

Law, transformative change and abolition feminism to address gendered violence

Information Sheet

You are invited to take part in this research project which is funded by the [Leverhulme Trust](#). Before you decide, I would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please read this information sheet carefully to decide whether you wish to take part in an interview.

Why am I doing this research project?

I want to understand how feminist organisers, activists, lawyers and gender-based violence sector workers who do not rely on prisons and policing to address gendered violence engage with law for transformative social change. While community-based alternative forms of transformative justice are being practiced, there is still a question about using law as part of wider strategies to dismantle harmful institutions and change the social, political and economic conditions which enable gendered violence. This is what this project explores in the UK context, including different areas of law such as civil law, human rights and international law, and different ways of engaging law, such as using legal language in campaigns, citizens' legal education, or strategic litigation. The research will be written up in a book and academic articles, as well as resources for feminists to inform decision making about when, how and for what ends to engage with law for addressing gendered violence without policing, prisons or other punitive systems.

Who is doing this research?

The research is being conducted by Dr Nikki Godden-Rasul at Newcastle Law School who is responsible for the conduct and administration of the project. I have been a researcher in the field of sexual violence and law for 15 years, have been a volunteer in the gender-based violence sector, and participate in UK-based abolitionist groups.

Why have I been asked to take part?

You have been asked to take part because you are in a good position to provide insight and information into the ways that law is or could be used in feminist activism and organising that connects to movements to abolish police, prisons and similar harmful institutions.

Do I have to take part?

You are not obliged to participate in this study; it is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to take part that is perfectly acceptable, and you do not have to provide an explanation. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form to show that you agree to participate in the research project. If you change your mind before or during the interview, and up to two weeks after the interview, you can withdraw your participation from the project.

What will I have to do?

If you agree to take part, I will arrange a 1-1.20 hour interview for a date and time that is convenient to you. It can take place online via Microsoft Teams or in person in a suitable quiet space, such as an office room or bookable library room. Before beginning the interview, you will be asked to sign a consent form. Interviews will be audio-recorded. You do not have to answer all of the questions. If you are uncomfortable or do not want to answer a question, just let me know and the question can be skipped.

Will I be compensated?

As a thank you for your time, you will receive £50 after the interview.

Will I be named in the research?

You can choose whether or not to be named in the research.

If you choose to be anonymous then all identifiable information (e.g., names, location, employer) will be changed. Any other information that might lead to your identification or the identification of other people discussed in the interview, such as names of places, organisations, specific case details etc. Audio-recordings will be transcribed by a professional transcription service which will keep all information confidential. No one who opts to be anonymous will be named or identified in any reports or publications that are produced. Any identifiable information about you, including your contact details, will only be seen by the researcher. Non-anonymised data will only be kept as long as is needed for the research project and publications to be completed.

You may wish to be named because individuals from marginalised social groups or radical organising/activist groups are often excluded from knowledge production, so acknowledgement may be important to address this. It may also be an opportunity to record the work of these individuals and groups which otherwise could risk being lost, and there is the potential for other abolition feminists to learn from this activism and organising.

If you choose to be named, it will be made clear that you are not representing any movement, campaign or organisation but are reflecting on your experiences and views. You will have the opportunity to review draft text which contains excerpts from your interview and where you are identifiable to ensure that you agree it is an accurate representation. Adjustments to the text can be made to address inaccuracies, or you can choose to be made anonymous at this point.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

The research will be published in different formats, including a book, an academic article and resources for activists, organisers, gender-based violence sector workers and lawyers. Anonymised data will be archived in data.ncl, Newcastle University's open research data repository, to ensure that research data is available as a public good for use in other research projects. Only completely anonymised data will be added to this repository.

What are the possible problems or risks of taking part?

This research project explores sensitive topics that may not always be easy to talk about. If you experience any discomfort or distress during the interview, please let me know and we can decide on an appropriate course of action (e.g., change the topic, discuss sources of support).

Whatever you say during your interview is confidential unless you tell me that you or someone else is in immediate danger of serious harm, or the I see or am told about something that is likely to cause serious harm. If that happens, I will raise this with you during the interview and tell you about what could happen if you continue to talk about it.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this research?

When it comes to addressing gendered violence from an abolition feminist perspective there is a lot of research around transformative justice and community-led initiatives for healing and accountability. However, there is less known about the use of, or potential use of, different areas of law, and different ways of using law, for transformative social change by abolition feminists to address gendered violence, particularly in the UK. Being involved in this work can contribute to producing this knowledge, which will be shared with abolition feminists to inform their activism and organising.

Who has reviewed this study?

All research is looked at by an independent Research Ethics Committee. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee at Newcastle University, reference number 66453.

If I want to take part, what should I do next?

If you are interested in taking part in an interview, please contact Nikki at nikki.godden-rasul@newcastle.ac.uk. You can also contact Nikki if you have any questions or require any further information about the research project.

Who should I contact if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint you should contact the Research Impact and Engagement Co-ordinator at Newcastle University Law School, Helen Hampson helen.hampson@newcastle.ac.uk