



University of HUDDERSFIELD

University of Huddersfield Repository

Monro, Surya

LGBT Equality Policies –Key Debates

Original Citation

Monro, Surya (2016) LGBT Equality Policies –Key Debates. In: Second European Rainbow Cities conference, 20th-21st May 2016, Barcelona, Spain. (Unpublished)

This version is available at <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/29777/>

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

<http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/>

LGBT Equality Policies – Key Debates

Second European Rainbow Cities
conference, Barcelona 20-21 May 2016

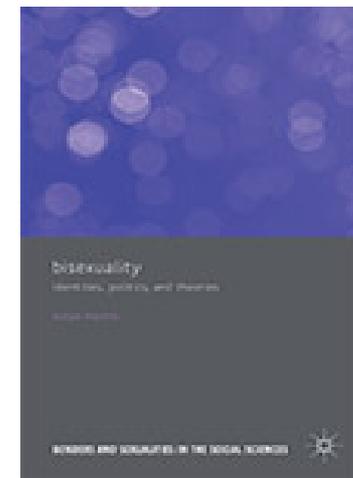
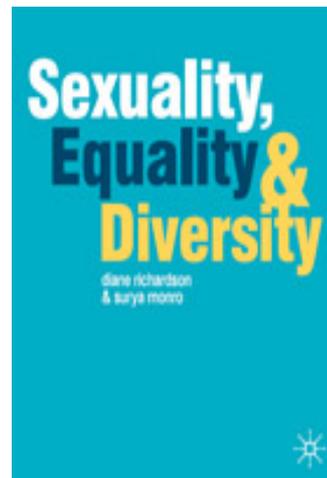
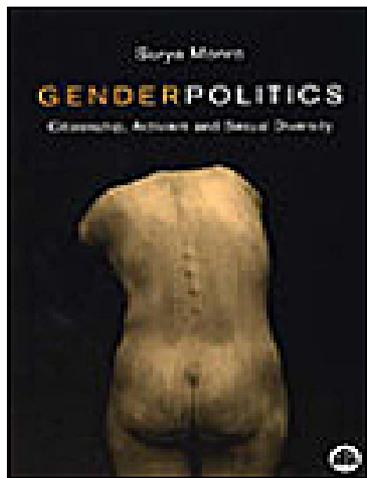
Surya Monro

s.monro@hud.ac.uk

- Key relevant projects
 - Transgender Politics (1994-2000)
 - Lesbian and Gay Equalities in Local Government (2001-2003)
 - Organisational Change, Resistance and Democracy: LGBT Equalities in Local Government (2007-2010)
 - Contribution to Fundamental Rights Agency Project ‘Professionally Speaking: Challenges to achieving equality for LGBT people’ (published 2016)
 - One of partner organisations in Equalities and Human Rights Commission UK project against LGBT hate crime (2015-2016)

Acknowledgements

- Funders, colleagues, research participants, activists



Aims of the talk

- To look at some of the major challenges facing the local LGBT Equalities Agenda in Europe
- To bring in some debates from sociology/political science to help us to think about policy/practice
- To provide something of interest/use to those working in municipal positions, activists, policy actors, and academics

Caveats: focus is Europe, focus is public officials/professionals, intersex rights not really included

Structure of the talk

- **The key overall challenges**
- **Challenges for those working at a local level**
- **Organisational change**
- **Intersectionality issues**
- **Citizenship issues**
- **Conclusion**

The key overall challenges

- High rates of hate crime and harassment (26% of LGBT people attacked or threatened in last 5 years - EU LGBT Survey FRA 2013)
- Issues concerning basic safety – especially for trans people (e.g. the Trans Murder Monitoring project reported that 238 homicides of trans persons took place in the 12 months before November 2013 alone)
- Major issues in other sectors – employment, education, etc
- Prejudice, misconceptions, and a lack of awareness
- Role of religious institutions and traditionalism
- Role of political opposition

Illustrative quotes

We did not get the LGBTI policy there, that is a thoroughly political choice [...] as I understand it, there was some lobbying (Public authority representative, senior ministerial advisor, Finland) (FRA 2016: 31)

Simply, the social-intellectual context has not become mature enough for this (Public authority representative, director, Hungary) (FRA 2016: 29)

In a relationship between two persons of type L or two persons of type G, the aim is strictly emotional, without any purpose. It is rather bizarre and it happened so many times that a gay family adopts a child. Yes? Maternal love is something else, even though in a relationship between two gay persons one is passive and the other is active (Public authority representative, general inspector, Romania FRA 2016: 30)

