

I'd rather you'd lay me on the floor and start kicking me': Understanding symbolic violence in everyday life.

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Synopsis

In this article we argue that to understand the intransigence and plurality of violence, we need to understand the presence of symbolic violence with other direct forms of violence. We argue that it is important to analyse symbolic violence since its subtle and non-visible ways of working do not allow us to understand its mechanisms completely.

Drawing on the narratives of women who have experienced violence, we have identified specific features of symbolic violence that were evident in these narratives. We illustrate features of symbolic violence embedded in everyday life such as consent, complicity and misrecognition. At the same time, we also analyse how institutional language and implementation of procedural norms can also be a form of symbolic violence.



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