Mekler, 2018, p. 157). As "sexuality

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operates as a category of power in patriarchal societies", queer structural violence takes the form of sexual stratification (Schönpflug et al., 2018, p. 3). This occurs in both 'developed' and 'developing' countries. As part of this sexual stratification, queer people experience "social, political, and economic exclusion and marginalization" (Mason, 2018, p. 1). Specifically, this can manifest as economic discrimination through greater rates of unemployment, limited opportunities for job progression, workplace harassment, and lower earnings relative to their heterosexual colleagues (Schönpflug et al., 2018). In addition to this, "institutional, legal, and structural mechanisms" privilege "hegemonic configurations of gender and sexuality" (Gore, 2022, p. 300). An example of this is the criminalisation of consensual, same-sex sexual activity in sixty-nine jurisdictions in the world (UN Human Rights Council, 2022). By not locating the production and reproduction of these human rights violations in violent structures, the harm they are causing remains unnoticed (Evans, 2016). It is by adopting a queer structural violence lens that Development Studies can identify the ways that "power operates not only through direct coercion but also through the [interaction of] structured relations" (True, 2010, p. 44). These relations determine who gets access to which privileges in heteronormative societies. But what causes these structured relations? To answer this question, this essay must first demonstrate the falsity of widely assumed causes of queer structural violence – that of culture and evolution.

Attributing Queer Oppression to Culture and Evolutionary Dysselectedness

While countries in the "Global South are considered the most homophobic and transphobic globally", they are seen to be on a trajectory of 'evolutionary' progress towards overcoming the "backward[ness]" of "homophobia" through the assistance of development (Mason, 2018, p. 1). What is implicit in this narrative is the elevation of "the West as the natural endpoint to which human Existence" leads (Hewitson, 2013, p. 92). This Western sense of distinctive moral superiority and sexual exceptionalism has been coined by Jasbir Puar (2017) as 'homonationalism'. Underpinning homonationalism are the "discourses about race, sexuality, gender, and class" (Puar, 2017, p. 11). By pitting the 'West' against the 'Global South', colonial rhetoric is being advanced whereby the latter is constructed "as different from and in opposition to an assumed norm of modernity" (Kayatekin, 2009, p. 1114). Even "development theorists and practitioners" are complicit in this effort to "recreate the Third World through and in the image of the First" (Gosine, 2005, p. 60) based on "coercive tropes of civilisation and barbarism" (Rao, 2020, p. 13). The divergences between these regions are frequently explained by reference to cultural differences. However, such accounts extract cultures from their structural contexts and render them abstract. As Puar points out, the notion of "'homophobic culture' elides the workings of economic disparities and the differentiation between cosmopolitan ethnicity and pathological racialization" (2017, 29). This is significant as it is these factors which make homophobia possible (Puar, 2017). Such reasoning is part of a general trend where forms of structural violence like "poverty and inequality […] are conflated with "otherness."" (Farmer, 2009, p. 23). Essentialist arguments of cultural difference thus become a means to "explain away assaults on dignity and suffering in general" (Farmer, 2009, p. 24) rather than to confront them and their structural causes head-on.

Furthermore, these narratives about homophobic cultures are "intimately bound up with the historical constitution of 'whiteness' and its racial Others" (Hewitson, 2013, p. 92). Where homophobia in regions in the 'Global South' is represented as a "timeless or trans-historical phenomenon" (Gore, 2022, p. 304), the insinuation is that there is something inherent about the people in the region which inclines them towards homophobia. In many cases, the current hierarchal structuring of subjects in the world is naturalised with reference to evolution. When this argument is advanced, Sylvia Wynter (2003) argues that a "Color Line [is] drawn institutionally and discursively between whites/nonwhites" (p. 315). Here, the notion of evolution serves as a "status-ordering principle" based on "differential degrees of evolutionary selectedness […] or dysselectedness" (p. 316). The consequence is that the lesser-evolved "non-Western, nonwhite peoples" are relegated to pre-determined subordination (p. 329) and moral inferiority. This polarisation of white and nonwhite people becomes a means for Western countries such as the United States to act "as the site for authoritative condemnation" of inequalities and rights abuses elsewhere (Grewal, 2005, p. 150) while side-stepping their own implication in violent structures. In actuality, victims of structural violence exist worldwide, including in wealthy Western democracies (Bufacchi, 2005). Therefore, Development Studies should reject accounts which naturalise – and thus justify – queer oppression in the 'Global South'. By adopting a queer structural violence approach, it becomes apparent that the establishment of heteronormative violence instead derives from the "cross-cultural outcome of [the] historical process of domination" of the colonial encounter (Zein-Elabdin, 2009, p. 1159).