Key challenges for public officials

- Lack of political support
- Lack of LGBT visibility
- Difficulties implementing equalities/rights legislation and policy frameworks
- Institutional barriers or other difficulties
- A lack of resources
- Competing rights claims from the population

Example quotes from FRA (2016) report

As regards European funds, we live in times of economic turmoil, so often good ideas are handicapped by a lack of sufficient finances (Public authority representative, Ministerial department expert, Poland)

I think in terms of the legislative and policy environment there have been changes, whether they have had an impact on the lives of LGBT people I think is more questionable (Public authority representative, head of unit of human rights body, UK)

Unless there is a binding resolution or other kind of policy document that would charge the state administration organs with concrete tasks and activities, then allocation of resources becomes virtually impossible (Public authority representative, ministerial office, Slovakia)

Challenges for those working at a local level

- LGBT issues seen as ‘sensitive’, ‘embarrassing’, or ‘private’
- Deeply held prejudices
- Direct blocking of work
- Lack of organisational and individual ‘buy-in’
- Issues to do with organisational structures and mechanisms
- Lack of capacity in the community and voluntary sector
- Issues of ‘loudest voices’ and exclusions by some actors in the voluntary and community and activist sectors (Richardson and Monro 2012)

Quotes from organisational change project (UK)

So we don't talk about being gay and we don't talk about gay rights and we don't talk about different races...

Initiatives were blocked, basically stopped above my head and didn't go any further within the Council. I just remember sitting down with them (local voluntary sector organisation) and making a note of all their suggestions and then sending the memo to line management and it didn't go any further...politically handcuffed

Service provision should be inclusive of the Black and Minority Ethnic communities, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, younger people, older people, people

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

THE AWARDS
AWARD WINNER
UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR

the guardian
UNIVERSITY
AWARDS
Winner
2013

2012
THE AWARDS
WINNER
Entrepreneurial University of the Year


THE QUEEN'S AWARDS
FOR ENTERPRISE

Organisational change

- Human Relations approaches:

Organisations are composed of informal structures and as such, the operation of organisations owes more to group norms and values than it does to structures and procedures... (Collins 1998: 17)

- Important for understanding bias and for tackling it:

We strive to raise pupils' awareness of LGBT issues by organising lectures and discussions with professionals who deal with these issues (School counsellor, Slovakia) (FRA 2016: 39)

Organisational change cont.

- Organizational development approaches:
 - People/groups go through ‘unfreezing’, ‘moving’ and ‘refreezing’
 - Core beliefs disrupted
 - Cognitive restructuring
 - Can be very uncomfortable

Can take place via training but also directly:

...senior member of staff who made a stray comment about gays, and I just said ‘Look, that’s just not on’, and he said ‘Oh I hold my hand up, I shouldn’t have done it’, and it never happened again (Senior Manager, Southern England)

Organisational change cont.

- Performance and implementation frameworks also required
- Importance of leadership, effective structures and institutions, visible and engaged LGBT people, and committed professionals

*Adult Social Services are doing some good stuff really, because what we, about twelve months ago, we looked at what we look at in care plans, when we're writing a care plan for somebody, and we've put race and ethnicity in there, and we put sexual orientation, you know, because if you're delivering personal care to somebody....you know, **who** sees you naked, **who** sees you on the toilet, **who's** going to be wiping your bottom...and really, we need to be very sensitive about that, and erm, understand the need for that sensitivity and the need to recognise serious relationships... (Manager, Wales) (Richardson and Monro 2012: 119)*

Intersectional issues

- Intersectionality theory was developed by feminists of colour and critical race theorists (Crenshaw 1997)

Intersectionality theory has a great deal to offer to those concerned with gender and sexuality...intersectionality approaches can be used to examine the way in which we are not just defined by sexuality, or gender, or ethnicity, or social class, or ability; we are each a unique mixture of different social characteristics. Because society is structured by many forms of inequality, some people - and groups of people - have identities that combine two or more marginalised or stigmatised characteristics. Importantly, these marginalised identities do not just add onto each other, but rather intersect in particular ways. In addition, characteristics such as race and sexuality are seen as being routed through each other, or mutually constitutive, so that it is not possible to think of 'race' and 'sexuality' as discrete social forces (Monro 2015: 59)

What does it mean?

