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CRGS Special Issue

Geographies of Gender-Based Violence in the Caribbean: Bodies, Institutions, Colonial Legacies

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Geographies of Gender-Based Violence in the Caribbean: Bodies, Institutions, Colonial Legacies

Working on gender-based violence from the Caribbean requires challenging frameworks that have historically marginalized, folklorized, or pathologized Caribbean experiences (Vété-Congolo, 2020). Understood as a plural, multilingual, post-slavery region shaped by differentiated colonial histories, diasporic circulations, and enduring power relations (Palmiste and Zancarini-Fournel, 2019), the Caribbean provides a critical space for conceptualizing gender-based violence as a historically and spatially produced structural phenomenon embedded in racial, economic, and imperial relations of domination (Lamour, 2024).

Caribbean scholarship has shown how gender-based violence intersects with racism, sexism, and economic exploitation, particularly for Black women and LGBTQ+ people (Kempadoo, 1998, 1999; King et al., 2012). Across the French Caribbean, research connects intimate partner and intrafamilial violence to socioeconomic vulnerability and material and affective dependencies in French Guiana (Hidair-Krivsky, 2025); gender norms, unequal power relations, and institutional failures in Martinique (Kabile, 2018); and the limitations of imported statistical frameworks for capturing Caribbean women's experiences in Guadeloupe (Palmiste and Lefaucheur, 2012). The VIdOM conference (2024) further highlighted the intersections between intimate partner violence, economic precarity, institutional violence, and women's strategies of resistance. In Haiti, violence against women has been situated within a continuum of patriarchal, economic, and political violence shaped by colonial legacies and institutional instability (Magloire, 2004). Anglophone Caribbean scholarship has similarly linked intimate partner violence to masculinities, family transformations, and economic change (DeShong, 2011), while emphasizing continuities between offline and digital forms of patriarchal and racialized violence (Haynes and DeShong, 2017).

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Together, these studies reveal a continuum between interpersonal, institutional, and state violence-including police, judicial, and medical violence-and expose the limitations of dominant legal and statistical frameworks for understanding the experiences of Black women and LGBTQ+ people (Kabile, 2018; Attai, 2023).

Building on these contributions, this issue advances a gendered, materialist, and decolonial approach to the geographies of violence, conceptualizing violence as an

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ordinary, cumulative, and relational experience shaped by gender, race, class, and social position. By centering Caribbean and diasporic knowledge production, it welcomes qualitative, activist, interdisciplinary, reflexive, intra-Caribbean, and transnational approaches across Francophone, Anglophone, Lusophone, and Hispanophone contexts, positioning Caribbean gender studies as a central site for theorizing the continuities between intimate and structural violence, institutional racism, patriarchal domination, and colonial and imperial relations.

Thematic Areas

1. Structural Violence, Institutional Racism, and Colonial Legacies

This area examines gender-based violence as a systemic phenomenon rooted in colonial and slavery-based continuities and reproduced through state and para-state institutions. Contributions may address police, judicial, administrative, and medical violence; institutional racism and public policies; non-sovereignty, postcolonial dependencies, and imperial relations; the governance of Black bodies, sexualities, and reproduction; and epistemic violence, particularly through data production and the erasure or invisibilization of Black women.

2. Everyday Violence, Black Bodies, and Lived Experience

This area centers the lived experiences of Black women and LGBTQ+ people by examining everyday spaces as sites of violence, domination, negotiation, and resistance. Contributions may explore intimate partner, intrafamilial, and sexual violence; femicide and its politicization; domestic and community spaces; the racialization, sexualization, and hypersexualization of Black women's bodies; psychological, emotional, and symbolic violence; and gendered injunctions to respectability, motherhood, and silence.

3. Contemporary Reconfigurations, Black Feminist Resistance, and Practices of Care

This area examines contemporary transformations of gender-based violence alongside practices of resistance, protection, and care. Topics may include cyberviolence and the continuities between online and offline violence; economic violence, gendered precarity, and the exploitation of care work; vulnerabilities associated with tourism, migration, and informal economies; Black feminist mobilizations, memory, and activist counting practices; institutional pathways, secondary victimization, and strategies of avoidance; and Black feminist protocols, situated knowledges, and decolonial practices of care.

The special issue adopts a interdisciplinary perspective, bringing together social and feminist geography, sociology, anthropology, history, gender studies, postcolonial and decolonial studies, law, political science, digital studies, and social psychology. It welcomes empirical, qualitative, quantitative, cartographic, narrative, and comparative approaches capable of illuminating both the structural dimensions and lived experiences of gender-based violence, as well as the forms of resistance, knowledge production, and care developed across Caribbean societies and diasporas.

Dr Sabine Lamour is a sociologist and assistant professor at Université de Montréal whose research focuses on feminisms in Haitian, Caribbean, and Afro-diasporic contexts. Her work reframes feminist theory from postcolonial, comparative, and transnational perspectives, foregrounding marginalized archives and the relationships between feminist activism and knowledge production. Her latest monograph, *Imaginer le féminisme haïtien : Enjeux théoriques et épistémologiques* (Éditions Charezzo, 2025), examines the theoretical and epistemological foundations of Haitian feminist thought.

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