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The Colonial Institutionalisation of Heteronormative Structural Violence

The history of colonialism has played a pivotal role in the "perpetuation of [heteronormative] structural violence" (Qambela, 2021, p. 592). During Western colonisation, "local traditions of gender identity/ies" and "family structures" were destroyed as colonised subjects were forced "to conform to strict cis-heteronormative lifestyles" (Weerawardhana, 2018, p. 121). One of the methods for entrenching heteronormativity was the imposition of monogamy and the nuclear family model on colonised societies (Mitchell, 2007). In the context of Australia, for instance, missionaries taught Aborigines that polygamy was immoral and that they should instead be monogamous because it is beautiful and beneficial (Perkins, 1936, p. 196). As an extension of this logic, a sexual division of labour was effectuated whereby women were made to specialise in housework to support their working husbands, as well as being responsible for investing in their children (Hewitson, 2013). As a result, a heteronormative conceptualisation of the nuclear family ideal has been "built into the theories and practices of social, cultural and economic institutions" in the region (Hewitson, 2013, pp. 96-97). Another facet of the institutionalisation of heteronormativity was the criminalisation of homosexuality. For example, anti-queer legislation in both Uganda and India emerged from the British colonial penal law, which criminalised homosexuality during the British rule of these countries (Rao, 2020). Likewise, anti-sodomy laws first arose in the British Empire and were subsequently administered in British colonies in Africa, including Kenya and Uganda (Human Rights Watch, 2008). While this legislation has since changed in the former colonies with country-specific variations, these colonial laws nevertheless "laid important historical and legal foundations for more contemporary structures of heteronormativity and homophobia" (Gore, 2022, p. 304).

In turn, Development Studies' examinations of present-day violence towards queer people would be incomplete without a structural understanding of the colonial institutionalisation of this violence. However, this is not to suggest that colonisation is the sole cause of heteronormative structural violence. Indeed, homoromantic narratives asserting that homophobia is the exclusive invention of colonial Western actors effectively strip "the agency of postcolonial elites in co-producing those predicaments" (Rao, 2020, p. 114). Such a stance "is premised on a reification of the precolonial past", constructed as a space which was "uncontaminated by contact with the West or indeed any other external influence" (Rao, 2020, p. 19). Instead, the interaction between colonial powers and their colonies should be seen as a "transformative political relation" which pushes all of those involved to "shift and evolve their dispositions in response to the encounter" (Gopal, 2019, p. 22). That is to say, all values and principles are "forged through contact" in "multiple historical and cultural sites" (Gopal, 2019, p. 14). This reality coexists with the fact that current structural violence towards queer people has been greatly influenced by the imperial imposition of a particular conception of European modernity "on most of the planet" (Shapiro, 2003, p. 136). A case in point is Zimbabwe, where present-day homophobia "does indeed have some roots in traditional African culture", but it is nonetheless "enormously indebted to Christian missionary propaganda" and "Western pseudo-science" (Epprecht, 2005, p. 263). In turn, the relationship between societies in the postcolonial period is one of "mutual constitution", which is "irreversibly inflected by the colonial encounter" (Zein-Elabdin, 2009, p. 1159). It is in this respect that structural violence provides Development Studies with the tools to uncover the historical and structural antecedents of contemporary heteronormative violence while recognising that cultures are co-constitutive.

Conclusion

The structural violence approach challenges Development Studies scholars to take action "to alter the violent structures and processes" (Weigert, 2010, p. 132), which are pervasive in global politics. This requires holistic thinking that understands physical and structural forms of violence as "mutually interrelated" and reliant on one another for their perpetuation (Hirst et al., 2023, p. 5). Following these insights, this essay has argued that Development Studies scholars should employ a multi-faceted approach to violence that places social hierarchies at the forefront of its analysis. By focusing on the social axes of queer oppression, it has spotlighted how development theory and praxis have placed excessive emphasis on physical forms of violence at the cost of overlooking the plethora of forms that heteronormative violence takes. This is most evident with development theorists' and practitioners' prioritisation of HIV/AIDS interventions above campaigns against other manifestations of queer oppression. Additionally, it revealed how narratives blaming homophobia on culture and evolutionary dysselectedness serve to conceal the structural conditions which make queer oppression possible. This essay further argued that a major contributing factor to present-day heteronormative structural violence is the ongoing

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legacy of the colonial encounter, which institutionalised monogamy, the nuclear family model, and the criminalisation of homosexuality. In turn, the example of heteronormativity illustrates the necessity of adopting a structural violence approach, as it has unveiled the "interconnections among types of violence" and how one form of violence can contribute towards the "maintenance of another" (Weigert, 2010, p. 129). All of this is overlooked when we employ a narrow conceptualisation of violence.

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