- Anticategorical approaches – deconstructs (takes apart) identity categories – helps us think about e.g. queer, MSM, non-binary
- Intercategorical approaches – uses existing categories for example campaigning for LGBT group rights – strategic use of categories
- Intracategorical approaches – looks at the ways that people can be multiply marginalised e.g. Black lesbians. Also use to look at within-group complexity (differences within LGBT communities)

Anticategorical

- LGBT categories are problematic for some people:
 - Those who do not use terms such as ‘gay’ e.g. in rural areas with languages that don’t recognise the term
 - Those who ‘do’ same-sex sex without identifying as LGB
 - Refugees/asylum seekers/immigrants whose indigenous sex/genders are different in their makeup
 - People who are non-binary (in their gender) who do not relate to terms such as ‘lesbian’
 - ALSO people who are strategically closeted

Quotes

...I really like the acronyms 'Men who have Sex with Men' and 'Women who have Sex with Women', I can just think about where I grew up...Black men would go to a sauna or a club and have sex with other men but they would never call themselves 'gay' or 'queer' (Jacqui, Black bisexual, in Monro 2016: 77)

I have some friends, Catholics, quite conservative, but they are quite kind to me as well....I guess it's the Chinese culture in a way. First of all I never openly say that I am whatever, because first of all I don't know how to identify myself and secondly I don't find that I need to come out, or whatever, so even for the Christians, say some of them they don't really like the idea, they reject homosexuality. But they never say something back to me (Jo, bisexual and of Chinese origin, in Monro 2016: 77)

Intercategorical

- Useful for policy makers – allows multi-strand equalities work:

...we monitor how many impact assessments have been done in accordance with that programme. I see every single impact assessment, we've just written our new programme now for the next three years and there's nearly 300 impact assessments there, we've looked at all our functions and policies, a policy might be Registration Services, the registration of births, deaths and marriages, so we've looked at all those functions and how they might be related to sexual orientation (Local authority officer, Wales) (Richardson and Monro 2012: 112)

I certainly think there would be a case for tying the LGBT issues with gender issues as well...(Local authority officer, Wales) (Richardson and Monro 2012: 43)

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



Intracategorical

- Important for recognising particularly marginalised peoples' needs and issues
- Helps with activism because identifies areas of privilege and power as well as marginalisation
- Helps identify marginalised groups and silences within the non-heterosexual/gender-diverse populations
 - Transgender
 - Non-binary
 - Intersex
 - Bisexual
 - Pansexual
 - Women

Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



Multiple marginalisations - example

LGBT History Month UK 2016:

UK LGBT History Month is now over. It was a mixed month for us at Bi's of Colour. Stage 3 of our history project saw us sending over 30 sets of our posters all over the country...[but] the Bisexual erasure from so called LGBT groups and organisations was even worse than usual. Camden LGBT Forum refused to host any bisexual events, and called them 'Flops'...The bi communities came out in force, as did the queer, trans and intersex people of colour communities, to support their members during February. This was in stark contrast to the large funded organisations who say they're LGBT, but are often only for lesbians and gays only. For many bisexual people of colour, this type of poor behaviour is nothing new (Bi's of colour <http://bisofcolour.tumblr.com/>)

Bisexuality

- 47% of women and 36% men felt they had been discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of their sexual orientation in the last 12 months (FRA 2013)
- Being out as bisexual doubled the likelihood of discrimination by healthcare providers (FRA 2013)
- ‘Double discrimination’ from both heterosexual and lesbian/gay people
- Discrimination in the workplace – e.g. views that bi people are untrustworthy, indecisive, or troublemakers (Chamberlain 2009)

It is very very different [pause] its more difficult, you don't feel included, it's difficult to find a community, it's difficult to find a reference point. You don't fit, basically...first of all, for many people you don't exist' (Merina, bisexual person, UK)

- Early approaches – social, political, legal (rights and responsibilities of citizenship within a state) (Marshall 1950)
- Critiques of heterosexist norms – ideas of the ‘normal’ citizen against which LGBT people are compared (Phelan 1995, Richardson 1998, Richardson and Monro 2012)
- Citizenship is crucial
- The limitations of the ‘good gay citizen’ model and issues of homonationalism

Quotes – heterosexist and gender binaried norms

T]here is neither gay, nor lesbian, at school (Headmaster, Lithuania, FRA 2016: 42)

The problem generally in Austria, but of course then also in the district, is that this form of crime is not recorded as such. In Austria there are no efforts – through investigations or surveys or in any other form – to record it until now. Hence there are no numbers, there are no official experiences regarding this issue (Head police officer, Austria, FRA 2016: 57)

R]eluctance on the part of the Irish medical profession to engage [...] Irish psychology, people won't deal with it [trans cases] (Doctor and clinical psychiatrist, Ireland, FRA 2016: 79)

Citizenship is a powerful LGBT rights tool

- EU law, international human rights commitments, legislation

The principle of equal treatment is a fundamental value of the EU which ensures both respect for human dignity and full participation on equal terms in economic, cultural and social life. This is clearly expressed by Article 3 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) and brought together in the Preamble of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Charter), which constitutes the compass for individual fundamental rights protection under EU law (FRA 2016: 17)

Using citizenship frameworks

- Public officials in both the FRA report (2016) and the much smaller UK study reported that legislation and citizenship frameworks are important

A growing number of EU Member States have strengthened European coordination and consultation mechanisms in the area of LGBT fundamental rights, notably through the European Network of Governmental LGBT Focal Points, which includes representatives of most EU Member States. Many see a particular role for the European Commission in strengthening and coordinating policy and legislative efforts in this area... A number of positive policy developments are taking place to ensure that LGBT persons can enjoy their fundamental rights (FRA 2016: 22)

Quotes

In the Barcelona town council we have looked upwards very much and the European Commission has been many times a model to imitate. We have always looked upwards, not downwards. For us, the European Union has been a legal framework or basis from which I think that in Catalonia and Spain we have gone beyond (Public authority representative, office for non-discrimination, Spain, FRA 2016: 23)

I think the more you talk the better, the more you write the better, the more you discuss the better... (Public authority representative, deputy head of police, Italy, FRA 2016: 23)

The limitations of the 'good gay citizen' model



University of
HUDDERSFIELD

- Who is able to claim citizenship rights?

...groups and individuals need to 'prove' that they should be recognised by the state in certain ways in order to claim resources and legitimacy (McLaughlin et al 2011 in Richardson and Monro 2012: 80)

- Models of citizenship may exclude people who are poor, do not fit norms associated with the LGBT communities, who are marginalised, who are 'too sexualised'/open about their sexual or gender identity, or who challenge monogamous norms
- Particular debates about non EU citizens, migration.....

European identities and homo-tolerance



University of
HUDDERSFIELD

- Puar's (2007) theory of homonationalism - some states construct themselves as progressive - supporting lesbian and gay rights - at the same time they pursue nationalist practices and racialized exclusions
- At the same time, increases in nationalist homophobia in some Eastern European states (Takacs and Szalma 2011) and elsewhere
- National LGBT-positive identities can be very positive...but we need to make sure we are inclusive....

Examples of organisations promoting diversity and tolerance (UK based)

- The Safra Project is a resource project working on issues relating to lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender women who identify as Muslim religiously and/or culturally (Muslim LBT women)
<http://www.safraproject.org/aboutus.htm>
- Networks for Christian LGBT people e.g.
<http://two23.net/resources/other-helpful-groups/>
- The Kaleidoscope Trust working to promote LGBT human rights internationally <http://kaleidoscopetrust.com/about-us/>

Conclusion

- We have many challenges ahead
- BUT also much good work is taking place
- Ideas drawn from the literature can be useful: organisational change, intersectionality, citizenship, also democracy and others

References

- Barker, M., Richards, C., Jones, R., Bowes-Catton, H. and Plowman, T. (2012) *The Bisexuality Report: Bisexual Inclusion in LGBT Equality and Diversity*. Milton Keynes: Centre for Citizenship, Identity and Governance; Open University. <http://www.open.ac.uk/ccig/news/the-bisexuality-report-is-now-available>
- Chamberlain, B. (2009) *Bisexual People in the Workplace: Practical Advice for Employers*, London: Stonewall.
- Collins, D. (1998) *Organizational Change, Sociological Perspectives*. London, New York: Routledge.
- FRA (2016) Professionally speaking: Challenges to achieving equality for LGBT people. Available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2016/professional-views-lgbt-equality>



- FRA (2013) *EU LGBT survey – European Union lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survey – Main results*. Available at: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eu-lgbt-survey-results-at-a-glance_en.pdf
- <http://bisofcolour.tumblr.com/>
- Marshall, T.H. (1950) *Citizenship and Social Class*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCall, L. (2005) 'The Complexity of Intersectionality', *Signs*, 30(3): 1771-1800.
- Monro, S (2015) *Bisexuality: Identities, Politics, and Theories*. Genders and Sexualities in the Social Sciences. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Phelan, S. (1995) The Space of Justice: Lesbians and Democratic Politics, in A.R. Wilson (ed) *A Simple Matter of Justice? Theorizing Lesbian and Gay Politics*. London: Cassell.

- Puar, J.K. (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Richardson, D. (1998) 'Sexuality and Citizenship', *Sociology*, 32(1): 83-100.
- Richardson, D. and Monro, S. (forthcoming 2012) *Sexuality, Diversity, and Social Change: In the Name of Equality*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (paperback and hardback).
- Takacs, J. and Szalma, I. (2011) 'Homophobia and Same-sex Partnerships Legalization in Europe', *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 30: 356-378.
- Trans Murder Monitoring Project <http://www.tgeu.org/node/435> accessed 09/06/2014